



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF GREATER PITTSBURGH, INC.**

ALLEGHENY COUNTY GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS, FACILITIES AND SERVICES

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	4
I. ALLEGHENY COUNTY’S HISTORY.....	5
Who Owns the “Forks of the Ohio”? Economic Development: Commercial, Industrial; Political History: Origins of County Government, Derivation of County Powers	
II. JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION.....	10
State Appellate Courts; Court of Common Pleas; Minor Judiciary; Court Administration; Judicial Officials: Qualifications and Prohibitions, Elections	
III. ROW OFFICERS.....	14
District Attorney; Sheriff; Controller; Treasurer; Public Defender; Medical Examiner, Department of Court Records; Department of Real Estate	
IV. LEGISLATIVE BRANCH OF COUNTY GOVERNMENT.....	18
Qualifications, Election, Vacancies, Duties; Public Participation	
V. EXECUTIVE BRANCH.....	20
Chief Executive, Qualifications, Election, Vacancy, Duties; Law Department; County Manager, Duties; Administrative Services: Property Assessment Oversight Board, Office of Property Assessments, Board of Property Assessment Appeals and Review; Board of Elections, Registration, Elections, Absentee Voting; Four-Year Election Cycle, Retirement Board	
FISCAL AFFAIRS.....	22
Budget and Finance; Debt; Flow of Funds; Purchasing and Supplies; Procurement of Professional Services	
PERSONNEL.....	25
The Personnel Board; Code of Accountability, Conduct and Ethics; Police; Emergency Management; Veterans’ Affairs, Solders and Sailors Memorial Hall, Museum Trust, Inc.	
HUMAN SERVICES.....	32
Department of Human Services; Department of Health, Board of Health, Environmental Quality, Medical Services; Kane Regional Centers	
PUBLIC WORKS.....	37
Administrative Division, Engineering and Construction Division, Roads Maintenance Division, Facilities and Fleet Management Division, Parks Division, Special Events Division	

PARKS.....	38
Park descriptions, Activities, Advisory Commission, Park Councils, Fund raising	
ECONOMIC POLICY.....	39
Goals, Development, Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, League of Municipalities	
AUTHORITIES.....	41
Port Authority; Airport Authority; Sports and Exhibition Authority; Sanitary Authority; Redevelopment Authority; Authority for the Improvement of Municipalities; Allegheny County Finance and Development Commission; Housing Authority	
MISCELLANEOUS.....	46
Community College; Penn State Cooperative Extension; Conservation District	
VI. APPENDIXES.....	48
A. Municipal Government in Allegheny County: Cities, Boroughs; Townships; Municipal Authorities and Special Districts; Intergovernmental Cooperation	
B. Public Education in Allegheny County	
C. Political Parties	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	

INTRODUCTION

We are all served, in Pennsylvania, by five levels of government: national, state, county, municipality, and school district. Citizen knowledge of the municipality and school district is often obtained through personal contact, and basic knowledge about state and national governments is gained from school civics courses and the news media. The role of the county in assessing the value of real property is frequently mentioned but other important functions are not as well publicized. The implementation of the Allegheny County Home Rule Charter on January 1, 2000 and the amendments of May 2005 brought many changes. This book provides a comprehensive description of Allegheny County government in 2009.

The Pennsylvania Constitutional Revision of 1968 permitted the passage of the Home Rule Charter and Optional Plans Law in 1972. Allegheny County voters rejected attempts in 1974 and 1978 to pass home rule for Allegheny County. In March of 1995 John E. Murray, Jr., President of Duquesne University, accepted the responsibility of forming a committee to assist the county to become more competitive by analyzing its structure and functions and comparing the county with other counties around the country. Murray's committee reported in January 1996 that counties experiencing economic growth had targeted and coordinated economic development plans and had streamlined government organizations to support that development. A home rule charter for the county was recommended.

Throughout 1996 the recommendations of the committee were published and discussed. In early 1997 state legislators agreed that the first step in the process of passing a home rule charter had been achieved in Allegheny County. The Murray committee recommendations could be used to formulate a charter to present to the citizens. The state legislators also outlined the method for selecting a bipartisan home rule charter committee to write the proposed charter. The home rule charter committee completed their work by spring 1998 and the charter passed on May 19, 1998. Candidates for the newly created offices of chief executive and county council were selected in May 1999 and elected in November. The charter became effective January 1, 2000.

The charter required that five years elapse before it could be amended. In May 2005, amendments to reduce the number of row offices were placed on the ballot and were passed. In that year also, a restructuring of the minor judiciary was ordered by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. The revision of the row offices proceeded over several years, culminating in the establishment of Department of Court Records in 2008.

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January, 2010

I. ALLEGHENY COUNTY'S HISTORY

WHO OWNS THE "FORKS OF THE OHIO"?

The area that is now Allegheny County entered American history as a focus of the struggle between Britain and France for control of the interior, with the Indians caught in the middle. Here the Monongahela and Youghiogheny River systems flowing north join the Allegheny River flowing south to form the Ohio River. In the early 1700s both Britain and France recognized that whoever held the "Forks of the Ohio" would have a large measure of control over the rivers and the valuable Ohio country through which they flowed.

The French held the St. Lawrence and the Mississippi Rivers and as they strengthened their network of forts and Indian alliances between these two great rivers, they confined the British to their coastal colonies east of the Allegheny Mountains. During the three years that the French flag flew over Fort Duquesne at the fork, the British frontier was pushed back about 100 miles and was under continual Indian attack.

The French were ultimately defeated because of William Pitt's determination to humiliate France. He persuaded Parliament to finance the war in the colonies, elevated colonial officers to an equal rank with regular army officers, and appointed competent officers to challenge the French at strategic points. In 1758 General John Forbes and his men arrived to take Fort Duquesne and found it recently abandoned by its starving French garrison. Forbes and his men entered gladly and Forbes named the place Pittsburgh "as I hope it was in some measure the being actuated by your spirits," he wrote to Pitt, "that now makes us Masters of the place."¹

A garrison of troops and a number of skilled workmen were sent to build a new fort, which was completed before the onset of a united Indian attack (1762-63) led by the Ottawa chief, Pontiac. Many other western forts fell and hundreds of soldiers and settlers were killed, but Fort Pitt was strong enough and its Captain Ecuyer resourceful enough that this frontier settlement remained intact. He accurately predicted the strength of the impending assault and ordered the 630 settlers: -- 330 men, 104 women, and 196 children -- to level their log cabins and bring all their provisions into the fort. The fort was never again threatened. Traders and trappers returned, the area changed from a military to a trading post, and settlers poured in by the hundreds. The "Forks of the Ohio" became the center of commerce for the whole West.

Virginia and Pennsylvania wrangled over the ownership of the land around the forks. Although Pennsylvania objected, the governor of Virginia divided the area into the counties of Yohogania, Monongalia, and Ohio. During the Revolution these two colonies decided they would rather fight the British than each other, and in 1780 when the Mason and Dixon line was agreed upon as the boundary between Virginia and Pennsylvania, the "Forks of the Ohio" became a part of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

¹ Stefan Lorant, *The Story of An American City* (State College, PA: Jostens, 1999), 34

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A Commercial Center

Although agriculture was the foremost economic activity of the area in the post-Revolutionary years, in Pittsburgh the volume of trade grew as county farmers brought their surplus produce to exchange for tools, cloth, and other necessities. Trade and transportation became thriving industries. At a time when transportation by water was far more convenient and economical than overland, Pittsburgh, situated at the confluence of two large river systems and to the west of one of the few natural gaps in the Allegheny Mountain barrier, became a natural gateway through which a huge volume of westward migration and trade had to pass. Activity became more diversified: shopkeepers stocked more sophisticated products; craftsmen made shoes, candles, and ropes; and boatmen ran flatboats and keelboats to Cincinnati, St. Louis, and New Orleans.

Contemporary opinions of the nature of this industrial hub and of its destiny varied. Hugh Henry Brackenridge wrote enthusiastically of Pittsburgh in the early issues of the *Pittsburgh Gazette* (1786), but many others saw only a town of 50 log houses and unpaved streets full of pigs and dogs, “the drinkingest town in the West”; a town with “four attorneys, two doctors and not a priest of any persuasion, nor church, nor chapel.”² Vindicating Judge Brackenridge’s optimism, the area’s economy continued to grow. The transportation industry boomed during the War of 1812 because a large part of the North-South coastal trade was forced inland to avoid the British blockade and because of the invention of the steamship, which could travel as easily upstream as down. In the years of peace following the War of 1812, as more roads and canals were built and as the American frontier moved westward, Pittsburgh ceased to dominate the East-West trade route. However, even today it is one of the nation’s most important inland ports.

An Industrial Center

Manufacturing began to surpass commerce in importance. Boat building was one of the first manufacturing industries, and flatboats, steamships for river commerce, and large oceangoing ships were made here. Other large and growing industries of these years were the manufacture of glass, iron products, textiles, cigars, and whiskey. By 1860 20,000 laborers in 1200 workshops in the county produced \$26,000,000 worth of goods. A great number of European immigrants settled in the manufacturing areas of the county. In 1860 one third of the county’s population of 150,000 were immigrants from European countries, mainly Ireland, Germany, England, Scotland, and France.

As the area began to import raw materials and export manufactured items, a new group of middlemen emerged. New financial institutions, banks, and insurance companies were born. Pittsburgh was no longer a frontier village but a thriving city with merchants, professional men, artisans, mechanics, factory workers, unskilled laborers, and transients.

² Lorant, 50-52

Although some other cities had equal access to iron deposits, it was the large deposits of bituminous coal in this region that allowed the Pittsburgh area to take a commanding position in the manufacture of iron and steel. Between 1860 and 1900 this became the largest steel-producing area in America. The same period saw the beginning of the aluminum, food processing, and electrical equipment industries in the county, and by 1870 half the glass in the country was produced here. In factories, mines, and mills the need for unskilled labor increased, and hundreds of thousands of immigrants poured into western Pennsylvania from southern and eastern Europe. By 1900 the population of Allegheny County was 775,000.³

The growth of industrialization was not smooth. There were depressions in 1873, 1884, and 1893. In the aftermath of the 1873 panic, labor conflicts increased and culminated in the nationwide railroad strike of 1877. When the strike began in Pittsburgh, the sheriff of Allegheny County requested state militiamen from Harrisburg. A clash between the militia and the strikers began one of the most destructive riots the country has ever seen. The rioters burned hundreds of railroad cars and engines, the Union Depot, and other railroad buildings. When order was restored, the strikers returned to work without having gained any of their objectives.

A second great strike, the Homestead Strike of 1892, began over questions of wage scales and recognition of the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers of America. After talks broke down, the union conducted a walkout and the entire work force was fired. A bloody battle broke out when the strikers discovered a contingent of private police attempting to reach the mill. The collapse of the strike after five months and the depression of 1893 put an end to unionization in the area's steel industry until the 1930s.

Today, the county's great period of industrial expansion is over. The 2000 population of Allegheny County was 1,281,666 a loss of nearly 55,000 inhabitants since 1990.⁴ The city of Pittsburgh lost 35,300, and most of the remaining decline occurred in the older industrial communities in the county. As of July 2008, the population of Allegheny County had declined to 1,215,103.⁵

By 2007, 682,331 people were employed in Allegheny County. Major occupation groups were health care and social assistance 124,609, retail trade 77,147, educational services 56,439, professional, scientific and technical services 56,163, finance and insurance 44,494, manufacturing 41,874, waste management and remediation 43,890, and construction 32,460.⁶ In 2008, six of the nation's 500 largest industrial corporations had their headquarters in Allegheny County: U. S. Steel, PPG Industries, PNC Financial Services, H. J. Heinz, Wesco International and Allegheny Technologies.¹

³ *Pennsylvania Statistical Abstract*, (Harrisburg, PA: Bureau of Statistics, Pennsylvania Department of Commerce, January 1969), 14-15.

⁴ "Census 2000", *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, March 11, 2001, A 14.

