Our Mission
To help businesses expand their markets, generate employment, improve the local economy, and plan for the future development of the Northern Tier region.

Our Vision
To be a leader in developing people, businesses, and communities for a globally competitive region.

Cover photo:
Double Run, Worlds End State Park
Sullivan County, Pennsylvania
The Full Commission

Bradford
Brian Canfield
William Farley
Sharon Kaminsky
Paul Kreischer
Doug McLinko
Jody Place
Hank Pliske
Fred Robinson
Mark Smith
Raymond Stolinas
John Sullivan

Sullivan
Darla Bortz
Fred Fiester
Bob Getz
Craig Harting
Mike Hufnagel
Norman Miller
Betty Reibson
James Rogers

Susquehanna
Leon Allen
David Darrow
Mike Giangrieco
Dennis Phelps
Katherine Shelly
Rick Soden
MaryAnn Warren

Tioga
Robert Blair
Erick Coolidge
Tom Freeman
Mark Hamilton
Fred LaVancher
Lindsey Sikorski
Sue Vogler
Jeffrey Wilson

Wyoming
Stark Bartron
Pete Butler
Mike Castellano
Matthew Dougherty
Alex Fried
Judy Kraft-Mead
Anthony Litwin
Richard Schwoebel
Paul Weilage

Advisory Committees

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Sam Anderson
Robert Blair
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Loren Stone
Charles Stringham
Sandy Voda
Terri Zimmerman

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Peggy Black
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Joe Ferretti
Fred Fiester
Jim Pietrowski
Sheryl Potocek
Kevin Rimmey
James Rogers
Richard Schwoebel
Richard Soden
Jeffrey Wilson

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Joseph Plonski
Raymond Stolinas
James Weaver
Paul Weilage
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Robert Neira
Betty Reibson
Lindsey Sikorski
Chris Smith
Jack Taylor
Tony Ventello

northern tier regional planning & development commission
Much was accomplished in the Northern Tier in 2009, and we are pleased to share highlights in this Annual Report. Although the Northern Tier Regional Planning and Development Commission (NTRPDC) has always operated as a lean and efficient organization, a major emphasis this past year was finding ways to accomplish even more with even less.

Because of a substantial reduction in state funding, four valuable NTRPDC employees lost their jobs in 2009. These individuals were loyal and hardworking members of our team, and this turn of events has been difficult for all of us. Further, although those positions were eliminated, their workload was not, and had to be absorbed by the rest of our staff. We commend our entire team for their professionalism during our forced transition into an even leaner organization.

Despite having fewer staff and resources, there is a growing volume of work to do to serve the people, businesses, and local governments of Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, and Wyoming counties. The natural gas industry is one of the most visible examples of change in the Northern Tier, and is at once our greatest opportunity and greatest challenge. The economic opportunities introduced by Marcellus Shale activity have been a boon to our region—and especially welcome now, when money is tight and jobs are scarce nationwide. Still, that activity translates to heavy traffic and wear and tear on our roads and bridges and a demand for infrastructure and municipal services that are difficult to pay for and deliver quickly. It also raises important questions about how to best protect our environment and the character of our towns and countryside.

Our staff works hard to provide reliable information and guidance in navigating these issues, and to help ensure that people here in the Northern Tier derive as much benefit as possible from natural gas development. For example, our FIT4 Natural Gas training program helps prepare local workers for good jobs in the gas industry. We convened a Northern Tier Natural Gas Summit for Municipal Officials in October 2009, bringing together experts on various aspects of the gas industry to advise local governments. An upcoming business-to-business expo will link entrepreneurs with potential gas industry opportunities. We have developed a page on our Web site with links and resources relevant to natural gas development. And every day our staff responds to inquiries and directs residents, businesses, and local officials to sources of more specialized services or expertise.

With the vision and dedication of NTRPDC staff, the Executive Committee, and Advisory Committees—as well as the hard work and spirit of the people of the Northern Tier—we continue to work toward a future where our way of life is preserved and our resources are used wisely to promote prosperity and opportunity.

