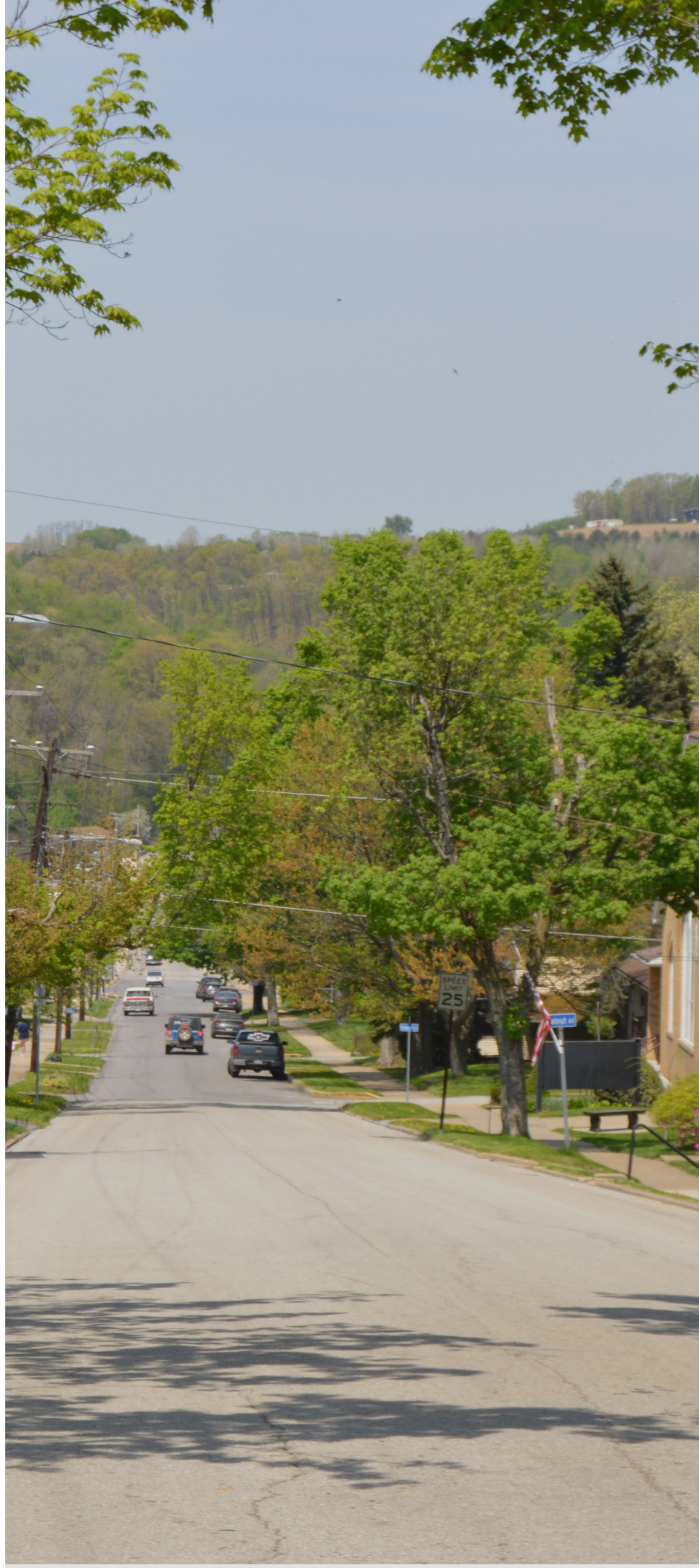


THINK CLYMER 2035

A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE REPORT

Borough of Clymer, Indiana
County
Adopted June 2016



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ThinkClymer2035 was funded by a Municipalities Assistance Program grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, with in-kind technical planning assistance from the Indiana County Office of Planning & Development as approved and endorsed by the Indiana County Board of Commissioners.

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Mapping A Way Forward

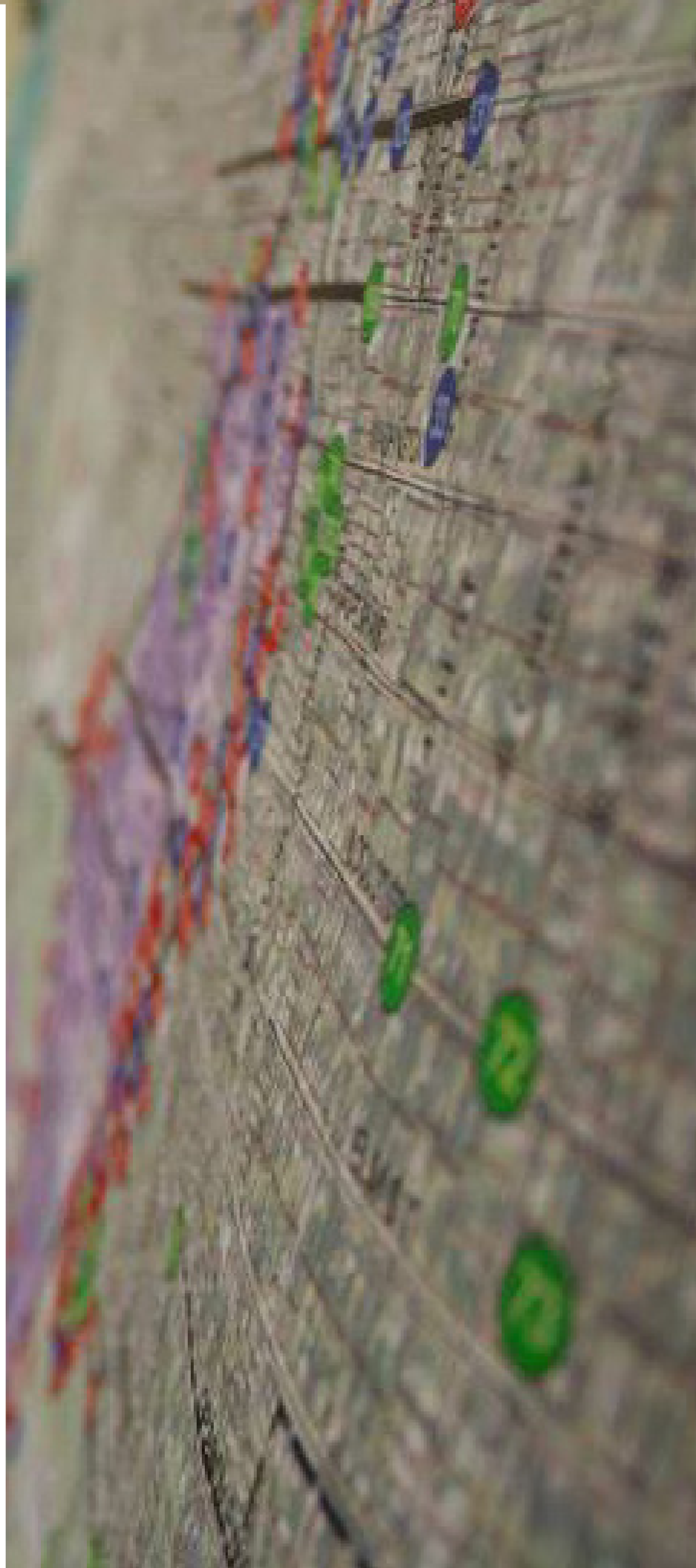
Thinking Big

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The Reasons We Plan



Clymer Borough today is a model of livability for young and old alike. Compact, traditional neighborhoods connected by quiet streets and surrounded by regionally recognized recreational centers have made the community distinct among its peers. As the “northern gateway” to Indiana County, the Borough has worked hard to cultivate a positive local business environment that is now home to medical offices, corner groceries, and distinctive fine dining. These amenities, along with a reasonable cost of living, local and nearby employment opportunities, and a renowned small-town setting, have made Clymer a place to be proud of.

However, the last several decades has introduced some notable changes in Clymer. A quick glance at the most recent socio-demographic data reveals that the community is now made up of mostly families and retirees and the resident labor force is becoming more educated and mobile. Some of the emerging challenges include a slow but steady population loss, declining median incomes, and growing unemployment.

The challenge before us is mapping a way forward by asking residents to enthusiastically leverage their strengths in ways that mitigate their weaknesses. The *ThinkClymer2035* report represents the beginning of a framework for this way forward.

THINKING BIG

The distinctive benefit of any comprehensive planning effort is that it is built around “thinking big.” Thinking big means identifying the big issues, understanding the connections, and shaping the big ideas that will move us forward. This type of thinking is best understood in contrast. Other planning efforts are more narrowly focused, concentrating on specific topics such as parks, infrastructure (i.e. water, sewer, etc.), or zoning. However, comprehensive planning is the only type of planning that fully considers how the whole community’s values, needs, people, and places are interrelated and interdependent. In developing the *ThinkClymer2035* report, we have worked to identify the defining issues and strategic direction that are central to Clymer’s future success.

