

Community Facilities Profile

Town of Bloomsburg Comprehensive Plan

Community Facilities by the Numbers

Number of police officers	21
Number of volunteer firefighters	20
Number of hospital beds	72
Number of nursing beds	149
Number of University students	8,745

Introduction

This profile inventories Bloomsburg's community facilities and services and discusses their operation and provision. This profile is useful in identifying strengths as well as inadequacies and needs among the wide variety of services and public and private service providers serving the citizens of Bloomsburg.

Public Safety

Bloomsburg Police Department

The Bloomsburg Police Department is located in the Town Hall building at 301 East 2nd Street. The force is composed of 21 officers, 14 full-time and six part-time, along with one detective. Six of the officers are trained for bike patrol. There are 13 vehicles. The department is well staffed, considering the 2006 census estimated the population of Bloomsburg to be 12,883.

The mission of the department is to protect life and property, to serve the public with integrity and professionalism, and to achieve an atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation with all citizens. The department is accredited. The Bloomsburg Police Department believes in a community policing approach. It forms partnerships with residents, business owners and community organizations to proactively address the causes of crime, fear of crime and various public safety issues. For example, one officer provides drug abuse resistance educating or DARE in the Bloomsburg Area School District teaching, in addition to dealing with juvenile related offenses in the schools.

The Bloomsburg Police Department is a charter member of the Columbia County STAR team. The team was established in the early 1990s and is comprised of municipal police officers from police agencies. The STAR team responds to high risk incidents, such as barricaded persons and hostage situations. The team is also utilized by the county Narcotics Task Force to serve high risk search or arrest warrants.¹

The first floor of the department was remodeled in 2002. Retention of officers remains an issue for the department.

The University Safety and Police Department² consists of 25 employees; eighteen commissioned Police Officers, (seven functioning in a supervisory capacity) enforcing Pennsylvania Crime and Vehicle Codes and University Policies. Two security officers monitor parking. The department has a full-time safety professional. The balance of the employees performs clerical and dispatching duties. The Safety and Police Office is located in the lower level of the University Store and is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Emergency call boxes, located across the campus, permit direct voice communication to

¹ Ibid.

² The University Safety and Police Department webpage, <http://departments.bloomu.edu/police/>.

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university police personnel. The department collaborates with the Bloomsburg Police Department when needed.

Bloomsburg Fire Department

The fire station is located at 911 Market Street in Bloomsburg. The station was built in 2000 after the consolidation of four fire companies as the Bloomsburg Fire Department. It houses fire fighting equipment and memorabilia. It also includes a social hall and kitchen facilities for fundraising events and community use. The Fire Department owns the station and the town owns the vehicles.

The fire department fleet includes nine vehicles:

1. Engine 22
2. Engine 23
3. Engine 24
4. Air Unit 33
5. Rescue 37, the toolbox of the fleet
6. Marine 37, a power boat
7. (Ladder) Truck 42
8. Rescue truck
9. ATV mule

The all volunteer fire department is dedicated to training, community service and fundraising to help with the costly task of maintaining the fire equipment. The 20 volunteers include nine officers, seven lieutenants, and four fire police. There are 10-20 other volunteers that help out when needed. The volunteers are on-call at all times.

Funding for the department is derived from several sources: fund raisers (bingo, boot-drop, breakfasts, etc.), Town of Bloomsburg line item funding, Bloomsburg Relief Association, fees for use of the social hall, donations and bequests, and periodic federal and state grants.³ Additionally, Bloomsburg University helped fund the acquisition of the ladder truck to ensure adequate fire protection for students living on- and off-campus.

The Town is adequately served for fire protection. The department faces the typical issues of a volunteer fire company: soliciting and retaining volunteers for fire protection and fundraising efforts as well as maintaining adequate operating funds.