Kevin D. Abrams
Executive Director

Betty Reibson
Chairperson
# Funding Sources

## Federal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appalachian Regional Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enterprise Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local Development District</td>
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<td>U.S. Department of Commerce</td>
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<td>Economic Development Administration</td>
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<td>U.S. Department of Defense</td>
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<td>Procurement Technical Assistance</td>
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<td>U.S. Department of Transportation</td>
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<td>Federal Highway Administration</td>
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<td>Workforce Investment Act</td>
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<td>American Recovery and Reinvestment Act</td>
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<td>U.S. Department of Health and Human Services</td>
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**Federal Total**

$5,486,000

## State

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania Department of Transportation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rural Transportation Program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Department of Community and Economic Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enterprise Development</td>
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<td>Business Retention and Expansion Program</td>
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<td>Export Development</td>
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<td>Keystone Opportunity Expanded Zone (KOEZ)</td>
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<td>E-Commonwealth</td>
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<td>Energy</td>
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<td>Pennsylvania Route 6 Heritage Corporation</td>
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<td>Municipal Technology Assistance Program (MTAP)</td>
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**State Total**

$1,100,000

## Local

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>County Contributions</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
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**Local Total**

$60,000

**Total Program Funds**

$6,646,000
NTRPDC assists communities in accessing public financing by targeting the most appropriate funding sources and preparing grant and loan proposals. Funds help pay for shared municipal services, machinery and equipment, infrastructure, main street revitalization, parks and recreation, historic preservation, and emergency services. Grants and loans awarded in 2009 include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recipient</th>
<th>Use of Funds</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wyalusing Township (Bradford County)</td>
<td>Playground equipment, village of Camptown</td>
<td>DCED Community Revitalization Grant</td>
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<td>Herrick Township (Susquehanna County)</td>
<td>Community park</td>
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<td>Westfield Borough (Tioga County)</td>
<td>Generator for fire hall/community center</td>
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<td>Gibson Township (Susquehanna County)</td>
<td>Municipal truck purchase</td>
<td>DCED Local Government Loans</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mansfield Borough (Tioga County)</td>
<td>Rehabilitation of the Mansfield Armory</td>
<td>DCED Local Government Loans</td>
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<td>Towanda Borough (Bradford County)</td>
<td>Planning project</td>
<td>DCED Planning Grant</td>
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<td>Colley Township (Sullivan County)</td>
<td>Municipal building repairs</td>
<td>DCED Community Revitalization Grant</td>
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<td>Tri-Borough Municipal Authority</td>
<td>Sludge truck purchase</td>
<td>DCED Shared Municipal Services Grant</td>
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<td>Middleton Township (Susquehanna County)</td>
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<td>Gibson Township (Susquehanna County)</td>
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<td>Thompson Hose Company (Susquehanna County)</td>
<td>Heavy duty rescue/pumper fire truck</td>
<td>PEMA Loan</td>
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<td>The Rail-Trail Council of Northeastern Pennsylvania</td>
<td>Endless Mountains Trail Feasibility Study</td>
<td>DCED Community Revitalization Grant</td>
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DCED = Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development
PEMA = Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency
## Loan Impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Borrower</th>
<th>Jobs Retained</th>
<th>Jobs Created</th>
<th>Loan Amount</th>
<th>Leveraged Amount</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Alfred Jones Farm</td>
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<td>$75,000</td>
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<td>ARARI Investments</td>
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<td>Drew E. and Lisa A. Remley</td>
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<td>Moose’s Munchies, Inc.</td>
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<td>Quality Insulation Solutions</td>
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<td>R.T. Griffis &amp; Sons Lumber Co.</td>
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<td>Triple H Farms, Inc.</td>
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<td>Wysox Equities, LLC</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Loan Impact</strong></td>
<td><strong>63</strong></td>
<td><strong>20</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,355,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>$4,373,952</strong></td>
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### Helping Local Businesses Grow

Small Business Loans assist Northern Tier entrepreneurs in starting or expanding businesses, which leads to more jobs and more money staying right here in the Northern Tier.

One of several 2009 loan recipients was Ryan Lightner, a high school teacher in the Southern Tioga School District who works as a contractor during the summers. In 2009, he and his wife built a house in Covington, and through that experience Ryan became interested in starting his own spray foam insulation business. He launched Quality Insulation Solutions with a Small Business Loan from NTRPDC.

Ryan had secured his contractor’s license and insurance, but needed money to buy spray foam equipment. Because he and his wife had recently taken out a construction loan to build their house, options for
business loans were limited, and applying for a traditional business loan through a bank would have been complex. The loan officer suggested that Ryan contact NTRPDC.

