Northern Tier
Regional Planning & Development Commission

Serving the Pennsylvania counties of:
Bradford
Sullivan
Susquehanna
Tioga
Wyoming

LUTED

Land Use, Transportation, and Economic Development Strategy

REGIONAL STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

JUNE 30, 2008

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Table of Contents

Gannett Fleming

Introduction

The Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission (NTRPDC) has developed a Regional Strategy and Action Plan (RSAP) to link Land Use, Transportation, and Economic Development initiatives in context with an overarching regional strategy. The strategy development process is to encourage meaningful planning on how communities can soundly manage growth and development to efficiently and effectively link land use, transportation, and economic development decision-making at the regional scale. The cooperating state agencies, PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), PA Department of Transportation (PennDOT), PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), and PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) will use these plan recommendations for regionally significant investment decisions.

This plan was developed in parallel with the creation of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and the formation of the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), with the intent of coordinating the strategic choices within each, thereby making the most effective and efficient use of limited resources, and with a focus on how and where investment choices are made in the region.

The NTRPDC, through its extensive outreach effort, sought which values and characteristics of the region were important for the future. The development of the RSAP was the result of identifying the common themes for the future vision, issues and gaps in achieving them, and formulating regional goals and objectives, from which projects and initiatives were recommended. The key component of the plan was to determine critical investment evaluation criteria for regional program and project priorities.

Investment criteria that are strategically the most important to the region were developed, and, when implemented, will yield significant economic development impact. A plan for maintaining and updating the Regional Action Strategy plan is offered, along with process for sustained coordinated planning to maintain and help implement the plan. As a result, the stakeholders will be better positioned to determine what projects are needed, where in the region they should be located, and, especially, why they are needed.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of the plan is the recognition of the inherent tension between two distinct perspectives underlying the acceptance of change in the region. This is evident, on the one hand, in the intent to grow economic prosperity (expand business, attract new and diverse residents, and support increased services), and, on the other, the strong desire of many residents to maintain the status quo of the quiet, safe, slower-paced, rural and agricultural, and excellent quality of life. The resolution of this dichotomy, balancing the impact of change, is central to the determination of regional strategies and potential beneficial outcomes.

The process to evaluate program or project investment is intended as a baseline set of investment criteria that can be used by all programs in ensuring consistency and integration of programs. This effort resulted in a process and/or criteria by which regional initiatives and investments can be determined on a regular basis, including priority projects and targeted areas of investment consistent with the Commonwealth's Keystone Principles for Growth, Investment and Resource Conservation. The NTRPDC approach of coordinating efforts under the auspices of a Planning

Advisory Committee (PAC) ensures commitment and focus from various stakeholders to achieve integrated strategies and actions.

The project approach is illustrated below. The three colors indicate the complementary projects in parallel. The light green is the LUTED project, the LRTP work is light pink, and the CEDS project work in the blue. The LUTED plan used integrated and complementary findings and recommendations from each to create a final product.

LUTED Project Process
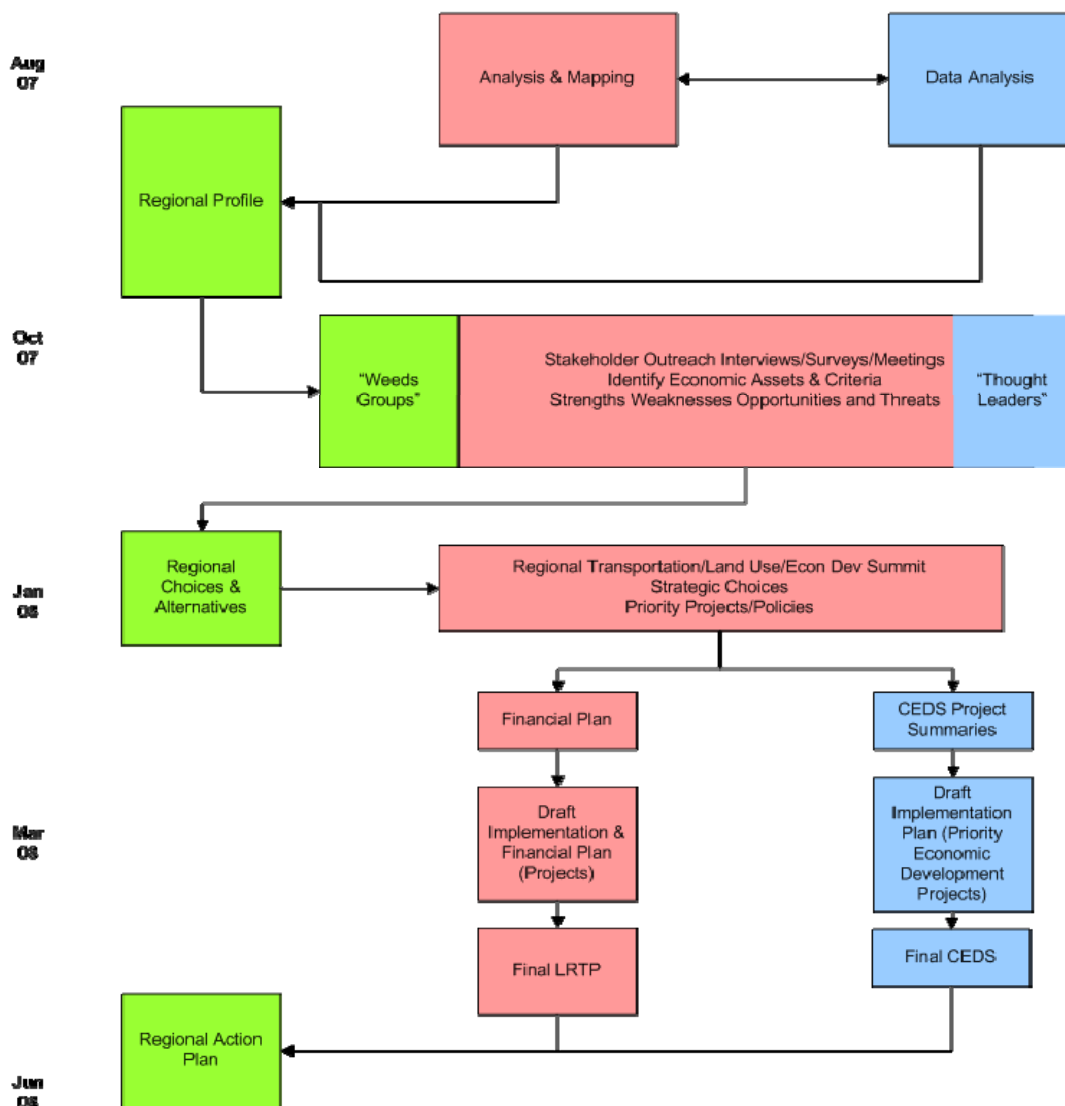
Public Participation

NTRPDC completed an exhaustive and inclusive outreach to regional, county and municipal officials, residents, business and commercial interests and representatives, and administrators of institutions of higher education, and economic development groups. Ideas, issues, and recommendations were gathered and validated within additional group sessions with the CEDS Steering Committee, the entire Commission membership, two groups of school superintendents representing all school districts in the region; approximately 30 individual interviews with key stakeholders, and at a regional summit representing diverse interests throughout the region.

This interactive and proactive process included large conferences and small brainstorming meetings, individual interviews, group discussions, and voting and web surveys. Over 200 people participated directly in the successful identification of regional strengths and weaknesses, and offered realistic and achievable strategies for the future of the region.

Acknowledgements

We want to acknowledge and thank the Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission Staff, Management, Executive Committee; and Board; and the County Boards of Commissioners for Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, and Wyoming Counties for their support and leadership in this effort. In addition, we would like to thank the following organizations for their active participation and input:

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Army Corps of Engineers	Northern Tier Cultural Alliance
Betterment Organization of Mansfield	Osram Sylvania
Bradford County Conservation District	PA DCED
Bradford County Planning Commission	PA DCNR
Bradford County Schools	PA DEP
Bradford-Wyoming Literary Program	Partners in Progress
Cargill	Penelec
Central Bradford Progress Authority	Pennsylvania College of Technology North Campus
Central Bradford Co. Chamber of Commerce	PA Association of Sustainable Agriculture
Claverack Rural Electric Company	People's State Bank
Comfort Inn/Riverstone Inn	Picture It Company
Craftmaster	Procter and Gamble, Inc.
Cummings Lumber	Red Rock Job Corps Center
Deer Park Lumber	Rep. Tina Pickett
DuPont de Nemours	Sayre Area School District
Endless Mountain Transportation Authority	Sayre Borough
Endless Mountain Visitor's Bureau	Sen. Joe Scarnati
First Liberty Bank	Sen. Roger Madigan
G.E. Railcar	Sullivan County Assessment
Greater Valley Chamber of Commerce	Sullivan County Chamber of Commerce
Greater Valley EMS, Inc.	Sullivan County Electric Cooperative
Greater Wyalusing Chamber of Commerce	Sullivan County IDA
Growth Resources of Wellsboro	Sullivan County Planning Commission

Guthrie Healthcare System	Sullivan County Rural Electric Cooperative
Henry Dunn, Inc.	Sullivan County School District
Hoffman New Yorker	Summerhouse Grill
Holcombe Group	Susquehanna County Planning Commission
Ingersoll Rand	Susquehanna County Schools
Intermediate Unit # 17	Tioga County Development Corporation
Intermediate Unit #10	Tioga County Schools
Kartri Sales	Towanda Shippers
Kingdom Company	Troy Borough
Lackawanna College	Troy Chamber of Commerce
Laurel Health System	Twig's Café
Laverly & Associates	Tyler Memorial Hospital
Lubbering, Inc.	Ward Manufacturing
Mansfield University	Wellsboro Area Chamber of Commerce
Memorial Hospital	Wordsworth Communications
Montrose Area School District	Wyoming County Chamber of Commerce
Northeast Bradford School District	Wyoming County Emergency Management Agency
Northern Tier Career Link	Wyoming County Schools

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1. Background – Northern Tier Overview

Pennsylvania's Northern Tier, shown on Figure 1, is a geographic region consisting of five rural counties in northeast Pennsylvania: Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, and Wyoming. The Northern Tier encompasses about 4,000 square miles and is home to approximately 180,000 residents who live mostly in small towns and communities throughout the region.

Figure 1: Northern Tier Region
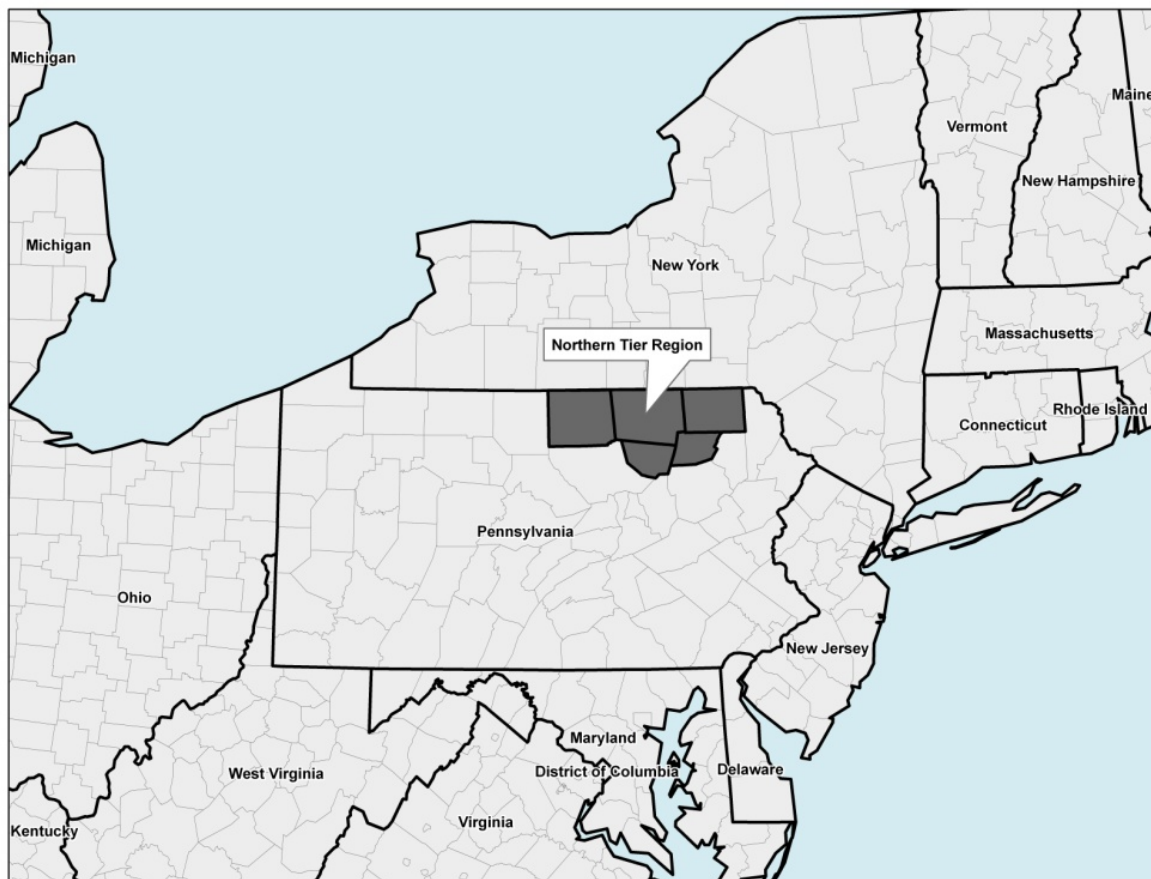
The region is located in close proximity (within 200 driving miles) to New York City, Albany, Syracuse, Buffalo, Philadelphia, Harrisburg, and Baltimore. The Northern Tier has natural affinities to the Southern Tier of New York State, as it borders four adjacent New York counties (Broome, Chemung, Tioga, and Steuben), and is influenced by employment centers of Binghamton, Elmira, and Corning. Together, the Northern Tier of Pennsylvania and the adjoining New York counties are often referred to as the "Twin Tiers." Similarly, strong relationships exist with the economic centers of Williamsport, Pennsylvania to the southwest and the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre region of Pennsylvania to the east.

Primary transportation arteries linking these areas include US Route 15 in the western portion of

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the region, linking Williamsport in the southwest to Tioga County and then Corning and Elmira, New York, in the northeast. US Route 220 runs north and south through the central part of the Northern Tier region. Interstate 81 is the major north-south interstate, located in the eastern part of the region, running through Scranton and Wilkes-Barre in the southeastern edge of the region. US Route 6 is a scenic and primary east-west route connecting many of the Northern Tier's prominent towns. Access to markets is provided by the highway system as well as by short-line rail networks and three general service airports.

Small towns and rural countryside characterize each of the five counties. In addition to the counties, the region includes 166 separate municipalities and 19 public school districts, resulting in one local government for approximately every thousand residents. The region's largest municipality is Sayre, located in northern Bradford County. Other notable boroughs include Towanda, the county seat for Bradford County and Wellsboro, the county seat for Tioga County (near Pennsylvania's Grand Canyon). Mansfield, also in Tioga County, is home to Mansfield University. Eagles Mere, a recreation destination near Worlds End and Ricketts Glen State Parks, is in Sullivan County, with Laporte as the county seat. Montrose is the county seat for Susquehanna County and Tunkhannock is the county seat for Wyoming County.

Residents of the Northern Tier have access to beautiful and abundant natural resources. Clean air, uncongested commutes, and a host of outdoor recreational opportunities are readily available. The cost of living in the Northern Tier is well below the national average, and housing costs and taxes are among the lowest in the state.

Figure 2: Northern Tier and Surrounding Counties

History
Long before the Europeans established permanent settlements in the region, Native Americans occupied the Susquehanna River Valley and traveled the river by canoe. They also used the river's

broad terraces as an even grade for travel by foot. By the early eighteenth century, European explorers began trading with Native Americans and used the river to move goods in and out of the region on small boats. As Europeans settled and the region developed, several early industries came to rely on the river and its tributaries for moving goods. However, the shallow, rocky waters and winding contour of the river made it nearly impossible for industries to ship large loads of cargo. Initially, lumber companies used the river system for transporting raw timber by floating or rafting it downstream.

The region's fertile valleys have supported dispersed agricultural villages for centuries. However, the undulating landscape restricted travel through the region, limiting the development of large settlements. In the mid-nineteenth century, lumber became a major source of income and a byproduct of agricultural development in the region. In many areas, the construction of sawmills preceded gristmills, because land had to be cleared before it was cultivated.

Overland transportation in the region was limited throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Before bridges were constructed in the 1830s and 1840s, entrepreneurs established ferries at key points along the Susquehanna River, such as Tioga Point, Towanda, Azilum, Wysox, and Sugar Run. County governments began to fund some road construction upon petition of influential landowners, but transportation routes remained limited until the latter part of the nineteenth century.

The agricultural economy of the Northern Tier grew steadily until the mid-1830s, when the Erie Canal across upstate New York and westward expansion affected the area. Increased competition in grain and cattle production from the west, along with the proximity of the Northern Tier to major urban centers, made the transition from grain to dairy production a logical step.

The period from 1870 to 1920 was an era of rapid industrial expansion fueled by regional improvements in transportation. During this period, the North Branch Canal and local railroads reduced costs for shipment of coal, lumber, and other products to distant markets. Although the North Branch Canal was short-lived due to its high maintenance costs and poor construction, it paved the way for construction of the Lehigh Valley Railroad, which ran along its towpath. This railway, and many others constructed throughout the region in the late nineteenth century, generated significant commercial and industrial activity within the Northern Tier.

Unlike government-funded canal construction, railroad construction was funded solely through private investment. The Northern Tier was primarily a through route, not a terminus; however, adjacent communities did secure some economic benefit from being included within a larger national transportation system. Railway construction facilitated not only the export of raw materials, but also the import of consumer goods and raw materials for manufacture. Shipments of dry goods, lumber, and hides were unloaded at local depots, while outbound trains carried newly manufactured doors, shoes, harness leather, and farm produce. Railroads gave life to communities such as Sayre in Bradford County, which emerged at the junction of several major railroad routes that crossed through the northern portion of the region.

Late-nineteenth-century industrial expansion in the Northern Tier had serious environmental consequences. Widespread deforestation resulted in the loss of acres of valuable white pine forests and wildlife habitat. Logging companies often burned cutover tracts, which destroyed the delicate seeds of white pine and hemlock. As a result, forests grew back in hardwoods. Furthermore, the massive amount of cleared land exacerbated flood conditions, since no vegetation

remained to absorb storm waters. The resulting erosion destroyed the soil structure and caused sediment to build up in the region's streams. During the 1920s, the region's resource-based economy was in decline. The prominent lumber and tanning industries had run their course, and dairy farming became the mainstay of the economy.

During the 1930s, the Public Works Administration and Civilian Conservation Corps sent hundreds of men to establish camps and to replant the forests, restore wildlife habitat, construct fire towers, and establish recreational areas.

Although portions of the Northern Tier faced environmental devastation, a small resort industry began to emerge in the late nineteenth century. In addition to raw materials and goods, railroads brought tourists. Affluent urbanites from New York City and Philadelphia escaped the hot summers by traveling to the lakes and mountains of the Northern Tier. Many seasonal visitors even constructed summer cottages along the shores of lakes.

As the twentieth century progressed, the quality of life in the Northern Tier improved significantly, due to the introduction of electrification as well as road and communication improvements. The automobile became the preferred method of transportation. An era of automobile touring coincided with a national push for road improvements. With the construction of a new road network in the Northern Tier, the railroad experienced significant decline and passenger trains eventually became obsolete. Railroad use in the region had peaked just after the turn of the century. By the 1920s and 1930s, new roads were paved, and highways such as Route 6 saw significant improvements that enabled trucks to compete with railroads for commercial shipments. The Depression pushed the railroad industry near the breaking point. In the following decades, rail companies consolidated their lines and gradually succumbed to the onslaught of automobiles. By 1961, the last railroad passenger car passed through Towanda. By the 1970s, active freight lines within the region were a rare sight. Although some older railroads have been disassembled in recent decades, railroading does remain a part of the Northern Tier landscape.

Although the railroad and motor vehicles improved mobility and access to the region, the area today remains remarkably rural and stable, considering its proximity to urban areas along the Eastern Seaboard.

Land Use

The Northern Tier region is approximately 3,955 square miles in size, comprising 2.5 million acres with some of the state's most rugged topography.

Of the 67 counties in Pennsylvania, 52 are located within the Appalachian Region. All five Northern Tier counties (also sometimes known as the "Endless Mountains Region," except for Tioga County) are located squarely within this region. The Northern Tier has a physical character that is quite distinct from the rest of the state. Historically, the rugged nature of the Appalachian Region has been a barrier to east-west movement and has hindered economic advancement. Over time, the region has become isolated and separated from other areas.

Figure 3: Northern Tier Topographical Map
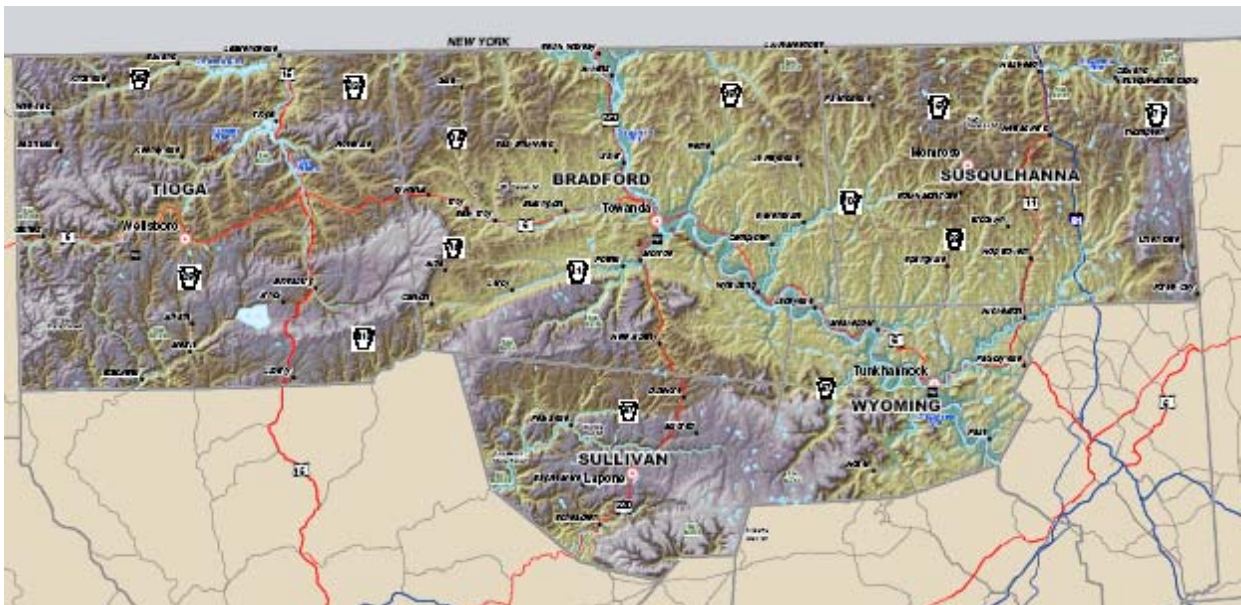
Topography

The five counties within the Northern Tier are shaped in large part by topography and geology. The majority of the Northern Tier lies within the Allegheny Plateau, a portion of the much larger Appalachian Uplands that run from New York State to Alabama. The Allegheny Plateau comprises three-fifths of Pennsylvania's landmass, and is situated adjacent to the Valley and Ridge Province directly to the south. The portion of the plateau that lies within the Northern Tier exhibits significant topographical relief resulting from glacial action and erosion. These sloping uplands are historically referred to as the "Endless Mountains," a name that was originally coined by eighteenth-century European explorers. The Endless Mountains is a unique landform that conveys a strong sense of place and has helped shape a common heritage throughout much of the Northern Tier.