⁵ <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/42/42003.html>

⁶ U.S. Census Bureau 2007 County Business Patterns: <http://censtats.census.gov/cgi-bin/cbpnaic/cbpsect.pl>

¹ http://money.cnn.com/magazines/fortune/fortune500/2008/full_list/

POLITICAL HISTORY

The period of rapid economic expansion brought an increasing need for government services of all kinds: water supplies, sewage systems, fire protection, public health measures, police, and schools. The numerous conflagrations and cholera epidemics that occurred indicate that these services were not forthcoming. Municipalities had little money to provide them and difficulty in securing appropriate municipal powers from the state, which was jealous of its power. Not until the 1830s was Pittsburgh's mayor elected rather than appointed by the governor. Counties were agencies of the state and were not responsible for providing purely local services. Today, counties provide many services. The evolution of county and municipal government reflects the growth and the increasing complexity of life in the settlements at the "Forks of the Ohio."

Origins of County Government

During colonial time when distance made the administration of government difficult, counties were established as judicial and law enforcement districts of the Crown, following the English tradition. The powers that counties enjoyed were vested in the county court. In addition to its judicial duties, this court performed a number of executive and administrative functions such as supervising property assessment, levying county taxes, supervising erection of county buildings, laying out roads, and taking care of the poor. The system of property assessment by court-appointed officials caused so much friction that in 1724 an elected three-member board of county commissioners was established in each county to help with tax assessments. Starting in pre-Revolutionary days, the county court appointed officials to perform court-oriented duties and certain routine functions such as record keeping and tax collecting. These appointed officials were the predecessors of the present-day elected county officials often known as the "row officers."

After the Revolution the county was maintained as a law enforcement and administrative agency of the state government. The courts handled law enforcement, and the board of commissioners, whose members were the only elected countywide officers until 1838, handled nonjudicial matters. As the population increased, new functions were assigned to this board. The number of row officers grew to eleven, and they eventually came to be elected at large, sharing administrative and fiscal responsibilities with the courts and the board of county commissioners.

Allegheny County was created in 1788. At one time it extended as far north as the New York State border, but by 1800 the county had been reduced to approximately its present size of 727 square miles. The town of Allegheny, across the Allegheny River from Pittsburgh, was also incorporated in 1788 and was originally designated as the county seat, but the village of Pittsburgh protested so vigorously that the county seat was soon moved there. Seven townships were also formed in 1788: Monongahela, St. Clair, Mifflin, Elizabeth, Versailles, Plum, and Pitt. The following year Allegheny County Criminal Court was established, with jurisdiction over Pittsburgh and the seven townships. Pittsburgh was incorporated as a borough in 1794 and became a city in 1816.

As other settlements grew in size, they seceded from the seven original townships to form new municipalities. Today Allegheny County has 130 municipalities (see Appendix B), more than any other county in Pennsylvania. These municipalities, the 43 school districts, and uncounted school and municipal authorities, all within the boundaries of Allegheny County, derive their right of government from the state and do not come under the jurisdiction of Allegheny County government.

Derivation of County Powers

County government derives its powers from the Pennsylvania Constitution, and the provisions of the constitution are implemented by statutes passed by the General Assembly, Pennsylvania's legislature. The General Assembly is empowered to classify government units within the state so that legislation may be enacted for units of similar character. Counties are classified according to population. There are nine classes of counties, and Allegheny is the only county of the second class.

Since the passage of the Home Rule Charter and Optional Plans Law of 1972, counties and local municipalities may determine what structures their governments will take and the manner in which some services will be performed. Under home rule local governments may exercise any powers not denied to them, the reverse of the previously established pattern in which they could exercise only those powers permitted them. By 2000 six counties had adopted home rule charters -- Allegheny, Delaware, Erie, Lackawanna, Lehigh, and Northampton.⁸

In May 1998, Allegheny County voters adopted a home rule charter for Allegheny County. Candidates for chief executive and Allegheny County Council were selected in the 1999 primary election and elected in the November general election. Of the thirteen district council seats, seven were chosen by lot to serve for two years in the first election. The remaining six council seats, the chief executive and the two at-large council representatives were elected for four-year terms. Subsequent terms are all for four years. The charter became effective on January 1, 2000.⁹ Unless expressly or implicitly modified or repealed by the Charter or the Administrative Code for Allegheny County, the provisions of the Second Class County Code and other applicable laws govern the operations of Allegheny County government.¹⁰

The original charter left in place the independently elected row offices that are part of all Pennsylvania counties. In May 2005, the charter was amended to reduce the number of elected row officers from 11 to 4. The functions of the eliminated row offices were assigned to appointed officers and departments.

⁸ PA Department of Community and Economic Development

⁹ Home Rule Charter of Allegheny County May 19, 1998

¹⁰ Administrative Code of Allegheny County, June 20, 2000, Section 107.02

II. JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

The Judicial Article of the Pennsylvania Constitution provides for the administration of justice by a unified judicial system. The state is divided into sixty judicial districts. Allegheny County is the Fifth Judicial District and is comprised of the Court of Common Pleas and magisterial district courts. The General Assembly may establish additional courts or divisions of existing courts as needed. Judicial salaries are paid by the state. In December 1987, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruled that the state should pay all court personnel costs, however, county governments still fund most of court personnel expenses.

APPELLATE COURTS

The Pennsylvania Supreme Court is the highest court of the Commonwealth and exercises general and administrative authority over the whole state court system. The Superior Court has final statewide jurisdiction in some cases. Commonwealth Court has statewide jurisdiction over cases involving the state and state officials and appellate jurisdiction over administrative and quasi-legislative boards. The Supreme, Superior, and Commonwealth Courts hold sessions in Allegheny County as well as in Philadelphia and Harrisburg.

COURT OF COMMON PLEAS

In Allegheny County the trial court of 45 judges consists of four divisions: civil, criminal, orphans', and family. The members of the court elect the president judge of the Court of Common Pleas for a five year term. The president judge may transfer judges from one division of the court to another. To expedite the business of the court, each division also has an administrative judge appointed by the state Supreme Court. The Supreme Court has supervisory and administrative powers over the Court of Common Pleas and the minor judiciary, as does the president judge of the Court of Common Pleas. The judges of the Court of Common Pleas have a number of other duties in addition to their caseloads. For example, they appoint the members of the Board of Viewers that handles most cases of eminent domain and realty tax assessment appeals.

The civil division has general jurisdiction over all civil cases, including torts, contract disputes and malpractice cases. Civil division is also responsible for arbitration and Board of Viewers operations and appeals from civil judgments by magisterial district judges.

The criminal division has jurisdiction over murder, felony and misdemeanor cases that have been held for court by magisterial district judges and maintains supervisory authority over the Adult Probation Department and Pretrial Services. The Allegheny County Pretrial Services Department was established in 2007, consolidating the Bail Agency, the Behavior Clinic, the first offense diversion program (ARD) and the Alcohol Highway Safety Program into one department.

The orphans' court division has jurisdiction over will and estates, civil commitments, guardianships and adoptions.

The family court division is comprised of three sections: adult, juvenile and children's court. The adult section includes domestic relations matters such as nonsupport, protection from abuse, divorce, and related property matters. The Pennsylvania Child Support Enforcement System, known as PACSES, is utilized by court staff for the financial management and control of the establishment, location, collection and enforcement of child support orders issued by the court. The juvenile section maintains jurisdiction over delinquency cases and related proceedings for juvenile offenders. Before a hearing for a delinquent child takes place, a juvenile probation officer interviews the complainant, the child, the child's family, and any social agency having knowledge of the case. If delinquency is proved at the hearing, the court may recommend commitment to a state juvenile institution or may return the child home under the continuing supervision of a probation officer. The children's court section is responsible for adjudicating cases involving child custody and child protection.

The Court of Common Pleas also includes a summary appeals branch that has jurisdiction over criminal appeals from summary convictions and civil appeals from decisions by state and local administrative agencies.

THE MINOR JUDICIARY

The president judge of the Court of Common Pleas supervises the magisterial district courts in the county. Allegheny County has 48 magisterial districts. The salary of a magisterial district judge is paid by the state. Magisterial district judges have jurisdiction over civil disputes not exceeding \$8000; landlord/tenant; and criminal complaint filings including preliminary arraignments and hearings, setting and acceptance of bail, disposition of summary offenses, traffic and non-traffic citations, issuance of arrest warrants and emergency relief under the Protection From Abuse Act.

The Pittsburgh Municipal Court was established on January 1, 2005, pursuant to the Order of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania. Presiding in the centralized court on a rotation are the magisterial district judges who are elected in districts within the City of Pittsburgh. The court handles all the afore-mentioned magisterial district judge functions pertaining to criminal matters that occur within the corporate limits of the City of Pittsburgh. This court is also the site for case initiation and preliminary hearings in homicide in Allegheny County. The Pittsburgh Municipal Court also houses Arraignment Court which is the after hours court serving all of Allegheny County for the issuance of search and arrest warrants, acceptance of criminal complaints, conduct of preliminary arraignments, setting and acceptance of bail, holding of summary trials or setting of collateral and emergency relief under the Protection From Abuse Act. Magisterial district judges are assigned to preside at Arraignment Court on a rotating basis allowing for continuous coverage.

COURT ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT OF COURT RECORDS

The Department of Court Records (DCR) was established on January 7, 2008 to perform the function formerly performed by the row offices of Prothonotary, Clerk of Courts and Register of Wills/Clerk of the Orphans' Court which were eliminated as a result of a ballot question approved by the electorate of Allegheny County.

The DCR handles all documents filed by every party in all cases filed in the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County. The DCR creates a file for every case. This file holds all official documents filed for the case and all Orders of Court for the case. Most of the functions of the DCR are set forth in state statutes and rules of procedure regarding the operation of the courts of Pennsylvania.

The District Court Administrator for the Fifth Judicial District and staff provide to the courts and other court related entities support services, which include fiscal management, information technology, human resource management, policy and operation development, facilities management, court reporters, and jury management.

The Office of Jury Management was established when the Allegheny County Home Rule Charter was amended in May of 2005, abolishing the two elected positions of Jury Commissioner. The Office of Jury Management is responsible for the selection of jurors, qualification of jurors and summoning of prospective jurors for service in the criminal and civil divisions. A merged list from the Departments of State, Revenue, Transportation and Public Welfare is utilized for the randomly drawn names for prospective jurors. Allegheny County utilizes the one day or one trial model for jury service. Jurors serve for one day or, if selected, for one trial. The Office of Jury Management also provides prospective jurors for investigative grand juries when authorized.

JUDICIAL OFFICIALS

Qualifications and Prohibitions

Justices of the Supreme Court and judges of a state court must be citizens and members of the bar. A magisterial District judge, if not a member of the bar, must complete a course of training and instruction in the duties of the office and pass an examination before taking office or must have completed a full term as justice of peace before the creation of the magisterial district. All judicial officers must retire at the age of 70. However, the Supreme Court may assign limited judicial duty to a retired justice or judge in order to relieve court backlogs. Justices and judges must devote full time to their judicial duties and may not hold office in a political party or organization. Judicial officers may not be paid any fee other than salary or expenses as provided by law.

Elections

Justices of the Supreme Court and judges of other state courts and the Court of Common Pleas are nominated by the voters in primary elections and are elected in municipal elections. The term of office is ten years. When a vacancy occurs, the governor fills it with the advice and consent of two-thirds of the senate. The appointee serves until the next municipal election occurring more than ten months after the vacancy. Some governors have set up bipartisan statewide advisory panels to recommend qualified persons for appointment.

Any justice or judge who is less than 70 years old and has completed a full term may become a candidate for another term in the same office without having to be nominated for a primary election. The procedure is called a retention election. The candidate's name appears on the ballot in November without political party designation and the voters indicate by voting "yes" or "no" whether the candidate shall be retained as a judge for an additional ten year term. If a judge fails to be retained for an additional term, a vacancy exists. If a judge does not declare as a candidate for retention election, then other candidates are nominated in the primary and a new judge is elected in November and takes office the following January.

