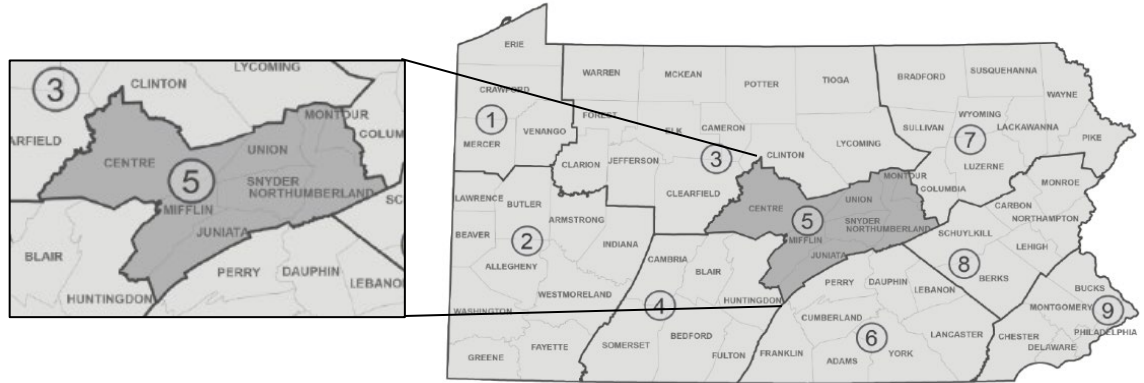




### Focus Area 5

Centre  
Juniata  
Mifflin  
Montour  
Northumberland  
Snyder  
Union



## Demographic Profile

### Key Findings and Conclusions

- There are 150 municipalities in the region including two small cities, Shamokin and Sunbury.
- This region experienced steady and significant population growth between 1960 and 2020, gaining approximately 108,663 people, an increase of 35% over the 1960 population.
- The majority of the population is distributed amongst small communities, with 132 (88%) of municipalities having populations of 5,000 or less. 101 (67%) of those communities have populations of less than 2,500.
- The region’s 2021 population is predominantly White/Caucasian, with White Alone (Non-Hispanic or Latino) representing 89% of the region’s total. Centre and Union are by far the most diverse counties by total number of non-white residents and as a percentage of total population.
- The distribution of minority populations amongst the various types of municipalities comparable across municipality types, which is unusual across the nine focus areas in Pennsylvania. In other focus areas, typically cities have the highest minority populations and townships have the lowest.
- Poverty in the focus area (14.7%) is much higher than the statewide average (11.8%). However, this isn’t evenly distributed. Cities and boroughs in the focus area have high poverty rates of 26% and 23.3%, while townships have a lower rate of 10.4%.
- Homeownership rates are mixed throughout the region. Historically, most of the region’s municipalities have had homeownership rates that exceed the statewide average (69%). However, homeownership rates now (69%) match the statewide average.

### Potential Implications for Historic and Cultural Resources

- Sustained population growth over the past decade suggest that some communities will continue to grow, but some will remain stagnant or contract in size and services. The region’s cities are at greatest risk for declining population, which may lead to abandonment of housing and decline of institutional and commercial buildings. Strategies to assist cities to make strategic decisions about how to best manage their built environment in the face of this trend should be considered.
- Growth in traditionally rural townships is likely being fueled by new commercial and residential construction, which may impact open space, vistas, agricultural landscapes, villages, and archaeological resources.



- Increasing numbers of ethnic groups other than those that are historically associated with the region may suggest that the established narratives of historical significance of communities and buildings may not carry the same meaning with these groups. It may also suggest that there are places that these groups consider significant and worthy of preservation that may not have been documented or considered previously.
- An aging population could have several implications for historic resources. The first is the impact of fixed incomes on the ability to maintain historic properties. Second is the mobility and access needs of individuals who wish to age-in-place and the changes that might necessitate to historic buildings and communities.
- The poverty rate is steady or increasing overall, particularly in cities and boroughs. This may present economic challenges to property maintenance, investment, and revitalization efforts.
- The relatively small size of the municipalities in the region may present challenges with matching funds, leadership and administrative capacity for preservation programs and projects.

**Current Population**

- The 2020 population of the 7-county region was 420,024, or 3% of the total population of Pennsylvania.
- There are 2 cities within the region, Shamokin and Sunbury. Both are in Northumberland County.
- Centre County has the highest population, despite not containing any cities. Montour County has the smallest population, only 12% the size of Centre County.

*Total Population:*

	Centre	Juniata	Mifflin	Montour	Northumberland	Snyder	Union
<b>City</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	16,661	n/a	n/a
<b>Borough</b>	54,789	2,808	11,965	4,441	25,482	11,140	9,695
<b>Township</b>	103,383	20,701	34,178	13,695	49,504	28,596	32,986
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>158,172</b>	<b>23,509</b>	<b>46,143</b>	<b>18,136</b>	<b>91,647</b>	<b>39,736</b>	<b>42,681</b>

- A majority of the focus area’s municipalities have small populations, with 132 (88%) having populations of 5,000 or less. Just 5 have populations over 10,000. These include State College Borough, Ferguson Township, Patton Township, College Township, and Coal Township.
- State College Borough, the largest borough in the focus area, has a population of 40,501.

