

Rural Pennsylvania

A Legislative Agency of the Pennsylvania General Assembly

July 2005

2005 Survey of Small-Town Municipal Officials

In 1999, the Center for Rural Pennsylvania conducted the state's first demographic survey of Pennsylvania small-town officials. To learn if any significant changes have occurred since that time, the Center conducted a follow-up survey in 2005.

The 2005 survey found that, demographically, Pennsylvania's small town officials have changed very little from the 1999 survey. In both years, the average small-town official was a middle-aged male who had been in office for about 10 years and had lived in the same community for more than 20 years with his spouse.

One thing has changed, however: an increase in educational attainment among small-town officials.

Method

The 2005 survey was modeled after the 1999 survey of local government officials. In both years, the sample of officials was drawn from a list of elected officials maintained by the Governor's Center for Local Government Services. From this list, the Center for Rural Pennsylvania excluded all officials in municipalities with 2,500 or more residents as well as officials in townships of the first class and cities of the third class with populations under 2,500.

In 2005, there were 12,991 officials on this revised list. A random sample of 3,500 officials was selected. The selection of officials from boroughs and townships of the second class (hereafter townships) was done separately to more accurately reflect the proportion of each type of government in the state. In February 2005, the survey was mailed to 2,204 borough officials and 1,296 township officials.

By March 31, 1,208 usable surveys were returned for a total response rate of 35 percent. The confidence interval, or margin of error, was plus or minus 2.5. This means that we are 95 percent confident the results are within 2.5 percentage points of what all small-town officials would have answered. Because of the large response rate, it was possible to examine borough and township officials separately. The response rate for borough officials was 32 percent, and for township officials it was 39 percent. Table 1 compares the response rates from the 1999 and 2005 surveys.

Table 1: Survey Response Rates from 1999 and 2005

	2005 Survey	1999 Survey
Response Rate		
Boroughs	32.1%	31.1%
Townships	38.7%	33.3%
Total	35.5%	32.2%
Margin of Error (Confidence interval at 95%)		
Boroughs	3.31	3.19
Townships	3.83	3.17
Total	2.51	2.40

Survey Instrument

The 2005 survey instrument was modeled after the 1999 survey. In both surveys, the questions were divided as follows:

- (1) demographic questions about the officials (gender, year of birth, educational attainment, employment status etc.),
- (2) background questions about the municipality (number of meetings per month, hours spent on municipal business, most important issues in the municipality, etc.), and
- (3) questions about serving in public office (years of service, reasons for running for office, plans to seek office again, etc.).

In the 2005 survey, several questions were added to address race, service in the Armed Forces, and the number of full- and part-time municipal employees. A question about the respondent's working relationship with other elected officials was excluded.

For ease of reading, in this report, boroughs and townships of the second class are referred to as "small towns."

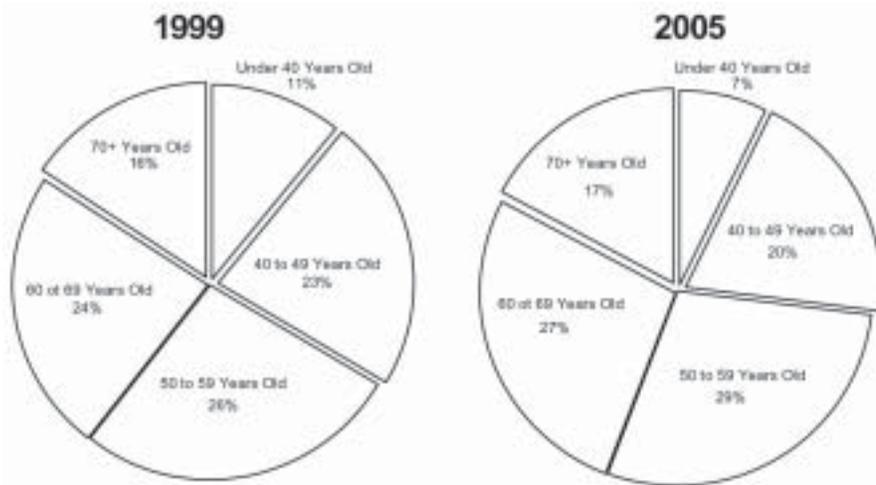
Results

Profile of Officials

Age Cohorts

Between 1999 and 2005, the average age of a small-town official inched up one year, from 56 to 57 years old. The obvious cause of this increase was a decline in the number of

Figure 1: Small Town Officials by Age Cohorts, 1999 and 2005



younger officials and an increase in the number of older officials. The number of officials under 40 years old declined 4 percentage points between 1999 and 2005, while the number of officials 55 years old and older increased 6 percentage points.