Magisterial district judges serve a six year term of office. They do not run for retention election but like candidates for the Court of Common Pleas may cross file in a primary election by filing nominating petitions for more than one political party. Candidates for statewide courts may not cross file. If a vacancy occurs in the office of magisterial district judges, the governor fills it by appointment with the concurrence of a majority of the senate if it is in session.

III. ROW OFFICERS

The Allegheny County Home Rule Charter did not eliminate any of the row offices that existed prior to the passage of the charter. The charter was amended May 17, 2005. The amendment replaced the Clerk of Courts, Jury Commissioners, Prothonotary and Register of Wills with an appointed Director of Court Records; replaced the Coroner with an appointed Medical Examiner; and replaced the Recorder of Deeds with an appointed Real Estate Manager. Each to be appointed by the County Manager. The Home Rule County Charter is amended by referendum initiated by ordinance or by petition of the voters of the County. Amendments by petition must conform to the provisions of Pennsylvania Home Rule Charter and Optional Plans Law.

Row officers now include the following: district attorney, sheriff, controller, and treasurer. Each of the row officers is elected at large in the county for a four-year term. Each must be 18 years of age and a citizen, and all except the district attorney must be residents of the county for one year prior to the election. District attorney candidates must be residents for at least two years. A row officer cannot be a member of the legislative body of any municipality, a school director, a member of the board of health, a member of Congress or a federal employee. The district attorney is further required to have been admitted to practice before the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania at least two years prior to election.

Some of the row officers run for election in the same year as the county executive; the others run two years later. In cases of death or resignation of a row officer, the governor may make an interim appointment until a successor can be elected, but an interim appointment to the office of district attorney is made by the Court of Common Pleas Board of Judges. Elected officials can be removed from office by the governor for “reasonable cause” after a full hearing and with the approval of two-thirds of the senate.

The duties of the row officers are specified by state law. Under the home rule charter their salaries may be set by ordinance of county council. Row officers appoint their own employees, but the number of employees, the salary for each position, office space and supplies are determined by the county’s comprehensive fiscal plan.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

The district attorney is the chief law enforcement officer of the county and represents the commonwealth in the prosecution of all criminal offenders. The D.A. reviews findings of the assistant district attorneys in the pretrial examining unit and signs indictments to bring the accused to trial. At pretrial hearings the D.A. reviews cases to prepare them for court or other alternatives. The D.A. represents the Commonwealth in all pardon and parole proceedings and provides police with legal advice at all times. The D.A. is especially charged to investigate white-collar, sophisticated economic crimes.

SHERIFF

The sheriff is the chief peace officer of the county. Although most police work is done by local and state police, the sheriff has broad police powers and may make arrests for any and all violations of criminal statutes and ordinances. The sheriff and deputies may be called upon during riots, prison breaks, strikes, and other emergencies that are or may be breaches of the peace. In such cases the sheriff is empowered to call upon all able-bodied male adults for aid. The services of the military in cases of extreme emergency are available to the sheriff.

Other duties of the sheriff are to serve all writs and injunctions issued by the courts, to execute warrants and provide security of the courts, to transport prisoners between the courts and their places of confinement as well as to extradite prisoners from other jurisdictions, to take custody of them during trial, and to summon jurors to duty. The sheriff issues permits for firearms and conducts the sale of real and personal property at the request of litigants, including the city, county, and state.

The sheriff's office dive team responds to river emergencies, providing services such as underwater investigations, search and rescue, and evidence recovery.

CONTROLLER

The controller is Allegheny County's chief financial officer and chief auditor. In this capacity, the controller exercises general supervision and control over the county's financial affairs. The controller is authorized to examine the accounts and official acts of all officers or other persons who collect, receive, or disburse the county's money.

Specifically, the controller establishes and maintains the county's accounting system; pre-audits all fiscal transactions and post-audits departments, officer and agencies that manage county money. The controller is the final, independent check on the fiscal activities of the executive and legislative branches of county government as well as the independently elected officers and courts.

The controller maintains and publishes the county's financial reports, including the comprehensive annual financial report, the quarterly financial reports, and monthly statements of expenditures. The controller serves as the secretary of the Retirement Board and the Jail Oversight Board and also serves on the Investment Board, the Depository Board and the Board of Managers of the Shuman Juvenile Detention Home.

TREASURER

The treasurer is the custodian of all county money for both the receipt and disbursement of funds. In addition to the fees and receipts processed, this office collects a myriad of taxes including real estate, hotel, motel, delinquent and lien taxes. Disbursements are made subsequent to the approval of the county executive or county manager and county controller. The treasurer serves as a member of the Allegheny County Retirement Board and the president of the Board of Investment. In that capacity the treasurer is charged with the responsibilities associated with the safekeeping and investment of all funds. The

treasurer is the designated agent for the Commonwealth for the sale of hunting, dog, fishing, and boating licenses. The treasurer also implements the real estate tax relief program for senior citizens.

APPOINTED OFFICIALS

PUBLIC DEFENDER

The Office of Public Defender (OPD) is required to provide constitutionally effective legal services pursuant to the United States and Pennsylvania Constitutions and the Public Defenders Act of 1968 for indigent persons who are charged with criminal offenses, or faced with incarceration under certain state laws and for respondents in actions for involuntary mental health commitment.

The OPD appears or conducts many critical and or necessary steps under state laws, case law, and rules of court and rules of professional conduct.

The county executive appoints the chief public defender.

MEDICAL EXAMINER

The chief duty of the medical examiner is to investigate all sudden unexplained, unexpected, or violent deaths with compassion for families and friends during their time of grief. The office applies current scientific methods for evidence analysis and investigating to effectively assist law enforcement, judicial court systems and health and environmental agencies. The coroner may conduct an inquest and call witnesses as a sitting magistrate to find criminal negligence or intent but has not done so since 2005. The medical examiner is in charge of the county forensic services.

DEPARTMENT OF COURT RECORDS

The Department of Court Records (“DCR”) was established on January 7, 2008, to perform the functions formerly performed by the row offices of Prothonotary, Clerk of Courts and Register of Wills/Clerk of the Orphans’ Court which were eliminated as a result of a ballot question approved by the electorate of Allegheny County.

The DCR handles all documents filed by every party in all cases filed in the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County. The DCR creates a file for every case. This file holds all official documents filed for the case and all Orders of Court for the case. Most of the functions of the DCR are set forth in state statutes and rules of procedure regarding the operations of the courts of Pennsylvania. The DCR has three (3) operational Divisions and an Administrative Division. The Civil/Family Division and the Wills/Orphan Court Division are in the process of providing similar systems for electronic filing of cases and expect to finish this effort January 2010. The Criminal

Division uses a state mandated system for filing and record keeping of cases.

Fees are charged for some court filings. The fees collected by the DCR are set and approved by the President Judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Allegheny County. The fees collected are distributed based on state statutes, rules and orders of court, depending on the filing, to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, other government entities and the County's General Fund. Fees that are collected on all filings that cause a new case number to be created are used for computer costs and records storage and management in the DCR.

Additionally these fees finance the childcare facilities operated by the courts, the County law library, and a Court Technology and Education fund. The Office of Jury Management is responsible for the creation of the juror array, qualification of jurors and summoning of prospective jurors for service in the criminal and civil divisions. A merged list from the Departments of State, Revenue, Transportation and Public Welfare is utilized. Jurors serve for one day or, if selected, for one trial.

DEPARTMENT OF REAL ESTATE

This department is the repository for legal documents relative to property ownership and encumbrances on all property located in Allegheny County. The documents include deeds, mortgages, mortgage satisfaction, and mortgage assignments. The office is also responsible for recording other specific statutory documents, such as powers of attorney, commissions, bonds, notary public commissions, military discharges, subdivision plans, and others. The Department of Real Estate is the designated agent for the collection and disbursement of the realty transfer tax for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and 170 municipalities and school districts in Allegheny County. This department is a repository for legal documents relative to property ownership. The recorded documents located in this office are available to the public. Information clerks will assist you in locating a document if at 101 County Office Building, 542 Forbes Avenue, downtown Pittsburgh. Because of the liability factor information cannot be provided via email or phone.



IV. LEGISLATIVE BRANCH OF COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Qualifications, Election, Vacancies

The legislature consists of 15 members of the Allegheny County Council. Thirteen are elected by district, two at-large. Any political party may nominate one at-large member. Voters vote for only one at-large councilperson. The two receiving the highest number of votes are elected. This process guarantees at least a minimum of political diversity on county council.



Council members serve staggered terms of four years. They must be at least 18 and registered voters in Allegheny County for one year preceding the election. Those elected by district must have resided in their district one year and remain in that district for their term. There are no term limits for council members. While serving on council, members may not seek nomination or election to or hold another elective office. If their district is changed by reapportionment and they are no longer residents, they may complete their term in office. County council members are prohibited from being employed by the county.

Council members fill council vacancies within 30 days. The person chosen must be of the same party as the member who previously held the office and serves until replaced at the next general municipal election. Death, incapacity, failure to perform or conviction of an infamous crime are reasons for forfeiture of office.

Council members do not receive a salary but may receive per-meeting stipends not to exceed \$9,000 in the aggregate annually. It may be increased by up to five percent every five years. Members can be reimbursed up to \$3000 each year for expenses directly associated with serving such as meals and parking. Members are not entitled to any county funding for personal staff, local district offices or fringe benefits.

Regular meetings of the council are set at the beginning of each year. They are usually bimonthly, not in consecutive weeks. Council may require the county executive to attend one meeting each quarter and the attendance of the county manager as necessary.

The presiding officer is the president of council and is elected by council members.

Duties

As the legislature for the county, the council passes ordinances and resolutions, makes appropriations, levies taxes, and incurs county debt. It may investigate county departments, accept grants or gifts on behalf of the county, confirm or appoint as allowed by law members of authorities and agencies and eliminate departments, agencies or functions no longer needed. The council must adopt a balanced annual operating and capital budget at least 25 days before the end of the fiscal year. A two-thirds affirmative vote is needed to override an executive veto of a council ordinance.

Council employs a chief of staff and a clerk and such staff as necessary to perform its duties. The total cost of the council operation including their stipend and expenses cannot exceed .4% (four-tenths of one percent) of the county annual tax levy.

Public Participation

The county charter requires rules to be adopted to allow public participation. Presently, public comment on agenda items follows roll call and approval of minutes of the previous meeting. A second opportunity for public comment on general items is provided immediately before adjournment. The agenda is available at least 24 hours before the meeting at the courthouse and on the county web site. www.allegheny.pa.us

The public may petition council to consider putting a particular action on their agenda through an “agenda initiative.” The petition form is available at the office of the council clerk. Some areas are not subject to initiative, for example boundary changes, regulation of schools, property assessments, and tax rate limits. Those areas are controlled by state law rather than the county charter. The petition must be signed by 500 registered voters in the county and filed within 21 days after the form is obtained. Council must consider and vote on the petition within 60 days of receipt.

Voters also have the power to propose ordinances by “voter referendum.” The same subject restrictions apply as for an agenda initiative. Referendum forms are issued through the Election Division. The initiative petition must be signed by at least five percent of the number of those voting in the county in the most-recent election for the office of governor and presented to election officials. It must be circulated between the twentieth Tuesday prior to the next election and the thirteenth Tuesday prior to that election. Ordinances passed by referendum cannot be vetoed and cannot be amended or appealed for two years.

V. EXECUTIVE BRANCH

COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Qualifications, Election, Vacancy

The county executive of Allegheny County serves a four-year term and is limited to three consecutive terms. The residency requirement is one year as a voter in the county before election and during the term of office. The executive must be at least 25 years old. Salary is \$90,000 and may be increased by Council. The increase may not exceed the average increase received by county employees as part of collective bargaining agreements. Reimbursement for expenses is available. The annual expenditure for the county executive's salary, expenses, and office staff compensation cannot exceed .2% of the county's annual tax levy.

If the county executive dies, is incapacitated or is convicted of an infamous crime, the office becomes vacant. The manager serves as temporary replacement until county council selects a replacement who then serves until the next municipal election. The county executive may appoint the county manager or other administrative officer to serve in cases of temporary absence or disability.