Topographical relief in the northern half of the region is much gentler and better suited for agriculture than in the southern half, which possesses steep slopes punctuated by clusters of

sandstone ridges. The northern half of the region exhibits a succession of broad rolling hills dissected by an extensive network of streams and valleys. An abundance of small water features supports diverse wildlife and provides recreational opportunities. Susquehanna County alone has 169 natural bodies of water. One major topographical feature in Susquehanna County is Elk Mountain, a 2,700-foot-high sandstone ridge. Bradford County's primary ridge is Barclay Mountain. Further south, Sullivan and Wyoming counties possess much larger expanses of steep sloping mountains due to the presence of many resistant sandstone-capped ridges. Land suitable for agriculture in this part of the Northern Tier is limited. Farmers cultivate about 10 percent of Sullivan County, and most croplands are concentrated in the stream valleys and along the northern hills.

The Tioga and Susquehanna River valleys are two of the most prominent topographical features in the Northern Tier. Both rivers have played an integral part in the region's development. The Susquehanna River is considered the longest non-navigable river in the United States, and drains a watershed that extends from the Allegheny Mountains on the West Branch and upstate New York on the North Branch, south to the Chesapeake Bay. The North Branch flows south from upstate New York and snakes through the Northern Tier region, first dipping into Susquehanna County around Lanesboro, then doubling back to receive the Chemung, and reentering Pennsylvania southbound near Athens and Sayre in Bradford County. The river takes a southeasterly path through Wyoming County, and then shifts southwest, ultimately connecting with the West Branch in Northumberland and continuing south to the Chesapeake Bay.

The Barclay coal deposit in Bradford County, the Bloss deposit in Tioga County, and the Bernice deposit in Sullivan County supported profitable semi-bituminous mining operations during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Beyond these deposits, the region's significant mineral deposits are limited. Mining in this part of Pennsylvania never achieved the economic prominence attained in the Wyoming Valley, which lies directly southeast of the region. The Moosic Divide (between Susquehanna and Wayne counties in the vicinity of Forest City) contains the northern tip of the Carbondale Anthracite Coal Basin.

In addition to coal deposits, active quarries are still found throughout much of the northeastern portion of the region. Local sandstone and bluestone, commonly used for building stone and paving throughout the country, are also significant exports.

The isolated nature of the region has historically been a function of both its topography and the mobility offered by two-lane roads. That has been changing, however, with the construction of I-81 in the 1960s and the modernization of US 15 into the future Interstate 99, occurring today. In neighboring New York State, improvements such as upgrading U.S. Route 17 to interstate standards as I-86 will also lessen the region's isolation from other markets and transportation corridors.

Environmentally- Sensitive Lands

There are eight general types of environmentally-sensitive lands. Table 1 provides a summary of the region's environmentally-sensitive lands.

Table 1: Summary of Environmentally-Sensitive Lands in the Northern Tier

Environmental Feature	Acreage	Square Miles	Percent of Total Land Area
State Parks	5,566	8.6	0.2
State Forests	208,161	325.3	8.2
State Game Lands	188,355	294.3	7.4
Wetlands	72,502	113.3	2.9
Floodplains	128,158	200.2	5.1
Steep Slopes (>12 percent)	1,291,566	2,018.1	51.0
Farmland	217,775	340.3	8.6
Farmland of Statewide Importance	927,135	1,448.6	36.6

Sources: Northern Tier GIS; Gannett Fleming.
Note: Percent of Land Area column includes overlap of some features, resulting in total percentage >100%

Each land use highlighted in the preceding table is explained in more detail in the following points.

Floodplains: Much of the region is drained by the north and west branches of the Susquehanna River. Related tributaries include the creeks of Loyalsock, Meshoppen, Pine, Towanda, Tunkhannock, and Wyalusing, among many others. Floodplains are areas adjacent to watercourses that are covered by water during times of flooding. A 100-year floodplain has a 1 percent chance of being flooded during any one year. The term is typically used for regulatory purposes. Floodplains should not be developed due to the potential for damage to persons and property. If development occurs within the floodplain, it may limit the floodway, resulting in increased damage downstream because of increased velocities of the floodwaters. There are over 128,000 acres within the region that are within a floodplain. Bradford County contains more of these regions (33 percent) than any other county.

Prime Farmland: The definition of "prime farmland" has been established nationwide by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to include Class I and Class II soils. Over 8,200 acres of land in the Northern Tier have been subject to agricultural conservation purchases, a majority of which have been in Susquehanna County. Bradford County, though, has the highest share of Prime Farmland in the region. According to the Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service, the total number of farms in the region has declined from 4,230 in 1996 to 4,120 in 2006, while the amount of land in farms has declined by nearly 6 percent over the same period, to 776,000 acres in 2006. Bradford County alone has 1,655 farms covering over 329,000 acres (ranking third and second in number and acreage, respectively, statewide).

Farmland of Statewide Importance: Some farmland is considered particularly valuable because of its location, distribution proximity, or environmental significance. The region's greatest share of this farmland is in Bradford and Tioga counties. Bradford County has 38 percent of the region's farmland of statewide importance.

State Forests: Approximately 7 percent of the Northern Tier's land is comprised of state forest, much of which was originally owned by lumber and land holding companies. The Tioga State Forest is the largest such forest in the Northern Tier, consisting of 160,000 acres in Bradford and Tioga counties. Loyalsock State Forest is located in Sullivan County. Over two-thirds of the region's state forest land is in Tioga County. There are no state forests in Susquehanna or Wyoming counties.

State Game Lands: There are several state game lands in the Northern Tier, totaling nearly 300 acres. These lands are managed by the Pennsylvania Game Commission for hunting, trapping, and fishing. Sullivan County contains only 11 percent of the region's total land area, yet has 34 percent of the region's state game lands.

State Parks: There are three state parks within the Northern Tier encompassing a total of 5,500 acres, or nearly 9 square miles of land. Two of these parks—Ricketts Glen and Worlds End—are located in Sullivan County, while Mt. Pisgah is located in west-central Bradford County. Nearly half of all state park land (46 percent) is located within Sullivan County. There are no state parks in Wyoming County.

Steep Slopes: Over half of the region consists of steep slopes, or slopes greater than 12 percent. Elevations in the region range from 523 feet at the Susquehanna River in Wyoming County to the highest point in eastern Pennsylvania, the 2,693-foot top of North Knob in the Elk Mountain ski resort in Susquehanna County. The region is separated by ridges and valleys of the great western plateau of the Allegheny Mountains. Tioga County has the region's greatest share of steep slopes, at 30 percent.

Wetlands: Wetlands are generally found along watercourses or in other areas subject to frequent flooding, and are characterized by soil type and the presence of hydrophytic ("water-loving") vegetation, in addition to the presence of visible surface water. Bradford County has the region's greatest share of wetlands (28 percent), followed by Susquehanna County (26 percent).

A review of the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development's (DCED's) municipal statistics summary shows that the region is generally lacking in terms of using the various land use management tools that are available to municipal government. The state planning code is the enabling legislation that empowers municipalities to adopt and enforce various plans and ordinances geared toward community preferences regarding land use management.

Table 2: Northern Tier Municipal Land Use Controls

	Municipalities	Comprehensive Plan	Zoning	Subdivision/Land Development
Bradford	51	19	13	7
Sullivan	13	5	3	3
Susquehanna	40	20	7	10
Tioga	39	21	16	10
Wyoming	23	13	10	4
Total	**166**	**78**	**49**	**34**

Source: www.munstatspa.org

As shown in Table 2, fewer than half of local Northern Tier governments have a municipal planning commission or a comprehensive plan. More detailed land management ordinances such as zoning or subdivision and land development ordinances are even less common. This general lack of planning at a municipal level contributes to uncoordinated development, undesirable uses of land, and sprawl. Over the long term, a lack of adequate land use planning is costly to municipalities and the region.

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Regional Land Use Policies

County comprehensive plans in the region have consistent approaches in land use strategies. The following are recommended for use as guidance to regional land use policies:

- Conserve and protect the natural environment
- Preserve agriculture and rural character
- Develop and sustain community services and infrastructure, especially roads and water-sewer
- Protect residential uses along with higher density uses
- Provide appropriate development areas to accommodate projected growth
- Encourage the use of natural resources to be a major component of local economies

Population

Population Trends

The Northern Tier exhibits challenges similar to other rural regions, including a slowly growing and rapidly aging population, and more significant impacts due to a sluggish national and state economy.

Figure 4: Northern Tier County Population Projection
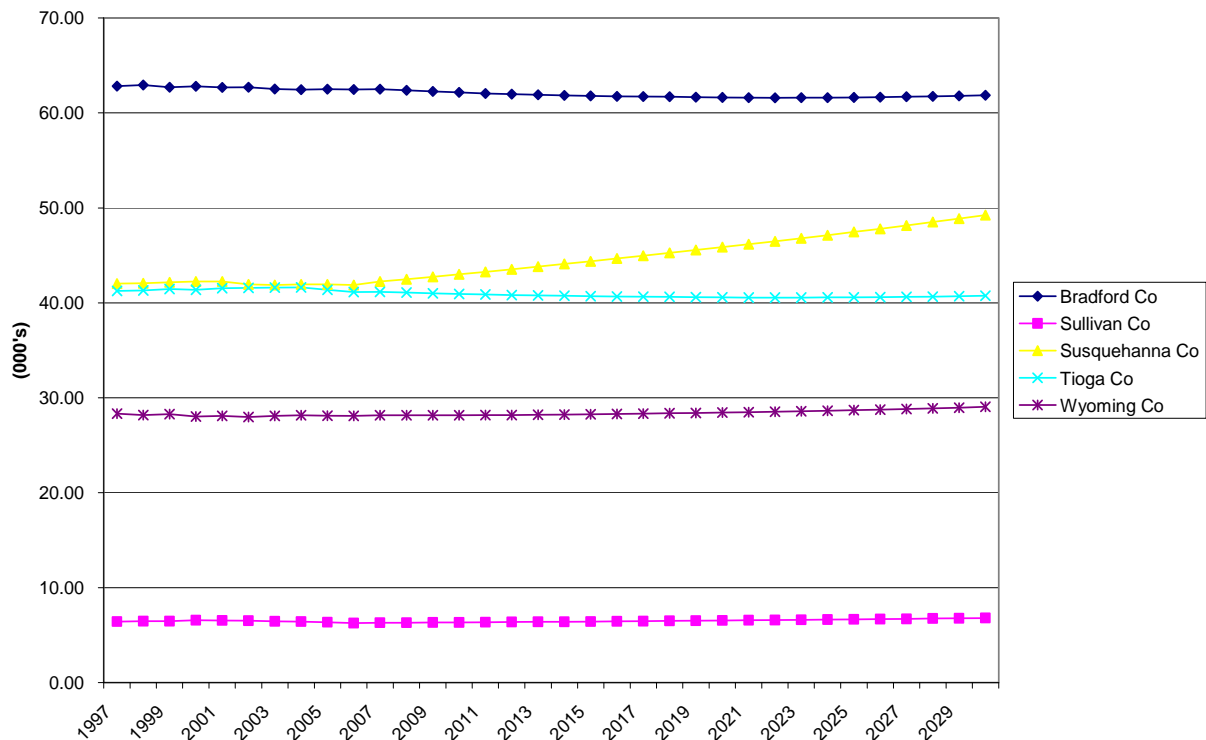
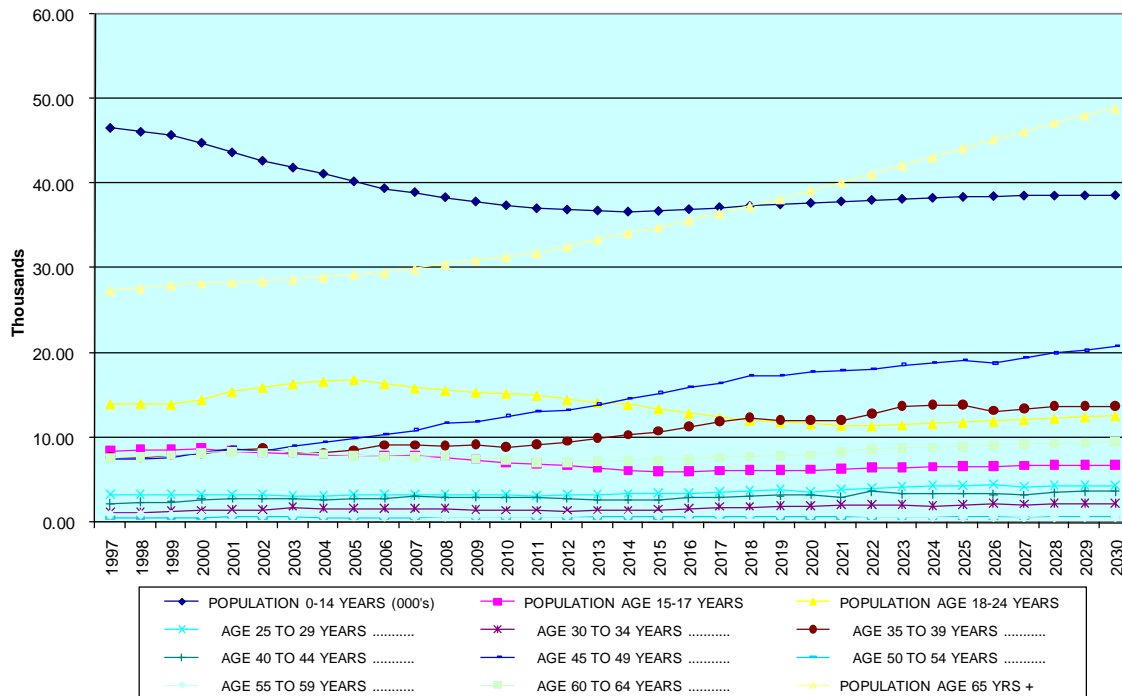Source: Woods and Poole Economics, Inc., US Census

The people of the Northern Tier may be its greatest strength, as they are characterized by its strong work ethic, consistent with Pennsylvania's higher-than-average employee productivity rates. However, the region's lack of diversity and below-average educational achievements may limit its ability to take advantage of entrepreneurial opportunities and attract additional creative talent.

Population is just one indicator of the vitality of an area or region. The Northern Tier region has experienced moderate to flat population growth since 1990. During the 1990s, the region grew by 4,355 persons, for a growth rate of less than 2.5 percent. More than 80 percent of this growth occurred in Bradford and Susquehanna counties. Bradford remains the largest county in the region, with a population of more than 60,000.

Population estimates recently released from the U.S. Census (2000 to 2006), indicate no growth in any of the Northern Tier counties. At the same time, Pennsylvania is showing a slight 1.3 percent increase in population, with some counties along the southern tier and eastern border seeing

double digit percentage increases. Population increases for the U.S. over the same period are estimated to be 6.4 percent, with northeastern states experiencing little to modest growth and significant growth in the south and southwest.

Figure 5: Northern Tier Population Projection by Age Group

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.

Regions with relatively low population growth rates are usually challenged in meeting the increasing cost demands of infrastructure, education, and other government services.

Table 3: Northern Tier County Population Change, 1990 – 2006

	1990	2000	Percent Change (90-00)	2006 (Est.)	Percent Change (00-06)
Bradford	60,967	62,761	2.9	62,471	(0.4)
Sullivan	6,104	6,556	7.4	6,277	(4.3)
Susquehanna	40,380	42,238	4.6	41,889	(0.8)
Tioga	41,126	41,373	0.6	41,137	(0.6)
Wyoming	28,076	28,080	0.0	28,093	0.0
Northern Tier	176,653	181,008	2.5	179,867	(0.6)

Source: U.S. Census
Note: Parentheses indicates a negative value

Age Profile

The graying of Pennsylvania has been a common topic of transportation and economic planning in recent years. The so-called "Baby Boomer" generation (those born between 1945 and 1963), has created economic and transportation implications throughout its existence. As the front end of this group moves into the region's more senior demographic ranks, it will continue to have ramifications in terms of the required efficiency, predictability, and accessibility of transportation systems.

In each of the Northern Tier counties, the median age of residents is increasing at a rate that exceeds the state's increases. Between 2000 and 2005, the region's median age increased by an average of 5.1 percent, versus the state rate of 4.5 percent. Table 4 displays the region's median age increases, by county.

Table 4: Northern Tier Median Age (2000 – 2005)

	Bradford	Sullivan	Susquehanna	Tioga	Wyoming	Region	PA
2000	39.1	43.0	40.0	38.5	37.8	39.7	38.0
2005	41.1	45.5	41.4	40.2	40.3	41.7	39.7

Source: U.S. Census

Table 5, below, indicates that the population segments that are most dependent (0-19 and over 65) are increasing and projected to increase. This trend has implications on health and human service providers and other services. Further, this region may be forced to deal with the implications of these changes—including economic transitions of an older workforce and a greater percentage of residents in retirement—sooner than the rest of the state.

Table 5: Northern Tier Age Groups as a Percentage of (Dependent) County Population

Ages		Bradford	Sullivan	Susquehanna	Tioga	Wyoming
0-19						
	2000	27.9	24.3	27.8	27.5	28.4
	2005	25.4	22.4	25.1	24.6	25.6
	2020 (proj.)	27.9	25.1	24.4	26.3	28.4
65+						
	2000	15.7	21.9	15.5	16.0	13.2
	2005	16.3	23.8	15.7	16.9	14.1
	2020 (proj.)	17.4	18.9	19.2	20.2	15.3

Source: U.S. Census

Diversity

The population of the Northern Tier is fairly homogeneous, with approximately 98 percent of the residents being white. Sullivan and Tioga counties have populations of black residents of 3.5 percent and 1 percent, respectively. Sullivan and Wyoming counties have Hispanic populations of 1.2 percent and 1.1 percent, respectively. All other race or heritage cohorts are less than 1 percent.

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The Northern Tier has some of the smallest concentrations of minority populations in Pennsylvania. The region has a small Hispanic population and an even smaller black population. At any given time, regions compete with each other for talent. Regions that are diverse are able to attract a wider range of talent by nationality, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation than those that are relatively closed.

As shown in Table 6, the racial breakdown of the region's residents indicates that in 2000, minority populations comprised less than 2 percent of the total population, compared to the state rate of 14 percent. The region's non-white population ranged from a low of 1.5 percent in Susquehanna and Wyoming counties to a high of 4.4 percent in Sullivan County.

Table 6: Northern Tier Ethnic Composition

	Total	White	Black	Hispanic	Indian	Asian	Other
Bradford	62,761	61,471	251	398	193	285	125
Sullivan	6,556	6,266	144	72	50	10	30
Susquehanna	42,238	41,621	128	285	63	92	79
Tioga	41,373	40,589	250	214	96	124	60
Wyoming	28,080	27,598	149	187	47	77	43
Northern Tier	**181,008**	**177,545**	**922**	**1,156**	**449**	**588**	**337**

Source: U.S. Census

Home Ownership

Home ownership and home values are often indicators of economic prosperity and quality of life. In the Northern Tier, median home values are less than the state and nation as a whole; however, home ownership rates are significantly greater. This fact corroborates pervious data that residents of the Northern Tier and surrounding areas enjoy jobs at fair wages that allow them a reasonable quality of life.

Table 7: Northern Tier Home Ownership Percentage by Home Value (2000)

	Home Ownership Percentage	Median Home Value ($)
Bradford	75.5	$73,900
Sullivan	80.8	$74,900
Susquehanna	79.5	$81,800
Tioga	76.2	$72,000
Wyoming	78.9	$93,900
Pennsylvania	**71.3**	**$97,000**
USA	**66.2**	**$119,600**

Source: U.S. Census

Population Density

Population density—in addition to a municipality's total population and composition—is another important demographic indicator for economic development (particularly downtown revitalization) and transportation (particularly public transportation).

A key factor in successful downtowns is that they maintain a walkable scale and have a population base to sustain economic activity during the workday and after hours. A typical measurement of the potential for fixed route public transportation includes a population density of 2,500 persons per square mile, along with a population base of at least 5,000.

With a population density of fewer than 46 persons per square mile, the Northern Tier is Pennsylvania's least densely populated region.

The region has some of the state's largest counties by land area (Bradford, for example, ranks second and Tioga ranks fourth). Wyoming County is the region's smallest in land area, contributing to its position as the region's most densely populated county.

Table 8: Pennsylvania's Least Densely Populated Counties

County	Persons per Square Mile (2000)
Forest	12
Sullivan	**15**
Cameron	15
Potter	17
Fulton	33
Tioga	**36**
Elk	42
Clinton	43
McKean	47
Bedford	49
Warren	50
Susquehanna	**51**
Bradford	**55**

The Northern Tier's most densely populated county is far below the state average of 273 persons per square mile (see Table 9).

With Sayre Borough and Athens Township as the first- and second-largest municipalities in the region, the area known as "the Valley" in northern Bradford County is the region's largest and most densely populated area. None of the Northern Tier's other 164 municipalities has more than 5,000 persons. The region's more relatively "urban" communities can be best characterized as mid-size boroughs that serve as trading centers for smaller sub-areas within the region.

Table 9: Northern Tier Population Density (2007)

	Population (2006 Est.)	Size in Square Miles	Persons per Square Mile
Bradford	62,537	1,151	54.3
Sullivan	6,391	450	14.2
Susquehanna	42,124	823	51.2
Tioga	41,649	1,134	36.7
Wyoming	28,090	397	70.8
Northern Tier	180,791	3,955	45.7
Pennsylvania	**12,224,000**	**44,820**	**272.7**

Source: Northern Tier State of Region 2008.

Table 10 displays the municipal governments by county in the Northern Tier. The following figure graphically displays the dispersion of local governments across the region.

Figure 6: Northern Tier County and Municipal Governments
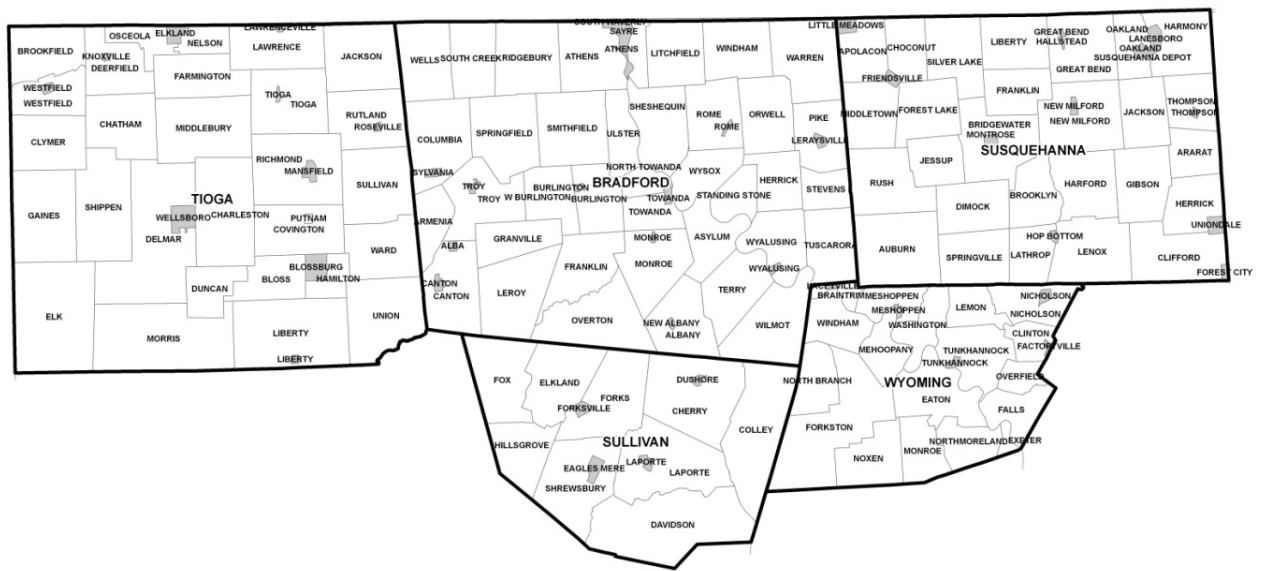
Residents in the Northern Tier are served by 166 local municipal governments and 19 public school systems (in addition to five county governments). This is approximately one local government per every 1,000 persons. In a state with an approximate ratio of one municipal government per 5,000 residents, this region has one municipality for nearly every 1,100 residents.