THINKCLYMER2035: WHAT IT IS

ThinkClymer2035 is a report that is intended as a long-range planning tool to help guide change and improvement in Clymer Borough over the next 20 years. The content of the report is built around the ideas and hopes of community residents, carefully balanced by emerging trends and existing conditions.

The report consists of five chapters. In chapter one readers are presented an overview and introduction to *ThinkClymer2035*, along with a summary of the planning process. The second chapter consists of a sociodemographic exploration of who Clymer is today. The third chapter contains a review of how the larger community was involved in the development of the report. The fourth chapter offers a vision for the future and an updated list of community development goals and objectives. And finally, the fifth chapter briefly summarizes report findings and next steps. Collectively, these components represent the beginnings of a map for the future of Clymer Borough.

The components presented in this report were developed by the Steering Committee during the beginning phases of the project. They were organized around three guiding purposes which became the galvanizing themes around which both the planning process and document were built. These purposes were 1) to identify important emerging socio-demographic trends; 2) to quantify current interests in the community, and; 3) to establish an updated vision and goals for the future. These purposes became not only a guide, but a measuring stick by which *ThinkClymer2035* could be measured.

While this document is only one tool of many that should be considered in planning for Clymer’s future, *ThinkClymer2035* is intended to serve as a policy and investment guide to ensure that Clymer continues to evolve as a prosperous, healthy, and resilient community for all in the years to come.

THINKCLYMER2035: WHAT IT IS NOT

ThinkClymer2035 is only a partial update of the Clymer Borough 2000 Comprehensive Plan adopted by the Borough on February 28, 2000. This planning effort was not a traditional, full-scale, comprehensive plan update as outlined by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (PA MPC), which is the legal guide for planning in the Commonwealth.

The PA MPC governs the general land-use regulations in the Commonwealth. There have been several revisions to this code regarding

Chapter 1	A Comprehensive Plan: Mapping a Way Forward
Chapter 2	Clymer: Who We Are
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local and regional comprehensive plans since its original adoption in 1968. The most recent edition, with revisions, was published in January of 2015 and referenced in the development of this report.

According to the PA MPC, there are nine required components of a full-scale comprehensive plan update (see below). Each of these components are designed to guide decision-making based on interest of residents and available resources. They are also intended to serve as a springboard to amendments to any existing zoning and/or subdivision and land development ordinances and promote discussion between Clymer Borough elected and appointed officials, the public, developers, and agencies at all levels.

However, of the nine components identified by the PA MPC, *ThinkClymer2035* is focused solely on the first requirement, the Statement of Objectives of Clymer Borough concerning its future development. The reason behind the narrowed focus of the *ThinkClymer2035* was that the comprehensive plan report represented a significantly smaller element of a two-part planning initiative advanced by the municipality in 2014-2016.

The first, and larger component, was development and adoption of a Form Based Code (FBC), designed to preserve the historic character of Clymer's downtown and surrounding neighborhoods. Form-based approaches are the latest evolution in the practice of development and land-use regulation and are rapidly becoming an emerging alternative to conventional use-focused controls. The development and adoption of this cutting-edge

PA MPC Comprehensive Plan Requirements*

1. A statement of objectives concerning future development
2. A plan for land use
3. A plan for housing
4. A plan for the movement of people and goods
5. A plan for community facilities and utilities
6. A statement of the interrelationships of the plan components
7. A discussion of short-range and long-range implementation strategies
8. A map or statement indicating the relationship of the Township and its proposed development to adjacent municipalities and areas
9. A plan for the protection of natural and historic resources

**Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code Act of 1968, P.L.805, No.247 as reenacted and amended. 22nd Edition, January 2015*

land-use control in March of 2015 was bundled with the *ThinkClymer2035* project to complement its construction by realigning the community's objectives with findings and input gathered during its development.

While this abbreviated focus does not meet the full PA MPC requirements, it does, with its heavy public involvement pieces, represent a well-informed initial step of a future, more complete, comprehensive plan update.

FINDING THE FUNDING

Funding for both projects (FBC & *ThinkClymer2035*) was provided by the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) through the Municipal Assistance Program (MAP). Funds were awarded and a project consultant was contracted in early 2014. The consultant, Environmental Planning & Design, LLC (Pittsburgh, PA), was responsible for the development of the FBC, and the Borough was tasked with updating the Statement of Objectives concerning its future development. Organization of both projects centered around a single Steering Committee responsible for guiding both projects, appointed by Clymer Borough Council at the start of the project. This diverse group consisted of community leaders, elected officials, and municipal staff. Clymer Borough also partnered with the Indiana County Office of Planning & Development through which planning staff provided technical planning assistance for both projects. The FBC was completed and adopted in March of 2015 and *ThinkClymer2035* was adopted in June of 2016.

THE REASONS WE PLAN

The crux of planning is providing a community with a vision that drives decision making. Done well, communities can adapt to change by using the plan to capitalize on opportunities and mitigate challenges. In this way, comprehensive planning should not be rigid and unwieldy but should be dynamic and innovative. This is important because the point of planning is to enable good decisions in the face of constant change and evolution.

Comprehensive plans are not laws. They are not regulatory in any way. However, they are official in nature and should be used as a guide for municipal officials, boards, and commissions when making regulatory and policy decisions about Clymer Borough.

Eric Kelly and Barbara Becker, well-known planners, professors, and authors, have identified three important elements that make up a “comprehensive” plan.

1. Geographical coverage. A comprehensive plan should include all of the land within the regulatory jurisdiction of the local government preparing the plan. In other words, the geography should be comprehensive and not specific.

2. Subject matter. A comprehensive plan should include all subject matter related to the physical development of the community, including land-use, transportation, utilities, etc.

3. Time horizon. A comprehensive plan must consider a relatively long time horizon. Generally these horizons should be 20 years or more. Horizons less than this are too short to enable the comprehensive thinking necessary to develop the big ideas needed for the plan.

What all this means is that comprehensive plans should be “value-driven.” Generally speaking, values are broad, important, and lasting beliefs shared by the members of a community regarding what is desirable and what is not. Based on this, any plan, at any level, should be reflective of the values of those it is aiming to serve. While this does not mean that more technical aspects of planning should not be addressed, it does mean that they should take a back seat to questions concerning quality of life issues, aspirations, and what steps the community is willing to take to make this happen.

As budgets tighten, funding becomes scarce, and there is continuing uncertainty about the future, the importance of planning is continually reinforced. Planning reports, like *ThinkClymer2035*, enable a community to effectively understand and communicate their vision, goals, and priorities to each other and those interested in investing in the community, including funding agencies, developers, businesses, and homeowners.

Approximately 16 years ago, Clymer undertook the task of creating a plan like the ones described. The 2000 Comprehensive Plan was the first to address changes in population, housing, land use, the environment, parks, community facilities, public utilities and transportation network. It identified downtown as the key to attracting visitors and residents, the need for local land use controls such as zoning, and the importance of recreation areas/trails among many other valuable big ideas. Now, nearly 20 years later, Clymer is starting to update what was done in 2000.

Why is this necessary? Because a lot has changed over the last several decades, from sociodemographic shifts to physical changes in the

landscape. Now it is time to evaluate what has been accomplished and outline some new strategies tailored to meet Clymer's needs and desires today and into the future.





Clymer: Who We Are

A Community with Rich History

Guide to this Section

Population

Households

Income

Education

Citizen Portrait: Jane Q. Clymer

What Does This Mean?



A COMMUNITY WITH RICH HISTORY

Named after George Clymer, Founding Father and signatory of the Declaration of Independence, Clymer Borough was established in 1908 as a mining town to provide housing for miners working the rich deposits of the Dixonville coal fields. Prior to this the area had been a largely agricultural community since the settlement of the region, with some residents, including noted abolitionist Dr. Robert Mitchell participating in the Underground Railroad.

After the end of the Second World War, the coal-driven industrial and economic boom that created Clymer diminished. Mirroring this trend, the borough's population has declined nearly every decade since the 1950's. The expansion of hard road infrastructure in Indiana County and the countywide trend of suburbanization also contributed to this decline.

Clymer today is a community in touch with and influenced by its history. Many residents are descendents of those early twentieth century immigrants who helped to found the town. It is a legacy of hard-working and good natured people with a sense of pride and community.

GUIDE TO THIS SECTION

Listed below are a group of terms and definitions that are important to understanding the facts and figures contained in this chapter. This is followed by a brief description of the data used in this report.