Duties

- Enforce county ordinances and resolutions
- Represent the county, or designate a representative, in negotiations with other officials and economic development efforts
- Approve or reject council ordinances
- Administer all county departments except those placed under other jurisdiction
- Submit an annual fiscal plan to council
- Appoint the county manager and solicitor with consent of council
- Recommend to council the establishment of authorities and agencies and make appointments to them
- Negotiate and sign all county contracts and agreements
- Submit ordinances and resolutions to council
- Give an annual state of the county address
- Participate or delegate another to negotiate with other government officials in economic development
- Attend one council meeting each quarter
- Call special meetings of the council
- Declare and take appropriate action to meet a state of emergency

Law Department

The Allegheny County Solicitor is appointed by the county executive and must be approved by council. The appointee must be a member in good standing of the bar of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania and serve as the director of the Law Department.

The solicitor and staff of assistant county solicitors provide legal opinions and advice to the executive and county departments and agencies. They prepare or approve all legal contracts, leases, and ordinances and other legal documents and represent the county in all litigation, including eminent domain proceedings, labor contract disputes and all suits where the county is either a plaintiff or defendant. This department provides special legal services for human service departments, for example at family court hearings for dependent and neglected children, mental health commitment hearings, and guardianship proceedings for senior citizens. This department is responsible for oversight of the county law library.

COUNTY MANAGER

The county executive selects the county manager with the approval of the majority of council. The position is held at the pleasure of the executive. The manager serves as administrative officer of the county and is selected based upon administrative abilities determined through professional preparation and work experience. It is a full-time position.

Duties

- Implement county policies regarding administration of county operations.
- Supervise all executive departments and agencies except the Law Department.
- In consultation with the executive, appoint and remove directors of departments.
- Administer a personnel system based upon merit.
- Hire, discipline, or discharge any employee under the manager's jurisdiction.
- Prepare an annual fiscal plan for the county executive; administer the plan and report to the executive and the council on the financial condition of the county.
- Evaluate the need for county departments and functions over a four-year sunset review cycle and make recommendations to the executive and council.
- Ensure the maintenance of a management information system.
- As directed by executive, negotiate labor and other contracts.
- In the absence of the executive or designee, attend and participate in authority and agency meetings.

To aid in the administration of Allegheny County government, a number of departments, bureaus, agencies, boards, commissions and authorities exist.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Property Assessment Oversight Board

This three-member board was charged with ensuring that real property in the county is assessed according to professional practice procedures; this board was abolished by County Council in March 2003. The board was composed of the county executive or designee, the president of county council or designee, and an appointee of the county executive approved by county council who must have at least 10 years experience as a real estate broker. This board confirmed the selection of the chief assessment officer by the county manager and certified the assessments determined by the Office of Property Assessments. At present the chief assessment officer certifies assessments.

The county may not derive windfall revenues from annual property reassessments or from changes in the ratio of assessed valuation. Following a revaluation, tax revenue may not exceed 105% of the tax revenue received the preceding year, not including new construction or improvements.

Office of Property Assessments

Before passage of the County Charter, the same board certified assessments and heard appeals. These duties are now separated. The Office of Property Assessments supervises the annual assessment process and assists the county executive and the Board of Assessment Oversight to determine the methodology for the valuation of properties for taxation purposes. It is located in the Executive Branch. The chief assessment officer is selected by and reports to the manager. The Property Assessment Oversight Board confirms the appointment. The chief assessment officer must be a certified assessment evaluator or hold the highest-ranking Commonwealth appraiser's license and have ten years experience in management of property valuation.

Board of Property Assessment Appeals and Review

The purpose of the seven-member appeals board is to oversee and certify assessment appeal decisions concerning the value of real property and exemptions from real property taxation. All members are appointed, four by county council and three by the county executive with consent of county council. They serve staggered three-year terms and are limited to two terms. Three members must have at least ten years' experience as a registered real estate broker, appraiser, or assessor; one must have ten years experience as a building construction engineer, civil engineer, or general contractor; or assessor and one must have ten years' experience as a practicing attorney with residential valuation expertise. Board members may not be county employees or elected officials of a municipality or school district. They must disclose all property in which they have an ownership interest and take no part in decisions on the value of their property. They each receive a per-meeting stipend that may not exceed a total of \$9,000 per year.

Property assessment appeals must be filed by March 31. In hearing appeals related to commercial and complex multifamily properties the board members or contracted hearing officers shall be state certified general appraisers or equivalents. Residential property appeals are before board members or contracted hearing officers who are state-certified general or state certified residential appraisers, real estate industry professionals or lawyers with residential valuation expertise. Information on assessed values of individual properties can be found at <http://www2.county.allegheny.pa.us/RealEstate/Default.aspx>.

Division of Elections

County government administers state election laws at the local level. The board consists of the county executive and the two at-large members of county council. If a member of the board is a candidate for public office, the President Judge of the Court of Common Pleas appoints a voter of the county of the same political party to serve while the member is a candidate. The board is charged by law with the responsibility of conducting elections and reporting the results to the Secretary of the Commonwealth. Those responsibilities include registering voters, establishing and equipping the polls, training personnel, certifying election petitions, reporting election results, and investigating election frauds. The Division of Elections is part of the Department of Administration Services. The division performs administrative duties for the board.

Registration

To register to vote in Allegheny County, a citizen must reside in the county at least 30 days before the election and be 18 years old. Residents may register at the same time they apply for a driver's license. Mail-in forms are available at the Division of Elections, libraries, municipal buildings, state legislators' local offices, and various state agencies. Persons who move or change their names may use the mail in form to report the changes to the Division of Elections. The same form may also be used to change party registration. Notice of registration should be received by the voter. It will identify the voter's polling place by ward and district numbers but not by physical location. To determine the physical location, a voter may use the online polling place locator at <http://apps.county.allegheny.pa.us/VoteDistricts>, or call the League of Women Voters at 412-261-4284, or call the Election Division at 412-350-4500. In 2001 the state legislature approved the establishment of a statewide, centralized database for voter registration.

Elections

The primary election is held each spring for the nomination of candidates. Presently, the law permits only those registered in a party to vote in that party primary. Municipal general elections to elect local officials and judges are held in odd-numbered years and state and federal general elections are held in even numbered years. Both take place on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November. Special elections for the approval or rejection of bond issues, constitutional amendments, and other questions are usually

held simultaneously with a municipal or general election, and all voters, whether or not registered in a political party, may vote on referenda items. The four-year election cycle is shown on page 21.

Because Pennsylvania is the one of the few states where voters elect their local district election boards, and because there are 130 municipalities and 43 school districts within the county, with many officials to be elected in each, more candidates are elected in and certified by Allegheny County than in any other political subdivision of the United States. In a four-year period over 23,000 nomination petitions are circulated, and approximately 12,600 officials are elected and certified.

There are approximately 1300 election districts in the county. The Division of Elections selects the polling places in each election district. Public and school buildings are preferred, but space in privately owned buildings is rented if necessary. Voting machines are used in all districts, and the division offers training in their use for district election boards before each primary and general election. A voter who is voting at an election district for the first time may be required to show an approved form of identification. A list of the approved forms can be found at <http://www.county.allegheny.pa.us/elect>.

All primaries and elections are conducted in each election district by a district election board consisting of a judge of election, a majority inspector, and a minority inspector. Each elector may vote for one person as judge and one person as inspector. The person receiving the highest number of votes for inspector becomes majority inspector, and the person receiving the second highest number of votes for inspector becomes minority inspector. In addition, each of the inspectors appoints a clerk to the district election board. It is the policy of the Allegheny County Division of Elections to appoint the majority inspector's clerk as the voting machine inspector. These elected officers and clerks are generally responsible for the orderly conduct of elections, and all are paid.

On Election Day the staff of the Elections Division, the county solicitor, and the Court of Common Pleas are available from 7 a.m. until 10 p.m. to handle any problems or complaints that may arise. After the polls close, the division staff remains on duty to receive from the district election boards the printed voting machine return sheets and the tallies of write-in and absentee votes. Each voting machine produces a permanent printed record of the votes cast during the day, and this is the official record.

The official canvass of the returns is begun on the third day after the election. If there are discrepancies, the Return Board must ascertain the causes and can summon a district election board for a formal hearing and order a re-canvass of the voting machines. The county executive and the two at-large county council members serve as the Return Board unless they are running for office, in which case judges of the Court of Common Pleas are designated to act as the Return Board.

Absentee Voting

Registered voters who will be absent from their municipalities because their duties occupations or business require them to be elsewhere or because of observance of a religious holiday, illness or disability prevent them from going to their polling place may

vote by absentee ballot. Application for an absentee ballot must be made not earlier than 50 and not later than seven days before the election. In an emergency a ballot may be secured up to 5 p.m. on the Friday before the election. There are special provisions for military personnel and their families.

College students may vote by absentee ballot from their home or register to vote in the area where they reside while attending school.

Retirement Board

The Retirement Board administers the county pension fund and reviews retirement applications from all county employees. The seven-member board consists of the county executive, the controller, the treasurer, one member of the retirement system selected by the county executive and approved by county council, one member selected by council from the retirement system and two members selected by a vote of the county's employees and retirees.

The Allegheny County pension fund, invested by the board in stocks and bonds, is derived from matching payments by the county and the employee. At age 60 and after 20 years' service, the retiree receives monthly payments of one-half the salary previously received. Retirees who work more than 20 years receive pensions increased by two percent each year more than 20. Employees who retire before age 60 lose .5 percent for each month to a maximum reduction of 30 percent. For more information, see <http://www.county.allegheny.pa.us/retirement>



FOUR-YEAR ELECTION CYCLE

	GENERAL ELECTION EVEN-NUMBERED YEAR	MUNICIPAL ELECTION ODD-NUMBERED YEAR	GENERAL ELECTION EVEN-NUMBERED YEAR	MUNICIPAL ELECTION ODD-NUMBERED YEAR
FEDERAL	President and Vice President Representative* in Congress U.S. Senator**		Representative* in Congress U.S. Senator**	
STATE	Treasurer, Auditor General, Attorney General Senator in the General Assembly Representative*in General Assembly	Justice, Supreme Court*** Judge, Superior and Commonwealth*** Judge, Court of Common Pleas*** District Justice**	Governor Lt. Governor Senator in the General Assembly Representative*in General Assembly	Justice, Supreme Court*** Judge, Superior and Commonwealth*** Judge, Court of Common Pleas*** District Justice**
COUNTY ¹		County Council Sheriff		County Executive County Council Controller District Attorney Treasurer
MUNICIPAL ¹		Mayor Council: cities and Boroughs Commissioner: 1 st class townships Supervisor**:2 nd class townships Class townships Controller: 3 rd class cities, some boroughs and twps. Treasurer Tax Collector Auditor** School Director Constable** ²		Council: Cities and boroughs Commissioner: 1 st class townships Supervisor**: 2 nd class townships Controller: Pittsburgh some boroughs and and townships Treasurer: 3 rd class cities Auditor** School Director Constable** ²
ELECTION DISTRICT				Judge of Election Majority Inspector Minority Inspector
ELECTED IN PRIMARY	Delegates to National Party Convention (no term)	Party Committee Dem* One man, one woman each party		Party Committee Dem* Party Committee Rep. One man, one woman each party

¹ For Home Rule municipalities, consult the Home Rule Charter for officials and their terms of office.

² Constables are officers of the court, not municipal officers.

* two-year term, ** six-year term, ***ten-year term. Unless specified, term is four years.

FISCAL AFFAIRS

Budget and Finance

A budget is an annual financial plan for revenues and expenditures for a given fiscal year, January 1 to December 31. Under the general supervision of the manager, the director of the Department of Budget and Finance prepares the annual comprehensive fiscal plan. The plan includes both a one-year and a two-year operating budget with projected revenues and expenditures and both a one-year and a five-year capital budget identifying needed capital projects and the coordination of the financing and timing of expenditures on a long-term basis. See <http://www.county.allegheny.pa.us/budget>

A comprehensive fiscal plan consists of the operating, capital, grants, special accounts and agency budget. It is prepared using the budget requests from the departments and divisions, the county council, independently elected county officials, the Court of Common Pleas, and other agencies that desire county appropriations. The proposed budgets are based on the premise that no appropriation is automatically continued into the next year. The budgets must be balanced.