Bloomsburg Ambulance/EMS

The Bloomsburg Volunteer Ambulance Association (BVAA) is staffed by volunteer, Pennsylvania certified emergency medical technicians and first responders to provide basic life support emergency services to Bloomsburg and surrounding areas. It owns three ambulances and operates from the ambulance hall located at 307 East Second Street. Volunteers attend training sessions in vehicle rescue, hazardous materials (R&I and Operations), critical incident stress management (CISM) training, and courses pertaining to changes in patient care.⁴

In 1999, the BVAA joined with Commonwealth Medical Services and the Bloomsburg Hospital to provide a partnership called Greater Columbia Medical Transport Service (GCMTS). Under this partnership, the BVAA provides a volunteer EMT driver and GCMTS provides a Paramedic. This unique combination provides Advanced Life Support Services to a majority of Columbia County,⁵

Citizen membership is BVAA's primary source of income and assists in helping to cover expenses for fuel, equipment, maintenance, training, building costs and overall operations of our organization.

³ Bloomsburg Fire Department webpage, wphc.us/bfd/Home/tabid/54/Default.aspx.

⁴ Bloomsburg Volunteer Ambulance Association website, www.bloomsburgambulance.com.

⁵ Ibid.

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Columbia County 911

The coordinator of the Columbia County 911 is located behind the courthouse in Bloomsburg. The office receives emergency calls and dispatches local first responders throughout the county.

Hazard Mitigation

Bloomsburg is subject to a significant flood hazard created by the Susquehanna River on the south and Fishing Creek on the north and west boundaries of the Town. When these waterways rise above flood stage, they can cover up to 1/3 of the landmass within the Town's boundaries. Bloomsburg has been flooded on the average of every five years since 1972. (See the Natural Resources Profile for a detailed description of the flood hazard and proposed flood protection project.)

The Bloomsburg Area Joint Flood Control Authority is a 7-member board established for the purposes of undertaking a flood control project, as described in the April 2005 Integrated Feasibility Report & Final Environmental Impact Statement prepared by the United States Army Corps of Engineers—Baltimore District, and associated improvements such as parks, recreation grounds and facilities of project lands.

In Spring 2008, the Town of Bloomsburg installed a siren/audio system to provide residents with warning of potential floods and other hazards. Three speakers are located on the west end of town where flooding is most common. The speakers can project siren and recorded audio announcements. There are plans to test the system annually.

Bloomsburg Code Enforcement

Minimum standards for development and their enforcement are two preventive means of protecting public safety. The Code Enforcement staff is responsible for ensuring that the Town's zoning codes, subdivision and land development codes, and building codes, namely the Uniform Construction Code (UCC), are followed. These codes ensure that homes are not a risk to resident life and health, that fires do not spread readily from one structure to another, and other such hazards. When citizens believe that these regulations impose significant hardships, they can bring their case to the Zoning Hearing Board and Code Appeals Board for review.

Bloomsburg University meets annually with the Code Enforcement staff to ensure that students housing concerns are addressed. There is annual inspection of off-campus student housing once a year to ensure that university housing standards are being met. Compliant landlords are then registered with the University and available units are advertised by the University.

Medical Facilities

Bloomsburg Hospital

Located at 549 Fair Street, the Bloomsburg Hospital has been serving the Town and surrounding communities since 1905. Its mission is to promote, restore and maintain the health of the local communities they serve. The hospital is a not-for-profit community hospital organization with capacity for 72 patients on site. It can provide 90% of medical care that residents may need throughout their lifetimes, from preventative medicine to full surgical care; obstetrics and maternity to geriatrics; and simple lab tests to MRI and CT scans.⁶

⁶ Bloomsburg Hospital website, www.bloomhealth.net.

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Geisinger Medical Center

Geisinger is a physician-led health care system in North Central Pennsylvania, dedicated to patient care, education, research. Its services span 40 counties covering 20,000 square miles and serving 2.5 million people. It operates several facilities, the closest to Bloomsburg being the Medical Center in Danville. LifeFlight helicopters from Geisinger provide service to the Bloomsburg Hospital. Geisinger also runs the psychiatric unit in Bloomsburg Hospital.