Household: A household consists of all the people who occupy a housing unit. A house, an apartment or other group of rooms, or a single room, is regarded as a housing unit when it is occupied or intended for occupancy as separate living quarters; that is, when the occupants do not live with any other persons in the structure and there is direct access from the outside or through a common hall.

A household includes the related family members and all the unrelated people, if any, such as lodgers, foster children, wards, or employees who share the housing unit. A person living alone in a housing unit, or a group of unrelated people sharing a housing unit such as partners or roomers, is also counted as a household. The count of households excludes group quarters. There are two major categories of households, "family" and "nonfamily".

Family: A family is a group of two people or more (one of whom is the householder) related by birth, marriage, or adoption and residing

together; all such people (including related subfamily members) are considered as members of one family. Beginning with the 1980 Current Population Survey, unrelated subfamilies (referred to in the past as secondary families) are no longer included in the count of families, nor are the members of unrelated subfamilies included in the count of family members. The number of families is equal to the number of family households, however, the count of family members differs from the count of family household members because family household members include any non-relatives living in the household.

Age cohorts: The population of Clymer has been broken down into age cohorts to provide for more effective analysis. These cohorts have been arranged and named according to life phases and reflect common, though not necessarily universal traits, among these demographics. The cohorts are Youth (0-17 years), Young Professionals (18-24 years), Newly Married (25-34), Families (35-49), Empty Nesters (50-64), and Elderly (65+ years).

Southwestern Pennsylvania Region: The Southwestern Pennsylvania Region is a geographic area defined physically, socially, economically, culturally, and politically, which comprises a ten-county area surrounding the metropolitan center of Pittsburgh. The southwestern Pennsylvania Region is served by the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC), a state regional planning agency which assists in long-term transportation planning, as well as being designated the Local Development District and Economic Development District by the US Department of Commerce. While there are variances within the region, macro-scale social economic and other characteristics within the region are generally similar and thus provide a useful baseline for comparison.

Poverty rate: The poverty rate indicates the number of individuals within the community whose annual income, in US Dollars, amounts to less than the United States Census Bureau's poverty level. Those making at or below this threshold are considered to be living in poverty. The poverty level varies according to the number of persons living in a household. For example, in 2014, the poverty level for a four person household was \$23,850, while for a single person, the threshold was \$11,670.

Data used in this report is derived from reports published by the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, and the United States Census Bureau. Census Bureau data included both decennial census data and American Community Survey (ACS) data. The US Census is the official enumeration of every resident in the United States. The Census is conducted every 10 years and it is used to determine the number of seats each state has in the US House of Representatives. It is also used to help

communities make decisions regarding where to build schools, roads, and hospitals and is also used to distribute billions in federal funds to local communities. The most recent Census was done in 2010. The ACS is a study conducted by the Census Bureau which seeks to track and predict population phenomena over periods of time smaller than the census interval. For information on sampling and methodology used in the ACS, please visit <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/methodology.html>.



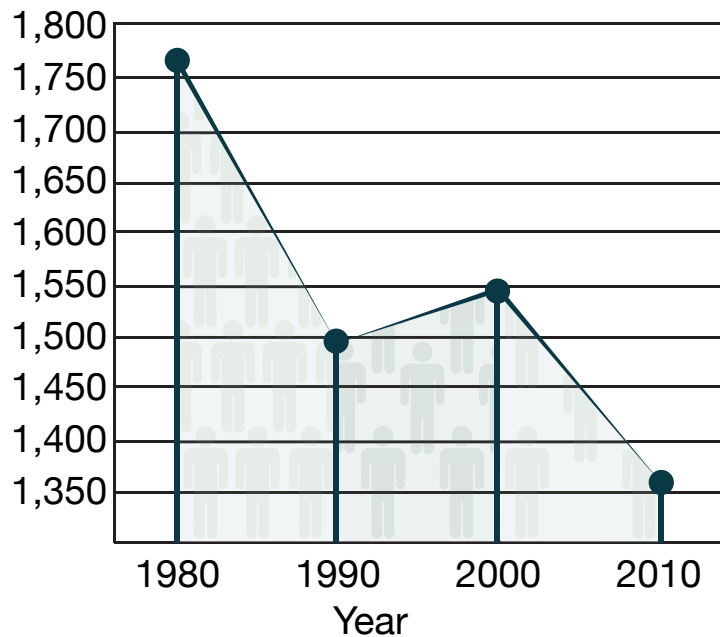
POPULATION

We are a small community, becoming smaller, and aging.

Between 2000-2010, Clymer experienced a slight population growth of 3.2%, breaking the historic cycle of uninterrupted population decline for the borough since 1950.

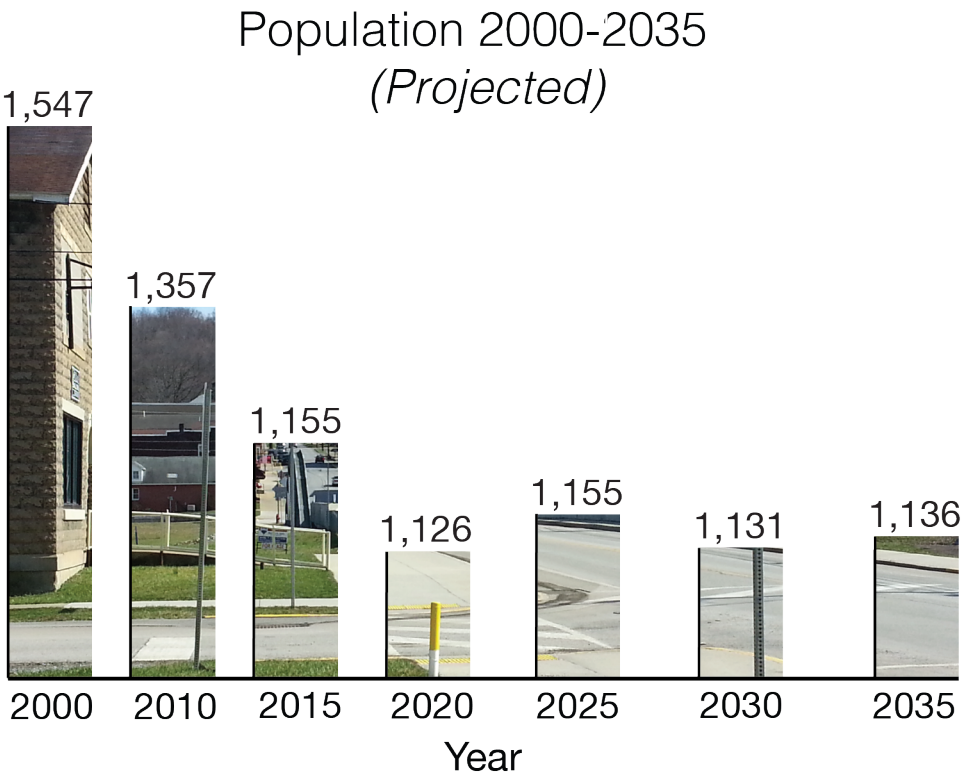
While Clymer's population again declined from 2000-2010, Clymer's population decline is projected to slow. Projections for Clymer's population in 2035 are 1,100 residents.

Clymer Population Trend
1980-2010



Clymer Borough is generally consistent with population growth trends in both Indiana County and the greater Southwestern Pennsylvania Region, both of which are experiencing a population decline. However, Clymer’s population is declining more rapidly than both the county and the region.

Compared to Indiana County and the Southwestern Pennsylvania region, Clymer’s population decline has been significantly greater, at more than double the rate of decline for the region, and six times the rate of population decline for Indiana County.

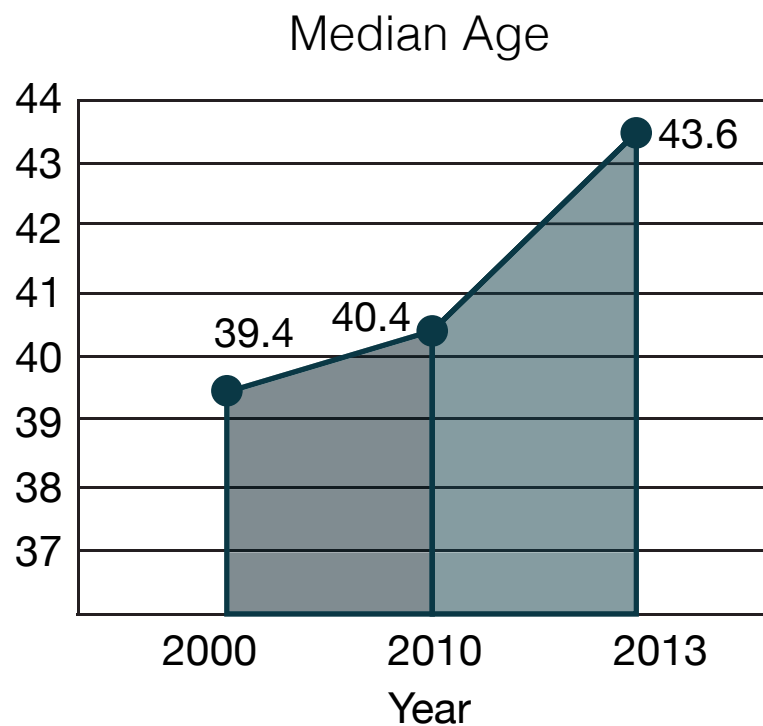


AGE



The population of Clymer is aging. The median age of Clymer's residents increased from 39 years old in 2000 to 44 years old in 2013.