There were no statistically significant differences in the age of officials among boroughs and townships, among the various regions of the state or among rural and urban small towns.

There were, however, significant differences in age between male and female officials. Female officials were, on average, 4.5 years younger than their male counterparts.

Additionally, persons who had a postsecondary degree

(technical school or college) were, on average, 3.5 years younger than those who did not have postsecondary experiences.

In 2005, 48 percent of officials were Baby Boomers, or persons born between 1946 and 1964. Six years earlier, in 1999, 41 percent of officials were Baby Boomers. On one level, this change represents a shift in leadership from an older generation to a younger generation. This shift, however, does not represent a change in priorities. Between these two generations, no statistical differences existed in the issues either generation cited as the most important in their municipalities.

Gender & Race

Between 1999 and 2005, the percentage of female small-town officials remained about the same at 15 percent. In both years, boroughs had a higher percentage of female officials (22 percent) than townships (6 percent).

There are some striking differences when comparing female to male officials; as noted earlier, female officials are generally younger and better educated, with nearly 30 percent having a college degree compared to 22 percent of males. Additionally, female officials are more likely to perform volunteer work in their community and have children living in their household than their male counterparts. The average female official has been in office for 6.5 years, while the average male has been in office for nearly 11 years. Despite these differences, the same two factors motivated the majority of these officials to first run for office: a desire to be active in the community and for the betterment of the community.

When asked to note any important issues in their community, male and female officials provided different answers. Males gave higher priority to streets and highways, and taxes and spending, while females cited public safety and recreational activities as important issues.

When asked to identify their racial group, 99 percent of small-town officials said white. The racial homogeneity of these officials is not surprising given the racial make up of the Pennsylvania municipalities they represent. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2000, about 98 percent of the population in municipalities with less than 2,500 residents were white.

Housing & Household Characteristics

In both 1999 and 2005, 97 percent of small-town officials owned their home, while 3 percent rented. This rate is higher than average for most small towns. In 2000, the U.S. Census Bureau reported that 80 percent of occupied housing units were owner-occupied.

According to the survey, 73 percent of officials had lived in the municipality for more than 20 years. This percentage

Data Limitations

Although a scientific method was used to gather the data presented here, the results may have been affected by the following conditions.

Outdated Mailing List: The list of names and addresses was drawn from the Governor's Center for Local Government Services' List of Municipal Officials. While this list is regularly updated, a lag may exist between the time municipalities notify the center of a change in local officials and the time when changes are made to the list. For example, the sample of names was drawn in January 2005, so newly elected or appointed officials would not have been on the list. The list included officials whose term had expired at the end of 2004; to this end, the Center for Rural Pennsylvania first removed from the mailing list all officials whose terms expired before 2005. Readers need to be aware that this study does not include newly elected or appointed officials.

More Responses from Boroughs than Townships: In the 2005 survey, borough officials accounted for 59 percent of the responses and township officials for 41 percent. As a result, responses may be skewed toward borough officials.

was a slight decline from 1999 when 77 percent of officials lived in the municipality for more than 20 years. Township officials tended to reside in their municipality longer than borough officials. In 2005, 82 percent of township officials lived in their township for more than 20 years, compared to 66 percent of borough officials.

In 2005, 24 percent of officials lived in households with children, down from the 1999 rate of 30 percent. In 2000, U.S. Census Data showed that 31 percent of households in Pennsylvania small towns had children.

Income & Employment

In 2005, 30 percent of officials had household incomes of \$60,000 or higher. In the 1999 survey, only 20 percent of officials had incomes of \$60,000 or higher. In both surveys, borough officials had higher household incomes than township officials. Younger officials had higher household incomes than older officials.