The number of residents served by local governments certainly impacts the costs of government services due to economies of scale. Further, industry site selectors and entrepreneurship research cite the fragmentation of local governments as having an impact on economic development. Site selectors assess the number of local governments from

which a firm will have to secure necessary approvals or permits; entrepreneurial activity is most successful where there are the fewest barriers to entry into the market.

Table 10: Northern Tier Local Government Per Capita

	Number of Municipalities	Number of School Districts	Local Gov't Per Capita
Bradford	51	7	1,059
Sullivan	13	1	418
Susquehanna	40	6	891
Tioga	39	3	957
Wyoming	23	4*	1,081
Northern Tier	**166**	**19**	**947**

*Two school districts serving part of Wyoming County are outside the region.
Source: NTRPDC

As previously noted, fewer than half of the region's municipalities have a municipal planning commission or a comprehensive plan. Only 34 have a municipal subdivision and land development ordinance. This has significant implications for economic growth as well as for the increased complexity and degree of integration and cooperation necessary for transportation and other infrastructure planning and development.

Education

Educational attainment is an important indicator in measuring the economic potential of a region. The population of all five Northern Tier counties is below the state and national averages in the percent of the population with a bachelor's degree or higher (22.4 percent and 24.4 percent, respectively). If these were urban or densely populated counties, the total number of individuals with bachelor's degrees or higher might be more important than the percentage; however, the rural Northern Tier counties have a relatively lower percentage of individuals with higher education degrees and naturally a smaller critical mass. Table 11 below compares individual county rates against one another and state rates.

Table 11: Northern Tier Educational Attainment Rates for Individuals Age 25+ (2005)

	Less Than High School (percent)	High School and More (percent)	Bachelor's Degree (percent)	Graduate Degree (percent)
Bradford	20.5	81.7	14.8	6.5
Sullivan	24.6	78.0	12.8	6.1
Susquehanna	19.8	82.5	13.2	5.7
Tioga	21.8	80.5	14.2	6.2
Wyoming	18.2	83.7	15.4	6.1
Pennsylvania	**18.1**	**81.9**	**22.4**	**8.4**

Sources: U.S. Census; Northern Tier State of the Region 2007.

Education proficiency rates in the Northern Tier are lower than the state and national averages. Educational proficiency and educational achievement are indicators of innovation and entrepreneurial capacity. Education achievement plus secondary education proficiency in math and reading are factors used by site selectors to locate new plants or expansions. The secondary education proficiencies in math and reading in the Northern Tier school districts do not compare favorably to the rest of the state. The following information shows that the math proficiency rate of eleventh grade students is below the state average for 16 out of the 19 school districts in the Northern Tier. The eleventh grade reading proficiency rate is below the state average in 10 of the 19 school districts. Table 12 below shows a comparison of the region's 19 school districts to the state average.

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Table 12: Northern Tier Education Proficiency and Attainment by School District (2006 – 2007)

|	Enrollment	Graduation Rate (percent)	Percentage of 11th Grade Students who tested Proficient or Above	
			Math	Reading
Bradford				
Athens Area SD	2,419	89	48.3	61.8
Canton Area SD	1,139	88	42.6	56.1
NE Bradford SD	885	93	41.1	56.2
Sayre Area SD	1,238	81	52.7	69.8
Towanda Area SD	1,766	88	57.3	60.9
Troy Area SD	1,704	90	43.0	59.1
Wyalusing Area SD	1,429	91	51.8	61.9
Sullivan				
Sullivan County SD	739	93	58.4	60.0
Susquehanna				
Blue Ridge SD	1,232	90	52.4	57.4
Elk Lake SD	1,479	86	50.9	67.0
Forest City Reg. SD	931	94	37.7	65.5
Montrose Area SD	1,858	91	52.6	64.7
Mountain View SD	1,333	97	41.0	59.3
Susq Comm SD	985	91	53.6	62.3
Tioga				
Northern Tioga SD	2,412	86	40.3	51.9
Southern Tioga SD	2,180	95	49.8	59.9
Wellsboro Area SD	1,571	92	47.0	69.9
Wyoming				
Lackawanna Trail SD	1,287	95	30.7	70.2
Tunkhannock Area SD	3,081	92	67.4	66.3
Pennsylvania		88.0	53.7	65.4

Sources: Pennsylvania Department of Education, Bureau of Assessment and Accountability; U.S. Census.
(Note that bold print indicates that a district meets or exceeds the comparison values.)

Economic Development

The U.S. economy continues to exhibit moderate growth with a strong labor market and moderate inflation; however, with the rapid-growth period of the expansion in the past, the economy is currently going through a period of "rebalancing." This is a time where higher growth of nonresidential investment and exports are offsetting the lower rates of housing investment. The economy is projected to settle into a steady state in which real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is expected to grow at about 3 percent per year, the unemployment rate will increase slightly toward a level of about 5.0 percent.

The regional economy of the Northern Tier encompasses approximately $4.5 billion dollars. A comparison of the Gross Regional Product of the Northern Tier with both the Gross State Product of Pennsylvania and the Gross Domestic Product of the United States indicates that the regional economy closely mirrors the trends of each, but lags behind and reacts more strongly to small changes. This is due primarily to the size and impact of large, mature industries in the region that are labor intensive. When the U.S. GDP drops, the regional economy drops significantly, but also recovers quickly due to the direct influences of economic effects.

Figure 7: Northern Tier GRP Comparison 1998 – 2006
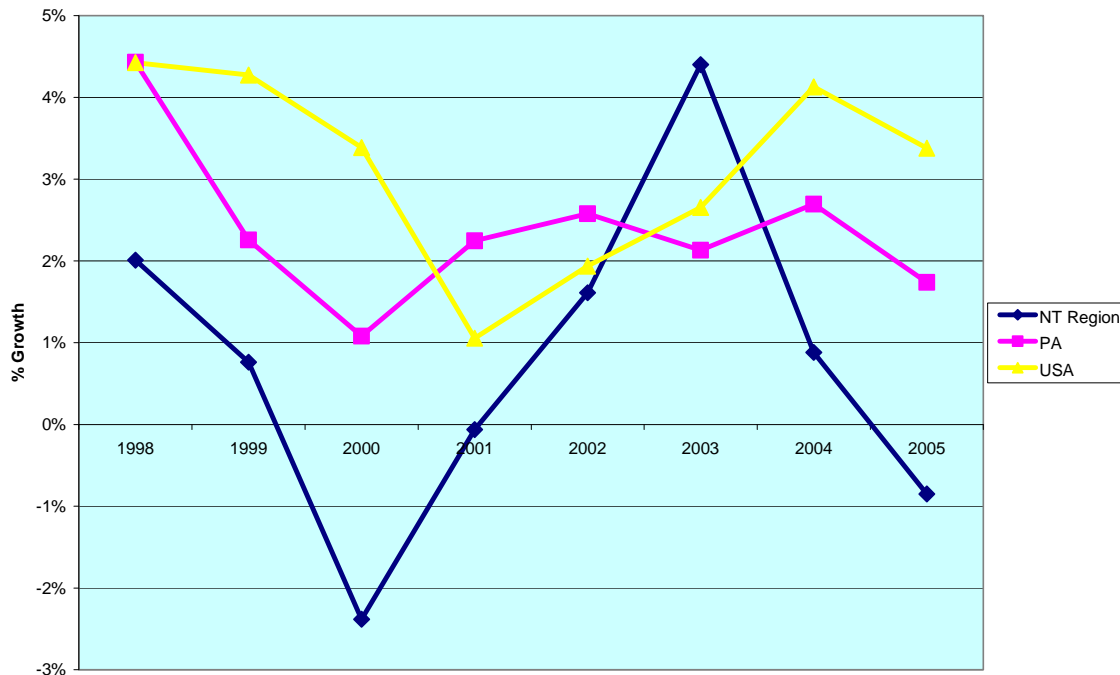
Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis; Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. 2007 State Profile – Pennsylvania.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau and the Government Accountability Office (GAO), and using Rural-Urban Commuting Area (RUCA) codes, much of the Northern Tier is considered rural, characterized by commuting to small towns, but more recently, more sections are becoming less rural due to development, especially near the outlying economic areas. For example, Sayre is

considered its own micropolitan statistical area while other areas of Tioga, Bradford, Susquehanna, and Wyoming counties, even though they are rural, are tied to urbanized areas socially and economically, and are the areas experiencing the growth.

Consumer spending is projected to grow in line with disposable income and business investment and exports are expected to grow a bit faster than the GDP as a whole. This estimate is corroborated by the Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia's June 2007 biannual Livingston Survey, which revised economic growth estimates downward for 2007 and 2008. This economic forecast expects the growth rate of economic output (real GDP) to improve to an annual rate of 1.8 percent during the first half of 2007, 2.6 percent in the second half, and then rise to 2.9 percent in the first half of 2008. Both the CPI and unemployment rate are expected to increase slightly into 2008 from 2006 and 2007 levels.

In Pennsylvania, however, economic growth is expected to be minimal in the immediate future. According to projections, indicated in Figure 7, based on recent years' economic activities compared with a base year of 2004, the manufacturing sector is expected to grow steadily, consistent with inflation rates, although the services sector is expected to grow considerably over the next two decades.

Figure 8: Northern Tier Industry Earnings Projections
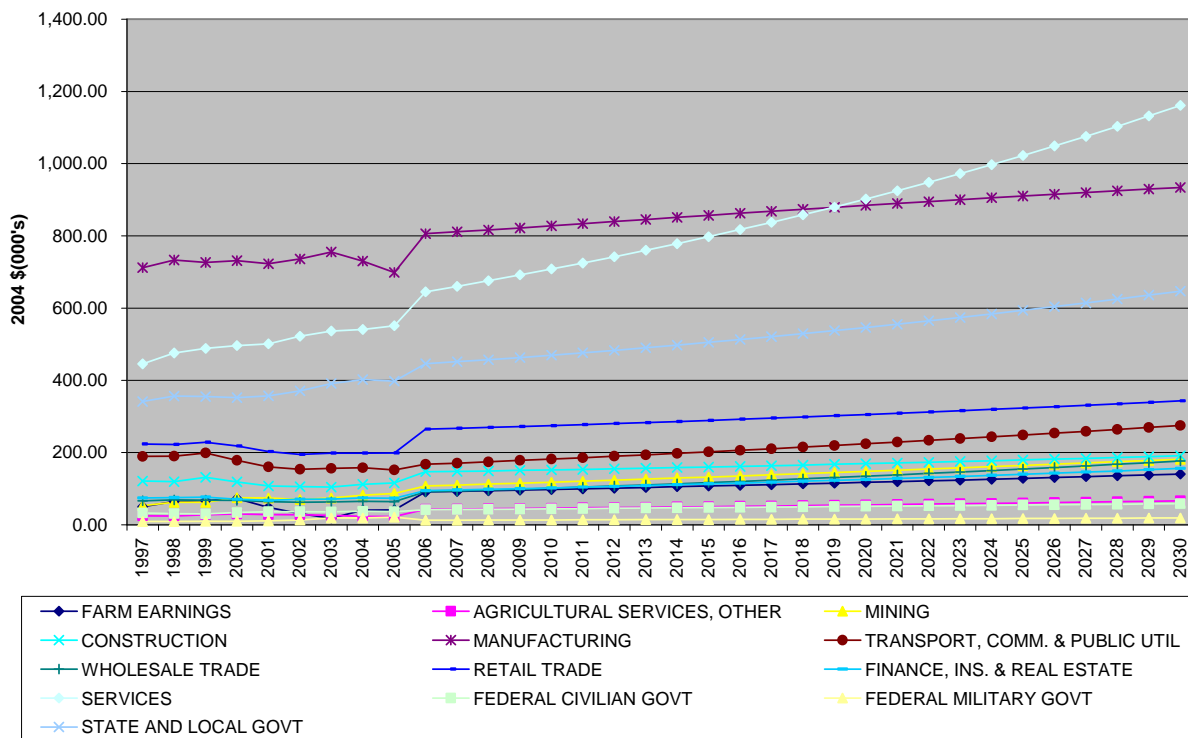
Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. 2007 State Profile – Pennsylvania.

Based on a series of leading indicators making up a coincident index (nonfarm payroll employment,

average hours worked in manufacturing, unemployment rate, wage and salary disbursements deflated by the CPI), the Federal Reserve Bank in Philadelphia, estimates there to be little to no growth in the state economy into the second quarter of 2008, and possibly beyond, due to the subprime lending problems in the financial sector and the slowdown in the residential housing and real estate markets.

The Wachovia Economic Group revised its economic growth estimates downward because of the credit crunch in financial markets. The unfolding credit crunch in the mortgage market, specifically the sub-prime market, and uncertainty in corporate debt markets, has resulted in a longer period of downtime in the housing market. The increased aversion to risk has resulted in a slowdown in fixed investments for the foreseeable future. Accordingly, the U.S. economy experienced a significant housing correction during 2007 after years of unsustainable home price appreciation. This, coupled with high energy prices and capital market turmoil, is negatively impacting economic growth in 2008, and into 2009.

The good news is that the primary drivers for consumer spending are employment and income growth. Both are remaining strong enough to maintain a rise in consumer spending over the next few years. However, slower economic growth and rising unit labor costs will constrain profit growth. The economy's long-term potential growth rate is expected to mirror real GDP at approximately 3 percent.

Industry Clusters

Identifying indigenous economic assets is a key strategy for rural economic development. One asset that researchers and developers often evaluate is the presence of existing or emerging industry clusters.

An **industry (or economic) cluster** can be defined as a vibrant center of interrelated industries that fosters wealth creation. The term "industry" is used to describe either a specific business activity—such as "semiconductors"—or a generic business activity such as "consumer durables." Industries are identified by Standard Industry Codes (SIC) or by the more updated North American Industry Classification (NAIC) system. If a company participates in multiple business activities, it is usually considered to be in the industry from which most of its revenue is derived.

An industry cluster is a group of companies linked by common markets, labor pools, similar technologies, supplier chains, or other economic ties. Clusters can take on strategic importance because activities that benefit one member typically generate positive effects for the other members. NTRPDC has targeted four key industry clusters for focus and activity:
1.   Building and construction
2.   Health care and social assistance
3.   Diversified manufacturing
4.   Lumber and wood products

Regional Competitiveness

Location quotient is a method for gauging the relative specialization of a region in selected industries. It is simply a ratio of industry concentration in an area compared to the industry concentration nationally.

A location quotient value of 1 (or close to 1) indicates that the region produces enough of that good or service to satisfy local demand; less than 1 indicates that the region does not produce enough

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locally and must import; greater than 1 indicates that the industry is an export industry and the region likely has some competitive advantage in that industry cluster.

A positive change in location quotient indicates that the region is growing its competitive advantage, increasing market share or exports, and growing value-added employment and jobs.

Figure 9: Northern Tier Industry Clusters Location Quotient
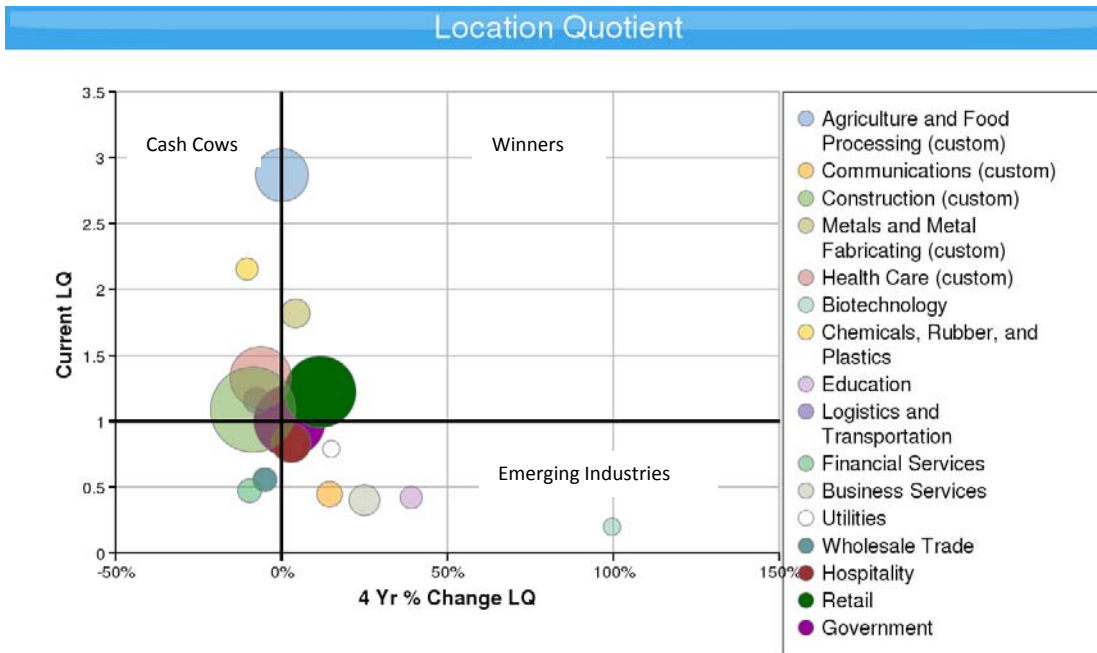
Source: Economic Modeling Specialists, 2007

Industry clusters can be characterized as: "winners," "emerging industries," or "cash cows."

- Winners are assigned a location quotient above 1 and have significant employment and increasing competitive advantage. They show a positive change over several years.
- Emerging industries are growing but do not yet have significant employment. Their location quotient is less than 1, but is increasing.
- Cash cows indicate a significant—but not growing or dynamic—component of the local economy. They have a location quotient above 1, but show a negative change.

Industry clusters that rank as **winners** in the Northern Tier include:

- Metals and metal fabricating
- Retail
- Agriculture (possibly categorized as a winner)
- Food processing (possibly categorized as a winner)

Emerging industries in the Northern Tier include:

- Biotechnology
- Customer communication
- Financial services

- Hospitality
- Education

Cash cows in the Northern Tier include:

- Agriculture
- Chemicals
- Rubber and plastics
- Custom health care
- Logistics and transportation
- Construction

Individual county concentrations may show a different picture of industry clusters and location quotients; however, economies do not align with arbitrary government boundaries. In fact, they reflect the fluid movement of goods, people, and ideas.

**Figure 10: Northern Tier Labor Shed Location Quotient**[*]
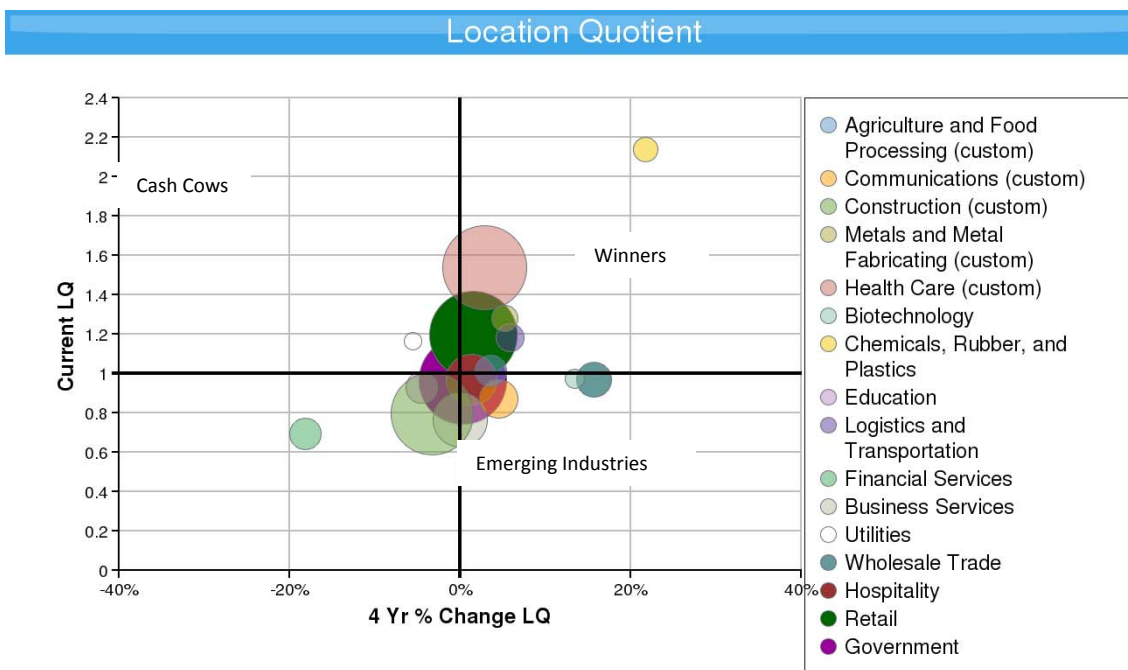
Source: Economic Modeling Specialists, 2007
[*]NT labor shed includes Chemung and Tioga counties in NY, and Bradford, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Lycoming, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, and Wyoming counties in PA.

Competitive advantage is created and sustained through highly localized processes. Differences in national and regional economic structures, values, cultures, institutions, and histories contribute to competitive success. Ironically, the globalization of the economy makes the region and its attributes and strategies even more important. With fewer impediments to trade sheltering uncompetitive domestic firms and industries, the home region takes on greater importance because it is the source of the skills, knowledge, technology, resources, and assets that are the foundations of its competitive advantage.