In observing age cohorts, we see that the increase in median age of the community has been driven by growth in Empty Nesters (50-64) and Families (35-49) age cohorts.

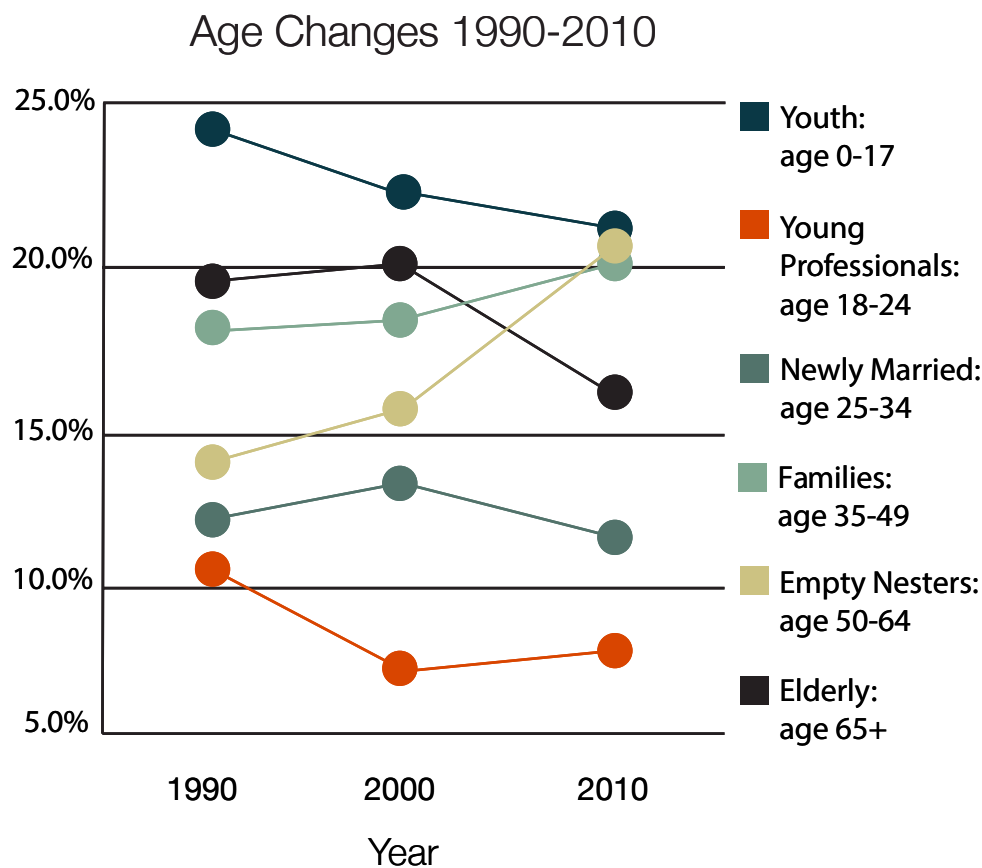


The number of Elderly (65 and older) residents of Clymer borough declined sharply between 2000 and 2010.

Consistent with the growth of the Empty Nesters, the Youth (0-17) cohort experienced decline, though not at the same rate.

The Young Professionals (18-24) cohort, while having grown slightly between 2000-2010, remains the smallest segment of Clymer’s population.

Similarly, the Newly Married (25-34) age cohort, while experiencing some growth from 1990-2000, resumed its decline between 2000-2010, and remains the second smallest age group for Clymer residents.



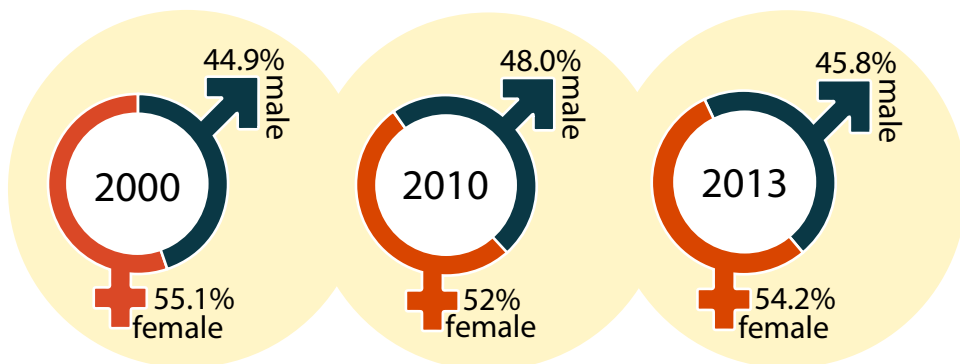
Diversity



Clymer is largely racially and ethnically homogeneous, with nearly 98% of the population being white, English-only speaking, and born in Pennsylvania.

Many residents grew up as residents of Clymer or surrounding communities.

Population by Gender



HOUSEHOLDS

We are a community of families.

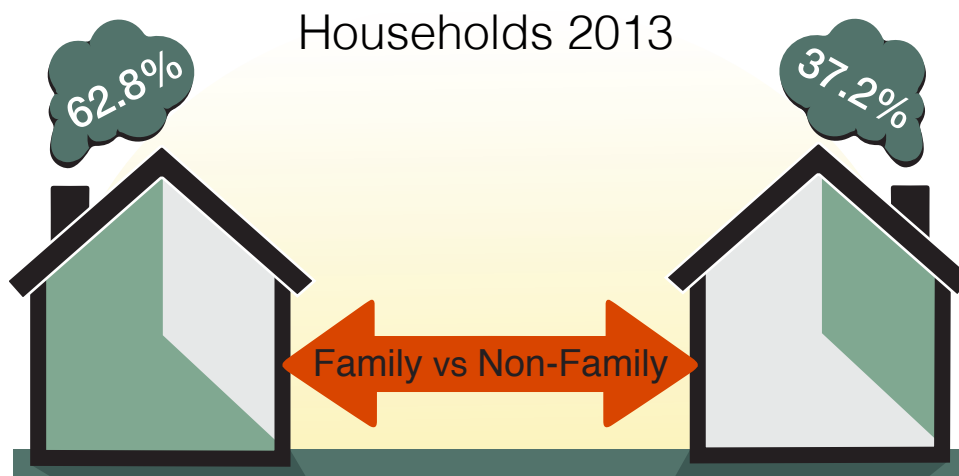


As of 2013, most households in Clymer are comprised of families. Families are classified by the US Census bureau into three categories: married couples, male households, and female households.

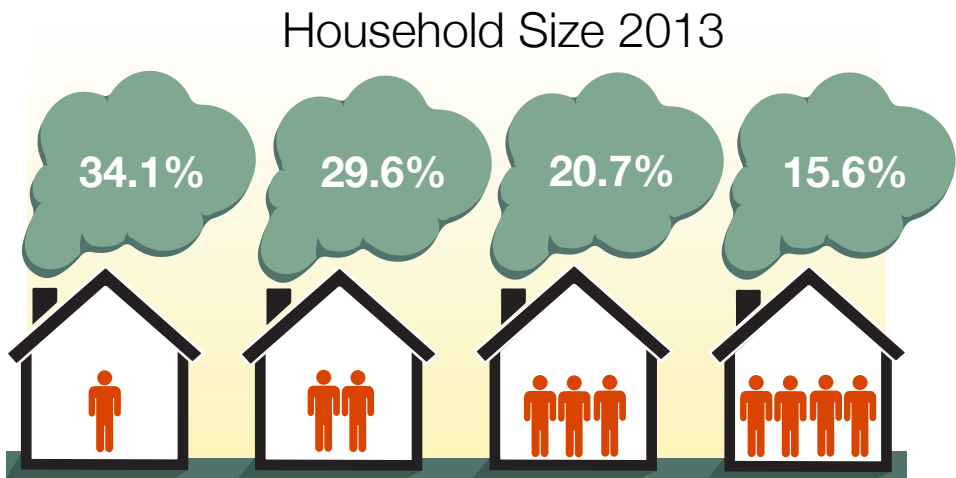
Of the family households in Clymer, 70% of family households are comprised of married couples.