The county executive presents the comprehensive fiscal plan to county council no later than 75 days before the end of the fiscal year. County council must hold at least two public hearings on the plan at least two weeks before adoption. Copies of the plan are made available to the public in the office of the county executive, county manager and county council at least one week before the hearings. No later than 25 days before the end of the year, county council adopts a balanced fiscal plan and sets the rate of taxation, discount for payment before April 1, and penalties for failure to pay. Any change in tax rates must be approved by at least two-thirds of council. Real estate property tax cannot exceed the limitations previously established for counties of the second class. This rate limit is 40 mills. The limit is based on previously authorized rate of 25 mills for general purposes, ten mills for human services, and five mills for the Community College. However, the rate of taxation for payment of debt is unlimited.

The county executive may veto any budget item and return the budgets with written objections within seven business days. The council has one week to override the veto by a two-thirds vote.

Pennsylvania Act 77 of 1993 allowed Allegheny County to levy a 1% county sales tax and create the Allegheny Regional Asset District, which has the same geography as the county. One-half of the funds raised through the tax are turned over to the Regional Asset District Board for distribution to libraries, regional parks, stadiums, and civic and cultural facilities and programs. One-fourth of the funds go to Allegheny County, and one-fourth is divided among eligible municipalities based on a formula in the act. The county and municipality shares were used initially to reduce or eliminate local taxes, including the county personal property tax. The local governments use the revenue for general government support. For additional information see <http://radworkshere.org>.

Debt

The Local Government Unit Debt Act establishes limits for county borrowing at a borrowing base of 300% county revenue over the three years immediately preceding the year of borrowing.

Flow of Funds

The county's fiscal year begins January 1. Under normal circumstances the county's tax bills are sent in January. During January, February, and March real estate taxes are collected at a discount; during April they are collected at face value; and after April 30 they become delinquent, and interest and penalties are charged. The Depository Board, consisting of the county executive, controller and treasurer (the majority quorum) and two members appointed by the executive with council approval select depositories for the funds. The banks and banking institutions selected serve for such time as the board may determine but may not serve longer than the term of the treasurer.

The Home Rule Charter of Allegheny County limits real estate tax rates, the hotel room rental tax and the rate of the additional sales and use tax to that established by state law.

The manager and controller approve payments upon receipt of requisitions or invoices. Only those payments included in the comprehensive fiscal plan are approved. Emergencies requiring unbudgeted expenditures must be submitted by the county executive to county council for approval. No expenditure shall be made or authorized in excess of the available unencumbered appropriations.

Purchasing and Supplies

With the exception of public works contracts, the Division of Purchasing and Supplies is responsible for the purchase and lease of all materials, supplies, furnishings, equipment, insurance and surety and fidelity bonds, or other personal property and nonprofessional services. The rules and procedures covering the general operation and administration of purchasing are included in the purchasing manual and can be found at <http://www.county.allegheny.pa.us/purchasing>. Units of the executive branch, county officers, independently elected county officials, the courts and agencies submit a requisition to the purchasing officers, describing the goods or services required. If the requests are part of the comprehensive fiscal plan, they are approved. Expenditures over \$30,000 must be purchased through a competitive sealed bid process. At least three suppliers must be consulted for purchases between \$10,000 and \$30,000. The county executive or his designate executes all contracts over \$30,000. To the greatest extent fiscally responsible, purchases are to be American made and ensure participation by disadvantaged business enterprises.

Procurement of Professional Services

Proposals for certain professional services established in the administrative code are reviewed and evaluated by a Professional Services Review Committee. The committee is comprised of five members: the county executive or designee, the county manager or designee, two members appointed by the president of council and one appointed by the county executive with consent of council. The committee reviews proposals and recommends a short list of at least three acceptable proposals, assuming at least three are submitted. Departments involved are asked for a recommendation. The final decision is made by the county executive, county official, president judge or council.

Services or work that is presently performed by county employees cannot be transferred to a private entity unless an appropriation for such service or work is approved by county council.

PERSONNEL

The unified personnel system is based on merit principles. It provides equal opportunity for employment based upon skill and ability. Employee classifications reflect differences in education, experience, and skill. Employees are provided training to assure high quality performance. They are protected from political coercion.

The human resources director works under the direction of the county executive and county manager. The director must be educated and experienced in the field of human resources.

All county employees are part of the county career service with the exception of the county executive, council members, county manager and their staff; the department directors, deputy directors, division heads and one assistant for each; members of agencies and authorities; county officials and court employees. All applications for employment or promotion are made to the human resource director.

At the present time employees of independently elected county officials are not part of the unified personnel system.

Employees are required to reside in the county within one year of employment. Those living outside the county on June 20, 2000, when the residency requirement was adopted, are not required to move.

The Personnel Board

The Personnel Board hears complaints from employees. It is composed of five members chosen by the county executive with consent of council for staggered terms of three years. No more than three may be of the same political party and one must be experienced in labor. They cannot be elected officials, officers of a political party, county employees or family members of employees. The board serves without pay, and terms are limited to six consecutive years.

Employees covered by collective bargaining agreements use grievance procedures rather than appealing to the Personnel Board.

Code of Accountability, Conduct and Ethics (ACE)

- All elected and appointed county officers, officials, and public employees must annually file a statement of public income and investments.
- Family members of county officials or officers may not be employed full time by the county except through election to office.
- Employee political activity is limited to off-duty time away from place of employment and out of uniform.
- Whistle blowing shall not be punished.

The ACE Commission enforces the code. Two members are chosen by minority county council members and three by the majority. They serve five-year terms and receive no compensation. The code goes beyond state law and is more encompassing.

Police

The Allegheny County Police established in 1932 provide security and police services for the county airports, county buildings, parks, and on other special details as necessary. County police assist other police departments when requested, provide countywide investigative services, and operate a special weapons and tactical team and a bomb squad. See <http://www.county.allegheny.pa.us/police/>

The Allegheny County Police Training Academy offers programs of instruction associated with the Pennsylvania municipal police officers basic training curriculum. The entry-level program is designed to prepare the police patrol officer for duty. In-service and specialized training courses are also offered. The academy is located in North Park. See <http://www.county.allegheny.pa.us/polacad/>

Emergency Management

State legislation directs each municipality to have a disaster emergency plan. The Allegheny County Department of Emergency Services handles emergency preparedness, prevention, and coordinated response and recovery for Allegheny County and has

achieved cooperation among the emergency responders for the 130 municipalities within the county. See <http://www.county.allegheny.pa.us/emerserv/>. It provides training, investigative services, and emergency management response to disasters, catastrophes and municipal needs. This is accomplished with the 911 emergency response telecommunications network, emergency response teams, fire investigative units, fire code compliance and the fire training academy. The department's Emergency Operations center also serves as the emergency management hub for 12 surrounding counties which form Pennsylvania Emergency Management region 13.

The 911 Center receives calls from all 130 municipalities in the county.

Veterans' Affairs

State law requires the establishment of a Division of Veterans' Affairs. It helps veterans and their families to know their benefits under state or federal law. The county maintains a web site <http://www.county.allegheny.pa.us/veterans> listing veterans' services. The county also contributes toward funeral and grave marker expenses and facilitates the purchase and distribution of these materials throughout Allegheny County. The division also participates in close support and promotion of the many activities at the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall and Museum Trust, Inc., where it maintains its offices.

Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall and Museum Trust, Inc.

Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall and Museum Trust, Inc. operate independently. It is the largest memorial in the United States dedicated solely to honor the American servicemen and women of all wars. The facility contains a 2400 seat auditorium and a ballroom that can seat 500 for dinner. The auditorium rises two stories and has a mezzanine balcony. The stage is large enough to accommodate the United States Marine Corps Band.

The Board of Directors includes service organizations such as the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion. The county executive, one member of county council, the president judge and the administrative judge of the Civil Division of the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas all sit on the board with community representatives.

Public tours and educational programs for local schools are available. The museum library holds thousands of volumes of rare military histories and the records of 28 Grand Army of the Republic posts.

HUMAN SERVICES

Department of Human Services

With the goal of providing services more effectively and efficiently, the Department of Human Services (DHS) was created in 1996 to integrate the functions of the departments of Children and Youth Services, Mental Health/Mental Retardation/Drug and Alcohol/Hunger and Homeless Program, Federal Programs, and the Area Agency on Aging. See <http://www.county.allegheny.pa.us/dhs>. The former functions are now the responsibility of the following offices:

The Area Agency on Aging addresses the needs of the elderly population by providing senior community centers, assessment of needs and support services, nursing home alternatives, caregiver support, adult foster care, protection from abuse and neglect, advocacy for long-term care consumers, training and employment, and health insurance counseling.

Behavioral Health helps people with mental illness, children and youth with serious emotional disturbance, and individuals with drug and alcohol dependencies through contracted agencies.

Children, Youth and Families is the public agency charged with protecting children from abuse and neglect. Reports of abuse/neglect are investigated, and efforts are made to preserve the family through in-home services to meet physical needs and provide support and treatment. Temporary homes are arranged for the children as necessary, and when family reunification is not possible, permanent homes are provided through adoption.

Community Services provides employment and training and a wide array of safety net services for low-income and vulnerable people through three bureaus.

- *Bureau of Family & Community* provides non-emergency medical transportation, Head Start, weatherization and heating bill assistance, free summer breakfast and lunch for children and family support services.
- *Bureau of Employment and Training* oversees the PA CareerLink centers which provide services for all job seekers and employers, provides youth employment and training, and offers a full range of job services for residents on cash assistance at Regional Service Centers.
- *Bureau of Hunger and Housing* uses grants from the state and federal governments to provide food, emergency shelter, transitional and permanent housing and rent, utility, and other supportive assistance.

Mental Retardation/Developmental Disabilities provides coordinated mental retardation services through contracted agencies. Support is provided in the home and at community-based activity centers. Other services include child development, living arrangements, skill and living training, community education, and outreach.

Department of Health

Under Pennsylvania law (Act 315), counties are permitted to establish health departments, either by resolution of the County Executive(s) or by public referendum. Effective January 1, 1957, the then Allegheny County Board of Commissioners established the Allegheny County Health Department by resolution. The department is responsible for protecting the health of citizens of Allegheny County by controlling communicable diseases, monitoring environmental quality, enforcing health regulations, and collecting and using public health statistics as required by law. For further information see <http://www.achd.net/mainstart.html>.

Funding for the department comes from several sources: direct county appropriations, per-capita reimbursements from the state, state and federal project grants, and fees charged for permits.

Board of Health

This is a nine-member board appointed by the county executive for four-year terms. Two members must be physicians, and all members serve without pay. They are required to recommend to the county executive a director of the Health Department, who must be an experienced public health administrator. This appointment must be reviewed and approved by the state secretary of health. The board is also required to recommend to the executive and the county council the adoption of rules and regulations governing public health. To govern activities in the field of public health, the board of health holds public hearings and formulates environmental quality and human health legislation, which when passed by the county council and executive, become official rules and regulations of the Health Department.

Environmental Quality

Environmental codes regulate housing and community environment, food protection, plumbing, public drinking water, sewage and solid waste management, and air quality. Guidelines for emergency response are also included.

If environmental quality inspectors find violations of county regulations, the department orders the violator to correct the problem. Those who fail to comply may be convicted in a summary proceeding before a district justice and can be fined up to \$300 per day for each offense. The department also has the power to seize harmful goods and close a dangerous establishment without previous warning if it is judged that the public health is in imminent danger.