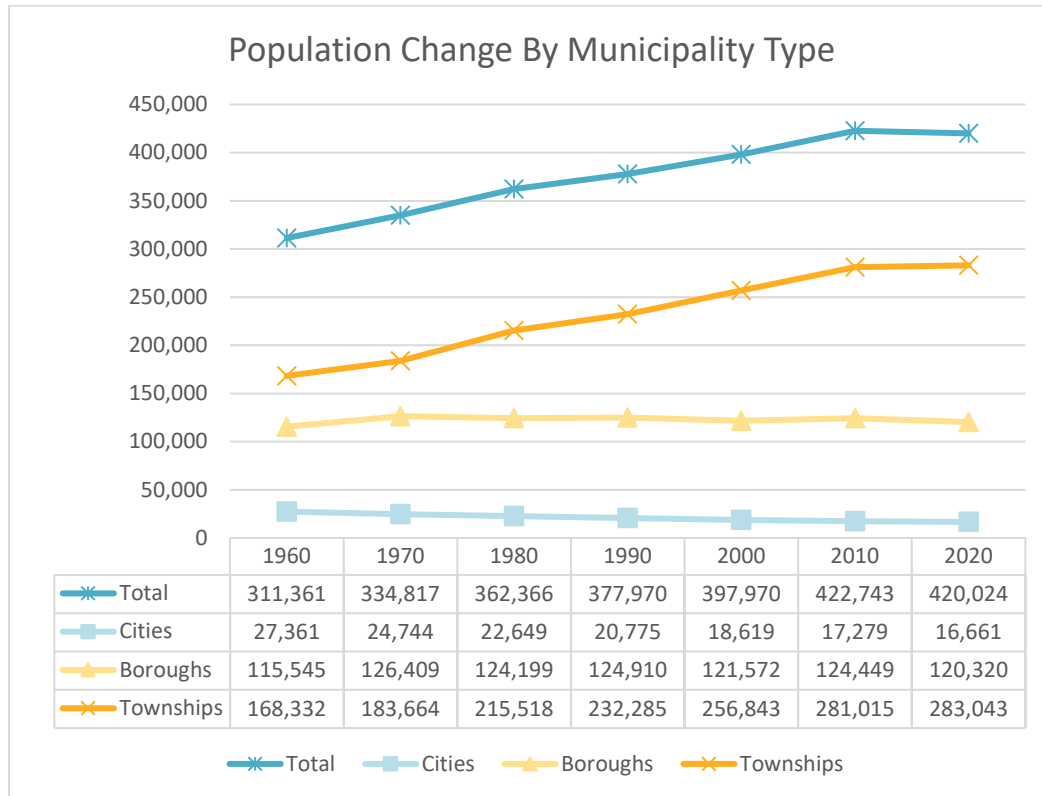
*Number of Municipalities by Population:*

Population	Focus Area 5	Centre	Juniata	Mifflin	Montour	Northumberland and	Snyder	Union
<2,500	<b>101</b>	21	14	9	9	24	18	6
2,500 to 4,999	<b>31</b>	6	3	5	2	7	2	6
5,000 to 9,999	<b>13</b>	4	0	2	0	4	1	2
>10,000	<b>5</b>	4	0	0	0	1	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>14</b>



### Population Trends 1960-2020

- The focus area’s population increased consistently from 1960 to 2010, but slightly decreased between 2010 and 2020. This has led to a net growth of 108,663 from the 1960 population, a 35% increase.
- The region’s cities, Shamokin and Sunbury, have historically been the only shrinking municipality type in the focus area. Between 1960 and 2020 the populations of Shamokin and Sunbury shrank significantly, decreasing 39%.
- While the population stayed relatively stable within the region’s borough, townships grew significantly, increasing by 68% from the 1960 population.



### Homeownership

- Overall, the region’s homeownership rate (69%) is the same as the statewide average (69%).
- However, this varies by municipality. The homeownership rate is lower in the focus area’s cities and boroughs, both of which have a homeownership rate of 50%. It is much higher in the region’s townships, where it is 78%.
- Snyder and Union Counties have the highest homeownership at 75%, while Centre County has the lowest at 63%. Though there is some variation, homeownership rates are relatively close across the focus area’s counties.