40% of family households in Clymer have children under the age of 18. Of those, 38% of families are single parent households.

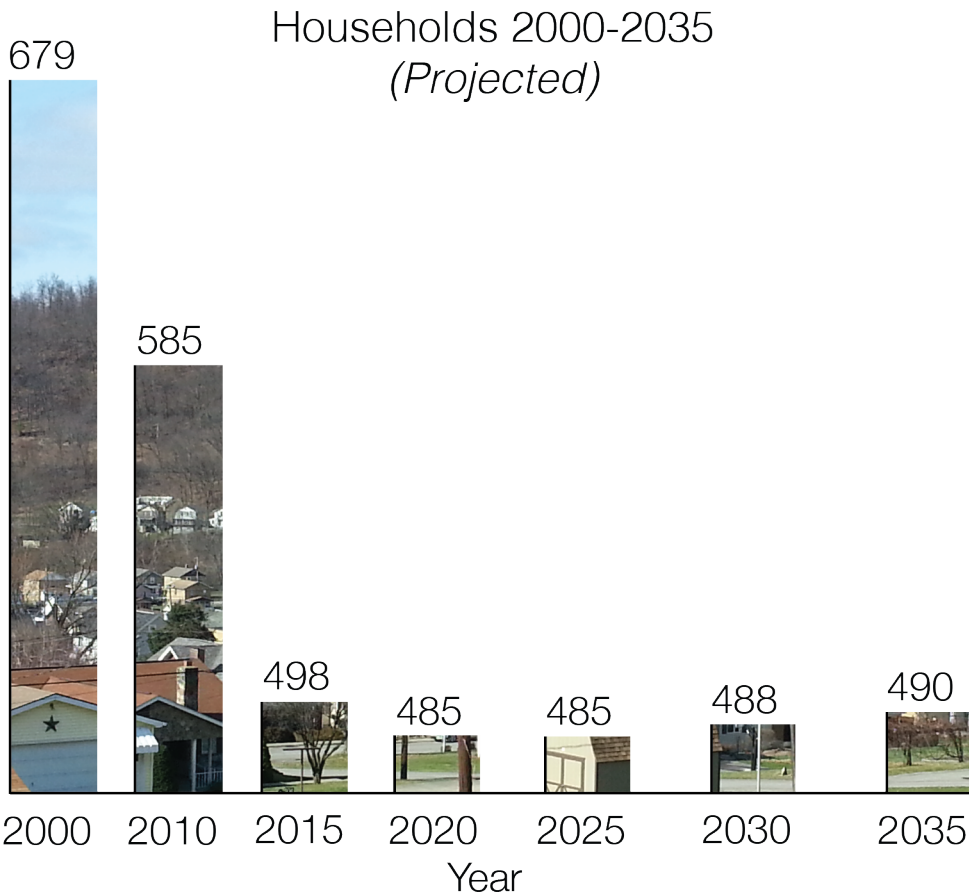
30% of households in Clymer have at least one Elderly (age 65 or older). Of these, 49% are households in which the elderly resident is living alone.

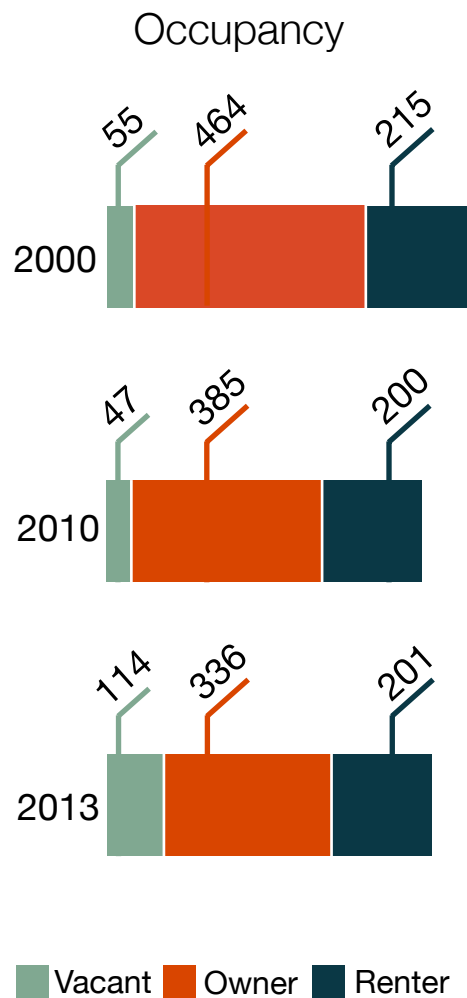


Household size in Clymer has remained stable with Clymer averaging 2.32 occupants per household.



The number of households in Clymer is projected to drop to approximately 500 by 2035. This mirrors the projected decline in Clymer’s population over the same period of time.





Vacant households in Clymer have risen, while Owner Occupied homes have declined. Renter Occupied households in the Borough have remained stable. This indicates that homeowners have been leaving the community, while new residents have not been entering the community in sufficient quantity to compensate for this loss.

INCOME

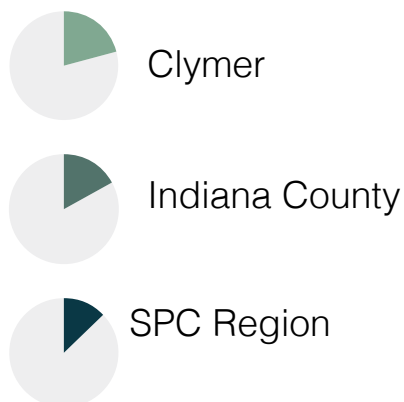
Hard workers, fixed incomes, family demands

The Median Household Income in Clymer climbed approximately \$400 (adjusted for 2014 inflation) from 2000 to 2014, or approximately 1.1%. This trend is slower than the rise in median income in Indiana county as a whole, (5.1%) for the same period.

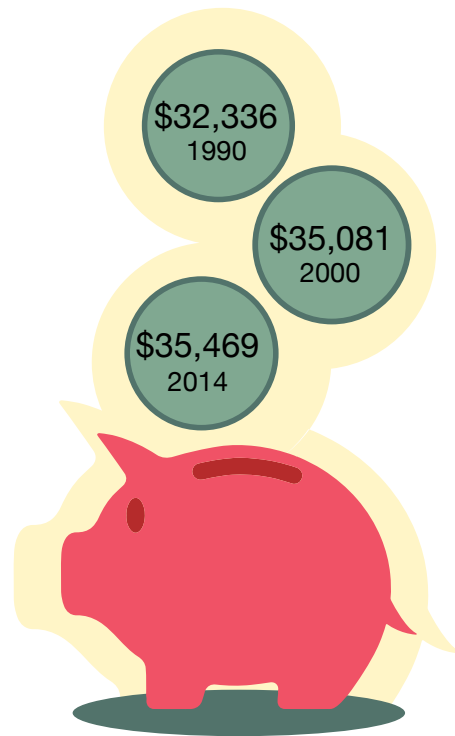
Income in Clymer for 2014 was approximately \$10,000 less than the median for Indiana County and \$16,000 less than the region.

As of 2014, 21.1% of the population of Clymer lives below the poverty level. This is about 5% greater than Indiana County and nearly double that of the region. Within the County, the poverty rate in Clymer has actually dropped relative to 2000. In 2000,

Population Living Below Poverty Line



Median Household Income 2013 CPI Adjusted



Clymer's poverty rate was 7.5% higher than Indiana County as a whole.

The demographic most at risk of poverty in Clymer borough are families with a single female householder, with nearly one-third of this demographic living below the poverty level in 2014.

For elderly households, the rate of those living in poverty is less than other demographics, at 7.7%. Within this subgroup, the poverty rate is greatest again in single resident households, with 14.3% of

elderly female householders living alone being below the poverty level.

In 2014, the average estimated cost of living per month was \$493 for homeowners, and \$543 per month for renters.

Area	% Unemployed
Clymer	11.2%
Indiana County	8.5%
SPC region	7.4%

As of 2014, Clymer's unemployment rate was higher than both the county and the region.

Another concern is low labor force participation rate among female residents age 20-64, with 34.6% of female residents within this demographic being non-participatory. This number increases to 38.6 for those with children ages 6 and under.

83.7% of employed Clymer citizens commute to work alone via automobile, with the average trip lasting about 23 minutes.