Figure 11: Largest Industries in the Northern Tier (# of Jobs Relative to Earnings)

Source: Economic Modeling Specialists, 2007
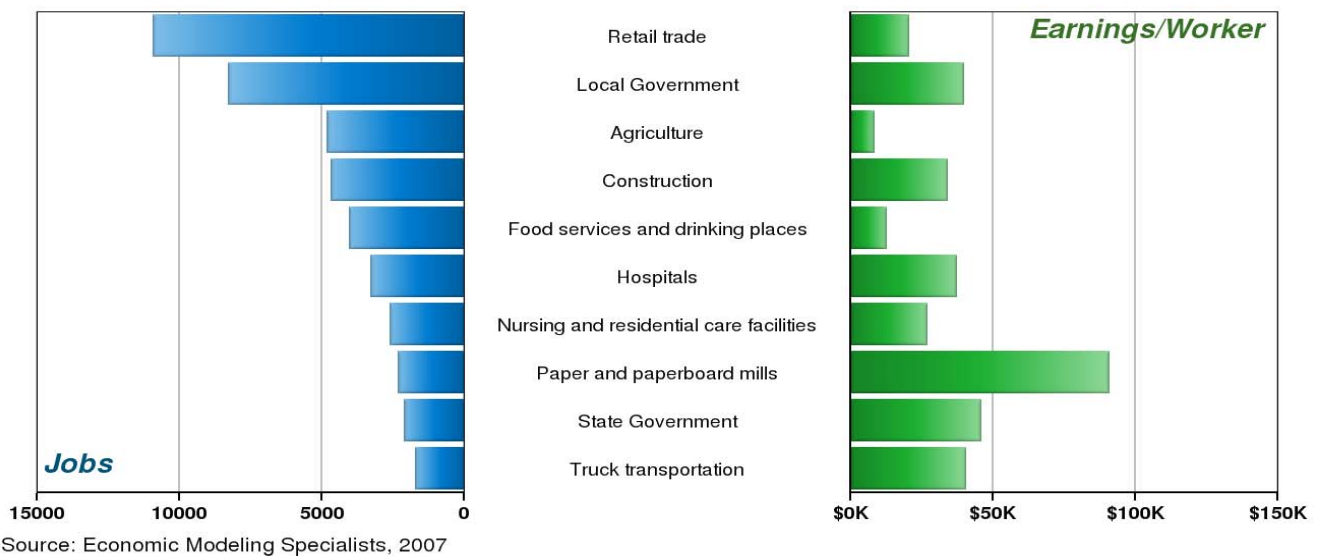
Previous analyses of the Northern Tier and statewide have generally documented the decline in the number of manufacturing jobs and the rise in service sector jobs. In viewing the Northern Tier region as a whole, the top five industries with the greatest number of employees are: retail trade, local government, agriculture, construction, and food services.

Recent Trends

In late 2007 and early 2008, trends emerged related to the increased investment and drilling activity in the oil and gas extraction industry in the region. The Marcellus Shale, long identified as a large natural gas field deep beneath the Northern Tier was previously too expensive to harvest. The maturation of the gasoline industry and large increases in petroleum prices have made it more desirable.

Oil and gas extraction is rapidly emerging as a burgeoning industry in the region, and is a candidate for extreme growth. It will have potential positive economic benefits, as well as potentially negative effects on the environment.

Income

The economy of the Northern Tier typically follows and lags national and state trends. The region's economy has diversified and become less concentrated on agriculture and manufacturing and much more dependent on the services sector. Business and economics are strongly influenced by the surrounding economic centers of New York's southern tier, the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre area, and parts of Lycoming County. A few large employers continue to significantly influence the overall employment and economic environment of the region.

Table 13: Northern Tier per Capita Personal Income (1995 – 2005)

	PCPI 1995	PCPI 2005	Average Annual % Change
Bradford	$18,530	$26,688	4.0
Sullivan	$18,059	$25,334	3.7
Susquehanna	$18,530	$26,417	3.9
Tioga	$17,591	$25,092	3.9
Wyoming	$16,583	$23,265	3.7
Northern Tier	$17,859	$25,359	3.8
Pennsylvania			4.2
USA			4.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Table P82 (2000).

The percent increase in per capita income for four of the five counties is well below the state average; only Wyoming County had a per capita income increase above the state average. The Northern Tier experienced employment growth between 2 and 3 percent between 1993 and 1995, while the employment growth in the United States was more than 3 percent. Pennsylvania had consistent employment growth throughout the 1990s while the Northern Tier experienced a decline near the end of the decade. As Pennsylvania's total employment has remained constant, the trend in employment for the Northern Tier has been similar.

Table 14: Northern Tier Median Household Income and Percent below Poverty Level

	Median HH Income	Percent Below Poverty Level
Bradford	$ 37,380	11.8
Sullivan	$ 32,749	11.3
Susquehanna	$ 36,104	11.5
Tioga	$ 34,037	12.3
Wyoming	$ 39,883	10.3
Pennsylvania	$ 43,714	11.2
USA	$ 44,334	12.7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Table P82 (2000).

Household income and proportion of the population below the poverty level are also indicators of a region's economic performance. While the region's poverty rate is lower than the national average, it is still higher than the state average. In all measures of income, the Northern Tier is significantly below state and national averages. The region cannot be characterized as poor or even lacking in jobs; however, it can be inferred that the jobs in the Northern Tier and surrounding areas pay wages or salaries that are below average, indicating that the high-wage, high-value jobs are being created elsewhere.

Municipalities with the lowest per capita incomes in the region include Colley Township in Sullivan County ($10,979), and Mansfield Borough in Tioga County ($11,042).

Table 15: Northern Tier Percentage of Households by Income Segment

	Households	< $10	$10 – 14,999	$15 – 24,999	$25 – 34,999	$35 – 49,999	$50+
Bradford	24,427	9.9	7.9	16.0	16.1	19.3	30.7
Sullivan	2,667	11.0	10.4	19.6+	15.3	16.8	26.9
Susquehanna	16,543	10.1	8.7	17.2	15.9	18.7	29.5
Tioga	15,942	10.8	9.2	18.2	16.3	18.6	26.9
Wyoming	10,822	9.6	8.0	15.4	15.1	18.0	34.0
Northern Tier	70,401	10.1	8.5	16.9	15.9	18.7	29.9
Pennsylvania	**4.78 M**	**9.7**	**7.0**	**13.8**	**13.3**	**16.9**	**39.4**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Table P82 (2000).

Low-Income Populations

The Federal Highway Administration has defined "low income" for transportation planning purposes as a household income at or below the Department of Health and Human Services' guideline of $19,971 a year. Sullivan County has the region's lowest average household income ($32,749), while Wyoming County has the lowest per capita income ($23,625). Pennsylvania state averages in 2000 were $40,106 and $34,937, respectively.

Between 2004 and 2015, employment is expected to:

- Increase in the building and construction cluster by approximately 24 percent.
- Increase in health care and social assistance cluster by 21 percent.
- Decline in diversified manufacturing by 16 percent.
- Decline in the lumber and wood products cluster by 10 percent.

If these projections are realized, the net increase in jobs would total only 1,300 over a 10-year period. Note that these projections were made prior to the economic slowdown in the construction industry in late 2007 and into 2008.

Reaching and Retaining Talent

The distribution of talent, or human capital, is an important factor in economic geography. It is widely accepted that key factors in the location decisions of firms include labor costs and labor

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quality. Clusters play a critical role in economic development because the generation and mobilization of new knowledge can be facilitated by the proximity of talent and the sharing of ideas.

Places attract human capital or talent through two interrelated mechanisms: matching people to job opportunities and providing a range of lifestyle amenities. This second point is particularly true of highly-educated, high human capital individuals who possess resources, are economically mobile, and can exercise considerable choice in their location. It can be argued that talent is attracted by diversity and low barriers to entry.

Employment and Unemployment

Total employment in the U.S. during the period of 2001 to 2005 grew by approximately six million jobs. In the Northern Tier counties over the same time period, four of the five counties saw a net decline in total employment with only Susquehanna County seeing a one-half percent increase. Pennsylvania's total employment over the same period was virtually unchanged. The economies of Pennsylvania and the Northern Tier did not rebound and grow after the economic slowdown of the late 1990s and early 2000s as did the rest of the country on the whole.

**Table 16: Northern Tier Total Employment (2001 – 2005)**

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	01-05 % Change
Bradford	22,967	22,842	23,079	23,001	22,765	**(0.9)**
Sullivan	1,696	1,717	1,693	1,668	1,657	**(2.3)**
Susquehanna	8,657	8,574	8,509	8,680	8,703	**0.5**
Tioga	13,070	13,029	13,319	13,213	13,046	**(0.2)**
Wyoming	9,962	10,124	9,877	9,084	9,156	**(8.1)**
Northern Tier	56,352	56,286	56,477	55,646	55,327	**(1.8)**

Source: U.S. Census
Note: Parentheses indicates a negative value

Historically, the region's unemployment rates have been above the national and state averages. However, recent unemployment rates have been fairly close to the state and national averages, while total employment in the region has been somewhat stagnant over the past five years and has declined in some areas. Unemployment rates in the region's five counties are higher than in many other Pennsylvania counties. The region's non-seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate lags, but is consistent with state and national averages.

Figure 12: Northern Tier Unemployment Rates (2000 – 2007)

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Northern Tier Unemployment Rates, 2000-2007
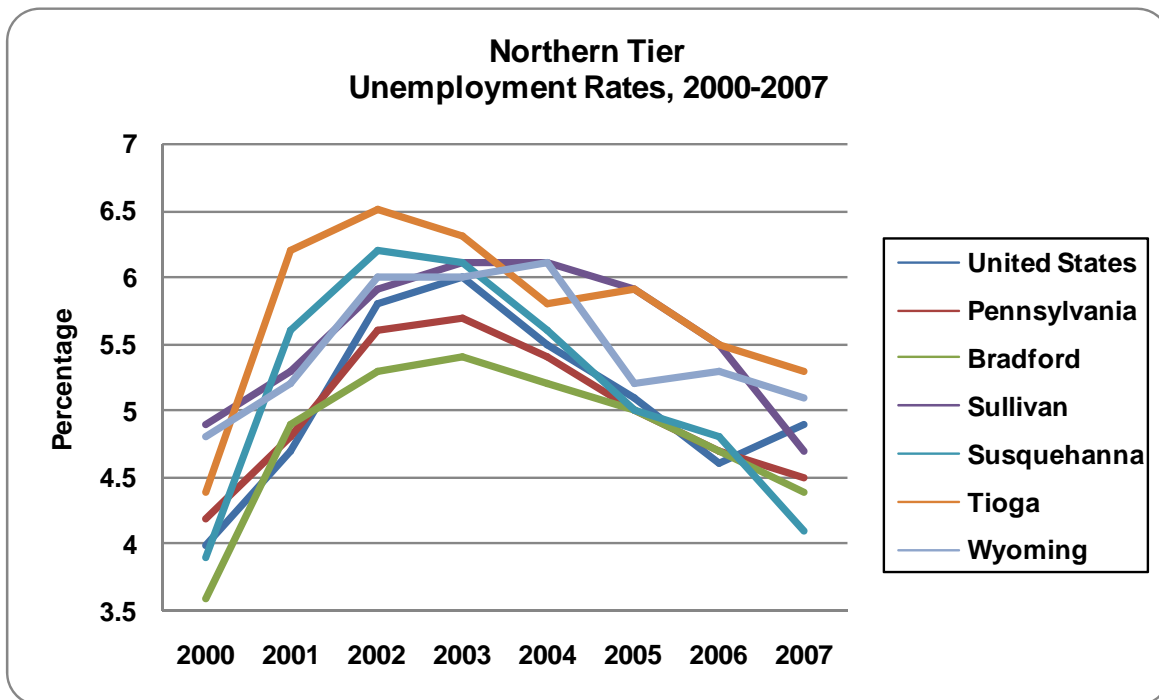
Source: U.S. Census

All counties except Bradford have higher unemployment rates than the state rate. Figure 12, above, shows the region's unemployment rates by county against state and national trends. The overall trend is that unemployment rates since 2002 have been declining with a projection of 2.6 percent in 2014. Note that these projections were made prior to the national economic decline of 2007 to 2008; during that time the PA unemployment rate increased by a full percentage point, from 3.5 to 4.5.

Northern Tier residents have jobs that earn a living wage; compared to other regions of the state and nation however, the wages on average are lower.

Top Employers by County (Number of Employees)

Robert Packer Hospital is Bradford County's largest employer, and together with its parent company, the Guthrie Healthcare System (which also includes the Troy Community Hospital, Sayre House Nursing Home, Guthrie Home Health, and Guthrie Hospice), represents two of the top four employers in Bradford County.

Cargill Taylor Beef is a processor of beef products for retail grocery and food service companies.

Osram Sylvania's Towanda plant is the company's largest factory and it produces the widest variety of tungsten and molybdenum materials and inorganic phosphorus in the world. A laboratory devoted to high-temperature metallurgy and inorganic chemistry, as well as the headquarters for the Chemical and Metallurgical Products business unit, is also housed at the site.

Of the five counties, Bradford is the only one that does not include local government and/or school districts in its top five industries.

Table 17: Largest Employers in Bradford County

Employer	Industry
Robert Packer Hospital	Not-for-Profit Health Care
Cargill Meat Solutions Corp.	Food Processing
Osram Sylvania Products, Inc.	Metals Manufacturing
Guthrie Clinic LTD	Not-for-Profit Health Care
Craftmaster Manufacturing, Inc.	Hardboard Manufacturing

Source: PA Dept. of Labor & Industry, Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, 1Q 2007.

The largest employer in Sullivan County is its school district; in fact, two of the largest employers are education-related.

Only one manufacturer is included in the list of Sullivan County's largest employers. Hoffman/New Yorker, Inc. is a manufacturer of apparel cleaning equipment and is the fourth largest employer in the county.

Table 18: Largest Employers in Sullivan County

Employer	Industry
Sullivan County School District	Education
Management and Training Corp.	Education
The Highlands Care Center	Health Care
Hoffman/New Yorker Inc.	Equipment Manufacturing
PA State Government	Government

Source: PA Dept. of Labor & Industry, Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, 1Q 2007.

Six of the 10 largest employers in Susquehanna County are school districts. Montrose Area, Mountain View, and Elk Lake school districts are within the top five largest employers in the county.

Susquehanna County Government is the seventh largest employer, falling between Blue Ridge School District in sixth place and Susquehanna Community School District in eighth place. Forest City Regional School District is the ninth largest employer.

Table 19: Largest Employers in Susquehanna County

Employer	Industry
Elk Mountain Ski Resort, Inc.	Recreation and Hospitality
Montrose Area School District	Education
Barnes-Kasson County Hospital	Health Care
Mountain View School District	Education
Elk Lake School District	Education

Source: PA Dept. of Labor & Industry, Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, 1Q 2007.

Manufacturing is the largest employer in Tioga County, with Ward Manufacturing being a leading producer of pipe fittings. The Laurel Health System's primary care centers, formerly the North Penn Comprehensive Health Services, and its Soldiers + Sailors Memorial Hospital, an acute care hospital, are among the county's top five employers. The Laurel Health System also includes the Green Home, which is a long-term care nursing facility.

Two local school districts are in the top five lists. Although Mansfield University is included in the education industry, it is part of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education.

Table 20: Largest Employers in Tioga County

Employer	Industry
Ward Manufacturing	Manufacturing
Mansfield University	Education
Soldiers + Sailors Memorial Hospital	Health Care
Northern Tioga School District	Education
Southern Tioga School District	Education

Source: PA Dept. of Labor & Industry, Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, 1Q 2007.

Procter & Gamble is Wyoming County's largest employer, and its Paper Products manufacturing plant in Mehoopany is the company's largest manufacturing plant in the world. It houses machines to produce paper for use in the manufacture of paper products; converting and packing operations; raw material storage; and shipping operations for products such as Bounty towels and napkins, Charmin bathroom tissue, and Pampers and Luvs diapers. In addition, Procter & Gamble was named one of Fortune's Top 100 Companies to Work For in 2007.

As with other counties in the region, local school districts are among the top five employers. New England Motor Freight, a transportation and logistics company, is Wyoming County's third largest employer.

Table 21: Largest Employers in Wyoming County

Employer	Industry
Procter & Gamble Paper Products	Manufacturing
Tunkhannock Area School District	Education
Tyler Memorial Hospital	Health Care
Kane Warehousing, Inc.	Distribution
Lackawanna Trail School District	Education

Source: PA Dept. of Labor & Industry, Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, 2007.

Employers Summary

The largest employers in the region reflect the character of the economy of the Northern Tier. A significant proportion of the largest employers are service-related providers of education, health care, or government. School districts are especially high on all but Bradford County's lists.

The larger manufacturing firms in the region are high performance companies with a global reach and a substantial presence in terms of personnel and assets.

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Transportation

The region's transportation system is a significant resource that provides the people and businesses of the Northern Tier with access to their neighbors and the nation. Demographic and economic trends directly affect transportation demand and, likewise, transportation can affect the economic vitality of the region. The trends and implications mentioned in this document and throughout the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) will bring continuing challenges as the region works to meet the travel needs of people and goods. The region's transportation systems will have to respond to growing travel demands on roadways and bridges; the special travel needs of an older, more diverse population; the growing importance for reliability and predictability in transportation services; and expanding international markets.

Figure 13 shows the Northern Tier's relationship with four of the primary economic centers that surround it. These areas include Scranton/Wilkes-Barre and Williamsport, as well as Binghamton and Elmira, in New York State. The figure demonstrates that—with the exception of Sullivan County and western Tioga County—most of the region is within a 45-minute drive of a major economic center.

Figure 13: Isochronal Map of Drive Times from Regional Economic Centers: 30 and 45-minute Intervals (NT Economic Center's Labor Shed)
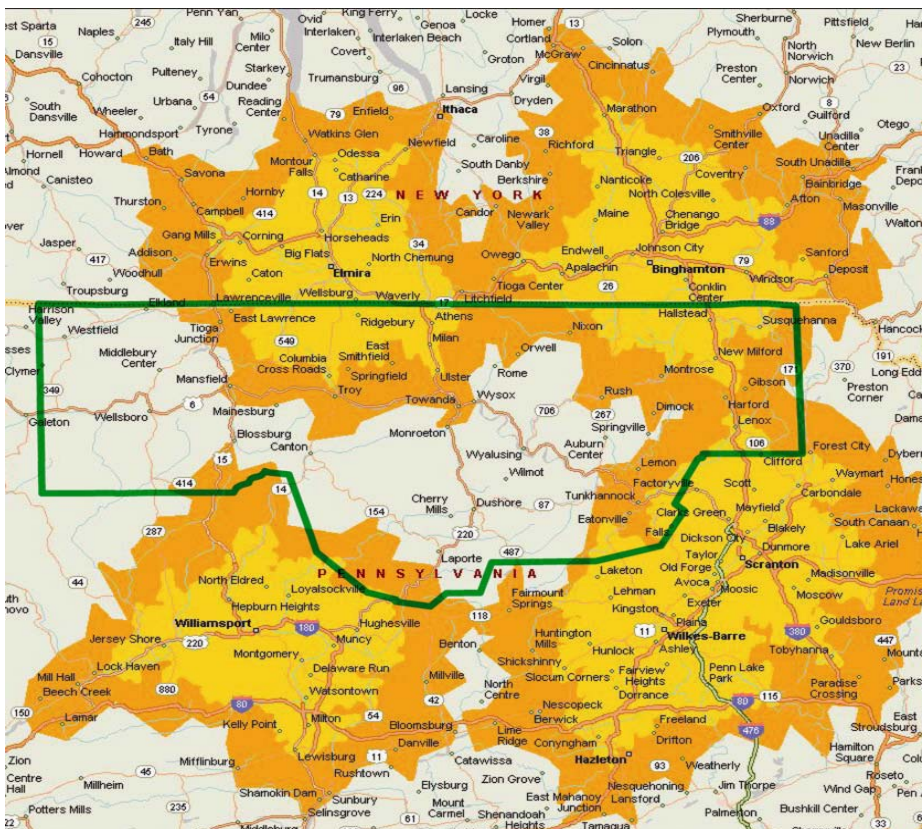
Major Corridors

The highest-order network in Pennsylvania and throughout the nation is the National Highway System, or NHS. Designated by Congress in 1995, the NHS entails only 4 percent of the nation's roads, but carries 40 percent of its traffic. Elements of the NHS within the Northern Tier include US 6, US 15, I-81, and US 220 north of Towanda.

Figure 14: National Highway System – Northern Tier
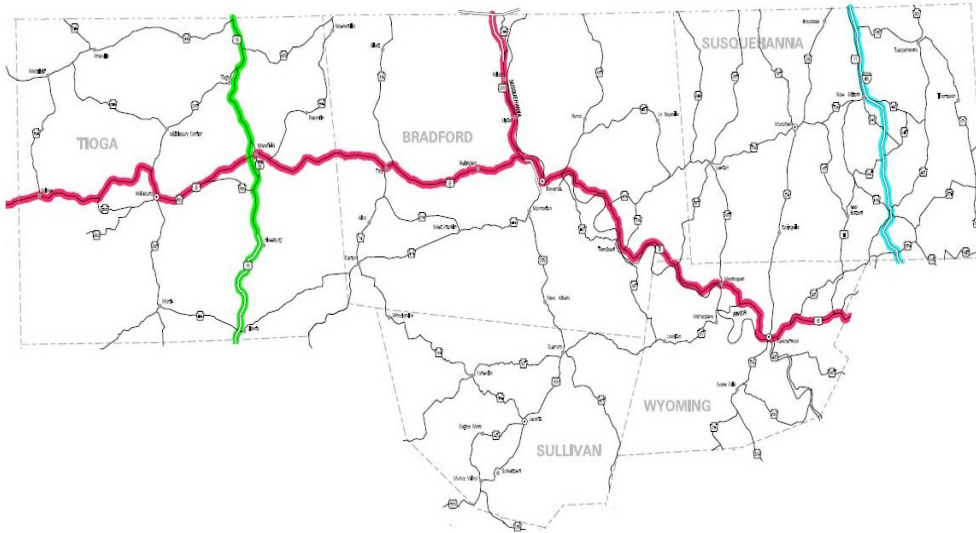
In serving a large, rural area, the region's highway network operates as the backbone of the Northern Tier's overall transportation system. A synopsis of the region's more significant roadways is highlighted in the points below.

I-81: The I-81 corridor in the Northern Tier includes just over 27 miles through Susquehanna County and is one of the region's three major north-south routes. The interstate is a major, strategic corridor for the Northern Tier, providing mobility to the Southern Tier Expressway (I-86) and I-88 and Albany, NY and south to the Pennsylvania Turnpike's Northeast Extension. Of prime interest includes the six interchanges within the I-81 corridor. Many of the interchanges are substandard and need to be improved. The interchanges at Gibson and at Great Bend/Hallstead were not designed to accommodate the level of demand they are now experiencing.

US 6: With the development of I-80, US 6 has transitioned to a scenic highway. Functionally classified as a principal arterial, the focus for planning for US 6 has been one geared more toward tourism potential than capacity expansion. The roadway is part of PennDOT's BicyclePA priority network of cross-state bicycle facilities. There has been no bus service on US 6 since the late 1970s; neither is there inter-city bus service. The roadway serves the timber industry, with logs and hardwood lumber being shipped. Farming communities also rely on US 6 for the transport of products such as sweet corn, beans, spinach, feed, and fertilizer. Approximately 4,800 vehicles use US 6 per day with a truck share of 7 percent.

US 15: The US 15/I-99 corridor has been the subject of major federal and state investment in recent years. The corridor traverses nearly 37 miles through Tioga

County in the western portion of the region. Between Interstates 80 and 86, US 15 is characterized by both four-lane, limited-access sections, as well as two-lane segments with at-grade crossings. The entire corridor awaits designation by the federal government as Interstate 99.

US 220: This roadway runs 73 miles through Sullivan and Bradford Counties and is one of the longest roadways in the Northern Tier, second only to US 6. The roadway connects two of the region's county seats (LaPorte and Towanda), as well as providing mobility to the urban centers of Williamsport and Elmira, NY. Within the region, the corridor features two, limited access bypasses around Towanda and Sayre. FHWA has designated the section north of Towanda as part of the National Highway System.