Bloomsburg Health Care Center

The Bloomsburg Health Care Center, an affiliate of the Bloomsburg Hospital, is a 149 bed skilled nursing and rehabilitation facility conveniently located one block from the hospital. Bloomsburg Health Care Center is Medicare/Medicaid certified and provides short term and long term nursing care, as well as respite care. Bloomsburg Health Care Center offers a wide variety of services for residents, including on site x-ray and lab service and psychiatric and podiatry care. Bloomsburg Health Care Center is currently in the process of redesigning its secured third floor unit to better meet the needs of residents with Alzheimer's disease or dementia.⁷

Columbia Montour Home Health Services - Nursing Home

Located at 410 Glenn Avenue, Columbia Montour Home Health Services offers three major programs: home health, hospice, and the nurse-family partnership. All services are available in a variety of settings. The organization has been listed in the top 25% of Medicare-certified home health providers in the country by HomeCare Elite, an organization that ranks such facilities. In addition, Columbia Montour Home Health Services is ranked as one of the top 50 agencies in Pennsylvania.⁸

Educational Facilities

Bloomsburg Area School District

The mission of the Bloomsburg Area School District is “to prepare its students to become contributing, responsible citizens and life-long learners with the ability to adapt and to succeed in a competitive world.”⁹ Bloomsburg Area School District serves the Town of Bloomsburg, Hemlock, Montour, Beaver, and Main Townships, and part of Catawissa Township. Memorial Elementary, Bloomsburg Middle School and Bloomsburg High School are located within the Town; the Beaver-Main and W. W. Evans Memorial Elementary Schools are located in Beaver and Montour Townships respectively. Students that wish to pursue vocational or technical skills in high school attend Columbia-Montour Area Vo-Tech School located in South Centre Township east of Scott Township.

Trends for enrollment in the district are projected to remain steady with current levels. There are no plans for new school construction or expansion of existing schools. The High School just completed a refurbishing project to update the existing facility.

⁷ Bloomsburg Health Care Center website, www.bloomhealthcare.com.

⁸ Columbia Montour Home Health Services website, www.cmhhh.org/as-news.htm.

⁹ Bloomsburg Area School District website, <http://bloomsburgasd.schoolwires.com>.

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Table 8-1 Public and Private Schools in the Bloomsburg Area

	Name	Location	# of Students
Bloomsburg Area School District ¹⁰	Beaver-Main Elementary	245 Beaver Valley Road	100
	Memorial Elementary	500 Market Street	464
	W.W. Evans Memorial Elementary	59 Perry Avenue	256
	Bloomsburg Area Middle School	1100 Railroad Street	468
	Bloomsburg Area High School	1200 Railroad Street	465
Private Schools	Bloomsburg Christian School	3300 Ridge Road	76
	Columbia County Christian School	123 Schoolhouse Road	245
	St. Columba Catholic School	40 East 3 rd Street	150

Private Schools

St. Columba Catholic School is the only non-public school located in the Town of Bloomsburg. St. Columba Catholic School offers a complete curriculum with state certified teachers in preschool through grade 8 as well as instruction in music, art, physical education, computer technology, and library science. Computers are integrated in each classroom. The curriculum follows the Diocese of Harrisburg Curriculum for Elementary Schools and exceeds the Pennsylvania Department of Education standards. St. Columba Middle School, which begins in Grade 5, is departmentalized for math, religion, science, and social studies.¹¹ For high school, students typically attend either Columbia County Christian School in Hemlock Township or Bloomsburg Christian School in North Centre Township, both of which serve K-12.¹²

Bloomsburg University

Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania is one of 14 member schools in Pennsylvania's State System of Higher Education. It offers 63 undergraduate majors leading to bachelor's degrees, 38 undergraduate minors, 18 graduate programs leading to master's degrees and a doctorate in audiology, as well as several certificate programs for professional educators. In Fall 2007, 7,938 undergraduate and 807 graduate students were enrolled at the university, most from the eastern half of Pennsylvania. With such a student population of more than 8500, Bloomsburg is a college town.