“NTRPDC’s Loan Program staff were extremely helpful, and even came to Covington to pick up my business plan and deliver loan papers so that my wife and I didn’t miss work. They helped secure a $25,000 loan at a favorable interest rate, which made it possible for me to buy the trailer and equipment I needed to get started,” Ryan says. Quality Insulation Solutions is gearing up for the 2010 construction season. “With everyone interested in energy conservation, highly efficient spray foam is expected to be a profitable specialty,” he notes. Ryan expects to hire employees as his business grows.

ARC Grants Expand Opportunities

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) is a federal-state partnership that supports economic development in the Appalachian Region. Each year, NTRPDC works with our economic development committee and board to prioritize projects for possible funding from ARC. NTRPDC writes proposals and grant applications on behalf of Northern Tier applicants to secure funding.

There were two recipients of ARC funding in 2009: Factoryville Borough/Clinton Township Joint Municipal Authority for a sewage treatment expansion ($300,000), and the Northern Tier Career Center in Towanda to establish a welding technology program ($300,000).

Factoryville Sewage Treatment Plant Expansion

Factoryville Borough’s sewage treatment plant is critically overloaded and in need of upgrades to meet current Chesapeake Bay watershed discharge requirements. The sewer facilities of neighboring Keystone College are also operating over capacity—the college has experienced significant growth in student population over the past five years, and hosts numerous events that bring an estimated 50,000 extra visitors to the campus each year. Further, three areas of Clinton Township adjacent to the Borough of Factoryville were found to have significant sewage disposal needs. These areas, as well as Keystone College, will be linked to the improved Factoryville sewage treatment plant.

When upgrades are complete, new connections will be able to be added to the sewer system, enabling businesses to expand and additional development to occur. ARC funds will help offset the costs of improvements to minimize increases to user rates.

Welding Technology Program

Demand for skilled welders is increasing dramatically, especially with construction of natural gas pipelines throughout the area. The Northern Tier Career Center’s Welding Technology Program is designed to help position local workers for job opportunities in the welding field. Construction was recently completed on a $9.2 million facility to house the program, developed in accordance with the Pennsylvania Department of Education Program of Study for Welding Technology. Classes began in September 2009. ARC funds were used for certain start-up expenses as well as equipment, textbooks, materials, curriculum, and professional development. Construction and other program development costs were funded by various federal, state, and regional sources.
One of the most significant recent changes to life in the Northern Tier has been the development of the Marcellus Shale that underlies our region. Natural gas drilling affects each of us in some way. Although no one has all the answers, NTRPDC actively works to help the region’s residents, businesses, and local governments navigate this new industry.

Handling Inquiries
NTRPDC staff field numerous inquiries each week related to natural gas. Questions range from environmental concerns to how to do business with gas companies, and include calls from gas companies themselves seeking guidance on real estate, workforce availability, infrastructure, and so on. NTRPDC provides information and helps direct callers to sources of more specialized services or expertise.

Convening Experts
In October 2009, NTRPDC convened the Northern Tier Natural Gas Summit for Municipal Officials. The day-long event brought together experts on various aspects of the gas industry to advise local governments. The keynote speaker was Terry Engelder, Ph.D., Professor of Geosciences at Penn State University, considered the leading authority on the Marcellus Shale gas play. Dr. Engelder spoke about how the gas industry has developed, its economic impact in Pennsylvania, and the use of natural gas versus other types of energy.

Panel discussions covered a range of topics. Representatives from the Susquehanna River Basin Commission, Penn State University, and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection discussed water quality monitoring, wetlands impact, and the use of water in hydraulic fracturing. PennDOT and an engineering consultant discussed the impact of heavy gas industry equipment on roads, and posting and bonding versus maintenance agreements. The Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Education Institute and Penn State Cooperative Extension offered guidance for municipalities on planning for the industry’s impact on our communities. Another panel presented the viewpoint of gas companies, with representatives of Chesapeake Energy, Fortuna Energy, and Chief Oil & Gas.

Training Workers
The summit was one of many gas-related programs. NTRPDC also hosted a series of Penn State webinars on Marcellus Shale topics. At one of the commission’s 2009 quarterly meetings, a representative of the Pennsylvania College of Technology spoke about employment projections related to the natural gas industry. To prepare local workers for jobs with gas companies, NTRPDC launched a FIT4 Natural Gas training program.