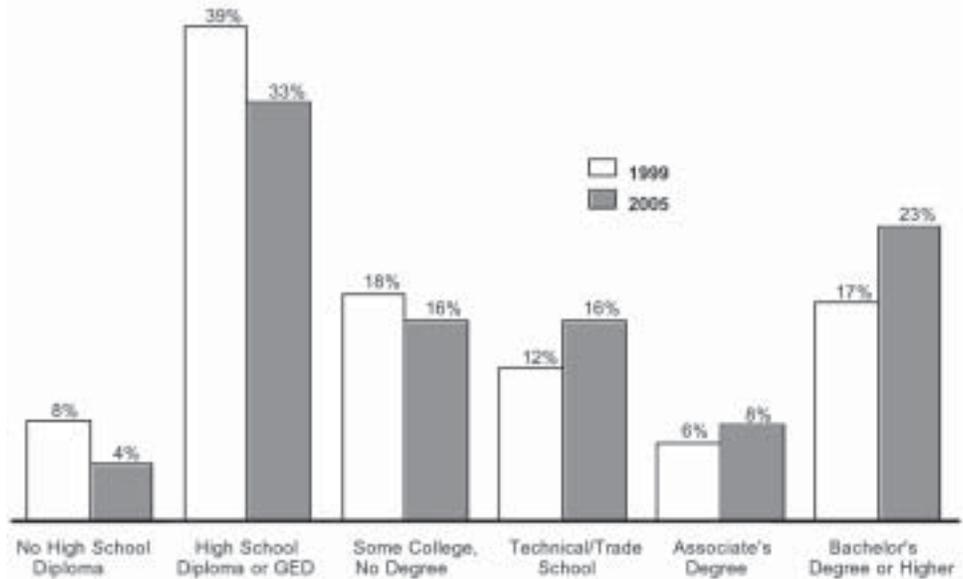
Forty-three percent of officials were employed full time in 2005, nearly identical to the 1999 survey. In both years, approximately 5 to 6 percent of officials were employed part time and 18 to 15 percent were self-employed. Unemployment among local officials was higher in 2005 than in 1999. In 2005, 2.5 percent of officials were unemployed, and in 1999, only 1.6 percent were unemployed.

In 2005, 32 percent of small town officials were retired. The average retired official was 68 years old and had been in office for 12 years. Boroughs had more retired officials (34 percent) than townships (29 percent). In 1999, 30 percent of officials were retired.

Among officials who were employed, 39 percent had blue-collar occupations, which included truck drivers, mechanics, and carpenters. Approximately 8 percent of officials listed farming or forestry as their occupation. Twenty-one percent were in professional or managerial positions, such as physicians, funeral directors, and attorneys; 23 percent had white-collar and service jobs, such as clerks, barbers, and salesmen; and the remaining 9 percent had other occupations.

In 2005, one-third of respondents had served in the U.S. Armed Forces, military reserves, or National Guard. The average official who served in the military was 64 years old and had been in office for more than 11 years. In contrast, the average age of officials who did not serve was 54 years old, and these officials had been in office for nine years. Both townships and boroughs had the same percentage of officials (33 percent) who served in the military.

Figure 2: Highest Level of Educational Attainment of Small-Town Officials, 1999 and 2005



Educational Attainment & Training

Small-town officials have attained higher levels of education than the citizens they govern. Among the survey respondents, 23 percent had a bachelor's degree. According to the 2000 Census, only 13 percent of all adults in Pennsylvania small towns had a bachelor's degree.

Between the 1999 and 2005 survey, officials with a bachelor's degree or higher increased 6 percentage points, from 17 percent to 23 percent. A higher percentage of borough officials (29 percent) had a bachelor's degree than township officials (15 percent).

Among officials without a bachelor's degree, 23 percent had an associate's degree or attended a technical/trade school. Nearly 16 percent of officials had attended college, but did not have a degree. Thirty-four percent of officials said high school was their highest level of educational attainment, and 4 percent did not have a high school diploma. The average age of officials without a high school diploma was 67, and these individuals had been in office for more than 13 years.

Fifty-four percent of the respondents attended no municipal training courses over the past two years. This is a slight increase from 1999 when 51 percent had not attended any courses in the past two years. Boroughs officials are less likely to attend courses than township officials; 70 percent of borough respondents had not attended any courses over the last two years compared to 31 percent of township officials.

Officials are more likely to attend training courses if the municipality does not have a manager.

Years of Service

In 2005, the average small-town official had been in office for 10.6 years, or slightly higher than the 1999 average

of 10.3 years. Among borough officials, the average number of years in office in 2005 was 9.5, while the average township official had been in office for 10.7 years.

When looking at the range of years in office, 36 percent of officials had served less than 5 years, while 16 percent had 20 or more years of service. Age was an important determinant in how long a person had been in office. In general, the older the official the longer he or she had been in office.

Community Involvement

Seventy-eight percent of local government officials participated in volunteer activities. This participation rate is nearly identical to the 1999 rate of 79 percent. In both years, a higher percentage of borough officials participated in volunteer activities than township officials. Statistically, there was no difference in age or years of service between officials who did and did not volunteer.