The University campus includes 54 buildings on 280 landscaped acres, divided into upper and lower campuses. The lower campus is located at 400 East 2nd Street and includes residence halls, academic buildings, student services, the library and administrative buildings. The upper campus, located just north of Lightstreet Road on Welsh Circle, includes two student apartment complexes, athletic facilities and university maintenance services. The campuses are linked by a shuttle bus that runs throughout the day.¹³

Other nearby colleges include Bucknell University in Lewisburg, Luzerne County Community College in Berwick, and Pennsylvania College of Technology in Williamsport.

¹⁰ Public School Report.com, schools.publicschoolsreport.com/district/PA/BloomsburgAreaSchoolDistrict.html.

¹¹ St. Columba Catholic School website, www.saintcolumbaschool.org.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Bloomsburg University website, www.bloomu.edu.

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Bloomsburg Public Library

The Bloomsburg Public Library is located at 225 Market Street. It is one of four libraries in the Columbia County Library System, which includes a traveling library. This important community facility encourages residents to be life long learners by allowing them free and ready access to reading materials. There are numerous children's programs offered year-round at the library. Story time is a weekly daytime event for young children, while special events for preschool and school age children are held in the evening.¹⁴ Every year there is a program that involves University students majoring in education tutoring children with reading difficulties.

Andruss Library

Andruss Library is a Bloomsburg University library that is also open to the public. It offers a complete collection of microform, general reference, newspapers, periodicals, and much more. The library is a valuable resource for the University and the community. It is devoted to developing and implementing programs and services and to building and preserving collections in all their appropriate forms to meet primarily the curricular and general information needs and secondarily the recreational information needs of its users. The Library maintains collections that promote free inquiry and intellectual development and provides instruction in the information gathering and evaluation process. The Library is also committed to working cooperatively with other libraries toward the fulfillment of its mission.¹⁵

Bloomsburg Children's Museum

The Bloomsburg Children's Museum is a non-profit corporation and is run by staff, volunteer committees, and a Board of Directors. Working from the Bloomsburg area, the committee has developed a hands-on museum open to everyone, as well as traveling exhibits that serve 17 school districts in the five county Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit area. The Children's Museum has sponsored an Art and Science Center since 1996 and has had a permanent location at 2 West 7th Street since 2001. Its objective is to provide hands-on learning experiences to children of all ages throughout the region by providing interactive educational materials. It emphasizes community involvement to develop resources and maintain the activities they provide.¹⁶

In addition to these facilities, churches in the Bloomsburg area also provide educational opportunities and cultural enrichment for their parishioners and many to the public at-large.

Water Supply

United Water Pennsylvania

Public water is supplied to Bloomsburg residents and businesses by United Water Pennsylvania, a subsidiary of Suez Environmental. In addition to owning and operating regulated utilities, United Water operates municipal water and wastewater systems through public-private partnerships and contract agreements. United Water Pennsylvania owns and operates the Irondale Water Treatment Plant in Bloomsburg. The plant draws raw water from Fishing Creek, a surface supply with a watershed of 300 square miles. The Irondale Water Treatment Plant processes approximately 2.7 million gallons of water daily to serve customers in the Town of Bloomsburg and six surrounding municipalities.¹⁷

¹⁴ Bloomsburg Public Library website, www.bloomsburgpl.org.

¹⁵ Bloomsburg University Library website, <http://www.bloomu.edu>.

¹⁶ Bloomsburg Children's Museum website, www.the-childrens-museum.org.

¹⁷ United Water website, www.unitedwater.com/uwpa/pdfs/w_g08_pa_bloom.pdf.

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The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency conducted a Source Water Assessment for United Water's Fishing Creek surface water source in 2003. The Assessment indicated that the most serious potential sources of contamination are related to the accidental release of a variety of materials along the transportation corridors and materials leaching from landfills.¹⁸

On-lot Wells

There are few private wells in existence in the Town of Bloomsburg.