Environmental quality protection activities include the investigation of conditions in rental housing, rooming houses, schools, public swimming pools, and personal care homes; technical assistance for mosquito and other pest-control efforts; investigation of the surroundings of a lead-poisoned child; licensing and inspection of food facilities;

licensing of plumbers and inspection of plumbing installations; regulation of public water systems; inspection of sewage treatment plants and conveyance systems; technical assistance in pollution-prevention practices for business and industry; and monitoring the operations at solid waste disposal sites, waste haulers and recycling centers.

The air quality program issues permits to sources of air pollution at fixed locations such as steel mills, utilities, hospital incinerators, chemical plants and industrial processes. Each permit specifies what equipment may operate and what discharges are allowed. Air quality also issues permits for the construction of new sources and modifications of existing sources.

Sources are inspected for compliance with air pollution control regulations, and penalties can be assessed. Air quality staff work with plant operators to find solutions to problems. Data are collected annually on air pollution emissions. Air quality is monitored by placing samplers throughout the county and comparing samples with national ambient air quality standards. The air quality index phone line, 412-578-8179, provides daily reports of air quality and information about related health effects.

There are special programs regarding asbestos removal, open burning, abrasive (sand) blasting and prevention of accidental releases of pollutants.

Changes in federal and state rules are reviewed, and local regulations are developed as needed to attain and maintain air quality. Staff use computer modeling to assess the impact of proposed changes in sources and emissions.

The **Air Pollution Control Advisory Committee** advises the health department and board of health on matters of air pollution including program direction, regulatory development and public education. The committee consists of appointed individuals who meet bimonthly and serve without pay. Industry representation is limited to no more than five appointees. For current members see <http://www.achd.net/air/committee.html>

The health department's emergency response capabilities are designed to prevent, control and alleviate health hazards that could result from natural disasters, terrorist incidents or accidental releases of toxic pollutants.

Medical Services

The range of **medical services** provided by the Health Department includes the following:

Policy Development and Assessment: Surveys, analyzes, and accesses data to help predict and recognize trends that may affect public health or the environment. At the heart of these services, statistics and epidemiological principles are used to identify trends in diseases, deaths, and births, which are critical to planning services to meet community health needs.

Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention: Uses a variety of data to identify areas and population groups at risk for heart disease, cancer, stroke, lung disease, and diabetes and devises programs to protect public health in these areas. Also sponsors programs to reduce the number of deaths and disabilities caused by fires, falls, firearms, violence, poisonings, motor vehicle crashes, and children at play.

Maternal and Child Health: Promotes good health care and healthy lifestyles for pregnant women, mothers, and children. The program specializes in the care of at risk families and offers a wide array of health services to meet their primary care needs through partnerships with locally based health centers.

Nutrition: Promotes good health through proper nutrition. The Women, Infants, Children (WIC) supplemental food program is targeted at income-eligible and high-risk nursing mothers, pregnant women, and children up to five years of age.

Tuberculosis: Evaluates patients and close contacts to detect tubercular infection and active disease. An outreach program helps patients with their medication, monitors for side effects, and offers support services to ensure optimal treatment and a cure.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs): Free and confidential treatment is available for patients. Follow-up testing and treatment are provided to sexual contacts found through partner notification efforts. Education and outreach focus on high-risk communities, schools, health-care providers, and the general public. Besides AIDS, gonorrhea, chlamydia, and syphilis, HIV infection is also reportable to the Health Department.

Veterinary Services: Investigates the transmission of diseases to humans from animals and animal products. Provides information to physicians, veterinarians, and the public about rabies, rabies immunization methods, and how to avoid bites from domestic and wild animals.

Dental Services: Operates four dental offices throughout the county to provide routine and corrective services for children ages 1 to 20. A school-based sealant program is targeted to at-risk children to prevent tooth decay in permanent molar teeth. Outreach includes children in Head Start and children and families living in homeless shelters.

Lead Poisoning Prevention: Offers screening and follow-up for children up to six years old. Conducts environmental investigations of surroundings of children who have had elevated lead levels found in their blood and makes medical referrals, if necessary.

Infectious Diseases: More than 60 communicable diseases and conditions are reportable in Allegheny County. When a case is reported, the patient's contacts are identified, tested, and treated. Follow-up can involve setting up special clinics to provide vaccines and/or preventive medications. Flu and pneumonia vaccinations, travel shots, and childhood immunizations are also given to targeted populations.

Kane Regional Centers

The Kane Regional Centers (formerly known as Kane Hospital) are comprised of the four county owned and operated long-term care nursing home facilities which provide skilled and intermediate nursing care to citizens of Allegheny County. The centers, located in Ross Township, Scott Township, McKeesport, and the Glen Hazel neighborhood of Pittsburgh, can each care for 360 residents. The public nursing home system provides a full range of in-house services to its patients, including a strong rehabilitation program consisting of physical therapy, occupational therapy, audiology, speech therapy, and therapeutic recreation. Medical Assistance, Medicare, Medicare HMOs, private health insurance, and Allegheny County pay for costs. The Kane Regional Centers are recognized for outstanding quality of care in nursing, dietetics, and rehabilitation and for a full range of in-house physician specialists like cardiologists, podiatrists, psychiatrists, etc. See <http://www.county.allegheny.pa.us/kane>.

In response to community needs the Kane Regional Centers designed specialized care to target specific areas:

- Glen Hazel Center, in collaboration with Western Psychiatric Institute/Clinic (WPIC) opened a specialized unit providing intensive psychiatric services for 60 patients. The unit, named Glen Haven, was remodeled to provide a secure and calming environment. Each resident benefits from an individualized care plan delivered by a specially trained staff from Glen Hazel and WPIC.
- In response to the need for “short-term” skilled nursing care, as expressed by St. Clair Memorial Hospital and other South Hills hospitals, Scott Center opened a 20-bed unit to deliver intensive, short-term rehabilitation and therapeutic services. The Highlands at Scott Transitional Care Centre offers private rooms with amenities, well-appointed physical and occupational rehabilitation service, and an array of services to prepare the patient to return home fully rehabilitated.
- A third community need was for the construction of affordable independent living suites. The suites combine “age friendly” housing with the availability of support services that allow the occupant to remain independent as long as possible. Kane Center/Glen Hazel received a competitive state grant of 4.5 million dollars to underwrite the construction of such units for low-and moderate-income residents of Allegheny County.
- Finally, to address the need for effective staff development, a unique collaboration with CCAC provides an on site education program for Kane employees to become licensed practical nurses

PUBLIC WORKS

This department is responsible for providing safe and accessible roads, bridges, parks and buildings, overseeing the design and construction of major public assets, developing and delivering quality recreational services and programs, providing support services to other county departments and levels of government within Allegheny County, and fostering a staff that is qualified, motivated, and customer oriented, whose skills are competitively compensated, and whose achievement are recognized. The program and services offered by the department are conducted in a way to maximize quality and to minimize burden to taxpayers. See <http://www.county.allegheny.pa.us/publicworks>

The department is organized into four divisions:

1. The ***Administrative and Operations Division*** is responsible for planning, directing, and managing the services provided by the other five divisions. In addition to central management, administration focuses its resources on improving communications, meeting the training needs of departmental employees, providing information services, managing the human resources function, and managing the fiscal affairs of the divisions.
2. The ***Engineering and Construction Division*** prepares and implements the annual capital budget. The division oversees the work of professional consultants and contractors engaged in infrastructure improvement projects.
3. The ***Road, Bridge and Park Maintenance Division*** maintains over 410 miles of county-owned roads and 521 bridges. The services provided by this division are essential to commerce and the economic well being of Allegheny County.
4. The ***Facilities and Fleet Management Division*** is responsible for maintaining and improving the building infrastructure through its building trades section. This division maintains over 49 county-owned structures which include the Courthouse, County Office Building, City/County Building, and Morgue. The Fleet Management section is responsible for maintaining the county's fleet and heavy equipment.

PARKS

Nine parks are owned and operated by Allegheny County. The Parks Department is responsible for maintaining facilities, groves, shelters and roads located within the 12,000 acre parks system. See <http://www.county.allegheny.pa.us/parks>.

Annually, over 10,000,000 visitors enjoy the activities and events held in county parks. The parks contribute directly to the quality of life within Allegheny County. In North and South Parks winter visitors may ice skate, ski, and fish, while summer visitors may picnic, swim, fish, play tennis, baseball, and golf; pitch tents and pitch horseshoes; rent boats in North Park or ride rented horses in South Park. Sports clinics offer instructions in golf, basketball, swimming, ice skating, skiing, and other sports.

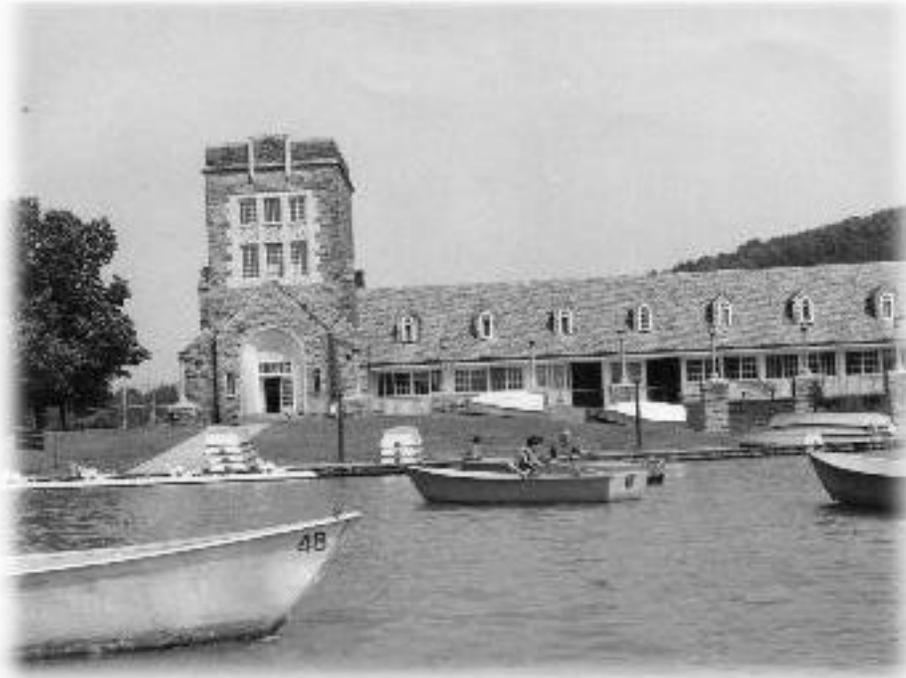
Regional Parks preserve open space in its natural condition. The first six sites were acquired by three Mellon family foundations and sold to the county at cost in 1958. They are located on or near the Orange Belt, a circular traffic route which rings the county at a radius of 15 miles from central Pittsburgh. The parks emphasize and preserve the natural beauty of the site while each provides at least one special but compatible man made feature like the winter sports at William D. Boyce Park, the working farm at Round Hill Park, and three fishing lakes in Deer Lakes Park. The six parks opened in 1970. The county's estate park, Hartwood, commenced operation in 1976. Programs of equestrian emphasis, tours, concerts, programs and special events are regularly offered. Hartwood is also the site of the annual Festival of Lights.

The Parks Department has a seven-person advisory commission chosen by the county executive and confirmed by county council. Commissioners are chosen from environmental groups, athletic and sports programs, landscape architects, organized labor, the disability community and educational institutions. The commission will advise the parks director on the budget, user fees, personnel recruitment and training, and other general operating responsibilities. Periodic public meetings are held to receive input from citizens.

Each park has a Council of Friends appointed by county council to promote programs, support volunteer recruitment and training, and conduct fund raising.

A five-person board is responsible for raising money from private and corporate sponsors and grants. This Fund for Allegheny County Parks develops marketing strategies for the parks. The board is appointed by the county executive and staffed by a development professional.

The *Special Events Division* develops and sponsors a series of free weekly concerts and events at Hartwood Acres, South Park and the Courthouse courtyard. Other special events include the county fair, the director's golf tournament fundraiser, the annual United Way campaign, Scouting for Food, blood drives, and numerous other charitable events.