Most often, officials volunteered for church and religious organizations, followed by social/service organizations. Approximately 33 percent of officials who volunteer did so with the volunteer fire company, EMS or fire police.

Profile of Municipalities

In 2005, 13 percent of officials had a manager in their municipality, a slightly higher percentage than the 11 percent reported in 1999. In both years, boroughs were more likely to have a manager (18 percent) compared to townships (7 percent).

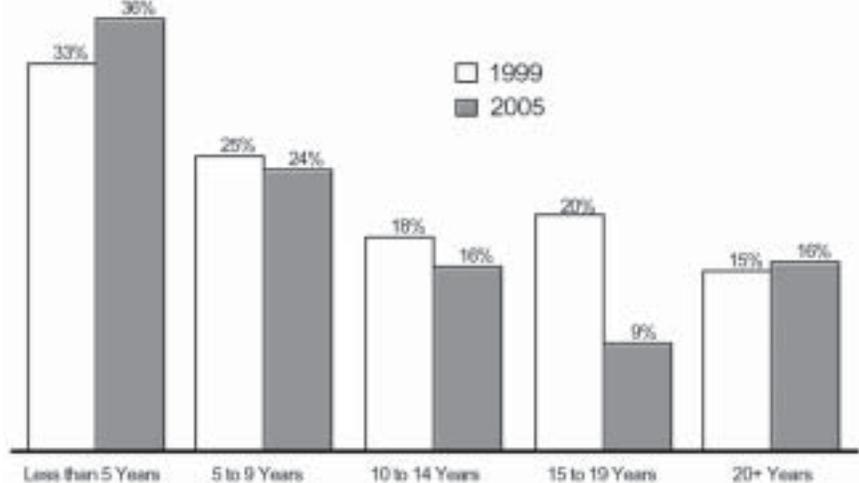
According to the 2005 survey results, the typical Pennsylvania small-town government had an average of 3.5 full-time workers and 3.6 part-time workers. Thirty-five percent of the municipalities had no full-time employees and 14 percent had no part-time employees. Boroughs had more full-time workers (average of 4.2) than townships (average of 2.6).

Meetings & Time Spent on Municipal Business

Eighty-two percent of officials in 2005 had one regularly scheduled meeting each month, compared to 84 percent of officials in 1999. Borough officials tended to have more meetings than township officials. In 2005, 23 percent of borough officials had two or more regularly scheduled meetings each month, compared to 11 percent of township officials.

In 1999 and 2005, 77 percent of small-town officials spent less than 20 hours per month on municipal business. In both years, however, there were differences among municipalities. About 35 percent of township officials spent more than 20 hours per month on municipal business, while 15 percent of borough officials spent this amount of time on municipal business.

Figure 3: Number of Years in Office, 1999 and 2005



Factors that most affect how much time a small town official spends on municipal business are: age of the official, length of time in office, and whether the municipality had a manager. The older the official, the more time he or she spends doing municipal business. The same is true for the number of years in office; the more time in office, the more time he or she spends on municipal business. Having a manager, especially a full-time manager, allows elected officials to spend fewer hours on municipal business. There is, however, no statistical difference in the number of hours spent on municipal business and the number of full-time municipal employees.

Another important factor for determining how many hours a small town official spends on municipal business concerns the issues they identified as important. In 2005, officials who cited street and highway maintenance and economic development were more likely to spend more hours doing business than officials who identified property code enforcement and public safety as important issues.

Reasons for Serving in Public Office

In general, the majority of small-town officials initially sought elected office for selfless reasons. The top three reasons cited for first running for office were: a desire to be active in the community (65 percent); the betterment of the area (56 percent); and encouragement from others (55 percent). These were the same top three reasons officials gave in 1999.

In 2005, political aspirations were not a motivating factor for seeking public office for the majority (95 percent) of small-town officials. Nor was dissatisfaction with the work of the officials they replaced; less than 30 percent identified this as an issue. Less than 30 percent of small-town officials first ran for office with a specific agenda item, such as public safety, maintaining streets and highways, or increasing public services, in mind.

Campaigning

In their last election, 47 percent of officials ran unopposed in both the primary and general elections. In 1999, 45 percent of officials ran unopposed. Borough officials were more likely to run unopposed for election than township officials. Other factors, such as age, years in office, and volunteerism, were not statistically significant factors for determining whether an official had an opponent.