Wastewater Disposal

Bloomsburg Sewer Facilities, Service Areas and Wastewater Authority¹⁹

The Bloomsburg Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) is owned and operated by the Municipal Authority of the Town of Bloomsburg and provides collection service to all the developed portions of the Town of Bloomsburg, the Bloomsburg University, and the majority of Scott Township. The treatment plant was initially constructed in 1950, with major expansion projects undertaken in 1967, 1971, and 1983. The plant discharges to the Susquehanna River in Columbia County under NPDES Permit No. PA0027171. The plant is currently rated for an average daily wastewater influent of 4.29 mgd, a biochemical oxygen demand (BOD₅) loading of 14,570 lbs/day (ppd), and a total suspended solids (TSS) loading of 11,595 lbs/day. The wastewater processing train from influent to effluent consists of comminution, raw wastewater pumping, primary settling, mechanically-aerated/complete mix activated sludge, final clarification, and chlorine contact disinfection. Currently the plant is required to treat to secondary CBOD and TSS standards (25 mg/L CBOD₅ or 894 lbs CBOD₅/day; 30 mg TSS/L or 1073 lbs TSS/day) and currently has no numeric limits for total nitrogen or total phosphorus. It should be noted that the plant was originally designed for effluent permit limits of 55 mg/L for both BOD₅ and TSS.

In 2006, the authority undertook the design of additions and alternations to the wastewater treatment plan to achieve two goals: flood mitigation and nutrient reduction. Design was completed in 2007 and the modifications are currently underway. Construction is expected to be complete by the end of 2010, in compliance with Pennsylvania's Chesapeake Bay Strategy.

Although the initial implementation of the Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategy by PADEP only considered 2010 flows, the Authority elected to consider a longer time frame. In order to consider future expandability of the WWTP, the flows and loadings have been projected until the year 2025. Future flows and loadings were projected based on comparing growth trends for between 1990 and 2000, and also probable increases which are not directly represented by historical data. Although the population for Bloomsburg reflected a minor decrease in population, a more conservative growth of 200 persons per year was used from 2000 to 2025.

A projection of 200 persons per year was used to project future loads for Bloomsburg which equates to 9,384 people in 2025 or a flow of 555,782 gpd. The projected flow of 3.81 mgd was determined to consist of three components of actual wastewater (2.58 mgd), infiltration/inflow (1.13 mgd), and an unallocated reserve (0.10 mgd). The I/I flow of 1.13 mgd equates to approximately 30 percent of the raw wastewater flow to the Bloomsburg WWTP. As connections to the sewer system occur in the service area they will be of materials less prone to leakage than terra-cotta pipe. Inspections of the connections and laterals to insure proper installation will be critical to preventing I/I from those

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Basis of Design, Additions and Alterations to the Wastewater Treatment Plant, Gannett Fleming, Inc., 2007.

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sources. An ongoing I/I identification and elimination program of the main sewer lines should correct existing problems and minimize problems in new lines. The installation of water conservation fixtures in new or remodeled homes/businesses will also assist in maintaining the projected annual flow of 3.81 mgd.

On-lot Septic Systems

There are few private on-lot septic systems in existence in the Town of Bloomsburg.

Solid Waste Management and Recycling

Waste Collection by Independent Contractors

There are 15 independent waste collection contractors that serve the Town of Bloomsburg on an individual contractual basis. There are no landfills, dumps, incinerators or other disposal sites within the Town of Bloomsburg.

Bloomsburg Recycling Center

Bloomsburg has been recycling since 1977. The Bloomsburg Recycling Center, located at 901 Patterson Drive, provides curbside pickup of recyclable materials, and paper shredding. Some recyclable materials not accepted for curbside pickup can be dropped off during business hours at the Center. Pickup is only done in Bloomsburg, but residents from surrounding municipalities can also drop-off material for processing.²⁰ The facility is staffed by five full time staff members and one administrator.

The benefits of recycling and waste reduction include reduced pollution risks, conservation of natural resources, energy and landfill space, and reduced disposal costs.

Bloomsburg Composting Site

The Bloomsburg Composting Site off Old Berwick Road provides a drop-off site for compostable materials and supplies free compost and wood chips to the residents of the Town of Bloomsburg and Scott Township.²¹ The composting cost will be relocated to Fort McClure Boulevard to accommodate the runway realignment and extension project.