Figure 15: Northern Tier Scenic Transportation Corridor Inventory
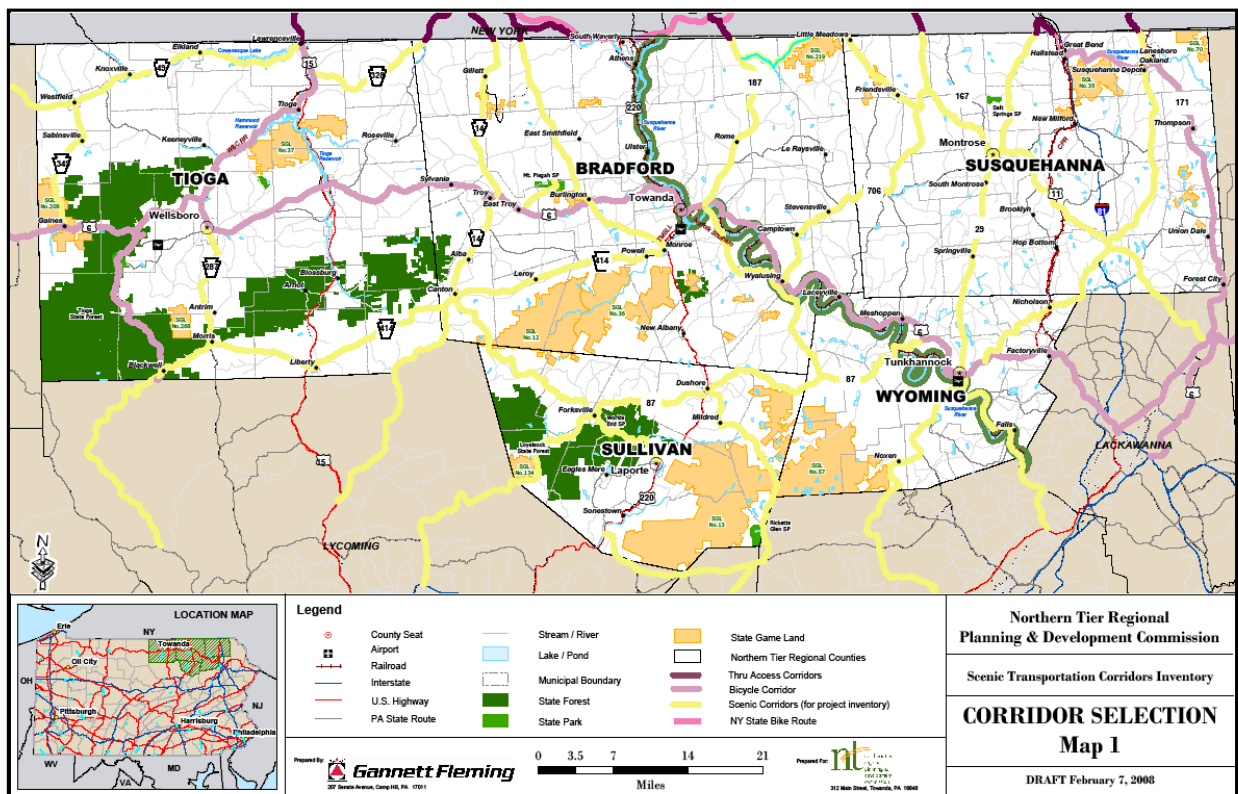
The corridors tend to follow the pathways of the ancient roads along the rivers and between the steep slopes in the region. Figure 15 shows the relationship between the corridors and the natural topography of the region.

Travel Time to Work

Commuting travel times in the region have increased since 1990. The percentage of 15- to 29-minute commutes remained steady from 1990 to 2000, but commutes of 30 minutes or more became more prevalent in 2000, accounting for 24.6 percent of all reported commutes, compared to 19 percent in 1990. Figure 10 shows the percentage of workers in travel time segments, according to the 1990 and 2000 U.S. Censuses.

As evidenced by travel and commuting patterns, the Northern Tier region is socially and economically integrated with surrounding areas. Mean travel times in the Northern Tier counties are generally longer than in other areas of the state. The national mean travel time to work in 2000 was 25.5 minutes.

Commutation Patterns

Commutation patterns vary widely among the five Northern Tier counties. Commutation data provides a coarse indication of journey-to-work travel patterns. As one of many factors, the region's geographic position among four relatively large economic centers has a profound influence on its commuting patterns. Two of the region's counties (Susquehanna and Wyoming) send approximately half of their resident workforce to employment destinations outside their county of residence. A third county, Sullivan, sends over one-third of its workers outside the county. With regard to total out-of-county commuting, Susquehanna and Wyoming Counties rank fourth and fifth, respectively, among Pennsylvania's counties.

Within the region, the most significant journey-to-work figures show a significant number of workers from Bradford and Susquehanna counties being employed at destinations in Wyoming County. Tioga County sends over 500 workers into Bradford County. Cross-county commuting among the remaining counties is fairly unremarkable, with no more than 400 moving from any one county to another.

Figure 16: Northern Tier Cross-County Commuting Patterns
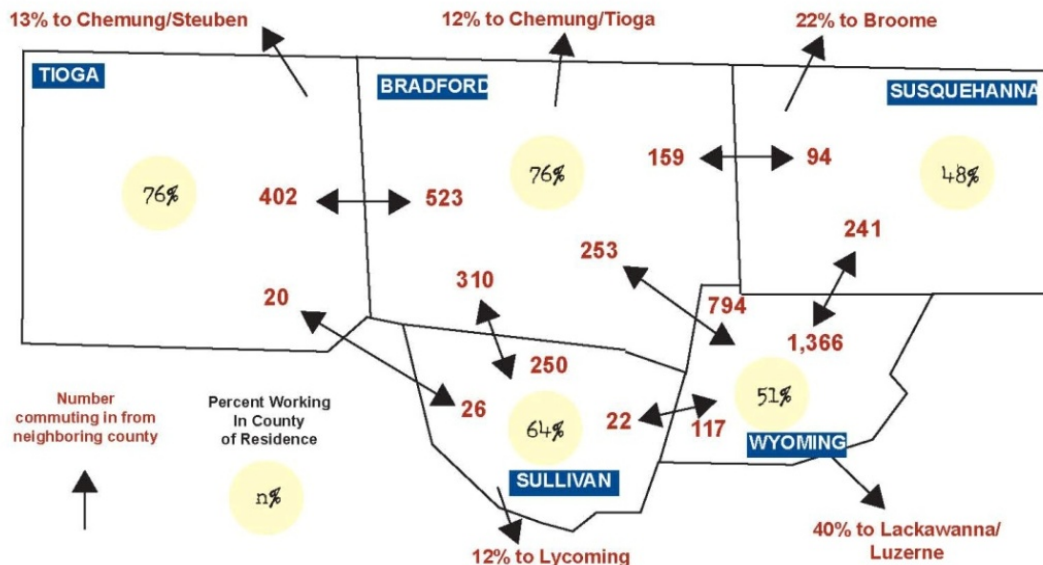
Wyoming County's workforce is composed of less than 60 percent of the resident workforce, indicating a strong relationship with neighboring Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties. This is due to the presence of Proctor & Gamble in Mehoopany, as well as other major employers such as Keystone College near the Wyoming County border. According to the US Bureau of Economic Analysis, there has been significant growth in the total number of Wyoming County workers

commuting to employment destinations in Lackawanna and Luzerne counties over the past 30 years. In the case of Luzerne County, the number has nearly quadrupled since 1970. Wyoming County is a labor source to Lackawanna and Luzerne, and is also an employment destination, with over 40 percent of its jobs being filled by workers from those two counties.

Overall, Northern Tier counties experience a net labor outflow. That is, there are more workers than jobs. Susquehanna County in particular experiences the highest such outflow, with a net loss of nearly 8,000 workers. Beyond mere roadway or transportation/capacity needs, this baseline data should inform decision-making related to future planning strategies. For example, should the region position itself and recognize the benefits of being a bedroom community? Would a more thorough analysis of commuter patterns by industry help to identify available worker skill sets and wages paid? Would this information facilitate marketing to potential employers? In any event, the data proves the criticality of transportation infrastructure to the Northern Tier's economy.

Table 22: Northern Tier Residence County to Workplace County Flows (in percent) – 2000

		County of Residence			
	Bradford	**Sullivan**	**Susquehanna**	**Tioga**	**Wyoming**
Total Resident Workers	**27,404**	**2,691**	**18,685**	**17,859**	**12,464**
Bradford	76.3	11.5	0.9	2.9	2.0
Broome (NY)	2.0	0.0	21.6	0.0	0.0
Chemung (NY)	7.7	0.0	0.0	6.5	0.0
Columbia	0.0	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
Lackawanna	0.0	0.0	14.6	0.0	23.2
Luzerne	0.0	1.6	1.2	0.2	17.6
Lycoming	0.5	11.9	0.0	2.7	0.0
Potter	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.8	0.0
Sullivan	1.0	63.6	0.0	0.1	0.2
Steuben (NY)	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.6	0.0
Susquehanna	0.0	0.0	48.2	0.0	1.9
Tioga	1.5	0.7	0.0	75.8	0.0
Tioga (NY)	4.2	0.1	1.5	0.0	0.0
Wyoming	2.9	4.3	7.3	0.0	51.3
Total To Outside Northern Tier	**18.3**	**19.9**	**43.6**	**21.2**	**44.6**

Note: The leftmost column label **County of Employment** is printed vertically alongside the employment county rows.

Source: U.S. Census

Mode Split

As in other Pennsylvania regions, most journey-to-work trips are taken in private automobiles. Nearly 90 percent of all workers reported using a private automobile in getting to work; nearly 78 percent drove alone. This is an increase of nearly 6 percent since the 1990 census. Wyoming County had the highest percentage of single occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips of any county (81.3 percent), yet Tioga County experienced the greatest increase in SOV as a mode, at nearly 8 percent. Carpooling accounted for 12 percent of all commuting trips in the Northern Tier, with

Sullivan County reporting the highest rate (13.3 percent). Use of carpooling as a means of journey-to-work has dropped in all counties since 1990, especially in Wyoming, where use of carpooling dropped by 4.5 percent.

Walking to work is uncommon among Northern Tier counties. As a region, only 4.7 percent of all workers walk to work. In Sullivan County however, the rate of workers walking to work is more than twice the regional average, at over 10 percent. As a region, the percentage of workers walking to work has declined slightly, to 1.5 percent.

The Northern Tier has a relatively high percentage of workers working from home, at 4.7 percent. Tioga and Bradford Counties have some of the highest such rates in the state, with over 5 percent each (the state average is 3 percent).

Mean travel time strongly correlates to commutation pattern; those counties that retain more commuters have shorter mean travel times than those counties that retain fewer commuters. Susquehanna and Wyoming counties export approximately half of their resident workforce—among the highest rates in the state. These counties also have the region's highest mean travel times to work, both at 26.2 minutes.

Table 23: Northern Tier Mode Split (in percent) – 2000 vs. 1990

	Number of Workers	SOV		Carpool		Walk		Work at Home		Mean Travel Time (Min.)
		2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	
Bradford	27,404	77.5	72.7	11.4	11.8	4.9	n/a	5.0	n/a	22.6
Sullivan	2,691	70.7	65.4	13.3	16.1	10.2	n/a	4.5	n/a	25.3
Susquehanna	18,685	78.3	72.5	12.5	15.1	3.8	n/a	4.4	n/a	26.2
Tioga	17,859	75.0	67.2	12.7	15.9	5.7	n/a	5.2	n/a	23.1
Wyoming	12,464	81.3	75.5	10.9	15.3	3.2	n/a	3.6	n/a	26.2
Northern Tier	**79,103**	**77.5**	**71.7**	**12.0**	**14.2**	**4.7**	**6.2**	**4.6**	**6.2**	**- -**

Source: U.S. Census SF3.

Household Access to a Vehicle

Rural regions such as the Northern Tier typically have a higher degree of reliance on the private automobile for mobility. Because of this, it is not unusual to see that the region's rate of households without access to a vehicle is less than half of the state rate of nearly 13 percent. Among the region's counties, Wyoming County's households have the highest rate of access to a vehicle, at nearly 95 percent. Rates in Sullivan and Tioga counties are nearly as high.

On the other end of the spectrum, approximately 14.8 percent of all Pennsylvania households have access to three or more vehicles. In the Northern Tier, the rate is 18.7 percent. Table 24 below includes more detail on regional households' rates of access to a vehicle.

Table 24: Northern Tier Access to a Vehicle (2000)

	None		1		2		3+	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Bradford	1,701	7.0	8,083	33.1	10,344	42.3	4,319	17.7
Sullivan	154	5.8	921	34.6	1,081	40.6	504	18.9
Susquehanna	1,058	6.4	5,221	31.6	7,046	42.6	3,204	19.4
Tioga	937	5.9	5,480	34.4	6,522	41.1	2,986	18.8
Wyoming	584	5.4	3,258	30.3	4,641	43.1	2,279	21.2
Northern Tier	4,434	6.4	22,963	32.7	29,634	42.2	13,292	19.0
Pennsylvania	4.77 M	12.8	1.67 M	34.9	1.79 M	37.5	704,693	14.8

Source: U.S. Census SF3, Table H44/46.

Over the past 10 years, the total change in the number of in-state registered vehicles has varied widely throughout the region. All but one county (Wyoming) experienced growth in excess of the state rate of 18.2 percent. Growth in Wyoming County was only 7.4 percent, the fifth-slowest rate of growth in the state. As shown in the preceding table, Wyoming County already had one of the highest rates of households with access to a vehicle in the state, at nearly 95 percent.

Existing Modal Conditions

This section of the profile provides an overview of existing modal conditions within the region, including synopses of aviation, bicycle and pedestrian, bridges, roadway networks, rail freight, public transportation, and intercity bus.

Aviation

There are three public use airports that currently serve the Northern Tier: Bradford Regional Airport in Towanda Township, Bradford County; Grand Canyon Airport in Tioga County; and Tunkhannock's Sky Haven Airport in Wyoming County. A discussion of these facilities follows. Major airports immediately outside of the region include Binghamton, Corning-Elmira, Wilkes-Barre/Scranton International, and Williamsport Regional.

Bradford County Airport: PennDOT's Bureau of Aviation has functionally classified the Bradford Regional Airport as a business airport. The airport, with 33 based aircraft, handles 23,000 annual operations. There is one runway, completed in November 2001. It is 4,300 feet long and is equipped with standard medium intensity runway lighting.

The airport is owned and operated by the Bradford County Airport Authority and is located near the junction of US 220 and US 6, adjacent to the Towanda-Monroeton Shippers Lifeline. Aircraft operations average 50 per day; approximately 82 percent are local general aviation, approximately 18 percent are transient general aviation, and less than 1 percent are military operations. The facility is used mainly for flight training and for business aircraft. There is some tourism-related traffic for activities such as hunting, fishing, and golfing. Fly-overs of French Azilum are held on a seasonal basis.

In recent years, the airport has completed work on a 12,500-square-foot maintenance hangar/terminal building. The $500,000 facility includes areas for the maintenance and storage of aircraft, a fixed-base operator's office, office space for the airport manager, classrooms, and a reception area for charter flights.

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Wellsboro Johnson Airport: In operation since 1940, this Tioga County facility is one of the principal airports in the region, with 14 based aircraft. Current annual aircraft operations are comprised mainly of local and itinerant general aviation operations. An estimated 8,100 local general aviation, 1,058 itinerant general aviation, 68 air taxi operations, and 48 military operations comprise the airport's annual operations. The general aviation facility is used by businesses for fuel, repair, and air taxi services, and also supports recreational and pleasure flying. The seasonal nature of the airport's use is evident as demand spikes during the summer months of July and August. The airport is able to accommodate small aircraft with wingspans less than 49 feet.

All of the airport's major facilities—including runway, apron, and terminal facilities—have been rated as being in "good" condition, meaning that the condition of these facilities is presumed to be adequate throughout the next five years. The airport property includes a 7,200-square-foot 6-unit T-hangar that had been rated as being in "poor" condition. The airport secured a local grant during 2006 to replace the roof.

The airport is served by PA 362 and SR 3029 (Dexter Road), both of which are relatively narrow country roads. According to Tioga County economic development officials, roadway improvements would be required before any commercial development could occur near the airport.

As a general aviation facility, Wellsboro is a marginal airport in its ability to break even. A major challenge for the airport will be raising the local matching dollars needed when grants are awarded. Airport officials cite difficulty in fundraising for small, rural airports, and, with the exception of Roger Penske and Trucklite, not many area industries are using the facility.

Sky Haven Airport: This airport is located one mile south of Tunkhannock in Eaton Township. The airport features an asphalt runway nearly 2,000 feet long that accommodates the local general aviation needs of the area. The airport has 27 based aircraft, with the majority of these being single-engine airplanes. Aircraft operations average 36 per day.

Bicycle/Pedestrian

There are many non-commuting opportunities for bicycling and walking in the Northern Tier. These include signed and unsigned bicycle routes, as well as recreational walking and bicycling trails.

The Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission (NTRPDC) developed a regional bicycle/pedestrian transportation plan in 2000. In addition to the projects proposed in the regional bicycle and pedestrian plan, the region is working with the state to map existing trails. NTRPDC will compare proposed projects to the agency's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to determine where there is overlap and to identify opportunities for implementing bicycle and pedestrian projects through scheduled TIP projects.

The region's most significant roadway-based bicycle facility is BicyclePA Route Y. The corridor serves as Pennsylvania's northernmost east-west cross-state bicycle route. Route Y is one of seven such corridors that PennDOT has designated for cross-state bicycle travel. The corridor is generally along US 6 but could be expanded to include other segments. Roadway improvements and shoulder widening have been identified as a regionally significant project.

Roadway Networks

There are over 7,700 linear miles of roadway serving the Northern Tier. While the region has less than 1.5 percent of the state's total population, it has nearly 6.4 percent of state-owned roadways. The region also includes over 7 percent of all the state's roadways that are maintained and operated by other agencies. These include facilities owned and maintained by other state and federal agencies such as state universities, the state's Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and the U.S. Forest Service. Tioga County leads the region in the total number of roadways owned by other agencies, with more than 200 linear miles. The county ranks fifth in the state in this regard.

Bradford County has the region's largest roadway network, at nearly 2,500 miles. With only 615 linear miles of roadway, Sullivan County has the smallest roadway network in the region and the fourth-smallest in the state.

Daily Vehicle Miles of Travel (DVMT)

Over the past decade, the region's average daily vehicle miles of travel (DVMT) has increased by 11 percent, or an annualized rate of 1.1 percent a year. This is only slightly less than the statewide rate of 1.2 percent annually. The region's current average of DVMT is approximately 5.6 million, or less than 2 percent of the state share. DVMT has increased in every county over the past decade, particularly in the two counties with limited access highways. Growth in each county ranged from a low of 0.6 percent in Bradford County to 24 percent in Tioga County.

Table 25: Northern Tier Daily Vehicle Miles of Travel, 1996 and 2006 (in thousands)

	PennDOT DVMT		Other Agencies DVMT		Local Municipal DVMT		Total DVMT	
	1996	2006	1996	2006	1996	2006	1996	2006
Bradford	1,190	1,156	1.0	3.3	161.4	201.5	1,353	1,362
Sullivan	185	169	34.9	75.6	25.5	25.3	246	270
Susquehanna	1,286	1,439	0.0	0.0	142.9	208.4	1,429	1,648
Tioga	1,051	1,206	85.7	212.5	126.3	150.4	1,263	1,569
Wyoming	700	693	0.0	0.0	79.8	98.7	780	792
Northern Tier	4,412	4,663	121.6	291.4	535.9	684.3	5,071	5,641
Pennsylvania	202,208	223,884	2,017.5	4,125.7	46,128.6	50,521.1	264,032	296,149

Source: PennDOT Bureau of Planning and Research (2006).

In examining DVMT by facility type, the greatest change has occurred on locally-owned roadways. Average DVMT on these roadways has grown by nearly 28 percent between 1996 and 2006. Change in average DVMT on locally-owned roadways was greatest in Susquehanna County, where it increased by nearly 50 percent. DVMT on state-owned facilities has actually *declined* in Bradford, Sullivan, and Wyoming counties over the past 10 years.

Roadway Conditions

In serving a large, rural area, the region's highway network operates as the backbone of the Northern Tier's overall transportation system.

There are 1,777 state-owned bridges longer than 8 feet in length and 331 locally-owned bridges

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longer than 20 feet in length in the Northern Tier. A good network of bridges is essential in improving residents' access to activities, goods, and services. Their ongoing preservation, improvement, and expansion serve to bolster the region's economic development potential and mobility.

PennDOT's Bridge Management System estimates that it would require more than $300 million to bring the region's inventory of state-owned bridges up to an acceptable condition.

When examining bridge condition data for structures not owned by PennDOT, conditions are generally worse in the Northern Tier, depending on what measure one decides to use. For structures that are functionally obsolete, the region's bridge inventory is 9 percentage points lower than the state average of 19 percent. However, and more importantly, the region has a *higher* share of bridges that are structurally deficient (39 percent). This is 9 percentage points higher than the state rate of 30 percent.

Rail Freight

While freight movement in the region is primarily via truck, the importance of rail service should not be underestimated. Rail freight traffic in the Northern Tier is shaped by the region's position in the eastern and national rail network and by the structure of the network itself. Ownership, connection, and distance combine to influence the pattern and character of current and prospective freight volume. While the Northern Tier is a gateway for substantial volumes of highway traffic on I-81, it is less accessible from a freight rail perspective. The ability of regional rail to relieve highway congestion is constrained by network position, vertical clearance limitations, facility capacity limitations, and institutional factors.

From a rail freight perspective, shippers in the region are served primarily by short lines and Class I railroads. These include the

- Wellsboro & Corning Railroad;
- Towanda-Monroeton Shippers Lifeline;
- Reading, Blue Mountain & Northern; and
- Canadian Pacific Rail.

The Wellsboro & Corning Railroad: WCOR is an important short line for industries and agriculture in Tioga County. It serves as a switching carrier for both Norfolk Southern (NS) and the Canadian Pacific (CP). It connects the county seat of Wellsboro with the NS Southern Tier line and yard in Gang Mills, New York.

The loss of Eagle Family Foods as one of the line's major shippers in February 2005 had a dramatic impact on total carload counts. Total carload counts were as high as 750 in 2002, before falling to 645 cars in 2004 and then to only 280 in 2005. (For 2007, rail officials anticipated a count of 320.)

Since its beginnings in 1992, the Tioga Central Railroad has provided passenger excursion service on the line, which has had a significant impact on the local tourism industry. Passenger excursions typically operate on weekends when freight is not moving (during fall foliage season and other special events, the excursions must defer to freight movement). The company's equipment includes three locomotives and six passenger cars.

Financial assistance is critical to the W&C Railroad. Eleven of the line's 35 miles are located in New York State; this fact hinders funding assistance through sources such as Pennsylvania's Rail Freight Assistance Program (RFAP). Participation in this program is critical to the future of the line, although the RFAP budget has been cut in half in recent years, from $8.5 million to $4.25 million in assistance annually. With the operation of the line currently in question, Growth Resources of Wellsboro (GROW) decided not to participate in the RFAP program for the 2008-09 funding cycle.

A major development affecting the line's operations includes the planned 2009 construction of a new salt plant near the rail line just north of Tioga. Dominion plans to mine table salt for shipment from Tioga County. The new plant is expected to generate 200 construction jobs, then 75 jobs during the first two years. More importantly, the new salt plant is expected to generate 400 carloads a year—a modest projection according to some analysts. The additional carloads would be welcome new business and would bolster the line's two remaining shippers, Agway and Osram-Sylvania. In the case of the latter, Osram could not survive without the rail option, and the 200 jobs it provides would be in jeopardy without it.