Fifty-three percent of officials faced another candidate in their last election. Among the 53 percent who faced opponents, 18 percent had opponents in the primary election only, while 19 percent ran against an opponent in the general election only. Sixty-three percent of these officials had opponents in both the primary and general elections. There was no significant difference between borough and township officials and whether or not they had opposition in the primary election, the general election or both.

Twenty-nine percent of small-town officials are not expecting to seek office again. In 1999, 31 percent of officials were not going to run again.

In 2005, the average official who was not planning to run again was 62 years old and had been in office for 12 years. A higher percentage of township officials (33 percent) are not planning to run again compared to borough officials (26 percent.)

Fifty-six percent of officials said they would not run again because they had served long enough and wanted to give others a chance. Other reasons were: tired of having to deal with the public (25 percent); frustrated/disillusioned with public office (25 percent); and family and work obligations (20 percent).

Figure 4: Opposition in the Last Election, 2005

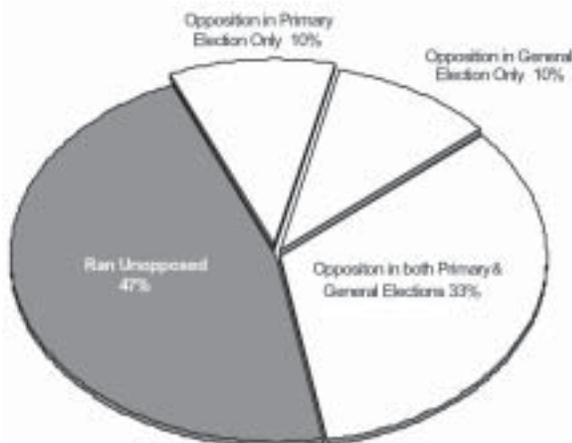


TABLE 2: Reasons Why Small-Town Officials First Sought Elected Office, 1999 and 2005

	2005 (n=1,208)	1999 (n=1,128)
Desire to be active in the community	65.1%	61.3%
Betterment of area	55.9%	62.3%
Encouragement from others	54.8%	55.1%
Control taxes and spending	30.9%	34.7%
Have expertise and experience to share	30.3%	28.5%
Dissatisfied with prior officials	29.1%	29.4%
Maintain streets and highways	27.1%	32.1%
Economic development	20.1%	22.0%
Public safety issues (police, fire services)	19.7%	21.9%
Increase municipal services (trash, recreation)	12.5%	16.7%
Political aspirations	4.6%	5.6%
Other reasons	9.4%	8.7%

(Totals do not add up to 100 percent due to multiple responses)

Discussion

According to the 2005 survey results, the average small-town official was a middle-aged male who had been in office for about 10 years, and had lived in the same community for more than 20 years with his spouse. This average official had some education beyond high school, was employed in a blue-collar or service profession and initially ran for office to be active in the community and to improve the area.

This 2005 profile of the average small-town official is nearly identical to the 1999 profile. In 1999, the average official was a middle-aged male who had been in office for 10 years and lived in the same municipality for at least the last 20 years. Also in 1999, this average official was employed in a blue-collar job and had some education beyond high school.

Despite all of the similarities, the 2005 survey did find a few differences from the 1999 survey.

First, there has been an increase in educational attainment among officials. Between 1999 and 2005, the number of officials with a bachelor's degree or higher has increased 6 percentage points. There also have been increases in the percentage of officials with associate's degrees and technical or trade school certificates.

Second, there has been a slight upward shift in the age of local officials. In 1999, the average small-town official was 56 years old; in 2005, his average age was 57. These averages, however, mask a subtle shift in age cohorts. In the six-year period between 1999 and 2005, there was a nearly 7 percentage point decline in the number of officials under 50 years old and a 4 percentage point increase in officials 65 years old and older. The aging of small-town officials means younger generations have yet to fully participate in local government.

Third, and perhaps a result of the aging process, fewer officials had children in their households. In 1999, 32 percent of officials had someone under 18 years old living in their household, while in 2005, only 24 percent of officials had someone under 18 years old living under their roof.

Fourth, there has been an increase in household income.

In 1999, less than 20 percent of officials had a total household income of \$60,000 or more. By 2005, 30 percent of officials said their household income fell into this category. Even after adjusting for inflation, there is a noticeable increase in household income.

Implications

Beyond these similarities and differences, the world in which small-town officials govern has dramatically changed over the last six years. Economic shifts, terrorism, and improvements in technology have all contributed to a municipal landscape that is much different than the one that existed in 1999. Adapting and managing these changes requires innovation, leadership, and commitment.