Stormwater Management Infrastructure

Current best management practices recommend managing the storage, rate of release and quality of stormwater as near to the source as possible—typically on-site. With many small lots and high percentages of impervious surface in Bloomsburg, on-site management is a challenge.

The Town of Bloomsburg manages stormwater through its regulations for new development. Development proposals are reviewed by the municipal engineer for compliance with Town regulations and by the conservation district for compliance with erosion and sediment control practices.

²⁰ Bloomsburg website, www.bloomsburgpa.org.

²¹ Ibid.

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Major Communications Services

Telephone Service

Verizon provides local telephone service for the majority of residents. There are a variety of long distance carriers available to residents of the Town.

Cell Service

Verizon Wireless and ATT are the primary providers in this region. A cell tower with transmission equipment from both companies is located on top of a church on Main Street.

Major Energy Services

Electric Service

PPL Utilities, based in Allentown, provides electric service to the Town residents.

Natural Gas

UGI Utilities provides natural gas to the Town residents.

Oil and Propane

Suburban Propane is the local provider for home heating oil and bottled propane. It is headquartered Whippany, New Jersey and has a local office at 95 East 10th Street.

Recreation and Tourism

Bloomsburg Town Park

Bloomsburg Town Park is located at the southern end of Market Street along Fort McClure Boulevard. Town Park was created and is being developed through the financial support of residents and friends of the community. Town Park offers 43 acres of recreational activities including baseball fields, soccer fields, tennis courts, basketball courts, a fitness trail, the bicentennial entertainment pavilion, and a skateboard park. Picnic pavilions, charcoal grills and a pond that is stocked with fish for an annual fishing derby are also available. Events and performances are held in the park especially in the summertime. In the spring of 1993, the community raised funds to build an extensive children's play area known as Kidsburg. The Norris E. Rock Memorial Swimming Pool adjoins the park. The park is managed by the board of directors of the Town Park Improvement Association.²²

Norris E. Rock Memorial Pool

The Norris E. Rock Memorial swimming pool is located at the corner of Fort McClure Boulevard and Catherine Street immediately adjoining Town Park. Annual season passes can be purchased at Town Hall. Swimming lessons are offered in the summertime for a variety of levels. The swimming pool operations board is composed of five members.²³

²² Bloomsburg website, www.bloomsburgpa.org.

²³ Ibid.

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Bloomsburg Fairgrounds

The Bloomsburg Fairgrounds is a 248-acre facility that includes a 8,000 seat grandstand, 78,000 square feet of exhibit buildings, an indoor arena, a covered band shell, a half-mile race track, and other large outdoor event amenities. The fairgrounds main entrance is located at the corner of Scott Avenue and West 3rd Street. The Bloomsburg Fair begins the third Saturday after Labor Day and draws over 650,000 people (2003 estimate) from all along the eastern seaboard. The Fairgrounds also attracts many trade shows and conventions throughout the year.²⁴

Bike Trail

Bloomsburg had a designated and signed bike trail that looped through town. Due to a series of bike trail sign thefts, council voted in 2006 to remove the bike trail designation. Some signs remain and the bike trail can still be used, but the town no longer maintains signage to promote it. Bloomsburg is a very walkable and bikeable community.

Other Municipal Facilities

Bloomsburg Town Hall

The Bloomsburg Town Hall is located at 301 East 2nd Street. It houses the offices of the tax collector, police department, code enforcement, and Town administration, as well as Town Council's meeting chambers. Meetings of volunteer and appointed commissions are also held at Town Hall.

The building was constructed in 1890 and renovated within the past 25 years. It remains structurally sound and provides adequate space for staff, however there are needs for improved maintenance of floor and wall surfaces and accessibility.

Columbia County Government Facilities

The Columbia County Courthouse is located at 35 West Main Street. The courthouse houses the administrative and judicial offices of county government. The Commissioners Office is located at 11 West Main Street in the former First Columbia Bank building.