Providing Resources
NTRPDC also provides information and links on its Web site related to the gas industry (www.northerntier.org/gas-Leasing.php) as part of its effort to serve as a clearinghouse for information. Events slated for 2010 include a Marcellus Shale Business-to-Business Expo in June at the Troy Fairgrounds. As the gas industry evolves in the Northern Tier, NTRPDC staff continue to educate themselves and others on the many issues related to this industry.
Local jobs are touted as one of the benefits of natural gas activity in the Northern Tier, but most jobs associated with extracting gas from Marcellus Shale require specialized skills—and workers who can handle hard physical labor, long hours, and challenging working conditions. To help local workers get up to speed, NTRPDC’s Workforce Investment Board and the Central Pennsylvania Workforce Development Corporation partnered with the Pennsylvania College of Technology to launch the training program FIT4 Natural Gas.

Reviewing the Basics
The 160-hour course begins with a week of assessment and “soft skills” training led by PA CareerLink®. Topics include resume development, interview techniques, and other skills required to secure a job and become a successful employee in any field. Participants are also introduced to the rigors of life as a natural gas industry worker.

Technical Training
Those who demonstrate a commitment to the program and the necessary aptitude and attitude then complete technical training, delivered by Penn College and the Marcellus Shale Education and Training Center. The curriculum includes training to qualify for a 10-hour OSHA certificate, First Aid/CPR certificate, and Defensive Driving certificate. OSHA forklift operation training and oilfield heavy equipment operation and excavation are covered, as well as oilfield basics.

Networking Opportunities
Upon completion, a networking session enables newly qualified workers to meet with potential employers in the natural gas industry—an opportunity to jump-start a successful career.

FIT4 Natural Gas is funded through a Career Opportunities Grant by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry. The program was developed in 2009 with input from area gas companies, and successfully piloted in early 2010. Classes are scheduled throughout the five-county NTRPDC region in 2010.

Participants learn oilfield basics and are introduced to the rigors of a job in the natural gas industry.
Making traffic flow better, making it easier to get around on foot or by bicycle, making our small towns inviting, thriving places…. Most of our local planning and construction projects in 2009 were driven by such goals, which taken together make transportation easier and life better in the Northern Tier. These efforts align with Pennsylvania’s Smart Transportation initiative, and have benefitted from state funding set aside to improve communities.

**What is Smart Transportation?**
Smart Transportation is an approach to transportation development that considers the big picture, rather than only how to accommodate more and more cars and trucks. It’s really common sense—roadway projects should be appropriate for their surroundings, projects should produce the greatest possible benefit per dollar, pedestrians and bicyclists should be accommodated, transit should be improved, the character of our communities should be respected and enhanced, and our neighborhoods and Main Streets should be great places to be. (See [http://www.smart-transportation.com/themes.html](http://www.smart-transportation.com/themes.html) for the full list of Smart Transportation criteria.)

To support Smart Transportation in the Northern Tier and position our area to receive state and federal funding for related improvements, NTRP-DC has undertaken planning studies in several communities to examine and prioritize transportation and community enhancement needs.

**Wellsboro at Work on Improvements**
In 2009, the Wellsboro Enhancement Strategy and Mobility Plan was completed. Local leaders and the general public in the Borough of Wellsboro, as well as adjoining Charleston Township and Delmar Township (Tioga County), helped identify issues—everything from congested intersections to sidewalks in poor condition to vacant commercial properties—and considered how these issues could best be addressed. The result of the Wellsboro study was a list of 16 recommendations and related action items to help guide future projects (see [www.WellsboroMobility.com](http://www.WellsboroMobility.com)).

Improvements are already under way. The top issue identified by the public and traffic engineers was the need to install a traffic signal at the intersection of Main Street/Tioga Street/Charleston Street (Route 6 near Pizza Hut). NTRPDC has secured funding to design intersection improvements, and alternatives will be presented to the public in Spring 2010.

A project Web site and online survey facilitated two-way communication with study area residents. www.WellsboroMobility.com
Money is not the only cost to consider with regard to transportation improvements. We need to be careful about how much open land we consume, what our transportation habits are doing to the environment, and how our communities are being shaped by the transportation facilities we build. To ensure these issues are properly considered and money is well spent, federal and state government have numerous requirements that must be met and formal processes that must be followed depending on the type and size of a project.

Also identified was the need to upgrade and synchronize the Borough’s four traffic signals. NTRPDC secured a grant to install new signal equipment, which is currently being evaluated. The new traffic lights are expected to include pedestrian countdown phases that will make it easier for Wellsboro residents and visitors to cross streets by foot or wheelchair.