There are other factors at work that will make the task of public governance more challenging for local officials. Below are three factors that are changing the way local officials are governing.

Eroding Public Confidence

A 1999 attitudinal survey of rural residents¹, sponsored by the Center for Rural Pennsylvania, found that 19 percent of respondents had a great deal of trust and confidence in their local officials. A follow-up survey² in 2003 found that only 9 percent of respondents had the same level of trust and confidence in their local officials. Local officials are not the only group to see an erosion of public confidence. The governor, the courts, and local law enforcement officials each had at least a 10-percent point drop in public confidence. This pattern of low confidence appears to be continuing. A May 2005 public opinion poll³ by the Pennsylvania Economy League found that only 9 percent of Pennsylvania adults always trust local government “to do what is right.”

For local officials, especially those in small towns, low levels of citizen involvement exacerbate low public confidence. Again, in the Center’s 2003 attitudinal survey, less than 10 percent of respondents had participated in civic affairs other than voting over the last two years. This finding may suggest that most residents feel disconnected from their local government. The ripple effect of this disconnect may be seen in this survey where nearly 50 percent of local officials ran unopposed in their last election.

The erosion of public confidence and low levels of civic involvement may contribute to an environment of cynicism and public apathy. As a result, it could be difficult for local officials to muster support for public projects; especially those that require increased tax revenues. They may also find it difficult to attract young individuals to public service, such as positions on the zoning hearing board or planning commission. This challenge is not unique to Pennsylvania’s small towns. However, the pool of potential

applicants in small towns is much smaller than in larger municipalities.

The Pace of Change

After analyzing the 1999 survey data, it was predicted that Pennsylvania’s small towns were in the midst of a leadership transition as older officials retired and younger officials assumed greater authority. Six years later, the data suggests there is a transition underway, but it is proceeding at a snail’s pace.

Baby Boomers now make up the largest percentage of elected officials, dominating the older and younger generations by 5 percentage points. Their participation in local government, however, does not represent a change in priorities. The top two issues for all generations are street and highway maintenance and taxes and spending.

The survey results suggest that officials do not want to radically change their municipalities. They view themselves as stewards, who are responsible for managing their municipality in the most efficient and effective manner.

Increasing demands for public services, changes in land use, and limited financial resources, however, are challenging this view. As a result, simply “staying the course” may not be a viable option in many small towns. While local officials strive to make steady improvements in their municipalities, the pace of change may be too slow for the rest of the world. Therefore, the next generation of local officials in Pennsylvania will likely face a greater complexity and velocity of issues than prior generations.

Increased Information Capacity

One of the more interesting findings of the 2005 survey was the increase in educational attainment among officials. In 1999, only 17 percent of small town officials had a bachelor’s degree or higher. In 2005, 23 percent had earned at least a bachelor’s degree. There were similar increases in the percentage of officials who completed technical or trade schools and those with an associate’s degree. The increased levels of education come on the heels of the information revolution brought about by the Internet. A 2003 survey by the Center for Rural Pennsylvania found that 80 percent of Pennsylvania’s small towns had a municipal computer. Among those with computers, 72 percent had Internet access⁴.

Today’s small town officials have more access to information and the capacity to use information than perhaps any other time in history. This means that no official should feel that he or she is governing in isolation. Access to information on everything from the latest road resurfacing techniques to guidelines on implementing new accounting guidelines are but a few mouse clicks away. In the coming years, having access to and the capacity to use information should make the mechanics of governance easier and more transparent to the general public.