Nearly 40% of Households in Clymer receive social security, and approximately 23% of households derive some income from retirement benefits.

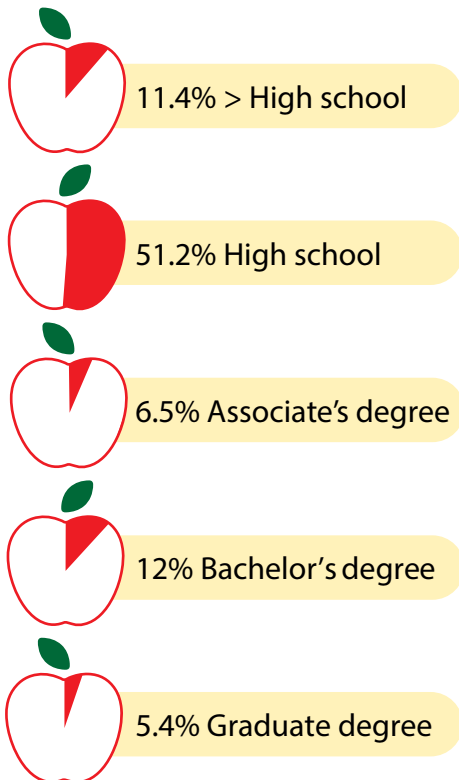


EDUCATION

Educated, intelligent, capable.



Educational Attainment Among Clymer Residents 25 and Older (2014)



The rate of educational attainment of Clymer residents compares favorably to that of the county in terms of high school graduation among adults over the age of 25 (51.2% vs 43.4%).

While Clymer is comparable with the county in terms of residents' rate of educational attainment for baccalaureate degrees (12.0%, 14.1%), Clymer residents' attainment of advanced degrees is noticeably lower (5.4% vs 9.2%).

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

- Clymer's population is steadily declining in number and aging, with many citizens drawing either social security or retirement benefits. This will likely result in a greater need for services to the elderly.
- The number of Clymer residents living at or below poverty level is particularly high. This is linked to both many residents living on a fixed income, and others earning less than the median wage for the region.
- A factor which is likely contributing to this reduced income is the large number of unemployed residents of Clymer, which is concentrated in single female family households.
- Many of Clymer's working residents face a moderate to long daily commute to and from work. This poses a challenge for single parents, particularly those with young children, and may help explain the relatively high unemployment and low labor force participation rates among those demographics within the borough.

CITIZEN PORTRAIT: JANE Q. CLYMER

If you were to encounter a "typical" resident of Clymer Borough in 2013, you would meet a 44 year-old white, non-Hispanic female home owner who resides in the Borough with her family. She will have family roots in Clymer and/or one of the surrounding communities. She works hard, traveling nearly 45 minutes round trip per day to and from work.

Age: 44
Sex: Female
Race: White
Place of Birth: Pennsylvania
Ancestry: German/Irish
Type of Household: Married
Family, children over the age of 18
Household Income: \$34,635
Education: High School
Diploma
Language: English only



3

Thinking About The Future: The Planning Process And People

Thinking About the Future:
The Planning Process and
People

What is a Form Based
Code and Why is It
Important?

ThinkClymer2035 Phasing

ThinkClymer2035 Public
Outreach

ThinkClymer2035 Public
Outreach Summary



THINKING ABOUT THE FUTURE: THE PLANNING PROCESS AND PEOPLE

The *ThinkClymer2035* initiative was launched with the development of the Form Based Code (FBC) project in fall of 2013. However, *ThinkClymer2035* did not become the central focus until after the adoption of the FBC in March of 2015.

Both projects were guided in both development and adoption by a diverse group of community leaders organized and appointed by Clymer Borough Council at the start of the FBC project. This group, or Steering Committee, was tasked with providing direction and oversight for every aspect of the planning process. The five member committee was comprised of members from the Clymer Municipal Authority, Clymer Borough Council, Clymer Borough Civic Association, Clymer Borough Municipal Staff, and the Indiana County Office of Planning & Development. The Steering Committee met monthly during the development of both the FBC and *ThinkClymer2035* and was staffed by Clymer Borough Manager and County Planning staff.

WHAT IS A FORM BASED CODE AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

The Clymer FBC Project is directly connected to the implementation of the 2000 Clymer Borough Comprehensive Plan. Since its adoption, the Borough has worked diligently to achieve the vision contained in the Plan's goals, objectives, and recommendations. One of these recommendations is the development of innovative land-use strategies, policies, and regulations that respect and preserve the community's history and culture while encouraging orderly growth and development.

The importance of land-use controls in protecting and improving the quality of life in Clymer Borough is not simply a recommendation; it is a clear theme throughout the Comprehensive Plan. Early, in the analysis sections, the Plan identified the lack of land use controls as a significant barrier to advancing the listed Community Goals and Objectives. These Goals and Objectives clearly articulated and prioritized the community's interest in developing innovative land-use strategies, policies, and regulations that respect and preserve the community's history and culture while encouraging orderly growth and development. Going further, the Land Use section recommended that Clymer develop a zoning ordinance that sets "...specific regulations for land use by tailoring how development will occur according to the values of the community". Other sections of the Plan both generally and specifically supported these recommendations

by repeatedly recognizing zoning as a critical tool in preserving the character and quality of life in Clymer.

Other local factors outside the Plan have also highlighted the importance of context-sensitive land-use controls. These factors include increasing development opportunities in recreation and housing, unwanted development patterns, and growing interest in downtown and neighborhood revitalization.

Recognizing the challenge in balancing the dual community interests of preserving local history and culture while encouraging orderly growth and development, the Committee prioritized creative thinking, community engagement, and context sensitive approaches. These priorities led the committee to consider a form based approach to land-use controls. After over a year of research and exploration, the committee recommended, with the support of Council, the development of a zoning ordinance using a form-based approach. This approach was identified as the most suitable tool to protect and preserve community character and encourage context sensitive growth and development.

The Committee then worked with planners from the Indiana County Office of Planning & Development and the Department of Community and Economic Development to secure funding for the project. After the Environmental Planning and Design was selected, the Steering Committee continued working with the Consultant to manage the project, engage the community, and deliver an innovative FBC that had the support necessary for adoption and implementation.

THINKCLYMER2035 PHASING

1. Organization
2. Discovery
3. Research and Assessment
4. Report Development
5. Report Presentation and Adoption

Upon the completion and adoption of the FBC in March of 2015, the Comprehensive Plan update became the focus of the Steering Committee's activities. The planning approach developed consisted of 5 distinct phases. The first phase, Organization, involved bringing together multiple stakeholders to develop a scope of work, deliverables, and engagement strategy. This phase was woven into the FBC planning process and continued the Steering Committee as the official, appointed guides for the project. The second phase, Discovery, consisted of a series of outreach and

public involvement sessions designed to identify key opportunities and challenges from the perspective of residents. These Discovery sessions continued throughout the subsequent phases as new stakeholder groups were identified by the Steering Committee. The third phase, Research and Assessment involved compiling and assessing past, current, and future socio-demographic data from multiple sources. Information collected during the Discovery phase was also analyzed which would become part of the basis for the updated community goals and objectives and vision statements. The Report Development phase was the assembly of the final report, including specialized graphics and socio-demographic data. The final phase, Report Presentation and Adoption consisted of meetings with the Steering Committee and public to refine the finished document and facilitate adoption by the elected body.

THINKCLYMER2035 PUBLIC OUTREACH

Public outreach for both the FBC and this report involved a variety of approaches in order to get a wide range of ideas and perspectives, which in turn were incorporated into the analysis of existing conditions, land-use controls, and the community's vision and goals.

STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee has served as a driving force behind the both the FBC and report. Members attended committee meetings, weighed in on the design of the planning process to ensure maximum public input, and offered feedback on the analysis and potential strategies detailed in the report. The Steering Committee assisted in the publication of multiple public events through coordination with local community-based organizations, social media updates, emails, and regularly scheduled community events. Members of the committee also volunteered at these events, providing hands-on facilitation assistance and speaking to the rational and importance of both projects. Going forward they will help ensure the momentum exists to implement the FBC and recommendations contained in this document.

In fall of 2014, the Steering Committee met to discuss the public outreach planning for this report. The group determined that the objective of outreach efforts would center around opportunities for residents to express their desires for the future of the community. The group also identified key groups and demographics within the community, and strategies for how best to engage them in the process of constructing the report. High school students, senior citizens, religious leaders, and other groups were all included in specific workshops and meetings to encourage

a wide array of community input. With target groups identified, the committee developed a series of public meetings and workshops designed to encourage participation while generating much needed information regarding the wants and needs of Clymer residents. Finally, to reflect the 20 year horizon selected by the committee, the project was entitled *ThinkClymer2035*.