ECONOMIC POLICY

Development

Allegheny County Economic Development provides comprehensive services designed to improve the quality of life for all residents by creating economic development opportunity, especially for persons of low-to-moderate income. The activities fall under one of these categories: planning, economic development, municipal development, residential, or authorities. See <http://economic.alleghenycounty.us>.

All proposed municipal subdivisions are reviewed by the county. The state mandates that the county provide a comprehensive county plan.

As the county planning agency, the department seeks to provide integrated planning of transportation projects to improve movement of people, goods, and services and to increase economic development opportunities by providing new or improved public infrastructure.

To attract business development, the county offers companies an extensive package of services including project finance, site searches, and demographic and market information.

The goals of municipal development are to construct and maintain public infrastructure, promote informed local decision-making, achieve cost cutting, and support private economic development initiatives. This involves sewer and water systems, municipal recreation, commercial revitalization, curbs and sidewalks, street reconstruction, and demolition.

Housing efforts strive to ensure all residents have access to fair, safe, and affordable housing in Allegheny County. This includes improving existing housing, eliminating unsafe structures, and coordinating residential redevelopment.

The authorities associated with the Allegheny County Department of Economic Development are described in the section on authorities (page 36).

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC)

Since many aspects of planning go beyond municipal or county boundaries, state law permits, and many federal programs require, comprehensive area-wide planning on a continuing basis. For this reason, Allegheny County is a member of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission. See <http://www.spcregion.org>. Other members of the Commission include Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Lawrence, Washington, and Westmoreland Counties, as well as the City of Pittsburgh. County governing officials or their designees meet regularly, usually every other month on the last Monday of the month.

The governor designated SPC as the metropolitan planning organization responsible for the development of a comprehensive long-range transportation development plan and a transportation improvement program. The plan looks at least 20 years into the future, while the program identifies projects that will be supported for federal funding during the next four years. SPC is also responsible for local government assistance programs.

As the local development district the SPC provides direct business assistance services that promote the creation and retention of jobs. Programs technical assistance with business financing, procuring government contracts, business expansion, export development, and federal and state grants.

The Southwestern Pennsylvania Corporation is the administrative arm of the commission. It owns the Regional Enterprise Tower (the former Alcoa Building) located at 425 Sixth Avenue in downtown Pittsburgh and managed by Oxford Development Company.

League of Municipalities

The Allegheny League of Municipalities is a voluntary umbrella organization of boroughs, townships, cities, home rule municipalities, and Allegheny County. The league assists local elected and appointed officials in the areas of communication, cooperation, and coordination on matters of area wide concern. Municipal officials

participate in the league through its board of directors, standing and special committees, municipal workshops, and county associations of boroughs and townships. Their participation supports the development of a systematic and coordinated approach relating to municipal legislation and municipal services. See <http://allegHENYcounty.us/alom>.

AUTHORITIES

Authorities are governmental bodies created to finance and/or operate specific public works projects without tapping the general taxing powers of the municipality. They may be created by a state, a county, a municipality, a school district, or a combination of these. The project must be in a discretionary government enterprise such as a utility, must have a public interest and must be self-sustaining. Authorities may acquire, construct, finance, improve, maintain and operate projects, provide financing for insurance reserves, make loans, and borrow money and issue bonds to finance them. The government units creating the authority appoint a board of directors, and this board then runs the authority autonomously. Authorities may exercise the right to eminent domain and may incur debt; they may not levy taxes.

The interest rate on authority bonds is higher than the rate on municipal bonds but is usually lower than the rate for bonds floated by private corporations. The interest on municipal and authority bonds has not been subject to federal income tax, but federal legislation places restrictions on the tax-free status of authority bonds. If the authority is located in Pennsylvania, interest paid is free of Pennsylvania tax. Allegheny County currently operates nine authorities and participates in two joint authorities.

Port Authority

This authority was created in 1956 to further the use of inland waterways by developing port and terminal facilities. In 1959 the authority was given additional power to acquire and operate all public transit facilities in the county. In 1964 it began operating a unified public transit system as the Port Authority of Allegheny County. See <http://www.portauthority.org/paac/default.aspx>

New members of the Port Authority board, which consists of nine members serving staggered terms, are appointed by the County Executive and approved by County Council. Board members serve without pay.

The Port Authority provides a network of services to persons traveling within a 730- square mile area, including the City of Pittsburgh and all of Allegheny County. The Port Authority has a bus fleet, light rail vehicles and minibuses; operates the Monongahela and Duquesne Inclines and sponsors ACCESS for riders with special needs..



Service is provided on three exclusive busways--the 4.3 mile South Busway, the 9.1 mile Martin Luther King, Jr. East Busway and the five mile West Busway. The T is a 25-mile light rail transit system that features the downtown subway and the Allentown rail route.

Twelve miles of light rail system through Carrick and Castle Shannon have been reconstructed, with new and rehabilitated vehicles. An extension of the T to the north shore stadiums is under construction.

Airport Authority

On November 5, 1999, the Allegheny County Airport Authority assumed administration of two airports from Allegheny County. The Allegheny County Airport Authority oversees operations at two airports: the Pittsburgh International Airport in Findlay Township and the Allegheny County Airport in West Mifflin Borough. The authority is governed by a board appointed by the Allegheny County Executive and approved by Allegheny County Council.

The Pittsburgh International Airport opened in 1992, replacing a smaller facility built in the mid 1950s. It is a world-class facility frequently recognized for quality in meeting traveler's needs. The Official Airline Guide (OAG) includes it on a short list of the world's best airports. See <http://www.flypittsburgh.com>.

Allegheny County Airport, located in West Mifflin, is the largest general aviation airport in western Pennsylvania. It was dedicated on September 11, 1931. The airport sits 12,052 feet above sea level and is one of the highest points in Allegheny County. See http://www.flypittsburgh.com/AGC_background

Sports and Exhibition Authority

The Sports and Exhibition Authority (SEA), formerly known as the Public Auditorium Authority, of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County was incorporated on February 3, 1965 under the Public Auditorium Authorities Act of July 29, 1953. As a joint authority for the City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County, the SEA's mission is to provide venues for sporting, entertainment, educational, cultural, civic, and social events for the benefit of the general public. The SEA currently owns and operates the Mellon Arena, leases the Benedum Center to the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, and is responsible for the management of the David L. Lawrence Convention Center.

The SEA, in cooperation with the state, county and city is responsible for the implementation of the Regional Destination Financing Plan. The plan includes the construction of PNC Park for the Pirates, Heinz Field for the Pittsburgh Steelers, and the Convention Center as well as the infrastructure improvements associated with these projects. Financial support for the Plan comes from bonds backed by hotel tax and sales tax revenues, state appropriations, federal funds, corporate funds and team contributions.

The SEA is governed by a five-member board of directors appointed by the mayor of Pittsburgh and the Allegheny County executive. The board meetings are open to the public. The web site is <http://www.pgh-sea.com>.

Allegheny County Sanitary Authority (ALCOSAN)

Located on 56 acres along the Ohio River on Pittsburgh's north side, the Allegheny County Sanitary Authority (ALCOSAN) provides wastewater treatment to 83 communities, including the City of Pittsburgh. It is the largest wastewater facility in the Ohio Valley. It's web site is <http://www.alcosan.org>

The plant processes an average of 225 million gallons of wastewater daily (MGD). The sludge generated from the process is incinerated, placed in landfills or beneficially reused to reclaim land on abandoned strip mines in western Pennsylvania and eastern Ohio.

ALCOSAN serves 320,000 residential, commercial, and industrial accounts representing a service population of 900,000. A nonprofit agency, ALCOSAN is funded completely by user charges with capital funds raised through the sale of sewer revenue bonds. ALCOSAN is governed by a seven-member board of directors – three appointed by the mayor of Pittsburgh, three by the Allegheny County executive, and one joint appointment. An executive director reports to the board.

ALCOSAN recently completed \$400 million capital improvement program. The upgrades address odor control, treatment capacity, and planning for regulatory compliance to handle wet weather flows. ALCOSAN has now embarked on the largest public works project in the region's history through \$1 billion in engineering and construction projects to address combined sewer overflows.

Redevelopment Authority

This authority was established in 1950 to implement economic development programs that lead to more productive land uses within Allegheny County's 130 municipalities. The RAAC is governed by an unpaid five-member board of directors that are appointed by the county executive for staggered five-year terms. It's web site is http://economic.alleghenycounty.us/authorities/redevelopment_overview.asp

The Redevelopment Authority has four primary functions:

- The Authority is responsible for administering Allegheny County's \$50 million Economic Development Fund. This revolving loan fund was established in 1995 to create and retain jobs in the region. Low interest loans are available for developers and companies who demonstrate viable plans to establish economic development opportunities for residents.

- The RAAC is also responsible for overseeing tax-based incentives for new development within Allegheny County. This includes the use of tax increment financing and tax abatements that provide relief from some local, county, and state taxes in exchange for creating jobs within a municipality.
- No good economic development is ever without a plan. The Redevelopment Authority is heavily involved in coordinating economic studies for the redevelopment of underutilized properties. The RAAC designates an area in need of redevelopment, works with consultants and staff to develop alternatives, and proposes new land uses. The authority has the ability to acquire properties on behalf of communities to expand the local tax base through new development.
- The RAAC also oversees programs that address the need for safe and affordable housing in Allegheny County. The Home Improvement Program of Allegheny County (IMPAC) provides low-to-no-interest loans for homeowners to conduct home improvements. It also aids in housing redevelopment by funneling state and federal funds to this cause and acquiring vacant properties for interested buyers in the community.

Authority for the Improvement of Municipalities

The Authority for Improvements in Municipalities (AIM) was created in 1968 by Allegheny County to help municipalities, Councils of governments and municipal authorities finance public infrastructure projects necessary for the health, welfare, and benefit of the citizens of Allegheny County. Its web site is <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/economic/authorities/aim.aspx>.

From 1968 through 1989, the AIM program consisted of loan and grant funding that was primarily limited to infrastructure projects. In 1989 the AIM board expanded its program to provide additional options for agencies seeking to finance capital needs by adding the infrastructure loan program, infrastructure grant program, and the capital and equipment loan program. These low-interest loans are typically used to purchase vehicles and equipment as well as to underwrite public improvements.

The Allegheny County Finance and Development Commission

This commission was established to issue tax-exempt debt on behalf of development organizations to create jobs and increase economic opportunities in Allegheny County. See http://economic.alleghenycounty.us/authorities/tax_exempt_financing.aspx

The commission is governed by up to as many as seven unpaid directors, who are appointed by the county executive for staggered terms not to exceed five years. The commission includes the Industrial Development Authority, Hospital Development Authority, Higher Education Building Authority and the Residential Finance Authority. The commission falls under the umbrella of the Allegheny County Economic Development Department.

The authorities enable developers and various nonprofit organizations to acquire property, building and equipment needed to create new jobs and expand within Allegheny County. Tax-exempt bonds issued on behalf of the developers can also be used for capital needs and expenditures.

The Residential Finance Authority differs from the other authorities on the commission. The RFA issues tax-exempt mortgage bonds to provide mortgages for first time-home buyers in the county. Savings realized by issuing the tax-exempt debt is passed on to the potential home buyer, who benefits from interest rates nearly two points lower than that available through commercial lenders.

Housing Authority

The Allegheny County Housing Authority currently owns and manages approximately 3,200 low income public housing units throughout Allegheny County. The ACHA administrates approximately 5,000 Section 8 vouchers throughout Allegheny County.

Information on how to apply for housing at the ACHA can be obtained by calling (412) 355-8940 or 1-888-249-6962 or by accessing the website <http://www.achsng.com/main.htm>.

There are some additional authorities. See <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/economic/authorities.aspx>.

MISCELLANEOUS

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Allegheny County has been directly involved in education at the junior college level since 1966, as local sponsor of the Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC). See <http://www.ccac.edu>

A 15-member board of trustees nominated by the county executive and confirmed by the county council administers the college. CCAC is comprised of four main campuses and nine college centers located strategically throughout Allegheny County. Classes are offered at Allegheny Campus on Pittsburgh's North Shore, Boyce Campus in Monroeville, South Campus in West Mifflin, North Campus in McCandless. and at other locations.