The Towanda-Monroeton Shippers Lifeline: Formerly Lehigh Valley, Conrail, this line is a 5.6-mile short line carrying grain and fertilizer from the NS line in Towanda to businesses in central Bradford County. Growmark and Shaffer's Feed Mill in Monroeton are the line's biggest customers, generating annual traffic of approximately 145 cars. Rail service is provided three days per week during 10 months of the year, and six days a week during the balance of the year. A majority of freight on the line is being shipped into (rather than out of) Monroeton. Line operators estimate that approximately 85 percent of the mill's freight is received by rail, adding to its competitiveness. The rail line is a vital part of the businesses' transportation operations.

Reading, Blue Mountain & Northern: This service began as a 12-mile line and today serves businesses and industry between Reading and Scranton, and north into Mehoopany. The railroad today operates a total of 266 route miles on 16 different lines in eastern Pennsylvania.

Most importantly to the Northern Tier, the railroad became an exclusive carrier for Proctor & Gamble's Mehoopany plant for more than 4,000 annual carloads of pulp board. The rail carrier is also being used by NS to carry traffic between Buffalo and Harrisburg.

Canadian Pacific (CP) Rail: Of all the rail lines in the Northern Tier, CP Rail's line through Susquehanna County is arguably the most important. In fact, rail freight analysts believe the line is one of the top one or two north-south lines in the northeastern United States. CP Rail bought the line from D&H in 1991 and traffic on the line is currently higher than it has been at any point over the past 20 years. In spite of this, the operation of the line is suspect as it may be leased to a regional railroad. Traffic on the line is funneled in all directions from the corridor. Freight moves west from Binghamton to Buffalo and Toronto and moves north toward New England and Montreal. Rail traffic moves south to Allentown and Harrisburg and into southern New Jersey. CP Rail also connects with CSX in Philadelphia.

Public Transportation

Public transportation services in the region are provided primarily by the Endless Mountains Transportation Authority, or EMTA. EMTA provides fixed-route and demand-responsive public transportation services in Bradford, Sullivan, and Tioga counties.

Total ridership on EMTA has been trending in a favorable direction, actually doubling over the past

decade. New service includes a run from Mansfield to Towanda. In 2003-04, the EMTA transported 306,235 total passengers, up from 294,771 in 1998-99. Of the total passengers in 2003-04, 67 percent were fare-paying passengers, while the other 33 percent were senior citizens. In 2006, the authority registered a total ridership number of nearly 120,000. Roughly 85 percent of its passengers are fare-paying, while 14 percent are senior citizens.

Intercity Bus

Fullington Trailways, based in Clearfield, operates both intercity and chartered bus services (mainly for schools) in the North.

Infrastructure Capacity and Resources

Utilities

Electric utility service is provided to the entire Northern Tier region by Pennsylvania Electric Company (Penelec), a subsidiary of the FirstEnergy Corporation. Commercial and industrial electric utility rates are very competitive in the Northern Tier region compared to the rest of the state, the nation, and especially the Mid-Atlantic region. However, it should be noted that electric utility rate caps in the Northern Tier region for Penelec will be lifted in the year 2012, which may have a significant impact on rates in the region.

The reliability of electric utility service in some areas of the region was identified by focus groups as a weakness; there are an inordinate number of outages at significant production times.

Table 26: Rates on File by User Classification

Customer Category	Penelec	Notes
Small Commercial (Using 1,000 KWH)	$86.78	Only two other companies offer lower rates in PA.
Medium Commercial (Using 10,000 KWH)	$775.24	This rate is below the PA average of $908.73.
Large Commercial (Using 200,000 KWH)	$14,237.03	Only two other companies offer lower rates in PA.
Industrial (Using 400,000 KWH)	$24,825.78	Only West Penn Power offers a lower rate in PA.

Source: Pennsylvania Public Utilities Commission (PUC).

Natural gas suppliers in the Northern Tier region include PPL Gas Utilities Corporation (serving Tioga and parts of Bradford counties), UGI Penn Natural Gas Inc. (serving Susquehanna and Wyoming counties), and Valley Energy Inc. (based in Sayre and serving parts of Bradford County). Natural gas rates are competitive in the Northern Tier region compared to the rest of the state, but do not provide any significant competitive advantage.

Table 27: Comparative Data for Natural Gas Providers

Monthly Bill	PPL Gas Utilities	UGI Penn Natural Gas	Valley Energy	Pennsylvania Average
Small Commercial (150 MCF/year)	$193.80	$166.15	$129.92	$149.64
Medium Commercial (500 MCF/year)	$575.72	$477.53	$415.00	$453.92
Large Commercial (9,000 MCF/year)	$9,524.88	$8,049.75	$7,337.53	$8,214.08
Industrial (>9,000 MCF/year)	$9,524.88	$106,124.46	$6,825.19	$17,920.73 $9,328.50 (median)

Source: Pennsylvania Public Utilities Commission (PUC

When all commercial rates are blended—and for industrial users as well—natural gas utility rates in the Northern Tier Region of Pennsylvania are slightly higher than the rates in the Mid-Atlantic

region. However, if current technology and exploration for natural gas reserves in the Northern Tier region prove to be fruitful, there could be a significant impact on natural gas prices and distribution costs for the entire Northeast region of the U.S., and especially for the Northern Tier.

Water and Sewer

Many of the water and sewer systems in the region are in need of upgrading in order to meet current needs and provide increased capacity to support expansion of development. Further, the amount of developable land in the region is limited, and generally near existing travel corridors. The location of infrastructure is intertwined with land use planning, creating a conflict for the identification of competitive sites for industry. The trend is to acquire the most accessible tracts apart from existing development. Because these tracts are limited, this situation results in extending sewer and water to locations that are more remote, preceding development. The solution is to identify sites that are closer to transportation access and can be served by existing water and sewer systems. This will involve collaboration among municipalities in the region.

High-Speed Broadband Internet Access

A study performed by Penn State University for the Center for Rural Pennsylvania, entitled, *Broadband Internet Service in Rural and Urban Pennsylvania: A Common Wealth or Digital Divide?*, indicated that an increasing number of rural businesses are relying on the Internet to conduct their day-to-day business activities. However, the research also revealed that while broadband services were virtually everywhere in the state's metropolitan areas, there was demonstrably less availability in the state's non-metropolitan areas and small towns, and even less availability in the more rural areas of Pennsylvania. In some rural and small town communities, for example, broadband was not available at all.

The research also indicated a lack of competition for broadband services in rural areas, which resulted in problems such as low speeds and poor service quality. The research indicated that as the demand for and the utility of broadband for these users continues to grow, it becomes imperative that reliable broadband connections are available from a number of providers at a reasonable price. The importance of having high quality, reliable, cost-effective broadband in Pennsylvania's rural communities cannot be overstated, especially considering that close to three million of the state's residents and thousands of businesses live and conduct business in these areas.

2. Current Conditions and Trends

Several general themes emerged throughout the myriad research documents, data, focus groups, and interviews, combined with the SWOT analysis. These themes summarize the Northern Tier's economic development problems and opportunities.

The region's population growth rate is slowing while the population is aging.
Population change is a general indicator of the overall vitality of a region. The Northern Tier's growth rate since 1990 has been stagnant. Between 2000 and 2006, total population of the five counties declined by 0.6 percent. At the same time, the median age of the region increased faster than the state rate. The region's share of population over age 65 is now 15.6 percent, which is slightly higher than the Pennsylvania average of 15.2 percent. Total population growth among those over the age of 65 increased in the Northern Tier at a faster rate than Pennsylvania as a whole (8 percent versus 4.9 percent). Among Pennsylvania's counties, Sullivan County ranks first in the percentage of its population that is 65 years or older, at 23.8 percent.

Implication: An increasingly aging population will likely rely on fixed incomes, and will add stress on the region's health care, human services, and transportation providers.

Unemployment rates in the region follow and lag state and national trends.
Unemployment rates are the most recognized indicator of the economic health of a region, and may also be a factor in industry site selection.

Implication: High unemployment rates make it difficult to attract and retain an active and diverse population, and can lead to an overall deterioration in quality of life in the region. However, several enterprises in promising industry sectors are already located in the area, suggesting future opportunities for the ready workforce.

Educational proficiency and attainment rates are below state and national averages.
Educational achievement can be considered an indicator of innovation and entrepreneurial capacity, and is a key factor for industry site selectors. Math and reading proficiencies for eleventh grade students in a majority of the region's school districts are below the state average. Educational attainment—the percentage of residents with a post-secondary education—is also below the state average.

Implication: Making education a priority and improving performance is an important facet of economic development.

There is a high ratio of municipalities per resident in the region compared to the state as a whole.
The number of municipal governments per capita is five times higher than the state ratio. Fragmented government is costly and does not promote a regional attitude or marketing theme. It impedes problem-solving, communication, and best use of scarce grant resources. This concern was one of the key themes consistently expressed throughout the initial visioning sessions of this project.

Implication: Streamlining government activities can improve regional economic opportunities, reduce costs, and improve the quality of life for citizens.

The region's ethnicity is predominantly homogeneous.
Only 1.9 percent of the region's population is non-white, compared to the state rate of 15 percent and the national rate of almost 20 percent. Research shows that the more a region embraces diversity, the greater its capacity for innovation and entrepreneurship.

Implication: The region should actively encourage and embrace diversity to enhance not only cultural richness but also a diverse and entrepreneurial economy.

Home ownership levels are higher than national and state averages; median home prices are significantly below national and state averages.
The home ownership rate in the Northern Tier is at least 10 percentage points higher than the national average and is slightly higher than the state average. The median home value in the region is significantly below the national and state averages. Both indicators, however, are comparable to the adjoining New York State counties.

Implication: The population is likely to be deeply rooted in the region and is unlikely to move from the area. Affordable homes and stable neighborhoods attract new workers; second homes are affordable to those with higher incomes and a desire to experience the region's natural offerings such as forests, lakes and rivers, mountains, and parks.

The region is influenced by neighboring economic centers.
The region is surrounded by larger economic centers, including Scranton/Wilkes-Barre and Williamsport in Pennsylvania, and Binghamton and Corning/Elmira in New York State. In fact, the region has more workers than jobs. Overall there is a net loss of approximately 13,300 workers to other regions. Susquehanna and Wyoming counties have the highest rate of workers leaving the region to commute to work.

Implication: This movement is a clear indicator of the strong influence of "beyond-the-borders" economies. There is an opportunity to draw visitors and residents from these bordering areas for tourism, recreation, and home-buying.

The region lacks a cohesive identity to attract and retain people.
The travel and tourism industry is fragmented throughout the region. The Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau provides marketing services to the tourism industry in Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna, and Wyoming counties. The Tioga County Visitors Bureau does the same for Tioga County. The Pennsylvania Route 6 Association, the Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau, the Northern Tier Cultural Alliance, and the Chambers of Commerce in all of the Northern Tier communities often work together in an effort to market the region. Fragmentation of tourism agencies and identities obscures a regional sense of place.

Implication: The region would benefit from coordinated marketing and tourism efforts. The region's rural and scenic beauty is widely recognized as an economic asset. The opportunity exists for various groups to collaboratively develop and capitalize on a regional image and identity by collectively promoting a scenic and outdoors-oriented region that attracts visitors and businesses.

The region is generally more reliant on the private automobile than most other areas of the

state.
Nearly 78 percent of workers travel to work alone by car, representing an increase of 6 percent from the 1990 census. Furthermore, only 6.4 percent of the region's households do not have access to a vehicle, which is one-half the state rate of 12.8 percent. Between 1995 and 2005, all but one county (Wyoming) experienced growth in excess of the state rate of 18 percent in new vehicle registrations. Relying on vehicles for commuting and shopping indicates that those opportunities are not available closer to the residents' homes, and also indicates a lack of affordable and convenient transportation options.

Implication: There are opportunities for residential and business growth in the area because potential commuters have easy access to vehicles. There are also opportunities to promote environmentally-friendly transportation options such as mass transit, carpooling, and intercity bus routes.

Over 60 percent of the land in the Northern Tier cannot be developed; areas of development are limited to major corridors.
Density is an indicator of the relative availability of land. The Northern Tier has a population density of only 45 persons per square mile. Among its 166 municipalities, only two have total populations exceeding 5,000. However, within the entire region there is a high proportion of federal and state game lands and forests (approximately 10 percent), steep slopes (51 percent), and wetlands and other undevelopable sites (approximately 8 percent). Thus, approximately 65 percent of the Northern Tier's land cannot be developed. The remaining 1,200 square miles encompass either small towns or farmland. When density is reconsidered in this context, the density rises from 45 persons per square mile to 151 persons per (habitable) square mile. That density figure is still less than the state average of 272.

Implication: About 30 percent of the available land is supporting the entire region in terms of generating tax revenues to provide services. The decentralized nature of the region's settlement pattern makes providing efficient public transportation challenging. On the other hand, the scenic and rural nature of the region can be considered an economic asset. Also, there is land available for residential and business growth.

3. Future Vision, Common Themes, and Challenges

Objectives within the region were formed from the common vision of the region's future in twenty years given during the outreach sessions. Common themes consistently voiced were drawn from the many descriptions, perspectives, and opinions of the residents' desired future of the region.

Vision

The vision of the NTRPDC is to "be a leader in developing people, businesses, and communities for a globally competitive region". During multiple "visioning" sessions throughout the region, residents were asked to describe the characteristics of the region in twenty years. In their view, the following will occur over the next two decades:

- The natural beauty of the region will be preserved.
- Downtowns will be more vibrant.
- Employment within the region will increase and result in higher average wages.
- The infrastructure and road system will be much improved.
- Communication and cooperation among municipalities and counties will improve.
- Transit systems and services will be expanded and improved.
- The quality of rural life will be maintained.
- There will be more and improved opportunities for recreational tourism.
- There will be a higher quality educational system.
- There will be more effective land management and focused land use planning.

Common Themes

Following the characterizations of the region's future, the consistently and commonly voiced objectives were compiled. These are the goals that need to be accomplished in order to attain the future vision. These important activities cut across various disciplines, and are referred to as common themes that will guide the strategies to achieve the desired future.

- Maintain the rural pace and quality of life.
- Preserve historic heritage, natural beauty, and scenic views.
- Retain and support existing industries.
- Support entrepreneurism and enhance emerging businesses.
- Improve prosperity by enhancing existing businesses and growing emerging businesses.
- Improve mobility throughout the region and maintain infrastructure.
- Improve municipal cooperation.
- Foster sound land use policies and controls.
- Focus land use on re-use and rehabilitation of existing structures.
- Support and develop recreational tourism.

- Leverage strong work ethic in the region.

- Develop workforce to meet the needs of existing and new industry.

- Revitalize communities for vibrant downtowns.

- Attract and retain young people.

- Support the health and welfare of the residents, especially the elderly.

Common Obstacles

A necessary part of determining the appropriate action plan was to identify roadblocks, or obstacles, that might impede the achievement of the desired future. These obstacles, much like the common themes and vision, were consistently voiced throughout the region:

- Lack of leadership to make regional views happen

- Lack of regional identity

- Region is topographically-challenged in areas of potential development\

- Counties and municipalities act independently

- Rural politics cannot compete with urban in PA

- Roads are not transformational in economic development—more roads place a heavier burden on local municipalities who must maintain them.

- Traditional public transit is not suited for a region with this geography.

The strategic goals of the region were identified during the outreach sessions. The strategies are intended to bridge the gap between the current conditions and trends and the achievements of the vision of the region.

4. Regional Strategies, Objectives, and Projects

The strategic goals for achieving the regional vision while resolving current issues, such as improving the region's productivity and competitiveness, are listed as follows:

1. **Expand regional economic opportunities supporting the fields of agriculture, manufacturing, health care, and travel and tourism.**

   Objectives:
   - Support key industry clusters of agriculture, manufacturing, lumber and wood, construction, health care, and travel and tourism
   - Maintain the competitiveness of agriculture through increased efficiency, orientation toward markets, and taking advantage of opportunities for diversification
   - Build upon the natural resource industries and growing value added production,
   - Leverage the industrial heritage and capabilities of the region to retain and attract manufacturing,
   - Support an expanding health care sector, recognizing the demographic opportunities and needs of the region.
   - Promote and take advantage of the travel and tourism opportunities in the region.

   Suggested Projects:
   - Package and promote the Northern Tier region to a profiled, targeted audience that includes potential workers and industries.
   - Develop power and energy generation alternatives as new businesses.
   - Develop sports camps as a new industry.
   - Build a conference center.
   - Create a magnet area within the region as a "destination'—growth will span outward.
   - Develop a "sustainability model" for the Northern Tier region—local agriculture, local retail, alternative power generation—and market this to businesses with whose corporate values align with sustainability.
   - Organize a leadership group with a mission and sense of urgency to coordinate, communicate, implement, and measure change.
   - Build a ski resort.
   - Identify and develop a single regional economic development spokesperson.
   - Target and attract industries that complement existing successful industries.
   - Develop "Leadership Institutes" as a new business and to support local entrepreneurs.
   - Develop niche hospitality in the form of spas with associated conference facilities.
   - Develop sports tourism based on existing resources.

2. **Improve infrastructure supporting mobility, economic growth, and quality of life improvements**

   Objectives:
   - Support the development of transportation to improve access to the region and mobility within the region.
   - Provide internet access and broadband communications throughout the region
   - Develop and expand the development of water and sewer, electricity, and other utilities needed to enhance the quality of life and economic opportunities of the region.

   Suggested Projects
   - Develop human service transportation for Northern Tier residents.
   - Develop high-speed Internet access, broadband, and cellular access across the region.
   - Develop park and ride locations.
   - Pursue funding opportunities for highway and infrastructure projects.
   - Increase state funding by developing a "voting bloc" in the Northern Tier.
   - Create and update a central clearinghouse where residents can access public transit information.
   - Expand Bradford County airport.

3. **Improve human resource development through the promotion and support of healthy lifestyles, education, training, and workforce development**

   Objectives:
   - The quality of basic and technical education must be competitive internationally and the region must provide opportunities for lifelong learning and skill development, particularly in the areas of emerging industries.
   - Develop healthy children and adults through education and other health promotion activities.
   - Attract and retain a diverse population with a particular focus on young adults and immigrants.
   - Actively support the role of universities and institutions of learning (including trades to support emerging industries) for economic development.
   - Ensure that job, cultural, and other quality of life opportunities are available and abundant are critical to retaining young talent in the region.

   Suggested Projects
   - Develop a Community College and Technical Education Center/Program
   - Create a Small Business/Entrepreneurial Academy
   - Create an Educational Consortium for local businesses.
   - Expand existing teaching hospital
   - Create a low-income health system to support Northern Tier residents.

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- Build fitness and community centers.
- Develop apprentice programs.
- Develop short-term, intensive training programs for critically needed skills.
- Add "work-ethics" to public school curriculum.
- Develop human service transportation for Northern Tier residents.

4. **By planning regionally, and implementing locally, integrate land use, transportation, and economic development programs region-wide.**

   Objectives:
   - Implement a strategy to cooperatively integrate the CEDS and the LRTP priorities, where applicable, to ensure the region's planning activities are balanced and reflective of the complementary nature of implementation efforts as well as the potential challenges of competing priorities.
   - Intergovernmental cooperation, visioning, mapping, public private partnerships and the championing of a shared view of the region.

   Suggested Projects
   - Inventory potential targeted investment areas in the region
   - Promote incentives for municipalities to work together.
   - Implement and enforce regional, consistent county-wide zoning and land use.
   - Create a government waste prevention program and oversight group.

5. **Create and promote a unified regional identity**

   Objectives:

   Defining the nature and character of the region with:

   - Broad economic opportunities in a rural and natural setting
   - An unmatched quality of life balance
   - Continued attraction of business and younger population
   - A focal point of travel and tourism

   Suggested Projects:
   - Package and promote the Northern Tier region to residents of the Northern Tier.
   - Sponsor and implement a regional sporting event with national coverage such as a Northern Tier Triathlon, Northern Tier Adventure Challenge, or Northern Tier Orienteering Event.
   - Create and promote "Tour de Tier" bicycling event.

6. **Improve regional, county, and municipal inter-governmental cooperation and land use planning.**

   Objectives:

   - Foster local capacity and community action to create and implement local and regional development strategies
   - Seek opportunities for efficiencies and streamlining of government activities to improve regional economic opportunities and the quality of life for its citizens.
   - Actively promote greater municipal cooperation leveraging the varying strengths of governmental relationships laterally and vertically.
   - Form creative municipal partnerships.

   Suggested Projects:

   - Advocate and implement consistent county-wide zoning and land use.
   - Create a government waste prevention program and oversight group.
   - Identify opportunities for cost-reduction in government services from a regional perspective.
   - Organize a leadership group with a mission and sense of urgency to coordinate, communicate, implement, and measure change.

5. Top Priority Projects

The RSAP is concerned with targeted investments of regional significance encompassing the need to coordinate among counties, stakeholders, or programs to achieve regional benefit regardless of the location within the region. The result of multiple outreach sessions' review of strategies, SWOT analysis (see Appendix XX), and areas of targeted investment, priority projects were identified as follows to obtain the greatest return for the needs of the region and localities:

- Package and promote the Northern Tier region to a profiled, targeted audience that includes potential workers and industries. Promote this residents and businesses within the Northern Tier to create a sense of place and pride.
  - o Adopt a regional vision that includes reference to Northern Tier's unique qualities, such as: safe, green, sports, food, wine.
  - o Educate residents to create momentum, common focus, and context for change.
  - o Profile corporations that would find this area attractive: corporate values, no need for "foot traffic"
  - o Package the area including easy relocation steps and assistance.
  - o Recruit targeted businesses based on the benefits of living here—avoid short term tax incentives that encourage short term relocation.

- Enhance and expand Community College and Technical Education Centers
  - o Use existing buildings and infrastructure to deliver education.
  - o Partner with existing providers to determine most effective means of delivery.
  - o Partner with business to determine curriculum needs and outcomes.
  - o Use technology to bridge distance and geography.

- Create a Small Business and Entrepreneurial Academy
  - o Goal is to build business skills in local entrepreneurs.
  - o Provide access to capital and grant guidance.
  - o Educate on compliance, zoning, regulations, and land use issues.
  - o Identify and package programs and applications.
  - o Facilitate communication between entrepreneurs.
  - o Create a mentoring program.

- Develop power and energy generation alternatives and conservation programs.
  - o Become the national leader in wind and biomass energy generation.

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- o Develop natural gas opportunities.
- o Create programs to lead conservation—start with municipalities.

- Create an educational consortium among local businesses.
  - o Identify a steering group with members from public and private sectors.
  - o Make recommendations to public schools and career and technology centers.
  - o Pool business resources for development outside the skills area of public schools and career and technology centers.
  - o Business and public school counselors collaborate on programs to educate students and parents on the value of skills-education.

- Create Outdoor Events
  - o Host a national sporting event(s) (biathlon, triathlon, marathon, endurance mountain sports, trail racing, rafting, shooting, and gliding) that showcases the area's assets.
  - o Commit to several years to build momentum and brand.
  - o Engage scouts, outdoor clubs, students, colleges, and environmental groups to develop and support—align with a nationally prominent, politically neutral Non Profit Organization.
  - o Connect trails in Northern Tier for regional hiking opportunities and as part of sporting event.
  - o Educate public on value and long-term benefits.
  - o Develop sports camps that relate to or dovetail on the event.
  - o Close enough to metro areas to attract people—Northern Tier is within a day's drive of large percentage of the nation's population centers.

- Create a magnet area in the region as a "destination."
  - o Target a specific area to develop on multiple fronts—resort, spa, conference center, arts, sports, and indoor recreation.
  - o Ensure that the area has capacity for density of projects.
  - o Promote aggressively as a "destination" for business and leisure.
  - o Support development of complementary business that spread from the area.