Individuals who use wheelchairs or are vision-impaired also depend upon sidewalk cuts that transition from sidewalk height to the street level at a certain angle, and include tactile strips—a metal strip with large bumps to indicate where the sidewalk ends and the street begins. These improvements were completed in Wellsboro in 2009 as part of a repaving effort.

Borough officials have taken the lead on other important initiatives such as developing a maintenance program for local bridges. The Borough engaged a bridge inspector to assess and prioritize needed repairs and improvements. NTRPDC can work with the Borough to add those projects to the regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which puts them in line for available state and federal funding.

**Similar Studies across the Northern Tier**

The Wellsboro Enhancement Strategy and Mobility Plan followed similar initiatives in other Northern Tier communities. In 2007 the Mansfield Revitalization Strategy and Mobility Analysis was completed, which examined the entire corridor from Richmond Township through Mansfield and Putnam and Covington townships. One issue identified was the need to make Mansfield’s primary intersection—Route 6 and Business 15—less congested for vehicles and easier for pedestrians to cross. Several potential benefits associated with the replacement of this traffic signal will be weighed by NTRPDC and Mansfield Borough. Work is also under way to better accommodate pedestrians in the vicinity of Wal-Mart.

In Athens Township (Bradford County), the busy Elmira Street corridor and its four intersections was studied in 2006. Projects are being advanced to synchronize traffic flow through those intersections and add pedestrian crossings.

NTRPDC has submitted a proposal to PennDOT to help fund a mobility analysis in Troy. Issues will include how to accommodate heavier traffic such as school buses and vehicles associated with the natural gas industry in the context of an historic small town.

In all, NTRPDC received $1.2 million in 2009 through the Pennsylvania Community Transportation Initiative (PCTI) to assist seven communities in making improvements that had been identified as priorities through local studies and were consistent with Smart Transportation criteria.

Questions about Transportation Planning?

In 2009 NTRPDC completed a series of three brochures, along with Web site content, that explain what transportation planning is, how ideas become projects, and the best ways to get involved. See http://www.northerntier.org/transPlanning.php.
Northern Tier products and resources are in demand in many other countries. Not only does that mean more revenue for local businesses and more local jobs, but businesses with diverse customer bases are typically in better positions to weather economic downturns.

Still, for small businesses, getting connected to those markets and navigating the complexities of international trade can be daunting. NTRPDC’s Export Assistance Program helps local businesses make that leap, and—literally—open up a world of opportunity.

In 2009, NTRPDC assisted 37 export clients, providing essential services such as training, export counseling, and trade assistance, all at no cost to those Northern Tier businesses.

**Tapping into State Resources**

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania boasts the largest network of international trade representatives of any state—24 people representing 23 countries. Trade reps are employed by the state to assist Pennsylvania businesses in identifying, understanding, and connecting with international markets.

NTRPDC serves as a liaison, assessing the readiness of local businesses for exporting and guiding them in tapping into state resources.

To save local businesses the time and money required for a trip to Harrisburg, NTRPDC typically hosts the trade representatives at least once a year, enabling business owners to meet with them one-on-one here in the Northern Tier. Despite state budget constraints in 2009, trade reps from nine countries visited the Northern Tier in November. Reps can help research the market po-

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NTRPDC hosts international trade representatives employed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to assist Pennsylvania businesses in exporting products.
potential for a particular product, identify potential clients, facilitate overseas travel, assist with translation, refine a market entry strategy, offer guidance on distribution channels, and ensure that products and marketing materials are appropriate for the target country.

Broader Benefits
Sometimes trade reps provide in-country services. At a 2009 hardwood show in Beijing, local wood products companies Channel Veneers USA; Cummings Lumber Co., Inc.; and Deer Park Lumber were all represented by the authorized Pennsylvania trade representative for China.

Even education can be considered an export, and NTRPDC supports Mansfield University in its efforts to recruit international students. In 2009, the authorized trade representative facilitated meetings in Pennsylvania between Mansfield University leaders and representatives of Japan.

NTRPDC’s export program connections can also lead to valuable partnerships. For example, Oak Hill Veneer, based in Troy (Bradford County), formed a business partnership with a Spanish company it originally met through NTRPDC and the Hardwoods Council in Harrisburg.