1. Center for Rural Pennsylvania. (2000) *An Attitudinal Survey of Pennsylvania’s Rural Residents*.

2. Center for Rural Pennsylvania. (2004) *2003 Attitudinal Survey of Pennsylvania Rural Residents*.

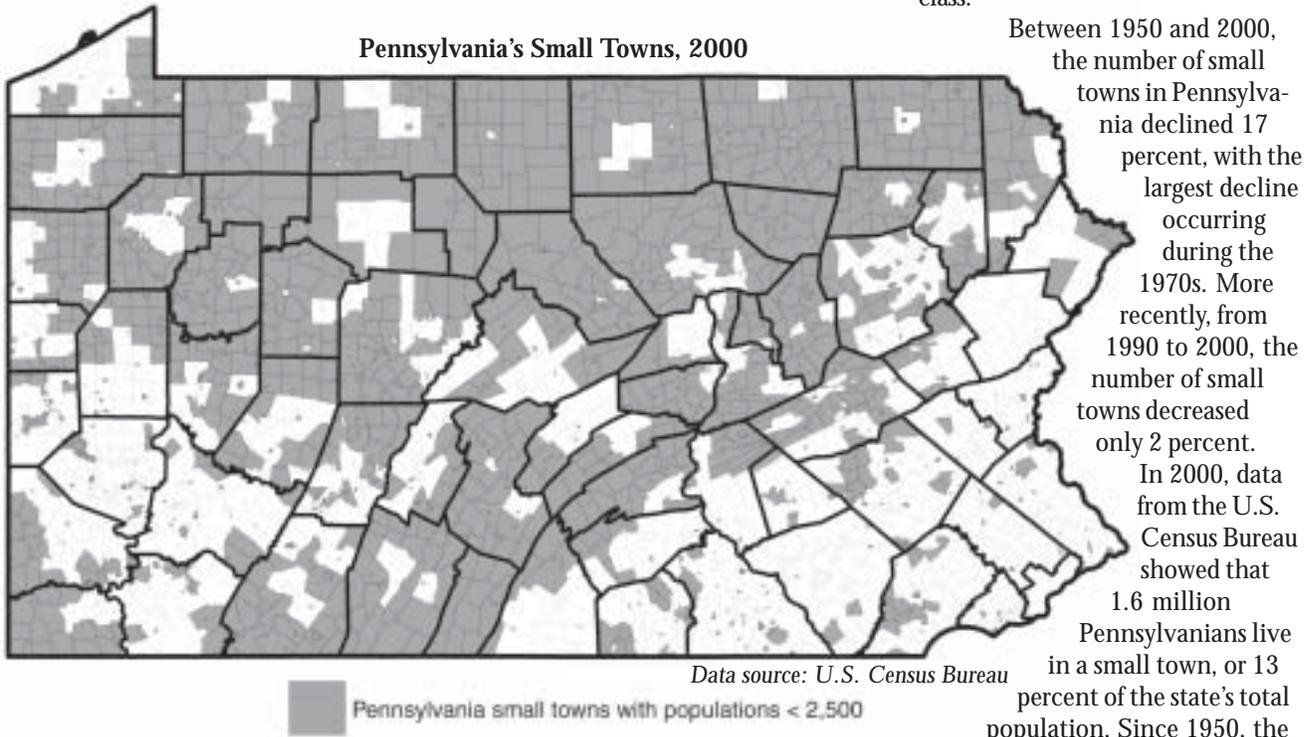
3. Pennsylvania Economy League. (2005) *Spring 2005 IssuesPA/Pew Poll: Values and Government Reform*.

4. Center for Rural Pennsylvania. (2003) *Municipal Computer Use*.

Overview of Pennsylvania Small Towns

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2000, Pennsylvania had 1,524 small towns or municipalities with populations under 2,500. These small towns accounted for 59 percent of the state's 2,565 municipalities. Except for Philadelphia, every county in Pennsylvania had at least one municipality with a population less than 2,500. In 46 of the state's 67 counties, small towns made up 50 percent or more of the municipalities in the county.

In 2000, 52 percent of small towns were townships of the second class and 42 percent were boroughs. Among the remaining 6 percent there was one city of the third class (Parker City, Armstrong County) and 10 townships of the first class.



Not all small towns experienced a population increase. Between 1950 and 2000, 41 percent of Pennsylvania's small towns lost population, and most were in western Pennsylvania.

Demographically, small towns are very similar to the statewide average in terms of age cohorts. In 2000, the average small-town resident was 38.5 years old while the average Pennsylvanian was 38.1 years old. One difference between small towns and the rest of the state is in homeownership. Again in 2000, 80 percent of the occupied housing units in small towns were owner-occupied; statewide, 71 percent of the units were owner-occupied. One reason for this may be lower housing values. In 2000, the average owner-occupied home in a small town was \$26,000 below the statewide average.

Poverty in small towns is about one percentage point below the statewide rate of 11 percent. Per capita incomes in these communities are also lower; about \$3,300 below the statewide level of \$20,880.

In 2002, data from the Governor's Center for Local Government Services showed that among reporting municipalities, those with a population less than 2,500 had an average of \$402,000 in revenues. About 39 percent of these revenues came from taxes, with the average resident paying \$141. In comparison, the average revenues among reporting municipalities with populations greater than 2,500 was \$5.5 million. Of these revenues, approximately 35 percent, or \$238 per person, came from taxes.