ThinkClymer2035 outreach consisted of two community events and six public workshops. The events were annual community functions or events at which planning staff and Steering Committee members hosted a table with information about the comprehensive plan report and some mapping and survey activities for attendees to participate in. The workshops were more focused, 90 minute events, during which attendees participated in a series of three facilitated activities designed to gather public input. All the events and workshops were well attended which made possible a detailed reflection of the desires of the community.

SonDay in the Park	Community Event	August 2014
Clymer Steering Committee	Workshop	August 2014
Clymer Days	Community Event	Sept. 2014
Clymer Ministerium	Workshop	March 2015
Clymer Civic Association	Workshop	April 2015
Penns Manor High School	Workshop	April 2015
Two Lick Valley Area Senior Center	Workshop	June 2015
Public Open House	Workshop	June 2015

COMMUNITY EVENTS

The community events portion of the public outreach plan had two main purposes, to raise awareness of the project within the community and to collect some general information regarding the changes the residents wanted to see. To solicit input, people stopping by the *ThinkClymer2035* booth were asked to review an infographic providing some basic information about Clymer pulled from the 2010 Census and American Community Survey data and respond to the question “What should Clymer be like in 10 to 20 years?”. Participants were provided two ways to respond. First, a matrix with 9 different investment scenarios (i.e. recreation, downtown, etc.) and a blank whiteboard on which they could write any response. Whiteboard responses were photographed and quantified, along with matrix votes. These activities helped build community awareness, fostering future participation, as well as gather information that would be used in later workshops and the finished report.



Common themes identified during both community events included interests in main street/downtown growth, increased recreational opportunities, and public investments in safety and youth activities. This data and community input was then used by the planning team to design workshop activities specifically designed to explore these themes expressed by the community.

PUBLIC WORKSHOPS



The six workshops organized for the project were assembled around a general collection of goals or outcomes. These included 1) Create shared understanding of *ThinkClymer2035* and why it is important, 2) Provide a summary of updated socio-demographic data and trends, and 3) Collect information from attendees regarding areas of concern in the community, downtown design ideas, and key elements that should be included in the community goals and objectives. Other, more specific, goals and outcomes were developed for particular groups based on their mission or interest.



To accomplish these goals, the planning team developed a series of three activities which were included in each of the six workshops. They included Collaborative Mapping, Enliven our Streets, and Today and Tomorrow. The Collaborative Mapping activity was designed to allow people to pinpoint different areas of the town and how they felt about them. The Enliven our Streets activity was a direct product of information collected early in the public outreach process at community events. One of the key concepts identified at these events was growing and improving the downtown or Main Street which became the catalyst for this activity. The Enliven our Streets activity challenged participants to share what aspects of street design were most important. Finally, the Today and Tomorrow activity was a broad, open comment opportunity designed to gather residents' current thoughts about the community and how they hoped to see it in the future. In the information and insights collected through these activities were then used to create updated vision and community goals and objectives statements. The following sections we provide additional detail regarding these activities and summaries of the outcomes.

COLLABORATIVE MAPPING

This activity provided participants an opportunity to pinpoint specific areas of Clymer, and their opinions of these areas. The objective was to gain insight on residents' favorite places, least favorite places, and areas they would want public money spent to improve these places. Citizens

were presented with a map of Clymer Borough and given green, blue, and red stickers. Green stickers corresponded to their favorite places, red to their least favorite, and blue showed their desire for public spending.

The activity provided a clear insight into how the community views itself and where improvement is needed. After compiling the data collected at all six workshops the planning team estimated that between 75-80 residents participated in the activity. An analysis of their responses and associated comments revealed that a collection of various parks within the community, downtown areas, some local restaurants and the social center were some of the places participants liked. These same areas were identified as target geographies for public investment. Some of the areas identified as places the community did not like were Sherman Park based on a need for updated equipment and amenities. Another area disliked by participants was the water treatment plant citing concerns regarding water quality and aesthetics. Listed below are some of the summary conclusions based on feedback gathered during the Collaborative Mapping activity.

- The Two Lick Valley Area Senior Center, Luigi's, and Sheetz all received the most mentions as a "favorite place".
- Main Street received some positive comments but participants also agreed it is in need of public and private investments to make it more attractive to business, visitors, and residents.
- The most common response regarding public investment was streets. Popular comments included references to better street markings and improved parking for seniors.
- Sherman Park, as well as Lee Park, were areas of both positive and negative comments. Both areas received equal numbers of "like" and "dislike" comments. Those indicating they disliked these areas also indicated that they should be improved with public funds.
- A significant number of residents indicated that the trails in the community were important and worthy of public investment.
- The area most people stated as their least favorite was the water treatment plant. Residents of Clymer voiced their negative opinions about the water quality.

ENLIVEN OUR STREETS

The Enliven our Streets activity was designed to determine which common street amenities the participants were interested in seeing incorporated into the streets of their community. The activity employed a poster-size image of a typical main street in a small community that included amenities such as awnings, newspaper stands, bike racks, street



seating and lighting, and sidewalk plantings. Similar to the Collaborative Mapping activity, residents were given four different colored stickers that corresponded to different opinions; Green to signify an amenity they desired, yellow to signify an amenity they wouldn't mind seeing around the community, red to signify an amenity they felt would be out of place in Clymer, and blue to signify an amenity they were uncertain of.

The Enliven our Streets activity was conducted in four of the six workshops held during the public outreach process. After compiling the data collected at these workshops, the planning team estimated that approximately 50 residents participated in the activity. The amenities participants found most intriguing were improved curb appeal through flower beds and plants along sidewalks, street trees to separate auto and pedestrian traffic, street seating, and also lighting to make the streets more welcoming during the day and after dark. Amenities the participants found unappealing were options like bicycle racks and newspaper stands. Listed below are some of the summary conclusions based on feedback gathered during the Enliven our Streets activity.

- Foliage, such as street trees and flower beds, as well as street seating and lighting were viewed very positively by participants.
- Awnings and cultural/historical signage received a mixed response of mostly yellow and blue stickers, meaning they weren't desired but also weren't undesired.
- Amenities such as newspaper stands were found especially

unappealing. Especially among students, there were no positive responses to newspaper stands.

- Streetlights received unanimously positive responses.

	Highly Desirable	Desirable	Disliked
Clymer Civic Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curb Appeal Cultural/ Historic Signage Street Lights Street Seating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bike Racks Awnings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newspaper Stands Street Trees
Penns Manor High School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awnings Curb Appeal Street Lights Street Trees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural/Historic Signage Street Seating Trashcans/ Recycling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bike Racks Newspaper Stands
Two Lick Valley Area Senior Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awnings Curb Appeal Street Seating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bike Racks Street Lights Street Trees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural/Historic Signage Newspaper Stands Trashcans/ Recycling
Public Open House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Street Lights Street Seating Street Trees Trashcans/ Recycling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bike Racks Curb Appeal Street Seating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Newspaper Stands

TODAY AND TOMORROW



The final activity was entitled Today and Tomorrow. This simple, but popular, exercise asked participants to think of a sentence or key words that describe Clymer today and how they would like it to be in the future. Both responses were recorded on “post-it” notes and put on a large poster board designed for the activity. By doing this, residents of Clymer could express in their own words their vision of the town they live in.

The Today and Tomorrow activity was conducted at all six workshops held during the public outreach process. After compiling the data collected during these workshops, the planning team estimated that approximately 65 residents participated in the activity. Most responses describing Clymer “today” highlighted the community as a relatively safe, “family-oriented” place that has a “solid core” but lacks community activities for residents and destinations for travelers that could be enabled through economic development activities, main street programming, and community event planning. Visions of a future, “more desirable”, Clymer had some variation but coalesced around Main Street revitalization, improving local parks and recreation facilities, increasing public transportation options, and improving the connectivity throughout the community. Another issue that frequently emerged was a consistent interest in increasing economic opportunities for residents, especially those just entering the workforce.

	Views of Clymer Today	Views of Clymer Tomorrow
Clymer Steering Committee	■ A safe, modernizing town meeting the basic needs of an area with large youth and elderly populations.	■ A modernized, diverse, walkable town with improved outdoor recreation facilities.
Clymer Ministerium	■ An aging blue collar population with lack of quality housing, economic opportunities and entertainment options leading to crime.	■ A safer family oriented town with a vibrant Main Street, improved youth recreation facilities and diversified housing options.
Clymer Civic Association	■ A relatively safe, family oriented town that has a solid core but lacks community activities for residents and destinations for travelers.	■ A vibrant, clean and safe town with an improved Main Street, revitalized community recreation facilities and increased public transportation.