NTRPDC offers additional training relevant for exporters, including classes in how to optimize a corporate Web site for international searches and product sales.

Footing the Bill for Legwork
NTRPDC administers a Market Access Grant which provides matching funds to help offset the cost of overseas trips for export program clients traveling to build their international business. For example, Liberty Seamless Enterprises, Inc., based in Knoxville (Tioga County), sells machinery for the construction industry and electric bicycles. The company received a 2009 Market Access Grant that helped fund a trip to the China Import and Export Fair in Guangzhou, China.

Further, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania sponsors trade missions—trips to other countries during which local business people, regional export program staff, and Pennsylvania trade representatives meet with potential international business partners.
Enhancement Projects Add Appeal

Streetscape projects in Montrose Borough (Susquehanna County) and Laceyville Borough (Wyoming County), as well as improvements to the Marie Antoinette Overlook just east of Towanda (Bradford County), were all completed in 2009 with Transportation Enhancement funds.

In Montrose, Public Avenue leading to the courthouse received a facelift with period lighting, new sidewalks and curbs, and Pennsylvania bluestone between the sidewalk and curb. The Laceyville project involved similar enhancements as well as storm water improvements.

The Marie Antoinette Overlook is on the Pennsylvania Register of Historic Places, and provides a view of the French Azilum, the site of a settlement along the Susquehanna River built for refugees fleeing the French Revolution. Improvements included rebuilding a stone wall and two stone turrets, repaving the parking lot, removing obstructions to the scenic view, and demolishing a deteriorated concrete building.
Health Career Club Introduces Towanda Students to Career Options

The health care industry offers stable, well-paying jobs here in the Northern Tier, but with so many diverse areas in which to specialize, it can be difficult for students to understand and evaluate options.

In 2009, NTRPDC’s Workforce Investment Board and the Northeast Regional Health Care Industry Partnership sponsored an eight-week Health Career Club to introduce Towanda students to various areas of health care. One afternoon each week, students learned about jobs in physical therapy, respiratory therapy, radiology, ultrasound and nuclear medicine technology, nursing, dental hygiene, and occupational therapy, as well as careers as a physician, paramedic, dentist, and health care administrator.

The club was taught by Pennsylvania College of Technology instructors. Following the classroom sessions, an all-day field trip to Penn College’s School of Health Sciences provided a hands-on introduction to a variety of specialties. For further on-the-job experience, several students were matched with job shadowing or volunteer opportunities.
Building Businesses through Government Contracting

Federal, state, and local government entities represent substantial potential markets for Northern Tier businesses, but navigating the government contracting process can be challenging and costly for small business owners. NTRPDC’s Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) provides free guidance on the government bidding process.

For example, Craig Lee Construction in Mansfield (Tioga County) sought to expand its customer base, so the company enrolled in NTRPDC’s Procurement Program. As a first step, NTRPDC provided guidance on the prerequisites for bidding on government-funded projects, such as the extensive online forms to register as a contractor and properly categorize the business.

Next, NTRPDC entered the company into a software program that scans all federal, state, and local projects that are currently out for bid. It matched the project types and other criteria to Craig Lee Construction’s services and produced a list of bid opportunities. NTRPDC subscribes to the software, which would be cost-prohibitive for individual businesses. The company submitted bids with guidance from NTRPDC, and was successful in winning a significant contract which employed four additional people.

In all, NTRPDC’s Procurement Program clients were awarded 301 contracts in 2009, representing $23,923,322 for Northern Tier businesses.

Boost for Wireless Broadband

Eighteen libraries in the Northern Tier received a total of more than $25,000 through a mini-grant program administered by NTRPDC with funds from the state e-Commonwealth initiative. Money was used for equipment needed to provide wireless Internet access for library patrons.

A separate design grant was awarded to Westfield-Sabinsville-Knoxville for analysis and design of a fiber optic system through local cable companies. When completed, the project will bring advanced high-speed Internet capacity to the area, expanding options for businesses, educators, and residents.

Libraries Receiving e-Commonwealth Funding:
- Blossburg Memorial Library
- Elkland Area Community Library
- Forest City Branch Library
- Green Free Library
- Hallstead-Great Bend Branch Library
- Knoxville Library Association
- Mansfield Free Public Library
- Mather Memorial Library
- Mehoopany Area Library
- Monroeton Public Library
- Sayre Public Library
- Spalding Memorial Library
- Susquehanna Branch Library
- Susquehanna County Library
- Towanda Public Library
- Tunkhannock Public Library
- Westfield Public Library
- Wyalusing Public Library
Training and Resources for Municipal Employees

Equipment Shows
NTRPDC hosts two equipment shows each year to provide municipal officials with an opportunity to interact with vendors of various products and services that local governments need—from heavy equipment to paving companies, engineering consultants, and banks.