- Create and use a sustainability model for the region.
  - o Identify a team from business, NPO, conservation, university agriculture, land use, and farming communities.
  - o Develop a model for regional sustainability in niche agriculture, energy, transit, retail, water, and recreation. Base on successful models elsewhere in the country.

- o Package and promote this model to niche businesses, individuals, and organizations that have similar values—attract based on value of living in a sustainable area.

- Develop program to improve regional collaboration.
  - o Foster municipal cooperation.
  - o Consolidate fire, emergency, and public utilities at county level.
  - o Mandate cooperation in planning.
  - o Create and enforce consistent land use and zoning policies across the region.
  - o Develop intergovernmental bylaws.
  - o Form a government accountability and waste prevention program with an oversight group—promote the program to business and to the public.

- Make the Northern Tier region more accessible to high-speed, broadband and cellular within five years.
  - o Identify steering committee to research options, define peak areas and gaps,
  - o Publish RFP's and select vendors.
  - o Secure Commonwealth funding for projects as needed.
  - o Collaborate with business for private/public ventures.
  - o Seek alternatives to ground-level infrastructure that is vulnerable to geography and weather.
  - o Maintain natural beauty and environmentally neutral impact.

6. Implementing the Plan (RSAP)

The fundamental approach that forms the basis for implementing the plan should begin with three basic questions: What are the projects desired (by the stakeholders), where should they be located, and why should they be completed?

The RSAP will be used as guidance for coordinating the process for integrating the different areas for planning. The plan is not a list of all possible projects in the region. Each program may have short-term maintenance or mandated efforts that are more tactical or operational in maintaining services to the residents of the region.

Implementation

1. Develop and implement marketing and outreach plan for the group and the process. Outreach and educational marketing is critical to ensuring municipal and public stakeholder support.

2. Publish and promote the LUTED process.

    a. Create templates for project submission.

    b. Publish weights, scoring, and selection criteria.

    c. Educate stakeholders and provide assistance in submitting project proposals.

3. Solicit projects from stakeholders in the Northern Tier.

    a. Evaluate, prioritize, and recommend projects based on project investment criteria and transparent weighted scoring selection process.

    b. Measure the outcomes of recommended projects based on the selection criteria and on the project's effects on regional performance measures.

    c. Communicate findings, meetings, decisions, brands, initiatives to the business and general public.

    d. Update the regional action plan annually, especially in terms of changing conditions such as:

        i. New threats –political, financial, social support for projects.

        ii. New opportunities – high price of wheat products and shipped produce— local agriculture.

        iii. Momentum from related completed projects.

    e. Facilitate communication between planning agencies, governments, business, nonprofit organizations, educators, and other stakeholders—especially in terms of project planning and funding.

    f. Provide leadership in decision-making and soliciting state support.

Project Advisory Committee:

The Project Advisory Committee will review plan findings and select the projects to fulfill the RSAP and will manage the process of selecting and evaluating projects that support regional goals. The PAC will ensure the required integration of land use, transportation, and economic development resources for planning and implementation.

1. Mission –

    a. Recommend, shepherd, and measure outcomes of regionally significant projects.

    b. Support integrated deployment of land use, transportation, and economic development resources.

2. Governance

    a. Committee with 3 year terms and a rotating chairperson

        i. Up to 3 terms per person

        ii. Terms cannot be concurrent with other elections.

    b. Community stakeholders, subject matter experts, and elected officials may participate in the process.

    c. All LUTED PAC members will provide disclosure of interests to avoid even the appearance of impropriety.

    d. The initial LUTED PAC decision-making body will develop job descriptions for committee members.

3. People

    a. The committee should have at least one county commissioner from each of the 5 counties.

    b. The committee should have municipal elected officials from each of the 5 counties.

    c. The committee should have at least one county planner from each of the 5 counties.

    d. The committee should have at least one representative of public education from each of the 5 counties.

    e. Other recommended stakeholders:

        i. Business representatives from large industry from each county.

        ii. Business representatives from small/entrepreneurial organizations.

        iii. NPO/Human services representatives.

        iv. Chambers of Commerce

        v. Industrial Development Corporations

4. Process

a. Solicit project ideas annually or at timeframe created in submission plan.

b. Compile project ideas for annual review.

c. Review projects against selection criteria.

    i. Annual trigger will start selection process.

    ii. Quarterly assessment of list of submitted projects to determine if immediate review is needed—based on Minimum Criteria.

d. Publish recommendations to stakeholders.

e. Gather feedback.

f. Select projects.

g. Refine project scope and develop performance and outcome measures as needed.

h. Assign to agencies/entities for project implementation.

i. Facilitate communication between project implementers.

    i. Schedule project reporting.

    ii. Provide reporting guidelines based on scope and complexity.

j. Measure project milestones and outcomes:

    i. Project milestone/timelines trigger review

    ii. Project closeouts trigger review.

5. Communication Plan

    a. Active Communication

        i. Monthly updates/reports via email to selected stakeholders

            1. Elected officials

            2. County and local planners

            3. Educators

            4. Chambers of Commerce

            5. Business organizations

            6. PAC members

            7. Human Service Agencies

            8. NPO's

        ii. Branding, marketing and educational outreach.

            1. Create the framework for branding and outreach.

            2. Subsequent outreach will be determined by the PAC.

    b. Website

        i. Update submitted projects and RSAP plan information.

        ii. Update project status for all PAC supported projects.

iii. Publish findings, reviews, measurements.

iv. Provide directories of contacts for land use, transportation, and economic development support and information.

v. Compile and provide regional resources.

7. Investment Criteria and Performance Measures

The PAC will use Project Investment Criteria to evaluate projects within areas of targeted investment and strategic emphasis. The criteria reflect the goals, values, and direction of Northern Tier stakeholders. The Project Investment Criteria in this plan were derived from multiple sources and prioritized at a regional stakeholder summit.

Investment Criteria

Investment Criteria are the inputs to creating a "Weighted Scoring" model for the PAC to evaluate projects. In addition, the PAC may use "Minimum Eligibility" criteria to determine whether or not the project will be considered and scored.

1. General

- How does project support regional strategy?
- What are the outcomes of the project?
- Have all benefits been identified and have been quantified?
- Is the fiscal impact (benefits & ROI) enough to attract further investment?
- What are the key measures of success and how measured?
- How will benefits be sustained?
- How does investment span beyond immediate horizon, anticipate economic changes, and diversify regional economy?
- Does investment maximize private capital investment?
- Does investment maximize "Return on Taxpayer" investment?
- What is degree of political "capital" by elected officials?
- What is probability of success?

2. Business and Industry

- Promotes existing or emerging businesses?
- Invites capital investment by private firms?
- Supports global competitiveness?
- Increases the amount of international business transactions?
- How is the investment market-based?
- How will investment create an environment of higher-wage, higher-skill jobs?

2. People

- Enhances workforce consistent with Pennsylvania and Northern Tier Workforce Investment Board strategies?
- Attracts additional visitors and people to come and live in the Northern Tier?
- Increases the number of people with world-class skills in the region that will benefit industry?

3. Place

- Fosters transportation access?
- Enhances and protects the environment?
- Promotes use of technology, and telecommunications, in particular?
- Balances physical development resources?
- Provides a destination for people to visit, conduct business, or learn?

Example Project Minimum Criteria:

Criteria	Detail
The project is clearly defined and ready to proceed.	☐ Benefits have been quantified. ☐ Key success measures have been articulated ☐ Specific outcomes have been defined. ☐ Risk analysis and success probability completed and presented. ☐ Long-term sustainability plan included in proposal. ☐ Project ownership, management, and governance clearly defined.
The project will create or retain jobs upon completion.	☐ A jobs projection is included in the proposal. ☐ Data is based on recognized models or methods.
The project has the support of local and elected officials.	☐ Elected and appointed officials have signed and noted their support of the project. ☐ Reasonable plans for public relations are included in the plan.
The project supports the regional vision, goals, and objectives.	☐ Expand economic development. ☐ Improve infrastructure supporting mobility. ☐ Improves human development. ☐ Integrated approach to land use, transportation, and economic development. ☐ Develops regional identity. ☐ Improves municipal cooperation.

The general criteria are assigned levels of importance that become a weighted scoring matrix. LUTED PAC will publish scoring guidelines to ensure consistent scoring.

Using metrics with weights ensures a transparent selection process and alignment of projects with stakeholders' regional vision.

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Example Weighted Scoring Matrix Worksheet:

Project Criteria	Max Score	Score
Project is of regional significance and LUTED impact.	10	
Project is consistent with local land use regulations.	15	
Project maximizes the use of existing water, sewer and transportation infrastructure	5	
Project promotes or strengthens targeted winner or emerging industry cluster	10	
Project creates or retains higher skill and higher wage jobs	10	
Project will attract private investment.	10	
Project will maximize the return on the taxpayer investment	5	
Project location	5	
Project increases skills and knowledge	10	
Project promotes the use and diffusion of technology	5	
Project establishes a destination and attracts visitors to the region	10	
Project increases international transactions and supports global competitiveness	5	
	100	

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High-Level Performance Measures

Performance measures indicate how the region will know it is successful. Performance measures reflect the key values and goals of the region. The goal of the collective projects is to meet or exceed regional performance measures. The Performance Measures in this plan were derived from multiple sources of input and were prioritized at a regional stakeholder summit.

Performance measures are indicators by which the region's stakeholders will judge the effectiveness of a particular strategy. Performance measures are linked to key success factors, and, as an example, include:

General:

Lower unemployment rate

Higher Gross Regional Product

Number and types of investments

Amount of private sector investment in the region

Changes in the economic conditions

Industry clusters

Positive change in Location Quotient (LQ)

Higher average wages

Increasing number of Family-sustainable jobs created and retained

Higher per-capita income

Education:

Higher Proficiency in Math & Reading

Higher attainment percentages

Population:

Increasing number of people in Ages 18 – 35 Cohort

Reduction in average age

Reduced commuter times

Total population changes

Agreement on key performance measures reinforces the shared view for the region. Performance measures are an indication of change and, therefore, require benchmarking (a baseline of past and current performance) and indicators (status of current measurement at specified times).

The baseline for the performance measures are listed in Appendix 3. These measures will be defined and refined by the regional partners involved in the development of this strategy and updated over time to determine incremental improvement as a result of the RSAP implementation.

Appendix 1 – Research

Extensive regional socio-economic information, both external and internal, was gathered from a variety of primary sources. Current data of the region and "beyond-the-borders" was collected and forecasts of future economic and demographic conditions and trends were calculated.

Additionally, land use data was also collected and analyzed. This included all five county comprehensive plans, recreation and greenways plans, land use patterns, the number of municipalities with plans, and environmental factors.

An extensive amount of data was gathered for input to the RSAP. This data included regional transportation plans, such as prior Long Range Transportation Plans, Transportation Improvement Plans, Transit Strategies, and a variety of other sources, such as:

- Bradford County Open Space, Greenways and Outdoor Recreation Plan, May 2006
- Central Bradford Region Comprehensive Plan, 2007
- Tioga County Comprehensive Plan, 2005
- Wyoming County Comprehensive Plan
- Mansfield-Richmond-Covington Revitalization Strategy & Mobility Analysis, 2007
- Susquehanna County Comprehensive Plan, 2003
- Sayre Keystone Opportunity Zone (KOZ) – Intermodal Feasibility and Investment Analysis, 2004
- NTRPDC Annual Reports 2006, 2007
- Aging Workforce Analysis, Northern Tier Workforce Investment Area, 2006
- Pennsylvania State Data Center, County data Books, 2005
- Center for Workforce Investment Analysis, Department of Labor & Industry
- Commuting Patterns by Major Industry in the Northern Tier Workforce Investment Area, 2007
- Northern Tier Region State of the Region Report, 2008
- US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Bearfacts 1995 – 2005
- The Center for Rural Pennsylvania, County Profiles, 2007
- US Census Bureau, 2000 Census, and 2006 Census Population and Demographic Estimates
- Economic Projections to 2030, Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., Washington, DC, 2007

Appendix 2 – SWOT Analysis

The combination of common vision, goals, and obstacles were considered in context with regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, commonly referred to as a SWOT analysis.

Participants with both county-specific and regional perspectives attended a series of facilitated sessions that focused on defining the ideal characteristics of a comprehensive economic development effort. Using the varied perspectives of the participants, a "SWOT" analysis was derived. SWOT identifies strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats applying to a situation or entity, and examines both internal and external forces.

The SWOT analysis indicated the following strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for the Northern Tier:

Strengths
- Worker productivity
- Affordable land
- Natural and scenic resources, e.g., water, timber, and quarry sites
- State parks
- Rural and historic heritage
- Volunteer base
- Low crime rate
- Interstate access (in some cases)
- Proximity to economic areas and markets
- Agricultural base, e.g., dairy farms

Weaknesses
- Availability of health care
- Poor soil conditions
- Low-paying jobs
- Lack of diversity
- Workforce skills-to-need deficit
- Divided region
- Lack of identity
- Traveling distances between places
- Lack of zoning
- Lack of municipal cooperation (leadership)
- Aging infrastructure
- Youth flight
- Lack of telecommunications and broadband
- Stagnant population growth

- Resistance to change, e.g., zoning and taxing

Opportunities

- Alternative energy movement, e.g., wind and biomass
- Devalued dollar
- Increased shipping costs
- Sustainability movement
- Perception of Chinese imports
- Organic and niche foods markets
- Increased vacation and travel costs
- Challenges in air and global travel
- Emerging industries

Threats

- Impact of a recession on Northern Tier economy
- Aging population's effects on health care and social services
- Available state and federal funding
- Price caps on energy costs will be removed in 2012
- Price competition from global players
- Factory farms
- Understanding and implementing regulations

Appendix 3 – Regional Performance Measures Matrix

Measure	Baseline
Number of jobs	55,327 (2005)
Per capita income	$25,359 (2005)
Unemployment rate	Bradford 4.3% (June 2007) Sullivan 4.7% Susquehanna 4.1% Tioga 5.3% Wyoming 4.5%
Gross regional product	$4.5 billion (2007)
20-35 age cohort	31,120 (2006)
Median age	39.7 (2005)
Educational attainment	*High School (2005)* Bradford 81.7% Sullivan 78% Susquehanna 82.5% Tioga 80.5% Wyoming 83.7% *Bachelors (2005)* Bradford 14.8% Sullivan 12.8% Susquehanna 13.2% Tioga 14.2% Wyoming 15.4% *Graduate (2005)* Bradford 6.5% Sullivan 6.1% Susquehanna 5.7% Tioga 6.2% Wyoming 6.1%

Appendix 4 – Investment Criteria Worksheet

Project Criteria	Score	Guidelines
Regional Significance.	0	Not relevant to CEDS or other formal federal, state or regional plan or policies
	5	Project is not currently in CEDS or other formal federal, state or regional plan but is consistent with its policies
	10	Project is in CEDS or other formal federal, state or regional plan
Project is consistent with local local land use regulations	0	Not consistent or requires zoning changes
	5	Appears to meet zoning, requires special permit
	10	Consistent with local zoning or land use strategy where there is no zoning
	15	Protects or enhances the environment
Project maximizes the use of existing water, sewer and transportation infrastructure.	0	Requires the development of new infrastructure
	3	Creates necessary community infrastructure
	4	Improves community infrastructure
	5	Maximizes use of existing infrastructure
Project promotes or strengthens targeted winner or emerging industry cluster.	0	Has no direct relationship to any industry cluster or sector
	3	Does not support targeted industry cluster but supports other significant business sector
	5	Supports targeted industry cluster in the Northern Tier Laborshed

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	10	Supports targeted industry cluster in the Northern Tier region (Agriculture and Food Processing, Metals and Metal Fabricating, Communications, Hospitality, Biotechnology)
Project creates or retains Higher skill and higher wage jobs.	2	Project is estimated to create or retain jobs with wages or salaries below the regional average
	4	Project is estimated to create or retain less than 25 jobs with wages or salaries higher than the regional average
	6	Project is estimated to create or retain between 26 and 50 jobs with wages or salaries higher than the regional average
	8	Project is estimated to create or retain between 51 and 75 jobs with wages or salaries higher than the regional average
	10	Project is estimated to create or retain more than 76 jobs with wages or salaries higher than the regional average
Project will attract private investment.	0	Project will not attract private investment
	3	Project will attract private investment that is less than 5% of the total project cost
	5	Project will attract private investment that is 5-24% of the total project cost
	7	Project will attract private investment that is 25-49% of the total project cost
	10	Project will attract private investment that is greater than 50% of the total project cost

Project Criteria	Score	Guidelines
Project will maximize the return on the taxpayer investment	0	The return of the project in terms of personal or corporate tax revenue, private community investment or gross regional product is less than the public investment in the project
	3	The return of the project in terms of personal or corporate tax revenue, private community investment or gross regional product is between 1 and 2 times the public investment in the project over 5 years
	5	The return of the project in terms of personal or corporate tax revenue, private community investment or gross regional product is greater than 2 times the public investment over five years
Project location	0	Project is located in a rural or undeveloped area
	3	Project is located in an urban or downtown area but not a Brownfield site or distressed property
	5	Projected is located in an urban or downtown area and is a Brownfield site or distressed property or KOZ or KIZ
Project increases skills and knowledge	0	Jobs estimated to be created require and will attract unskilled labor
	5	Jobs estimated to be created require and will attract a technically certified or degreed workforce
	10	Jobs estimated to be created require and will attract a professional or graduate degree workforce
Project promotes the use and diffusion of technology.	0	Project does not in any significant way promote the use of technology
	3	Project utilizes and promotes the use of technology within the community
	5	Project will result in the development and diffusion of new technology within an industry or a region

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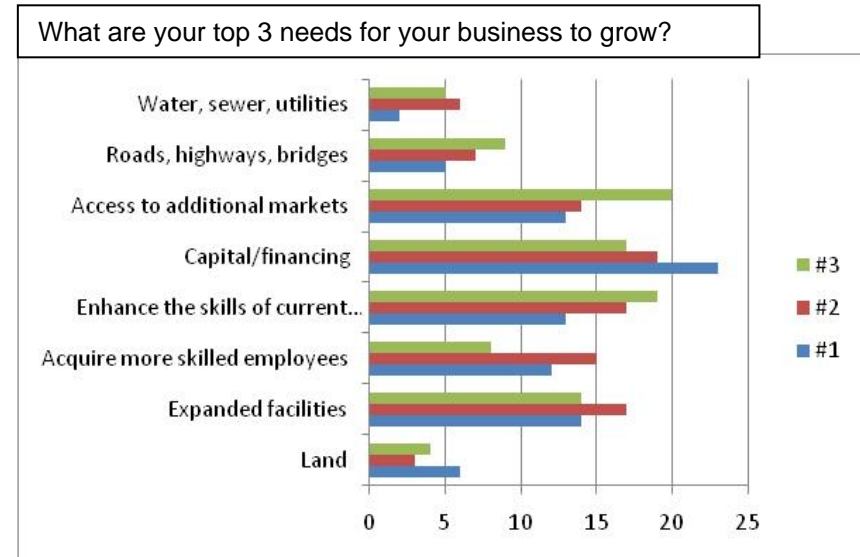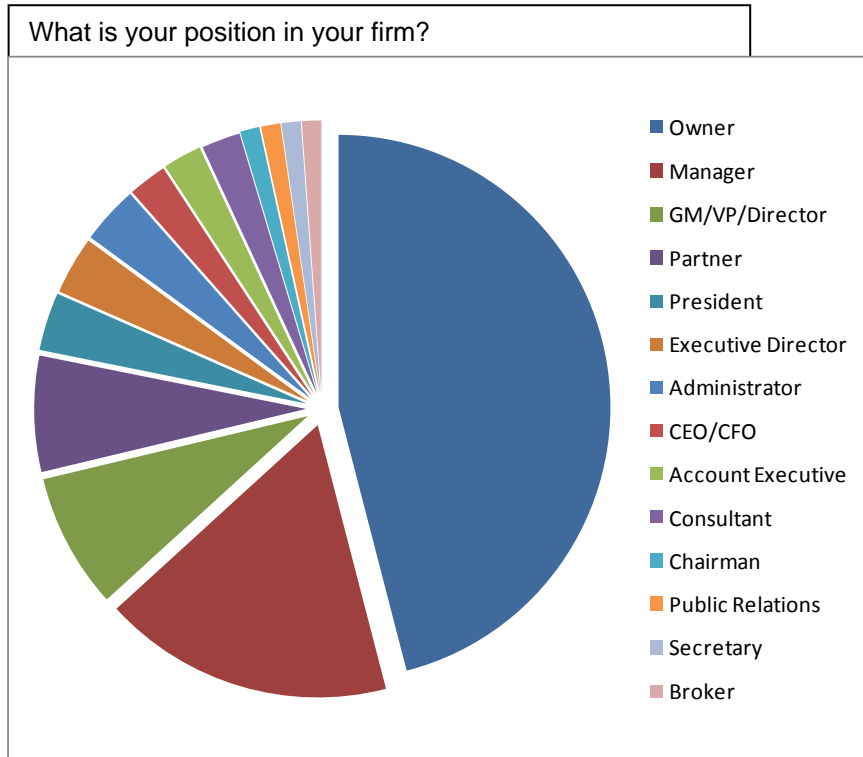| Project Criteria	Score	Guidelines
Project establishes a destination and attracts visitors to the region	0	Project will have no impact in increasing travel and tourism in the region
	3	Project enhances the capacity to support day and overnight tourism to a regional destination
	5	Project enhances or promotes a particular destination resulting in increases in day and overnight tourism
	10	Project creates or enhances a destination resulting in a 2% increase in day or overnight tourism in the region
Project increases international transactions and supports global competitiveness	0	Project does not impact international business or improve the competitive position of any firm or industry
	3	Project promotes the development of new international markets for existing products
	5	Project supports the entry of a firm or industry with a new product into new international markets resulting in the increased competitiveness of the industry