CCAC is the largest provider of workforce training in western Pennsylvania. Workforce training provides services to area employers that help the incumbent workforce maintain cutting-edge skills to keep local companies competitive.

The operating costs for CCAC are shared by the Commonwealth, the county, and student tuition. State and federal grants are also a funding source for the college.

PENN STATE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY

The agricultural extension offices in Pennsylvania are a part of both the county and Penn State University. See <http://allegheny.extension.psu.edu>. Their mission is to disseminate research-based information to individuals, families, and communities through informal education programs. Programs are offered in the following areas:

Home and family issues	Family resource management
Leadership development	Youth development & urban 4-H
Food & nutrition	Home gardening
Food and nutrition education for low-income citizens	
Commercial horticulture, serving the county's "green" industry	

ALLEGHENY COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

The Allegheny County Conservation District is a legal subdivision of state government charged with the conservation of county water, soil, and related resources. It coordinates local, state, and federal efforts to provide administrative assistance to individuals, private organizations, and other government agencies. See <http://accd.pghfree.net>.

With its staff, the district

- Reviews construction plans and issues permits for the control of soil erosion during earth-moving operations.
- Inspects earth-moving projects to assure that erosion and sedimentation controls are properly implemented and maintained.
- Coordinates water-quality improvement projects designed to reduce or eliminate pollution from abandoned mines and other point sources.
- Presents training seminars on various soil conservation topics for professionals.
- Assists landowners to resolve complaints arising from earth-moving projects.
- Sponsors community environmental education programs such as the Envirothon, a program in which high school students learn about the natural environment through competitive events.

The district is supported by appropriations from the state, county, and fees. The board consists of a county representative, three farmer members, and five public members appointed by the executive. Their service is voluntary.

VI. APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT IN ALLEGHENY COUNTY

Municipal governments, including counties, have no inherent powers except those granted by the state. Traditionally, however, they have been allowed to legislate on purely local matters within limits set by the General Assembly. The General Assembly may not pass a law applying to a specific municipality but must legislate for a class or classes of municipalities. Municipalities are classified as cities of the first class, second-class, second-class A, and third class; boroughs; and townships of the first and second class. Allegheny County contains 130 municipalities, more than any other Pennsylvania county. Berks County has the next largest number: 76. Since two boroughs, Trafford and McDonald, lie only partly within the county, the number of municipalities is sometimes listed as 128. For a map of municipalities in Allegheny County and links to municipal web sites go to <http://www.county.allegheny.pa.us/munimap/index.asp>.

There are four basic forms of municipal government in Pennsylvania: strong mayor and council, weak mayor and council, commission, and council manager form. In the *strong mayor form*, used mainly in large cities, the mayor is an elected, full-time, paid executive and does not participate in council meetings. In the *weak mayor form*, used mainly in boroughs, the mayor is elected separately from the rest of council but may attend council meetings and vote in case of a tie. The mayor has administrative responsibility over the police department. The council exercises all legislative and most administrative functions and makes all appointments.

The *commission* form is the most common form of local government in Pennsylvania. The elected commissioners select one of their members to serve as chair, and they may either divide the administrative departments among themselves or act as a “committee of the whole” in overseeing all administrative functions. In the *manager* form, the council or commission may hire a chief administrative officer to carry out administrative functions. The degree of executive and administrative authority given the manager depends on the local ordinance.

In 1972 the *Home Rule Charter and Optional Plans Act* gave communities additional choices for local government. *Home Rule* gives communities a broader range of power than they traditionally possessed. Local governments with home rule may exercise any power not denied to them, the reverse of the established pattern in which they can exercise only those powers permitted to them. In adopting home rule, municipalities can also change their form of government.

Optional plans do not change government powers; they simply permit a local government to adopt a form of government different from those set by the city, borough, township, and county codes. In all other respects, the municipality continues to be governed under the code of its class, in contrast to a home rule municipality which operates under its own charter.

A home rule charter is a written document setting forth the form and structure of the government and its powers and duties. The form must include an elected, representative council. A charter can be adopted, amended, or repealed only by vote of the citizens of the municipality.

The act provides these optional plans: *executive-council*, elected council of three, five, seven, or nine with an elected executive; *council-manager*, an elected council of three, five, seven, or nine which appoints a manager for an indefinite term; *optional county plan*, the previous form of Allegheny County government with three elected commissioners; *small municipalities plan*, an elected council of three, five, seven, or nine members including the mayor.

Twenty communities in Allegheny County operate as home rule communities. This includes the City of Pittsburgh and the county itself. The municipality of Indiana selected an optional form of government.

Cities

Classes of cities are set according to population. Prior to becoming a home rule community, Pittsburgh was classified as a second class city. Second class cities must use the strong mayor-council form of government with the council elected at large. Pittsburgh continued under the home rule charter to have a strong mayor-council form. In the primary election of 1987, the voters decided to change the election of council members from at large to by district. In both second class cities and in Pittsburgh, a controller is also elected.

Municipalities with a population under 135,000 and over 10,000 may choose to become third class cities. These cities have the commission form of government unless the electorate approved a change to a strong mayor-council form or a council-manager form between 1957 and 1972. The third class cities in Allegheny County have the commission form, with four councilmen elected at-large for four-year overlapping terms and a mayor, also elected for a four-year term, who serves as the fifth member of council, the president of council, and is head of the department of public affairs. The mayor's administrative and appointive powers are primarily confined to that department. The mayor has no veto power. Third class cities also elect a controller and a treasurer.

Boroughs

The population requirement for incorporation as a borough is 500 persons. The weak mayor and council form is mandatory. However, the borough council may choose, by ordinance, to adopt the council-manager form. Borough council members are elected for four-year overlapping terms. Seven council members may be elected at large, or one or two may be elected from each ward, up to a maximum of 13 wards. If the population is less than 1,000, the number of councilmen may be three or five. The mayor, also elected for a four-year term, has no appointive powers and only administrative authority over the police department. The mayor has a veto which can be overruled by a two-thirds vote of

the council. Boroughs also elect a real estate tax collector. They may elect a controller or three auditors, or they may appoint a professional auditor or auditing firm.

Townships

A first class township must have a population density of at least 300 people per square mile at the time of incorporation or creation. All townships which do not meet this requirement, or which do not choose by referendum to become first class townships, are classified as second class townships. In both classes the commission-manager form may be adopted. First class townships elect a board of at least five commissioners, either at large or by ward, up to a maximum of 15 wards. Second class townships elect a three-member board of supervisors at-large for six-year terms. If the population is over 10,000, the board of supervisors may be increased to five members.

First class townships also elect a treasurer who serves as tax collector, and either three auditors or a controller. Second class townships elect a tax collector and three auditors.

Municipal Authorities and Special Districts

Authorities may be created by one or more municipalities for a variety of facilities such as park and recreation areas, roads and parking spaces, sewer systems and sewage treatment works, solid waste collection and disposal facilities, hospitals, industrial developments, and other structures for public use.

Special districts may be created by townships to provide services to parts of the municipality. These districts are financed by special tax levies or assessments on those benefiting from the services and are administered by the township officials.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

Municipalities and/or municipal authorities may enter into joint agreements to perform any function which each is permitted to undertake alone, such as provision of water, fire and sewer services; tax collection; public safety communication networks; purchasing; libraries; planning; and police services.

Municipalities may also arrange formally or informally for joint discussion of mutual problems, on a regular or irregular basis, by means of a council of governments (COG). Some COGs purchase and share equipment, commission studies, and share services. COGs are voluntary organizations created by the member municipalities who share a common community of interest.

APPENDIX B

PUBLIC EDUCATION IN ALLEGHENY COUNTY

Pennsylvania has a three-level system of public education, composed of the Pennsylvania Department of Education, intermediate units, and local school districts. In Allegheny County there are two intermediate units, Pittsburgh and Allegheny, and 43 school districts. Each school district has a board of school directors whose responsibilities are to establish, equip, furnish, and maintain sufficient schools to educate the children of the district. The main sources of school district's funds are real estate and earned income taxes and state subsidies. The directors of all the school districts are elected.

Pennsylvania has established 29 intermediate units to provide on a regional basis specialized services which many school districts could not economically provide themselves. These services include curriculum development consultation; research and planning; continuing professional education; instructional resources and film libraries; and the provision of such specialists as psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers. In addition, many programs are provided for children with special needs.

The Allegheny Intermediate Unit serves 42 school districts in Allegheny County; the Pittsburgh School District is a separate intermediate unit. The Allegheny Intermediate Unit administers programs at three special education schools for exceptional children, area vocational technical schools, and Head Start child development centers

There is an annual convention of school directors from the 42 local districts in the Allegheny Intermediate Unit to elect members to serve on the 13-member board of directors. The board appoints an executive director and approves the policies, programs, and budget of the unit.

In addition to receiving a state subsidy and federal funding, the unit is supported by funds from the constituent school districts, the costs allocated in proportion to the pupil population of the district. Some districts may receive special services on a contract basis. The area vocational and special education schools are financed by the school districts in the areas served, through joint area school boards, and by state appropriation.

APPENDIX C

POLITICAL PARTIES

Party organizations select, nominate, and work for the election of candidates for government office. The Democratic and Republican parties are organized at the municipal, county, state, and national levels.

In order to qualify to have a party's name on the primary ballots for countywide offices, one candidate of the party in the preceding municipal or general election must have polled at least five percent of the largest vote cast for any officer elected in the county. A party or political body meeting the requirement may nominate candidates in the primary for any office in the county and in all political districts within the county. Each county board of elections determines which organizations are political parties within the county and transmits a list of the parties to the secretary of the commonwealth.

In the Republican and Democratic parties, the registered voters in a party elect a committeemen and committeewoman from each election district. These committee members serve on their party's **county committee** and municipal committees, and if the municipality is organized into wards, on a ward committee. Party county officers, and municipal and ward chairmen are chosen by their elected committee people.

Republicans elect committeemen and committeewomen to their **state committee** from each county based on the number of party members registered in the county. The Democrats also elect state committee members based upon the number registered in the county, but in counties allowed more than 20 state committee members, they are proportionally elected from senate districts in that county. Each party decrees equal numbers of men and women in so far as possible. State party committees are vested with the general supervision, regulation, and direction of that party throughout the state. These committees choose their state chairmen and other officers and nominate a national committeeman and committeewoman to represent Pennsylvania on the national committee of their party.

The highest level of political party organization is the **national committee**, whose members are nominated by the state committee and elected by the national convention. The national committee of each party conducts that party's national convention and party business between conventions. In the primary of presidential election years, registered electors of a political party also vote for delegates to that party's national convention. The national committee determines the number of votes each state is entitled to, using a formula based on the number of congressional districts in that state, plus a bonus if that state carried a party candidate for the office of governor, senator, or president.

The state committee, acting under the guidance of the national committee, determines how that state's delegates to the national convention will be chosen: i.e., how many delegates and alternates will be elected; whether the delegates and alternates will be elected by congressional districts, state senatorial districts, or some other means; how

many, if any, will be appointed by the state committee; and how many votes or fractions of votes each delegate may cast.

At primaries, the appropriate party organizations may decide to endorse candidates at the municipal, county, or state levels. These candidates may be opposed by other candidates in that party who run without organization support. The party organization may abstain from endorsing any candidates in the primary.

Ballot order, the order in which political parties or candidates are listed on the ballot or voting machine, is carefully regulated by the election code. The political party whose candidate polled the highest number of votes in the most-recent gubernatorial election is listed at the top. The party whose candidate polled the next-highest number of votes is listed second, and so on. Political organizations filing independent nomination papers in local or state elections are listed alphabetically, after the major parties. On a primary ballot, the order in which names of candidates are listed is determined by the casting of lots. In an election in which several candidates of the same party are running for the same office (for example: council, school director, commissioner) the ballot order is determined by the number of votes each candidate received in the primary.