The 2009 Susquehanna-Wyoming show was held in July at Lazy Brook Park in Wyoming County. Attendees numbered 327, with 52 vendors and 79 municipalities represented. The Tioga-Bradford Equipment Show was held at Elk Run Park in Troy in September. Some 200 participants interacted with 37 vendors.

LTAP Courses
Some 120 municipal employees attended courses offered through the Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) in 2009. NTRPDC coordinates the classes, which are federally funded. Participants receive practical information they will use on the job, such as techniques for conducting spring roadway maintenance.
Some 140 area young people, ages 14 to 24, earned a paycheck during Summer 2009 through the Northern Tier Summer Work Experience Program. The eight-week program enabled participants to gain work experience while helping out area businesses. The goal of the program is to provide participants with the opportunity to gain an appreciation of the connection between work and learning, as well as to educate them on the demands of business, especially high growth industries and occupations. Participants were matched to job sites based on their aptitudes and career interests.

Classroom Learning and Field Trips
The program included various academic enrichment and career exploration activities including resume writing, financial planning, and job search techniques. Team-building challenges included hands-on problem-solving exercises that made for fun learning experiences.

Field trip sessions exposed participants to the energy industry, photography, outdoor education, the legal system, dentistry, food service, and other diverse fields. Work as-

The 2009 NTRPDC Summer Work Experience Program benefitted students, businesses, and communities throughout the Northern Tier:
- Bradford County – 47 participants, 25 work sites
- Sullivan County – 9 participants, 12 work sites
- Susquehanna County – 20 participants, 13 work sites
- Tioga County – 36 participants, 15 work sites
- Wyoming County – 28 participants, 15 work sites
Energy costs can be a financial burden for Northern Tier municipal governments, schools, and non-profit organizations—and electricity costs are projected to increase some 40 to 60 percent in 2011 after deregulation of electric utilities. NTRPDC is helping local entities improve their energy efficiency through small fixes that can add up in savings.

Investing in Energy Efficiency
In 2009 NTRPDC provided six $1,000 mini-grants to local townships and boroughs, with funds provided by the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and Pennsylvania’s Shared Municipal Services Program. The mini-grants funded projects such as:

- **Wellsboro Borough (Tioga County):** Purchase of two ENERGY STAR qualified refrigerators for the borough building to replace antiquated, inefficient equipment.
- **Tunkhannock Borough (Wyoming County):** Purchase of an insulated door for the police station to replace an inefficient, damaged door.
- **Dushore Borough (Sullivan County):** Purchase of new windows and an insulated door for a heated well building to replace an aging, inefficient door and windows.
- **Warren Township (Bradford County):** Completion of an energy audit by Quad-K Energy Conservation Consulting; a prerequisite for applying for a larger grant to complete more extensive energy-related upgrades.

Energy Workshops
In 2009 NTRPDC offered two energy program workshops: Energy 101 and Strategic Energy Planning. Further, NTRPDC offers utility bill analysis to compare usage with charges, which can identify errors in billing or meter reading. Site visits assist municipal officials in prioritizing further opportunities to improve energy efficiency.

Continuing in 2010
The energy mini-grants are funded again in 2010, this year through ARC and Pennsylvania’s Enterprise Development Program. NTRPDC is assisting Lawrenceville Borough (Tioga County) with the cost of a traffic engineering analysis to determine the feasibility of removing or upgrading the traffic signal at the intersection of Business 15 and Route 49. Replacing traditional incandescent signals with LED equipment can save up to 80 percent of energy costs.
Grants and Guidance Help Businesses Launch Web Sites

The Small Business Internet Grant, administered by NTRP-DC, helps local entrepreneurs establish Web sites, which are essential business tools in today’s marketplace. The grant reimburses 50 percent of the cost of developing or significantly upgrading a Web site, up to $1,000. In 2009, 42 businesses received funding through the grant, totaling $27,277.60.