Children and Youth Services, the Juvenile Probation Office, and the Emergency Management Agency are located at 26 West First Street in Bloomsburg. Other human service offices are located at 15 Perry Avenue in Hemlock Township. The Area Agency on Aging, Conservation District, Planning and Geographic Information Systems offices are located at 702 Sawmill Road in Scott Township.

Columbia County Prison is located in Bloomsburg at 721 Iron Street. It was built in 1877 and renovated most recently in 1995.²⁵ The original prison had a capacity of 30 inmates. The renovation added a new wing including 2 general housing blocks, a restricted housing block, a women's block, raising the total capacity to 220 inmates, as well as classrooms, a kitchen and a control center.²⁶

The prison houses inmates from a variety of jurisdictions: Columbia County inmates serving less than two years, inmates awaiting transfer to state correctional facilities, out-of-county inmates, and federal inmates. Inmate offenses range from petty crimes to serious and violent crimes.

²⁴ Bloomsburg Integrated Feasibility Report & Final Environmental Impact Statement, 2005.

²⁵ Pennsylvania Department of Corrections website, www.cor.state.pa.us.

²⁶ Telephone communication with Prison Administration Office, Friday, July 11, 2008.

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The prison administration periodically evaluates the need for expansion. Renovation of the third floor of the original prison building could add another 36 beds, if and when there is a need for additional inmate capacity.

Bloomsburg Municipal Airport

The Bloomsburg Municipal Airport is owned by the Town of Bloomsburg and privately operated by Columbia Aircraft. The airport is located along the Susquehanna River in the eastern portion of the Town. There are currently 20 aircraft based at the airfield and an average of 32 operations per day. Most operations are local recreational flights, though some transient general aviation, air taxi and a small amount of military operations do take place. The airport has one 2800 foot paved runway, a runway lighting system, hangar and tie down parking, and fuel supply facilities. A runway realignment and extension project will extend the runway to 3200 feet and raise it above the height of the 1972 Agnes flood. Oxygen is not available. There is no landing fee but there is an overnight fee. The airport is staffed by an airport manager Monday through Friday 8 AM to 5 PM and Saturdays 8 AM to 12 PM. The manger is available by phone after hours.²⁷

There is interest among recreational flyers in expanding the hangar to accommodate more planes. Some flyers have also discussed the possibility of lengthening the runway to 4200' to accommodate small corporate jets. Additional land would be needed in neighboring Scott Township to extend the runway eastward; the runway cannot be extended westward any farther toward Ferry Road. To date, Scott Township has opposed the runway expansion.²⁸

Public and Non-Profit Community and Human Services

Columbia County Assistance Office

Residents of Columbia County can seek government assistance and a range of services for themselves and their families from professionally trained staff members at the Columbia County Assistance Office. The office is located at 27 East Seventh Street in the Town of Bloomsburg.²⁹

United Way of Columbia County

The United Way of Columbia County, located at 10 Penn Street in Bloomsburg, is an organization of community volunteers that leads, inspires and mobilizes volunteers and contributors to help provide solutions to essential health and human service issues and improve the quality of life for the people of Columbia County. The group is a charter member of the Columbia County Human Service Coalition, which is a coalition of education, business, government and human services executives who coordinate human service planning. United Way of Columbia County also partners with public and private organizations throughout the state to advocate for programs aimed at educating young children. They support the Community Fund, which is Venture and Community Grants directed at neighborhood coalitions. Additionally, they provide information and referral services by working with local, regional and state organizations to establish "211", an information and referral hotline manned by trained professionals.³⁰

For more than 50 years, the United Way of Columbia County volunteers have been looking into human

²⁷ Bloomsburg Municipal Airport, - N13, www.airnav.com.

²⁸ April 17, 2008 Stakeholder Workshop for the Comprehensive Plan

²⁹ Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare website, www.dpw.state.pa.us/ServicesPrograms/CashAsstEmployment/003670281.htm.

³⁰ United Way of Columbia County website, <http://unitedwaycc.com>.

