Clearfield County has been approved grant funding through the Shared Municipal Service Grant Program to fill the position of a grant writer. Grant writing services have been a much-requested service from municipalities and local entities that simply could not afford them. As part of the 2006 Comprehensive Plan, Clearfield County made it a goal to seek funding to provide these services.

The new position, once filled, will provide technical assistance to all 51 municipalities within the County. This person would also be able to provide guidance, assistance with the implementation of projects as well as grant preparation, and administrative assistance to those municipalities as well as associated authorities and entities as long as such services are related to the implementation of the many goals and objectives outlined in the County’s Comprehensive Plan Update of 2006.
Recently, Clearfield County’s Recreation & Tourism Authority nominated a potential scenic byway that would traverse the West Branch of the Susquehanna River. This route would follow US 219 from Cherry Tree to Bells Landing (21 miles), then would shift to SR 969 from Bells Landing to Curwensville (11 miles), and then would follow SR 879 from Curwensville to Karthaus (30 miles) for a total length of 62 miles. An additional proposed West Branch Loop is also proposed which would begin 3/10 of a mile before Lumber City Bridge at the intersection of SR 969 and SR 729. The route would then intersect with US Route 219 to Bilger’s Rocks Road (T461) shifting to Greenville Pike Road and then to SR 879 before returning to the original Byway Corridor. The loop would extend the Byway to a total of 77.5 miles.

What is a byway?
A byway is a roadway specially designated by the State based on one or more archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational and scenic intrinsic qualities. The mission of the byways program is to create a distinctive collection of State roads, their stories and treasured places. Byways promote tourism and enhance economic development potential; enhance and improve the visual impact of specific routes; maintain natural resources and intrinsic qualities along such routes; and educate residents and visitors on the history and culture of the Commonwealth.

Why along the West Branch?
Clearfield County has many assets located along the West Branch including its rich lumbering history, its plethora of recreational opportunities, natural wonders such as Bilger’s Rocks, quaint small towns and its panoramic scenic views.

What would be the benefits?
Such a designation would take advantage of the recent State initiatives such as the Susquehanna Greenways and PA Wilds, designed to promote tourism and recreation in this part of the State. Benefits to local municipalities would include free State promotion of the byway through State provided byways signs, byways brochures, advertisement on state websites, a listing in the PA Travel Guide and designation in the State’s official transportation and travel map. Such promotion would assist local communities in their endeavor to enhance local economic development opportunities. Another important benefit would be the funding opportunities available to scenic byways. Funding could be used for safety improvements, construction of byway facilities such as scenic overlooks, creation of access points to recreational assets, efforts to protect resources, marketing, and developing interpretive information.

What is the process & timeline?
Once a highway has been nominated, State officials tour the proposed route and determine if it meets State criteria for such a designation. If so, the entity that nominated the scenic byways is invited to submit a formal application. Application requirements include resolutions of support from 1) the municipalities along the corridor, 2) regional planning organizations, 3) local tourism promotion agencies, and 4) members of the PA General Assembly whose districts bisect the corridor along with documentation demonstrating that no new billboards would be erected along this corridor jeopardizing its scenic beauty. If approved, notification will follow along with press releases and a formal dedication ceremony.

Role of local municipalities
In order to submit an application the local municipalities located along the corridor would have to provide resolutions of support for such a scenic byway designation. Inclusion into the Pennsylvania Byway Program requires that no outdoor advertising can be erected by a property owner within 660 feet of the nearest edge of the right-of-way or more than 660 feet from the nearest edge of the right-of-way if the sign is visible from the byway and the purpose of the sign is that its message be read from the main-traveled way of the byway. Two options exist to accomplish this requirement. The first and easiest method would be to have the corridor designated by State legislation. This would eliminate the need for local municipalities to adopt ordinances prohibiting such signs. If the corridor is not State designated, our local municipalities would have to agree to adopt ordinances restricting signage along the corridor. Sample ordinances would be provided to the local municipalities for consideration. It should be noted that there would be some exceptions allowing for reasonable use of commercial and directional signage.

For more information, please contact our office at (814) 765-5149 or ccp@clearfieldco.org

Pennsylvania Wilds Design Guide (Continued)

(continued from page 1)
Provides techniques and tools that are available to decision-makers when reviewing development applications to encourage preferred design practices, and to develop projects that are fitting with your regional character, community context, and natural environment. It can also serve as a basis for prioritizing capital improvement projects. Projects that advance the principles contained in the Design Guide should have priority over those that would either not achieve or be detrimental to the achievement of the principles of this document.