Proposal Guidance
In addition to funding, NTRPDC guides clients through the process of implementing a Web site. After an initial assessment of the type of site that would best support the individual business, NTRPDC drafts a Request for Proposal on behalf of the client and sends it to prequalified Web site developers. The client selects the developer they feel will best meet their needs, and is reimbursed upon site completion, within the guidelines established for the grant program.

Targeted Training
NTRPDC also provides training for Northern Tier businesses seeking to establish or improve their Web site on their own. For example, understanding how to set up a site so that it appears near the top of the list when someone does a Google™ search (known as search engine optimization) can make a big difference in the actual benefit a business derives from having a Web site. Search engine optimization and other key topics are covered in no-cost NTRPDC classroom training and site visits.

“The grant has allowed us to get our Web site up and running and hopefully increase our sales in the coming years.”
–Barnstead Pantry

“We would like to thank NTRPDC for their assistance with our Web site; exposure is what we needed and the Web site makes all the difference.”
–Snake Creek Alpaca Farm & Village

“Thanks so much for all your help and aid; it is greatly appreciated.”
–Benedict’s Bus Service
Municipal budgets are always tight, and keeping computer hardware and software sufficiently up-to-date to maintain productivity is challenging for local governments. NTRPDC provides assistance through the Municipal Hardware/Software Incentive Grant, which reimburses 75 percent of the cost of upgrades, up to $750. In 2009, 71 Northern Tier municipalities received funding through the Municipal Hardware/Software Incentive Grant, totaling $35,451.78.

Municipalities use the funds to purchase computers, printers, or even radio equipment. Often it is most needed to purchase software such as QuickBooks, or specialized software to manage water and sewer billing, for example. Configuring hardware and software can present another challenge. NTRPDC provides technical support to municipalities, assisting with computer setup, software installation, file transfer, and related tasks.

“Thanks to this great program we were able to upgrade technology in our office.”
–Lawrenceville Borough
(Tioga County)

“The program is a wonderful benefit for municipalities; we are able to keep current without straining our budget.”
–Forest City Borough
(Susquehanna County)

“We so appreciate all you have done for our township.”
–Warren Township
(Bradford County)
The Small Business Training Grant, available to enterprises with 100 or fewer employees, covers 50 percent of eligible training costs, up to $1,000. Thirty-four Small Business Training Grants were awarded in 2009, totaling $21,617.72.

“This program has assisted me in furthering my education, thereby enhancing my customers’ health options. Thanks!”
Mary Theresa Jurnack
Jurnack’s Naturally!

“We appreciate the help we receive to attend seminars that help us better serve our customers.”
Michelle Brown
Something Blue Bridal Boutique

“We are so grateful to have this local resource, which has helped us create two employment positions—our designer/field technician and our office manager. Service has been amazing!!”
Laurel F. Mueller
Soil Services Co., Inc.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Recipient</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sullivan</td>
<td>Daniel Swift, Consulting Forester, Endless Mountains In-Home Solutions, Inc., Soil Services Company, Inc., Tammy’s Stitchen &amp; Printen</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tioga</td>
<td>Clear Path Healing Arts Center, Human Nature Apparel, Spencer Oriental Medicine, Triumph! Personal and Professional Coaching</td>
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2009 Executive Board

Chairperson
Betty Reibson, Sullivan County Commissioner

First Vice Chairperson
Leon Allen, Susquehanna County Commissioner

Second Vice Chairperson
John Sullivan, Bradford County Commissioner

Secretary
Stark Bartron, Wyoming County Commissioner

Treasurer
Mark Hamilton, Tioga County Commissioner

Mark Smith, Bradford County Commissioner
Doug McLinko, Bradford County Commissioner
Darla Bortz, Sullivan County Commissioner
Bob Getz, Sullivan County Commissioner
Sue Vogler, Tioga County Commissioner
Erick Coolidge, Tioga County Commissioner
Mike Giangrieco, Susquehanna County Commissioner
MaryAnn Warren, Susquehanna County Commissioner
Judy Kraft-Mead, Wyoming County Commissioner
Anthony Litwin, Wyoming County Commissioner
Jody Place, Area Manager, Penelec (A First Energy Company)
Craig Harting, CEO, Sullivan County Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Tom Freeman, Resident Manager, Blue Ridge Communications
Alex Fried, Public Relations Manager, Procter & Gamble
Rick Soden, Vice President, Pennstar Bank
Hank Pliske, Vice President Resource Development, Guthrie Healthcare System
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