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service needs of the people of Columbia County and seeking preventative solutions; developing money, manpower, and material resources to serve local needs; allocating these resources where most needed; and reporting progress.³¹

Bloomsburg Area YMCA

The Bloomsburg Area YMCA is located at 30 East 7th Street in Bloomsburg. The YMCA is a national faith based association that serves children, families and communities by “building healthy spirit, mind and body for all.”³² The YMCA provides facilities and services such as: a fitness center with instructors, fitness classes, personal training, massage therapy, sports teams for a variety of age groups, child care, pre-school, and hold special events.³³

The Women's Center, Inc. of Columbia and Montour Counties

The Women's Center is located at 111 North Market Street in Bloomsburg. The Women's Center is a non-profit organization that was formed in 1974 and incorporated in 1976. It was one of the first programs in Pennsylvania to provide free support services to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and incest. The Center serves the residents of Columbia and Montour Counties and offers free and confidential services including emergency shelter for battered women and their children, empowerment counseling for adults and children, assistance with filing Protection from Abuse petitions, safety planning, support groups and prevention education programs. Advocates are also located and available to support victims and their families at Geisinger Medical Center, the Bloomsburg Hospital and Berwick Hospital through the agency's Medical Advocacy Program.³⁴ The philosophy of the Women's Center is that all individuals are equal to one another and have the right to live in a non-violent environment. They depend greatly on the community for donations and volunteers from the community to help them in their mission.³⁵

Bloomsburg Area Community Foundation

Founded in 1996, the Community Foundation is located at 144 West Main in Bloomsburg. It is designed to pool donations into a coordinated investment portfolio and distribute grants primarily for the social improvement of Bloomsburg. Families, individuals, businesses, and nonprofit groups can contribute a variety of assets to be used for charitable purposes.

Findings

- A total of 39 police officers serve the town and the University campuses.
- The Town is adequately served for fire protection. The department faces the typical issues of a volunteer fire company: soliciting and retaining volunteers for fire protection and fundraising efforts as well as maintaining adequate operating funds.
- Bloomsburg is subject to a significant flood hazard created by the Susquehanna River on the south and Fishing Creek on the north and west boundaries of the Town. The Bloomsburg Area Joint Flood Control Authority has undertaken the final design and construction of a flood control project, as described in the April 2005 Integrated Feasibility Report & Final Environmental Impact Statement prepared by the United States Army Corps of Engineers—

³¹ Ibid.

³² The National YMCA website, www.ymca.net.

³³ Bloomsburg Area YMCA website, <http://bloomsburgymca.org>.

³⁴ The Bloomsburg Psychological Center, LCC website, www.bpcenter.com/support_groups.html.

³⁵ The Women's Center, Inc. website, www.thewomenscenterinc.org.

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Baltimore District, and associated improvements such as parks, recreation grounds and facilities of project lands.

- In Spring 2008, the Town of Bloomsburg installed a siren/audio system to provide residents with warning of potential floods and other hazards.
- Trends for enrollment in the Bloomsburg Area School District are projected to remain steady with current levels. There are no plans for new school construction or expansion of existing schools.
- Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania reached a student population of more than 8500.
- Public water is supplied to Bloomsburg residents and businesses by United Water Pennsylvania. United Water's Fishing Creek surface water source in 2003. The Assessment indicated that the most serious potential sources of contamination are related to the accidental release of a variety of materials along the transportation corridors and materials leaching from landfills.
- The Bloomsburg Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) is owned and operated by the Municipal Authority of the Town of Bloomsburg and provides collection service to all the developed portions of the Town of Bloomsburg, the Bloomsburg University, and the majority of Scott Township.
- In 2006, the authority undertook the design of additions and alternations to the wastewater treatment plan to achieve two goals: flood mitigation and nutrient reduction. Design was completed in 2007 and the modifications are currently underway. Construction is expected to be complete by the end of 2010, in compliance with Pennsylvania's Chesapeake Bay Strategy.
- Bloomsburg has been recycling since 1977.
- The Town's composting site provides a drop-off site for compostable materials and supplies free compost and wood chips to the residents of the Town of Bloomsburg and Scott Township.

Community Facilities Profile

Town of Bloomsburg Comprehensive Plan

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