Appendix 5 – Stakeholder Interview Summary Results

The following is a summary of the common responses from the personal interviews of 36 key stakeholders. Each was asked 10 questions.
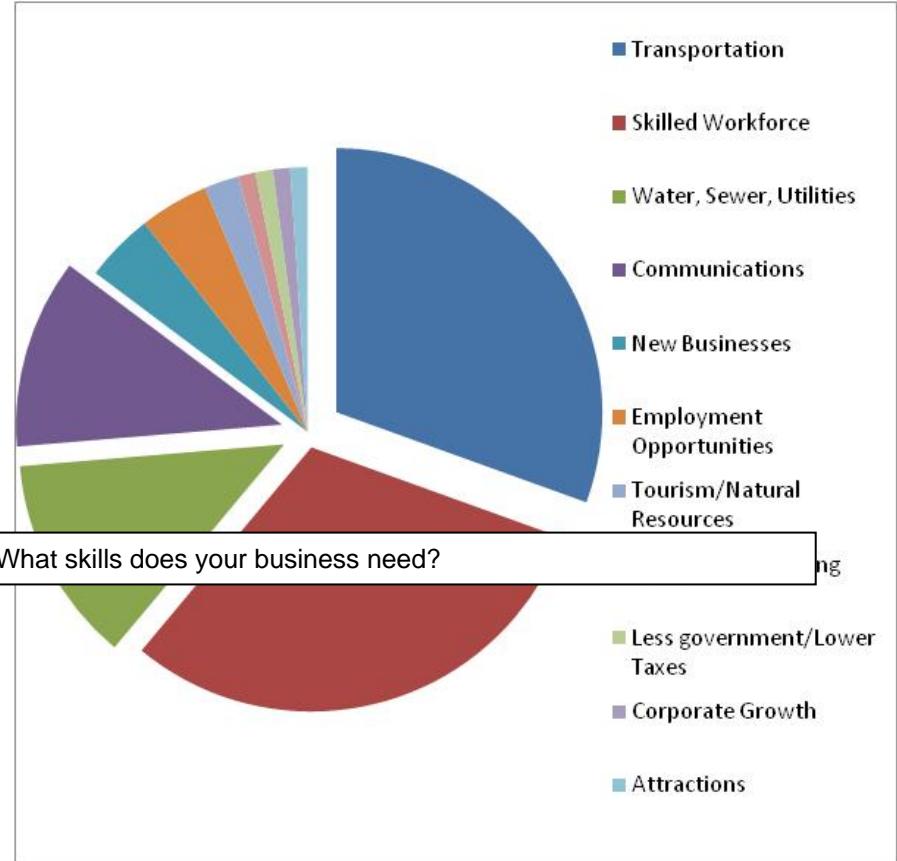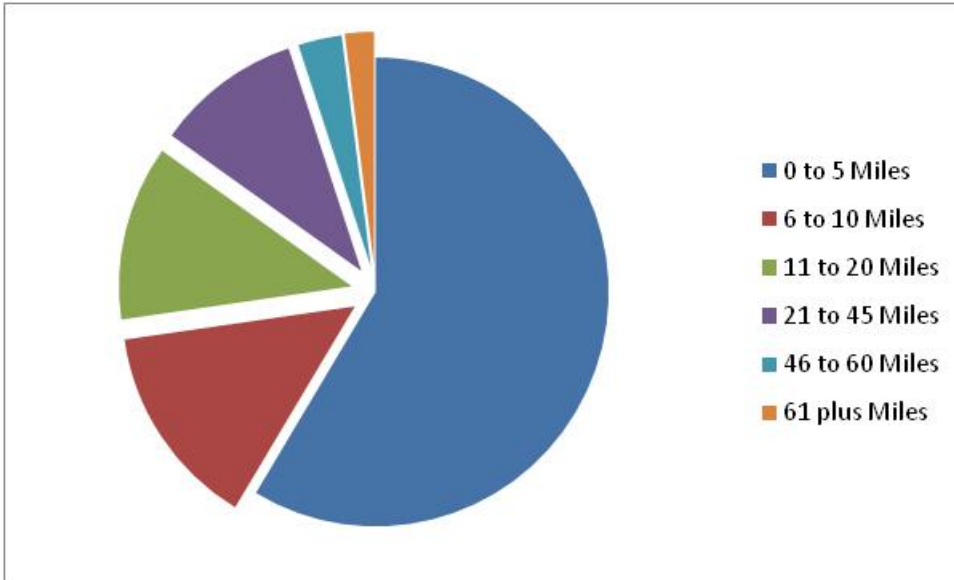
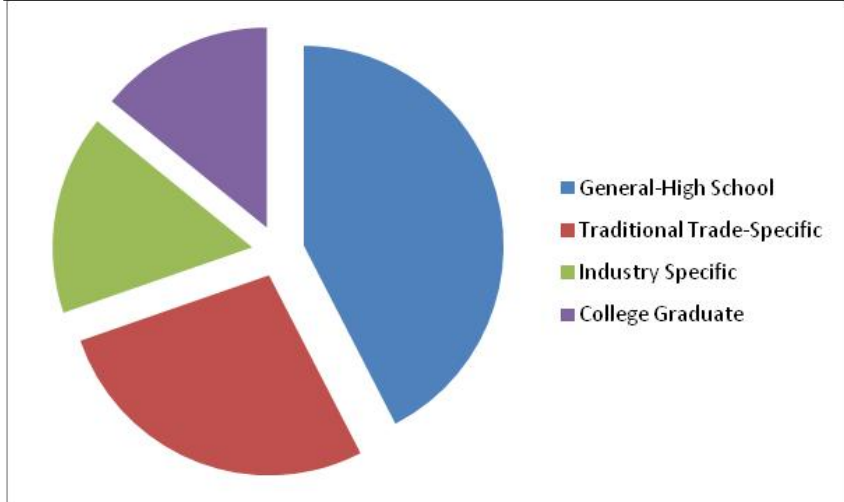|			
1. What do you perceive to be the image of the Northern Tier to: residents, corporate leaders who have business or branch operations in the Northern Tier, industry site selectors, entrepreneurs, visitors?	Rural Humble Backwards Natural	Isolated Limited Opportunity Hometown/small town Friendly	
2. How would you describe the effectiveness of various economic development efforts and agencies in the Northern Tier?	Moderate success Varied success "OK"		
3. What are some examples of successful economic development projects, what made them successful? Why have some others failed, what are some examples?	Don't know Bradford Route 6 bypass Luprino	Mills Pride Taylor Metadyne	
4a. What do you believe are the economic assets of the Northern Tier?	Work ethic Healthy forests Natural resources	Recreation Low property cost Low wages	Workforce Historic/heritage sites Hunting/fishing
4b. What do you believe are the economic liabilities of the Northern Tier?	Workforce, not enough skilled labor Limited outlets for tourism	Water infrastructure No broadband	
5. In what industry sectors does the Northern Tier have a competitive advantage on which it should build?	Wood products Agriculture Natural resources Hardwood	Niche industries Recreation/tourism High tech/IT Gas wells	Land Manufacturing - hard tools Plastics Healthcare
6. Put another way, if you were going to invest your money in the economy of the Northern Tier anticipating a significant return on the investment, in what sector or sectors would you invest?	New manufacturing technologies Laser cutting Finishing, plating		
7. How would you describe the competitive position and outlook of your business in the industry?	Positive overall Furniture industry down		
8. What obstacles exist to taking the Northern Tier economy to the next level?	Small labor force Low number skilled workers Local land use	Infrastructure Small town structure Broadband	Too many municipalities
9. What actions or changes would be necessary to take your business and related businesses to the next level of competitiveness, global competition?	Grow skilled labor Invest to attract skilled labor Government leadership	Invest in public education Expand high scool programs Add value in products	Workforce specific programs
10. What major breakthroughs, initiatives, or projects would substantially impact the economic position of the Northern Tier, its businesses, and its people?	Enterprise zones Education consortium Inprove infrastructure Develop own skilled workers Businesses more attractive in education	Create secndary hardwood process Invent new energy initiatives Build on Mansfield University More health resources Manage local government waste	County-wide zoning and land use Teaching hospital Broadband

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Appendix 6 – Business Survey Results

Selected responses from the survey of business are listed below.

What is your position in your firm?

What are your top 3 needs for your business to grow?

How far do you commute to your business?

Legend:
- 0 to 5 Miles
- 6 to 10 Miles
- 11 to 20 Miles
- 21 to 45 Miles
- 46 to 60 Miles
- 61 plus Miles

Legend:
- Transportation
- Skilled Workforce
- Water, Sewer, Utilities
- Communications
- New Businesses
- Employment Opportunities
- Tourism/Natural Resources
- Less government/Lower Taxes
- Corporate Growth
- Attractions

What skills does your business need?

What kinds of skills do the non-management employees at your business require?

Legend:
- General-High School
- Traditional Trade-Specific
- Industry Specific
- College Graduate

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Appendix 7 – Outreach Summary Results

Northern Tier Regional Strategy and Action Plan
Breakthroughs or Action items for Emergent Themes from LUTED Sessions

Group	Regional Economic Opportunities	Improved Infrastructure	Human Resource Development	Integrated Land Use, Transportation and Economic Development	Regional Identity	Municipal Governance
Bradford	Attract value-added industries Promote region to knowledge-based employers Develop regional website Need development and cultural components to attract visitors	Improved roads: Highway link to key areas, four-lane highway to south central part of state Improved municipal water and sewer Wireless available to all areas Recognize impact of energy costs on regional objectives	Offer post-secondary certification programs for "gold collar" jobs (welders, machinists, electrical) Partnership among area schools, universities and companies to develop relevant regional curricula Private industry to provide scholarships to post-secondary courses for needed employee hiring skills Need more career focused curricula in the post secondary schools Improve educational budgeting and investments Provide more onsite training in private industry to upgrade labor levels Partner with vocational-technical schools for shorter-term, intensive training courses for unskilled labor	Need mandates to force the issue Area-wide land use planning to protect county "flavors" Get townships more involved in planning Mandate or reward land use activity (ex. KOZs) Overcome NIMBY objection Overcome "redneck" mentality (small population in large land area - isolated pockets) Need for municipalities to do own planning Leadership needed from political leaders and legislators There are planning groups available to assist the effort	Develop a "common theme" for the region Have one regional economic development spokesperson	Mandate that all infrastructure grant requests be written on a regional basis Shared municipal services Improved cooperation among county planning departments Consolidation of rural municipal governmental services
Sulllivan	Sullivan County Tourism Group Board Promote tourism for the region opportunities Tax relief for small business	Update Route 220 Passing areas on Route 220 LaPorte area sewage system Some improvements to highway system Look at energy source that will benefit all	Life skills education for all Improved technical training for youth Trades enhanced: carpentry, plumbing, electrical Examining education programs for results Engage youth in shaping regional strategy Make the book *Founding Brothers* required reading in our schools Add to our current education system to include self-esteem, values, ethics, doing a good job	Enforced ordinances by municipalities a must Land use management through proper zoning Utilize vacant building for possible minimum youth security Recognition that secure homes are an integral part of the economy Have some local control of state-owned land such as the ability to extract resources Recreation and better roads Referendum vote on final approvals, keep it local	Promotion marketing plan Involve members of the community, advertise Unify the Northern Tier region Educate all citizens in different groups to work their thinking as a region not as individuals Each section of the region is unique. Expand on uniqueness An attitude of sharing and working together instead of "what do I get out of it"	Strengthen SEDA-COG relationship Unify actions of municipalities You have got to get the municipalities to work together for the good of all Education and accountability of township supervisors to enforce their areas Cooperation of state and local governments, organizations and schools – combined efforts for building leadership for children and adults with recreation, culture -- resulting also in attracting tourism Careful, good planning for the region to achieve infrastructure, unity and identification Cooperation, careful, good planning of all concepts with concerned citizens

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Northern Tier Regional Strategy and Action Plan
Breakthroughs or Action items for Emergent Themes from LUTED Sessions

Group	Regional Economic Opportunities	Improved Infrastructure	Human Resource Development	Integrated Land Use, Transportation and Economic Development	Regional Identity	Municipal Governance
Sullivan (cont'd)			Work with youth organizations to promote employment in the region Promote educational resources in the region such as Job Corps Encourage business to get involved in youth career exploration Community involvement to establish youth groups, recreation activities Listen to youth Provide more recreation for youth Busines driven educational programs Involvement of teenagers, young adults, buy into future	Safeguards against development Environmental stewardship		Local steering communities Work together, decrease competition among municipalities
Susquehanna	Educate land owners to potential for natural gas development Incubator building to help develop industrial park with tech center Incubator building Regional recreational development Tourism Incubator program and strategy Expand artisan programs, marketing events 365 day solution for economic development	Plan for Montrose bypass Infrastructure supporting economic development Set aside taxes and fees for improvement Partner with utilities Develop 10-year transportation plan with townships, PennDOT and private enterprise 706 corridor Secondary roads	Greater education opportunities and curriculum for younger students Continue to review and analyze employer needs, county has good business-education partnerships just need more employers to participate Strive to keep students in schools with higher academic standards Offer language in elementary schools to compete in global economy Career awareness (clusters) Continued improvement in school system Mentoring programs	Prepare for Scranton-NY/NJ commuter rail and impacts Land use plan supporting economic development Zoning districts Farm conversion plans Enforcement of regional codes More financial breaks for farms Offer incentives for clean and green land use projects	Marketing brand - We're Green and Clean Support and market community building events (fairs, farmers markets, arts and crafts, boutique industry) Need to educate populus-not only youth by holding informational meetings, doing press releases, announcements at carnivals, fairs and festivals. Need to go where the people go and put forth information in a style that will appeal to them- not just those people who are forward thinking and involved Improve not in my backyard attitude Expand recognition of Susquehanna River Create River Authority Positive promotion of the region rather than negative	Cooperative municipal resources Combine service such as fire, police and public utilities Partnering among township and boro officials to develop balanced long-range planning Share concepts that have successfully worked in similar communities, utilize tools provided by state and federal government Merge smaller municipalities, work together Municipal cooperation

Northern Tier Regional Strategy and Action Plan
Breakthroughs or Action items for Emergent Themes from LUTED Sessions

Group	Regional Economic Opportunities	Improved Infrastructure	Human Resource Development	Integrated Land Use, Transportation and Economic Development	Regional Identity	Municipal Governance
Susquehanna (cont'd)		Rt 706 funding Additional lower cost energy to support business and residential growth Transportation routes improved Municipal water and sewer upgrade and expansion Clean energy initiatives Lake Montrose water supply-clean lakes Clean energy, RR Rail Trails, Wind Affordable housing mix	Presence of community college and partner with online providers Develop community college and promote within local school districts Improve education at all levels Expand technology job skills: carpenter, mason Eliminate "No Child Left Behind" Increase state funding for education Improve and update educational system to keep students interested, expand career opportunity courses, improve guidance of students Agriculture school Shared vision for education (regional summit for business, school officials) to focus students earlier on industry needs, out-migration Community College with industrial and commercial opportunities, job diversity Are enough amenities available to attract the "Creative Class"	Control commercial growth Clean up Susquehanna River Controlled and educated zoning changes Clear zoning	A realistic assessment of who we are and what we have Involve all people in this type of effort, not just those who can attend meetings during the day Marketing unified theme for the area: agriculture, education, safe Educate everyone: what does it mean and mean to you	
Tioga	Opportunities for farmers: dairy processing, farmers markets Local foods and improved marketing Attract a geothermal heat pump manufacturing plant Attract more business to main streets	Improved reliability of electric power Improve access and reliability of telecommunications Investment in upgrading infrastructure to remain up to date and a viable alternative to other regions within the state I-99 designation	Build indoor activity center, for winter activities such as a driving range, perhaps even put in schools Improve funding for education and training for those who can't pay Partnerships with local industry and educational facilities to ensure increased quality of the workforce and better workforce development Expansion of geriatric services	Natural resources integrated land use policy not just regulations Zoning: PA Wilds Planning Team Zoning Incentives to redevelop existing commercial and industrial sites	Look at tourism as a way of introducing the area to people who may relocate here (telecommuters, home- Bringing all 5 counties together to understand what each county can gain wirking side-by-side for meeting this region's needs	Internet system provide and internet service to all townships and boros GIS in every county, need integrated way to look at the region, GIS based pattern identity Encourage municipal partnerships to remove obstacles to manufacturing locating here Regional approach to economic development

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Northern Tier Regional Strategy and Action Plan
Breakthroughs or Action items for Emergent Themes from LUTED Sessions

Group	Regional Economic Opportunities	Improved Infrastructure	Human Resource Development	Integrated Land Use, Transportation and Economic Development	Regional Identity	Municipal Governance
Tioga (cont'd)	Use of GROW's railroad to divert trucks from highways Industry and companies who use natural resources and agriculture for our people Tioga County residents support Tioga county businesses Tax incentives for manufacturing, retooling, location and expansion, and local farmers Tax incentives to attract businesses to the region, businesses are all inclusive with manufacturing, health care, and tourism Industrial park Additional funds to commit to Tioga County loan program Economic support services paid for from county room tax Value-added growth - explore partnerships with furniture manufacturers about how we can manufacture products from wood or how do we support new company development for secondary products Provide incentives or financial support to create development Formation of venture capital network Business consortia to support value added industries Develop relationships for business attraction	Financial incentives form the state and federal government for infrastructure and workforce development Designation of Rt 15 as I-99 REA type initiative for telecommunications Infrastructure investment in IT/telecommunications. Seek partnership with industry to stay at leading edge Small business incubator with I-99 Improve transportation to allow easier access for training initiatives	Commitment to grow TCDC Technical training for industries and businesses, employees and potential employees Develop entrepreneurship curricula	Educate local and out-of-town homebuyers on the benefits of living in town instead of building out of town Zoning designed around each community with funding for infrastructure as a vehicle for achieving these goals Adoption or buy-in for county zoning More collaborative efforts in Northern Tier and state agencies, ie Mansfield Mobility Study Local or regional zoning Ag preservation (make industry economically feasible) PennDOT, DCED, DCNR to work on Greenway Network		Consolidation of government entities including schools is inevitable Incentives from the state for specific funding Stick or strong arm approach for municipal consolidation
Wyoming	Retention of existing employers Expanded tax incentives to attract new business	Adequacy of medical and health facilitiy Transportation for access to shopping and medical	Business-Education partnerships - school-to-work transition Stem brain drain from people leaving area	Zoning to protect streams and rivers County-wide zoning	Branding	Collaboration Municipal consolidation

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Northern Tier Regional Strategy and Action Plan
Breakthroughs or Action items for Emergent Themes from LUTED Sessions

Group	Regional Economic Opportunities	Improved Infrastructure	Human Resource Development	Integrated Land Use, Transportation and Economic Development	Regional Identity	Municipal Governance
Wyoming (cont'd)	Create an Economic Development Commission Establish entrepreneurial focused programs and support Economic Development strike team with economic development and transportation like the partnership for Procter and Gamble Programs for downtown façade improvements Help businesses realize the value of tourism, realize the value of hospitality and knowledge of the region Promotion of region for tourst visits Streamline permitting process for infrastructure improvements	More public transportation Decide on the best place for growth and focus on transportation to there	Allow businesses to partner with schools to train students for work world Creation of a Northern Tier Leadership Academy View education and training as a strategy, find out what is most needed and train for it Community College and trade school Literacy Technical skills, trade schools and community colleges Provide practical financial education in the schools (volunteer to lead this)	Address availability of sites for small industry with water and sewer available Protect the natural beauty of the area, particularly the Route 6 corridor Branding for the region Eliminating county borders		Alignment of state districts, ie. PennDOT, DEP, etc.
LUTED Executive Committee	Tax incentives for new industry Business retention strategy Develop shovel ready sites for business attraction Building on each county's assets and sharing the understanding as change takes place for the benefit of each economy Expand tourism	Cooperation among companies relating to telecommunications services Have business review region and transportation and other infrastructure is where it can support business Do not reinvent the wheel (wireless sewer, road, broadband, water, school, police coverage) Designate I-99 quickly Upgrade Route 6, but not to 4 lanes	Coops among business and area schools, vo-techs and colleges Educate the young to use the economics that are here Keep young people interested and challenged (health field, existing businesses, home-based)	Zoning versus growth or controlled development areas without taking landowners rights Regional zoning Consistent zoning and regulations among municipalities Seed new developers with balanced vision Work with municipalities, some areas keep from development, some areas encourage development	Find common threads Build on consistencies among areas Identify assets throughout the region Market natural beauty, recreation, etc. The better recreation events (things to do) the better to encourage large businesses to look at the region	Cooperation among neighboring states, ie. I-99, Road C Encourage partnerships with with more incentives for inter-municipal consolidation projects (police forces, school administration) Base grants and funding awards on "regional" concepts and plans, rather than just local, this would encourage partnerships

Northern Tier Regional Strategy and Action Plan
Breakthroughs or Action items for Emergent Themes from LUTED Sessions

Group	Regional Economic Opportunities	Improved Infrastructure	Human Resource Development	Integrated Land Use, Transportation and Economic Development	Regional Identity	Municipal Governance
	Improve capacity to handle events such as the last Route 6 promotion where there were not enough rooms, bathroom facilities, understanding by travelers of distances between spots	Improve parts of the area highways Increased access to wireless hi-tech infrastructure to aid small businesses of tech or in the home Improved road infrastructure to help people get here, but not to speed through Better and more accessible roadways Better roads, road improvements		develop regional zoning ordinances Planning through each municipality Need to prepare land use, plans and ideas and roads for vision and get municipalities on board because they will have to do Update local zoning	Develop plans to encourage small businesses and unique shops to make the region more interesting than just a place to work Develop infrastructure to handle the State's ad campaigns for PA Wilds and Route 6 tourism	
Planning Advisory Committee	Focus on supporting businesses that employ 10-30 employees More employment through business attraction More local payroll Create hi-tech infrastructure to lure cutting edge employers Viable agriculture sector Clear understanding of what economic development is Greater support for entrepreneurs Encourage certain types of growth Consideration of the global economy	Expand transit system-identify high travel corridors and create connections Innovative infrastructure financing mechanisms Build on successes (PA Wilds, Route 6, Heritage Routes) Better transportation routes with EMTA system Commonwealth provide added funding for alternative transportation modes More funding for infrastructure Strategic investments for infrastructure for strategic locations Better road system, enhanced transportation funding, more liquid fuels funds for local government Establish infrastructure improvement as a priority county-wide	Better basic education system, especially transferable programs of use when employees transfer to new jobs Work with schools (primary and secondary) for job ready education Penn College - optimization for technical and job retraining Lackawanna/Keystone/TTEC, Penn Tech Provide opportunities for student recruitment	Encourage growth to restricted areas Focused land use planning throughout the region Preserve natural beauty: effective land management Effective timber and quarry management Provide assistance to small communities to preserve landmark buildings and historic sites Better land use controls Educate officials and residents on the value of good community planning Preserve natural beauty - identify and create strategy to protect those areas Foster county-wide land use controls	Unified regional community with shared goals Remain united - we are all in this together Provide varied cultural resources to expand heritage and attract new residents Create a more visible and recognizable identity for the region Outside funding opportunities (state/federal) Strong state and federal representation Political recognition and support Take better advantage of outside resources (public and private) Promote regional pride	Incentives for collaboration Education on collaboration benefits and success Be the champion and develop champions for municipal collaboration Legislation Consolidate services NT become advocate for municipal cooperation COGS as a positive influence State mandates (UCC issues)

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Northern Tier Regional Strategy and Action Plan
Breakthroughs or Action items for Emergent Themes from LUTED Sessions

Group	Regional Economic Opportunities	Improved Infrastructure	Human Resource Development	Integrated Land Use, Transportation and Economic Development	Regional Identity	Municipal Governance
Planning Advisory Committee (cont'd)	Targeted incentives for downtown revitalization More support and investment for targeted industry clusters Shovel ready industrial sites Development of county based downtown managers Attraction strategy for quality employers (hi-tech companies, manufacturing, communications) Improve the tax structure Educate the community about economic development Prioritize projects to secure funding	Develop funding mechanism for infrastructure improvements Improved mid-level housing Expansion of Northern Tier airport to accommodate regional commercial aircraft Repair and maintenance of existing highway system Privatization of road network based on land use Increased federal and state funding Expand infrastructure to improve living standard Maintenance of existing infrastructure		Work with and support existing entities in the land use arena	Citizen involvement	
NT Staff	Strengthen and complement existing base including agriculture Better prioritize business assistance resources Facilitate development of value added businesses related to our resources	Increase usability of public transportation system Work with utility companies to facilitate better EMTA, passenger rail nearby Speedier routes in and out of region (US 220, 4 lane improve by-passes) Public water and sewer expansions, high-speed internet, natural gas Focus on preventive maintenance of transportation and other infrastructure	Workforce training Reasonable consolidation Increase post-secondary opportunities (including affordability, accessibility, employer-related) Internship programs with higher education institutions Expand vo-tech curriculum and opportunities to meet regional occupational needs Trade apprenticeship programs Youth opportunities for recreation	Utilize and leverage natural resources		Consolidation of services Consolidation of recreational boards Partner with New York on recreation

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