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The Design Guide is “descriptive” rather than “prescriptive” and will need to be interpreted with some flexibility and professional judgment tailored to the specific circumstances of a particular property or project. It is not the intent to homogenize the character of the built environment, to burden property owners with unnecessary requirements, or to mandate any specific style for new development. To the contrary, individual expression is encouraged.
Consolidating Municipal Services & Intergovernmental Cooperation

Clearfield Borough and Lawrence Township have recently made headlines for their ambitious endeavor to explore avenues of municipal service consolidation as a means to save both money and resources. For several months now these two municipalities have been discussing the possibility of regionalizing both their police and fire departments, ways to work together on public works, opportunities for jointly bidding supplies and services as well as improving the efficiency of operating the municipalities two compost sites.

In a time of ever dwindling financial resources and skyrocketing fuel costs, efforts such as those being considered by Clearfield Borough and Lawrence Township should be applauded and replicated. While many opportunities exist to share equipment and services, many times such opportunities are not explored. In many instances, both money and resources can be saved if services were consolidated. However, it’s not to say that on occasion consolidation of services is not the most feasible option. It is well worth the effort, though, for a municipality to explore opportunities with its neighbors, especially when the state provides a wealth of technical and financial resources.

A local government policy specialist from the Governor’s Center for Local Government Services is currently working with Clearfield Borough & Lawrence Township on the preparation of a joint study to explore police regionalization. The Center can help your municipality as well.

It is fairly simple for municipalities to access these State resources. All that is needed to obtain technical assistance is the submission of a one-page “Letter of Intent” which is available on-line at http://www.newpa.com/default.aspx?id=126. You simply check the appropriate box for the type of technical assistance you are requesting and fill in the municipality’s contact information. The elected municipal officials, at one of their public meetings, must then make a motion to approve submitting the final form to the State.

Types of technical assistance include:
- Regional Police Consolidation
- Police Management
- Volunteer Fire Merger/Consolidation
- Land Use Planning
- Uniform Construction Code
- Finance
- Public Works
- Public Administration
- Home Rule
- Boundary Change
- Cooperative Purchasing
- Intergovernmental Cooperation
- Act 47 Municipalities Financial Recovery Act
- Public Risk Management

The form also provides for an “other” category if the type of assistance you are looking for is not listed.

In addition to technical assistance, two financial grant programs are specifically available for multi-municipal initiatives. They are as follows:

Regional Police Assistance Grant Program
Provides grant funds to two or more municipalities that regionalize police operations. Grants are used to pay for regional police chief salary and other related expenses. Grants are awarded up to $99,000 for a period of up to three years. To apply, contact the Center for Local Government Services at 1-888-223-6837.

Shared Municipal Services Grant Program
Provides grant funds that promote cooperation among municipalities. Encourages more efficient and effective delivery of municipal services on a cooperative basis. Two or more municipalities or Council of Governments may apply. Grants can be used for combined police records administration, shared personnel activities, joint ownership of equipment, shared data processing operations, cooperative building code programs and Council of Government start up funding. There are no minimum or maximum grants awards, however grants typically range between $10,000 and $25,000. A 50% match is required. To apply, contact the Center for Local Government Services at 1-888-223-6837.

Tolling of Interstate 80

The Transportation Funding and Reform Commission issued a report in November 2006, which confirmed that a funding crisis exists for transportation facilities within the Commonwealth. The report stated that “Pennsylvania has more than twice the percentage of structurally deficient bridges than the national average, and more than a third of the 21,000 miles of state owned secondary roads rated poor.” In response to this report the General Assembly considered options such as steep increases in the gasoline tax and other fees and/or taxes. But in the end it was decided that tolling of interstate 80 was the best option and thus resulted in the passage of Act 44 on July 18, 2007.

Under Act 44, the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (PTC) will lease Interstate 80 from PennDOT and implement a tolling system. Which will generate (continued on page 4)
National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor

The National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor (NIETC) has stemmed out of Section 216(a) of the Federal Power Act (created by Section 1221(a) of the Energy Policy Act of 2005), which directs the United States Department of Energy (DOE) to identify transmission congestion and constraint problems. In addition, it authorizes the Secretary, in his discretion, to designate geographic areas where transmission congestion constraints adversely affect consumers as National Interest Electric Transmission Corridors (NIETC).