In addition, data from the Governor's Center for Local Government Services indicated that approximately 25 percent of small towns have full-time or part-time police departments. About 12 percent of these municipalities are either part of a regional police department or contract services from another police department. The remaining 63 percent of small towns rely on the Pennsylvania State Police.

The majority (63 percent) of Pennsylvania small towns have either municipal or county zoning. However, less than 45 percent of these municipalities have a comprehensive plan and only 49 percent have a planning commission.

Roles and Responsibilities of Local Municipal Officials

While they operate in different administrative structures, elected township and borough officials have similar roles and responsibilities, as described in the handbooks for these officials.

Role of Borough Council Members

Council plays the central role in borough government. Section 1202 of the Borough Code places general supervision of the affairs of the borough in the hands of council. The role of council members is a combination of the roles found in separate branches or levels of the state and federal governments. Council members serve as the legislative body of the borough, setting policy, enacting ordinances and resolutions, adopting budgets and levying taxes. Members also perform executive functions, such as formulating the budget, enforcing ordinances, approving expenditures and hiring employees. Some boroughs hire managers, but most others use the borough secretary for general administrative purposes. In many boroughs, council members also play a large role in administrative activities, overseeing the day-to-day operation of borough government. Because of the member's elected status, an individual in that position is often looked to as a community leader. In many cases, the member is called upon to perform as a problem solver, and act as an agent for borough citizens with municipal or even outside agencies. The council member has a role in representing the borough's interests, past, present and future. Although assisted by a planning commission, paid administrator or historical commission, elected officials must make the final decisions. The extent of any one council member's activities in these roles will be defined by the individual's own view of civic responsibilities, particular fields of individual interest and personal skills and talents. To a large degree the member's role is also defined by the local political culture, the generalized local attitudes toward municipal government and commonly held expectations of how officials will operate.

Source: Borough Council Handbook 10th Edition. Center for Local Government Services, Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development. Harrisburg: June 2000. p. 3-4.

Role of Township Supervisors

The board of supervisors plays the central role in township government. Article 15 of the Second Class Township Code places general supervision of the affairs of the township in the hands of the board of supervisors. Supervisors combine many of the roles found in separate branches or levels of the state and federal governments. The board serves as the legislative body of the township, setting policy, enacting ordinances and resolutions, adopting budgets and levying taxes. Since there is no separately elected executive, the board also performs executive functions, such as formulating the budget, enforcing ordinances, approving expenditures and hiring employees. Although some townships have hired managers, most use the township secretary for general administrative purposes. In many townships, supervisors play a large role in administrative activities and oversee the day-to-day operation of township government. Because the Code allows supervisors to also be employed by the township, many supervisors spend a significant amount of their time working on the township roads, performing the duties of secretary or treasurer, or attending to other authorized duties. Because of the supervisor's elected status, an individual in that position is often looked to as a community leader. In many cases, the supervisor is called upon to be a problem solver, and an agent for township citizens with outside agencies or private firms. The supervisor has a role in representing the township's interests, past, present and future. Although assisted by a planning commission, paid administrator or historical commission, elected officials make the final decisions. The extent of any one supervisor's activities in these roles will be defined by the individual's own view of civic responsibilities, particular fields of individual interest and personal skills and talents. To a large degree, the supervisor's role is also defined by the local political culture, the generalized local attitudes toward municipal government, and commonly held expectations of how officials will operate.

Source: Township Supervisors Handbook 10th Edition. Center for Local Government Services, Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development. Harrisburg: April 2001. p. 3

The Center for Rural Pennsylvania Board of Directors

Chairman

Rep. Sheila Miller

Vice Chairman

Sen. John R. Gardner

Secretary

Dr. C. Shannon Stokes

Pennsylvania State University

Treasurer

Rep. Mike Hanna

Steve Crawford

Governor's Representative

Dr. Nancy Falvo

Clarion University

Dr. Stephan J. Goetz

Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development

Dr. John R. Halstead

Mansfield University

Dr. Robert F. Pack

University of Pittsburgh

William Sturges

Governor's Representative

Sen. John Wozniak

The Center for Rural Pennsylvania is a bipartisan, bicameral legislative agency that serves as a resource for rural policy research within the Pennsylvania General Assembly. It was created in 1987 under Act 16, the Rural Revitalization Act, to promote and sustain the vitality of Pennsylvania's rural and small communities.

The Center for Rural Pennsylvania

200 North Third Street
Suite 600

Harrisburg, PA 17101

Phone: (717) 787-9555

www.ruralpa.org

1P0705-900