Penn's Manor High School	<p>■ Clymer is a town oriented towards older people that needs improvements in many areas.</p> <p>The youth noted a lack of parks, restaurants, and places for youth to socialize, along with a lack of entertainment; a growing drug issue was noted.</p>	<p>■ A town that is safer, cleaner and environmentally friendly. Improved streets, sidewalks, and Main Street amenities can bring in more business and create a tighter-knit community.</p>
Two Lick Valley Area Senior Center	<p>■ Clymer is a pleasant place to live with quality senior center, parks and stores but needs more activities for residents as well as improvements to Main Street, public transportation and the lack of street lighting and parking in the town.</p>	<p>■ A town with an improved and updated Main Street containing benches, street lighting and increased parking capacity. Increased public transportation for the elderly as well as more activities for young and older residents alike.</p>
Public Open House	<p>■ A safe and economically improving town in need of increased economic growth, and improved town amenities to encourage young people to remain in the area.</p>	<p>■ None recorded</p>

THINKCLYMER2035 PUBLIC OUTREACH SUMMARY

ThinkClymer2035 was designed to obtain the public input of the community of Clymer employing a deliberate, multifaceted approach. This was achieved through a series of community events and guided workshops. In the end, more than 100 community residents had the opportunity to interact with the planning team in voicing their thoughts, ideas, and opinions about Clymer. These participants represented a wide range of stakeholders from high school students to senior citizens. A review of community events and workshops reflects a diverse collection of interests and focus areas included in the public outreach process. Information collected and summarized in previous sections was then used in the review and update of the existing community development goals and objectives and the development of a community vision statement.



Vision, Goals, And Objectives: An Ongoing, Dynamic Process

Vision, Goals, and
Objectives: An Ongoing,
Dynamic Process

ThinkClymer2035 Vision
Statement

Getting it Done:
ThinkClymer2035 Goal
and Objective
Statements



VISION, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES: AN ONGOING, DYNAMIC PROCESS

An effective comprehensive plan is built around a collective vision of the future and on sound goals and objectives. Together, these provide elected and appointed officials and their staff with overall policy guidance to prepare, adopt, and implement the plan.

Goal statements are simply the long term desires of the community encapsulated and realized with a broadly defined end-state. Objectives are specific, measurable statements that are developed as a means of obtaining a particular goal(s). Vision statements describe the future of the community, as we would like it to be. As we inhabit an ever-changing world, it is necessary to assess and update the community's goals, objectives, and vision to meet constantly changing and emerging demands.

The process to develop a vision and updated goals and objectives engaged hundreds of residents over the course of both the FBC and *ThinkClymer2035* projects. Through a robust public outreach process, that included community events, workshops, and many Steering Committee meetings, residents described their ideas for the future of their community.

The starting point for the development of these important aspects of *ThinkClymer2035* began with a review of the 2000 Clymer Comprehensive Plan. This document contained no vision statement but did offer a set of 12 community goals and objectives. Using the 2000 Plan as a foundation, the Steering Committee compiled and analyzed the results of the public outreach process. From this, the planning team worked with the Committee to draft a new vision statement and update the goals and objectives from the 2000 Plan. The following chapter is divided into two sections. The first is a presentation of the vision statement for the community and the second is the updated goals and objectives.

THINKCLYMER2035 VISION STATEMENT

Clymer is a thriving community made up of people that care about each other and the place they call home. As the northern gateway to Indiana County, Clymer is a place where business thrives, neighborhoods are welcoming, and people are engaged in shaping the decisions that affect their lives.

The *ThinkClymer2035* vision statement embodies the community's commitment to preserving the best of Clymer while envisioning how it could be different in the future. Based on input from residents the vision statement answers the question "What sort of community do we want Clymer to be?" Based on this, the Steering Committee drafted the following vision statement for Clymer Borough.

GETTING IT DONE: *THINKCLYMER2035* GOAL AND OBJECTIVE STATEMENTS

The 2000 Clymer Comprehensive Plan identified 12 goals and objectives. These goals and objectives included the following:

- Goal 1:** Identify strategies which will promote economic development efforts within Clymer.
- Goal 2:** Revitalize the Main Street/Downtown area and initiate a marketing strategy to attract new shoppers to Clymer.
- Goal 3:** Provide strategies to ensure that future growth is orderly and positive.
- Goal 4:** Preserve and promote recreational and scenic qualities of the waterways within the community.
- Goal 5:** Capitalize on the history of the Borough by establishing policies whereby future development will have a thematic approach reflective of the municipality's beginnings.
- Goal 6:** Establish a basis to implement local land use controls, such as zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances.
- Goal 7:** Require that infill development and redevelopment is compatible with surrounding uses.
- Goal 8:** Identify the best uses of open space land suitable for development.
- Goal 9:** Address the flooding problems along the waterways within the community which are a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of its residents.
- Goal 10:** Enhance the existing Transportation system to allow for safer

and more direct access to major highways and established population centers.

Goal 11: Create links within the community through the development of trails and/or pathways which will provide safe access to the downtown area and recreation facilities.

Goal 12: Increase community involvement and participation in the development and implementation of the plan.

Assessment and Public Outreach

To aid in assessment and the updating of Clymer's goals and objectives since the 2000 Plan, input was sought from members of the community. The aim was to quantify the perspectives and desires of Clymer residents with regard to the needs and direction of their community. To determine what changes the Clymer residents wanted to see in their community, a series of public meetings were held which consisted of engaging residents in the planning process through workshop activities, helping participants envision their town and how they would like to see it changed and improved. All of these meetings were critical to assessment of the existing goals and objectives.

Rethinking and Reorganizing

Analysis of input from members of the community has been distilled into a series of suggested revisions to Clymer's goal and objective statements. These revisions included reorganizing the existing list of goals and objectives to fit the goals and objectives definition offered earlier in this chapter. After reorganizing the list, the planning team added collective contributions gathered during the public outreach process. Great attention was given to separating broad goals from specific objectives.

The result was 5 redesigned goal statements and 11 new objective statements. These statements were designed to better reflect how the community will fulfill its vision for the future. Listed below are the suggested revisions for Clymer's Goals and Objectives statements.

Goal 1: Identify strategies which will promote economic development efforts within Clymer.

Objective 1.1: Revitalize the Main Street/Downtown area through incorporation of enhancements, including street lights and increased curb appeal measures.

Goal 2: Provide strategies to ensure that future growth is orderly and positive.

Objective 2.1: Preserve, promote, and improve, recreational areas and the waterways within the community.

Objective 2.2: Capitalize on the history of the Borough by establishing policies based upon the concept of the Form-Based Code, whereby future development will be reflective of the municipality's beginnings and be consistent with the desired character of the Borough.

Objective 2.3: Develop and implement additional local land use controls, such as subdivision and land development ordinances.

Objective 2.4: Require that infill development and redevelopment be compatible with surrounding uses.

Objective 2.5: Inventory and identify the best uses of open space land suitable for development.

Goal 3: Promote health and public safety through effective management of environmental issues.

Objective 3.1: Develop and implement effective flood-control/stormwater management policies.

Objective 3.2: Improve and maintain a high level of water quality for the community.

Objective 3.3: Engage in activities that promote a cleaner Clymer, and ensure that this objective is reflected in development projects.

Goal 4: Enhance the existing transportation system to allow for safer and more direct access to major highways and established population centers.

Objective 4.1: Strengthen and promote links within the community through increased emphasis upon improving walkability along both sidewalks and trails, and public transportation which will provide safe access to downtown, recreation facilities, and other population centers.

Goal 5: Increase community involvement and participation in the life of the community and its ongoing development.

Objective 5.1: Develop and implement community based outreach and recreation activities to strengthen and improve the bonds among residents within, and to the community.





What Next: Clymer Tomorrow

What Next: Clymer
Tomorrow



WHAT NEXT: CLYMER TOMORROW

On behalf of the *ThinkClymer2035* planning team and Steering Committee, thank you for reading this report. *ThinkClymer2035* has presented some current but challenging background information, a lofty vision, and a collection of goals and objectives designed to map a way forward to a more vibrant future.

As with many things in life, none of this will happen without the combined effort of everyone. Our hope is that all who read the report are inspired to take action and rally around the ideas framed by community members.

Forging our way forward begins now. Resilient communities like Clymer set differences aside, and look beyond short-term concerns to achieve the vision articulated in this document.

Regardless of whether you were involved since our kickoff, or whether reading this document is your first experience with *ThinkClymer2035*, we hope you'll stay involved. One person can do so much, and working together just imagine the results.

Clymer is Livable.

Clymer is Thriving.

Clymer is Engaged.