The DOE announced (on October the 2) the designation of two corridors, the Mid-Atlantic NIETC and the Southwest Area NIETC. The Mid-Atlantic Corridor which would affect 52 of Pennsylvania’s 67 counties consists of a 240-mile, 500-kilovolt transmission line that would encompass parts of Ohio, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York, Maryland, and Virginia. Counties of Pennsylvania that could be impacted are as follows: Adams, Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Bedford, Berks, Blair, Bradford, Bucks, Butler, Cambria, Carbon, Centre, Chester, Clearfield, Clinton, Columbia, Cumberland, Dauphin, Delaware, Fayette, Franklin, Fulton, Greene, Huntingdon, Indiana, Jefferson, Juniata, Lackawanna, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lehigh, Luzerne, Mifflin, Monroe, Montgomery, Montour, Northampton, Northumberland, Perry, Philadelphia, Pike, Schuylkill, Snyder, Somerset, Susquehanna, Union, Wayne, Washington, Westmoreland, Wyoming, and York.

The Act also authorizes the Federal Energy Commission (FERC) to issue, under certain circumstances, permits for new transmission facilities within a National Corridor. Generally, if an applicant does not receive approval from a State to site a proposed new transmission project within a National Corridor within a year, FERC may consider whether to issue a permit and to authorize construction of the project.

In determining the boundaries of the two National Corridor, DOE did not carve out environmentally sensitive lands because the statute does not require exclusion of such lands from a National Corridor. This proposed pre-emption of state and local land use and permitting requirements has triggered a backlash of opposition from those states to be affected. In PA alone, Governor Rendell, the PA Utility Commission, and county planning officials, to name a few, have publicly issued statements in opposition. The Governor argued such a designation is premature, supplants the Commonwealth’s rights, and may lead to projects that do not satisfy the needs of the state or nation. The Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PUC) filed for rehearing with the DOE over its National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor (NIETC) while also filing suit against the designation in U.S. District Court.

Other issues of concern identified include:

- Health concerns. Grassroots groups have expressed alarm over the possible effects of exposure to the electromagnetic radiation that emanates from high-voltage power lines.
- Intrusion into scenic and historic areas. Environmental impacts to areas currently under federal or state protection.
- Property values. Grassroots Groups have expressed concerns over the decrease in property values that could arise based on the negative impacts of the power lines.
- Environmental concerns. Local governments have expressed that the power line “fails to set forth progressive energy policy, and does not provide incentives for conservation, advance clean generation technologies, reduce greenhouse gas emissions or competitive energy supply markets.”

For more information please, visit http://nietc.anl.gov/

Tolling of Interstate 80 (continued)

(continued from page 3)

an approximate revenue of $116 billion over the 50 year period. Of the overall revenue, $83.3 billion will go to PennDOT for general transportation funding, $8 billion will be directly invested back into Interstate 80, and potentially up to $24.8 billion dedicated to highway and bridge projects. Of the funds solely dedicated to highway and bridge projects $30 million annually will be distributed to local municipal roads and bridges through the State Liquid Fuels Program.

Act 44 does limit the number of toll facilities that may be constructed on Interstate 80 to no more than 10 facilities over the 311 mile Corridor. The toll collection facilities will be mainline plazas rather than ramp collections as on the existing Turnpike system. With 59 existing interchanges, there will be an average, one toll plaza for every 5 to 6 interchanges. The locations of the toll plazas will try to be placed at locations that will minimize the impact on local drivers. Some of the local concerns are as follows:

- The potential of hindering or stopping economic growth in areas that are currently focused at the interchanges of Interstate 80.
- The negative impact or loss of jobs from businesses that rely on the use of Interstate 80 for commerce.
- The impact on maintenance and repair of highways that will see an increase of usage due to alternative more cost-effective routes.

The Federal Highway Administration must make two approvals of the proposed project before the possible tolling of Interstate 80 could begin, which could be as early as spring/summer of 2010. For more information, please visit www.paturnpike.com/i80/.

Websites of Interest

Sample Ordinances
www.psats.org/request.html
http://ordinances.blogware.com

Local Government Law Library
www.newpa.com/defualt.aspx?id=252

Land Use Law Library
www.landuselawinpa.com

DCED Funding & Program Finder
www.newpa.com/programFinder.aspx
Recently Awarded Grants

Recently the State awarded grants for projects ranging from recreational to flood control throughout Pennsylvania. The following local entities were awarded funding:

**Bigler Township**, $64,000 to develop the Madera School Park, including a skate park, pavilion, access road, and parking. Work also includes landscaping and improving access for the disabled.

**Clearfield Borough**, $6,000 to prepare a master-site development plan for the 1.58 acre Bucky Strunk Memorial Softball Field.

**Hilltop Howlers Snowmobile Club**, $9,800 to buy a trail groomer to maintain about 500 miles of trails in Moshannon State Forest.

**Lawrence Township**, $52,000 to develop access to the West Branch of the Susquehanna River. Work includes construction of an access road, parking, a boat launch, improved access for the disabled, and landscaping.

**Westover Borough**, $24,000 to improve Mosser Park, including construction of basketball and volleyball courts, a parking area, improved access for the disabled, and landscaping.

**Curwensville Borough**, $42,000 to purchase a boom mower to maintain vegetation along the Tanners Run Project and to remove sediment and debris from Tanners Run stream channel.

Funding is available for a variety of projects ranging from AMD (acid mine drainage) treatment, dirt and gravel road improvements, flood protection, agricultural preservation, economic and commercial development, recreational, and historic preservation.

An excellent tool for identifying funding sources is the Pennsylvania Rural Access Guide. The Pennsylvania Rural Access Guide is a comprehensive database of state, federal, and nonprofit/foundation grants, loans and technical assistance resources created by the Center for Rural Pennsylvania, a legislative agency of the Pennsylvania General Assembly, and the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors.

The guide was designed to help local government officials, nonprofit organizations, community groups, and individuals find the assistance they need for projects and programs.

The guide is available free online at http://www.ruralpa.org/access.cfm

You may search for a specific program by selecting an agency name, the type of program you are looking for, or a specific keyword.

Remember the County’s Planning Office is a resource that is often overlooked. Our office would be happy to assist you in identifying funding sources and will be able to provide more extensive grant writing services once the County’s new Grant Writer is online.

**Available Funding**

**The Pennsylvania Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)**

**Details:** Helps low income people pay their heating bills through home heating energy assistance grants and crisis grants. You need not have an unpaid bill to receive home heating energy assistance. You can receive this money without being in the Cash Assistance program. No lien is placed on your property if you receive this help.

**Contact:** 1-866-857-7095

**Keystone Historic Preservation Grant Program**

**Details:** Funding under this program is available to nonprofit organizations and local governments for preserving or restoring historic resources listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

**Deadline:** 5/1/2008

**Contact:** Scott Doyle  
(717) 783-6012

**Growing Greener II**

**Details:** Funding under this program is to clean up rivers and streams; protect natural areas, open spaces and working farms; and shore up key programs to improve quality of life and revitalize communities across the Commonwealth.

**Deadline:** 4/2008

**Contact:** DEP  
www.depweb.state.pa.us/growinggreener

**Land Use Planning and Technical Assistance Program**

**Details:** Provides grant funds for the preparation of community comprehensive plans and the ordinances to implement them.

**Deadline:** Year round

**Contact:** Governor’s Center for Local Government @ 1-888-223-6837

**DCNR Grant Programs**

**Details:** The Community Conservation Partnerships Program is a combination of several funding sources and grant programs. The C2P2 contains the following grant components: Community Recreation, Land Trusts, Rails-to-Trails, Rivers Conservation, Snowmobile/ATV, Heritage Parks, Land and Water Conservation Fund and Recreational Trails. Generally, all components require a match, usually 50 percent of cash or in-hand contributions.

**Deadline:** Spring Application Round 4/25/2008

**Contact:** DCNR  
http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/grants/
Upcoming Events

Training:
Grant Preparation
Date: 5/7/2008
Location: Williamsport
Cost: $120.00
Contact: Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs at 1-800-232-7722
Details: This class is designed to teach you how to prepare your most effective grant proposal. Information will be provided to ensure your project will be considered for all available funding. Discussion will include important steps to be taken to guarantee submission of the most thorough application possible. Instructors will review the on-line grant application submission process and some of the more helpful grant writing web sites. Also, various funding sources will be covered.

Newly Elected Borough Officials
Date: 2/29-3/1/2008
Location: State College
Cost: $150.00
Contact: (814) 865-8500
Details: This 2-day course is designed to help you become knowledgeable borough officials, providing guidance on numerous issues including:
- Structure and organization of borough government
- Duties and responsibilities as an elected official
- Running effective and legal meetings
- Managing finances and services

What Every Township Supervisor Needs to Know: Basic Training for Elected Office
Date: 2/16 & 2/23/2008
Location: Centre County
Cost: Session I $85, Session II $85, and both $135
Contact: (717) 763-0930
http://psats.org/news_newly-elected_training.html

DCNR Grant Workshops
Dates: 2/13/2008 and 2/20/2008
Locations: Altoona and Clarion
Contact: Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society at (814) 234-4272
Details: You will learn about changes to the Spring 08 Grants Program, gain a better understanding of how to develop an excellent project, receive samples and overviews of “excellent” funded projects, meet recreation and park advisors and grant project managers, learn about the Bureau’s new website and web resources.

Conferences:
Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs Conference Spring 2008
Date: 3/30-4/1/2008
Location: Grantville
Contact: (717) 236-9526
www.boroughs.org/conferences

Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors 86th Annual Educational Conference
Date: 5/11-5/14/2007
Location: Hershey
Contact: (717) 763-0930
www.psats.org/convention.next.html