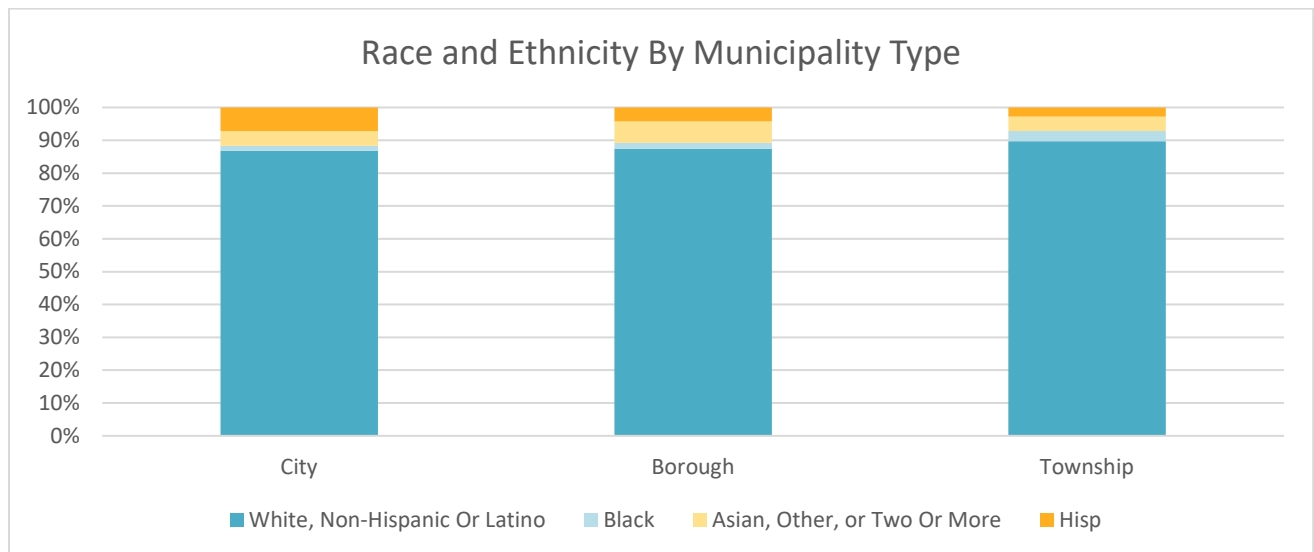
	Focus Area 5	Centre	Juniata	Mifflin	Montour	Northumberland	Snyder	Union
<b>Homeownership Rate</b>	69%	63%	74%	72%	68%	73%	75%	72%



### Race and Ethnicity

- The region’s population is predominantly White/Caucasian, with White Alone (Non-Hispanic or Latino) representing 89% of the region’s total. This is above the state average of 75% White Alone (Non-Hispanic or Latino).
- Centre and Union counties are the most racially and ethnically diverse in the region. In these counties, White Alone (Non-Hispanic or Latino) made up 85% and 84% of the population, respectively. Centre County had the highest population marking Asian, Other, or Two or More, at 9%. Union County had the highest Hispanic or Latino population, at 6%, and the highest Black population, at 7%.
- Mifflin and Snyder counties are the least diverse, both with 95% White Alone (Non-Hispanic or Latino), just 1% Black Alone, 2% Hispanic or Latino, and 2% Asian, Other or Two or More Races.
- Unlike other many other focus areas, there is limited variation in diversity between cities, boroughs, and townships. All have similar breakdowns, though race and ethnicity vary by county. This may be due to the small size of this focus area’s cities.

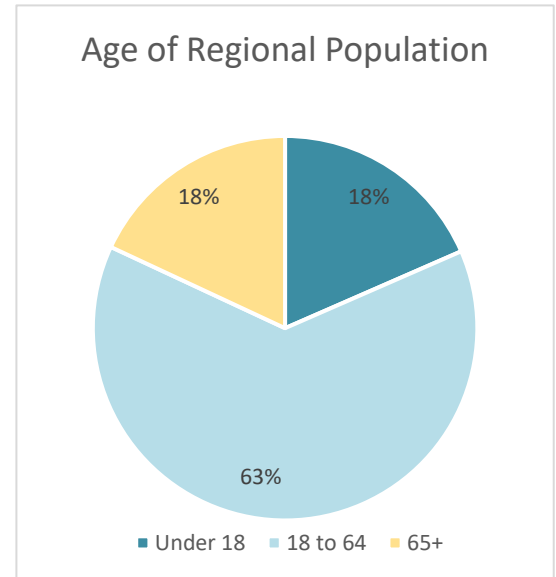
	Focus Area 5	Centre	Juniata	Mifflin	Montour	Northumberland	Snyder	Union
<i>White, Non-Hispanic Or Latino</i>	<b>89%</b>	85%	93%	95%	91%	91%	95%	84%
<i>Black</i>	<b>3%</b>	3%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	7%
<i>Hispanic Or Latino</i>	<b>5%</b>	3%	4%	2%	3%	4%	2%	6%
<i>Asian, Other Race, or Two or More</i>	<b>5%</b>	9%	1%	2%	5%	2%	2%	3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>420,024</b>	<b>158,172</b>	<b>23,509</b>	<b>46,143</b>	<b>18,136</b>	<b>91,647</b>	<b>39,736</b>	<b>42,681</b>





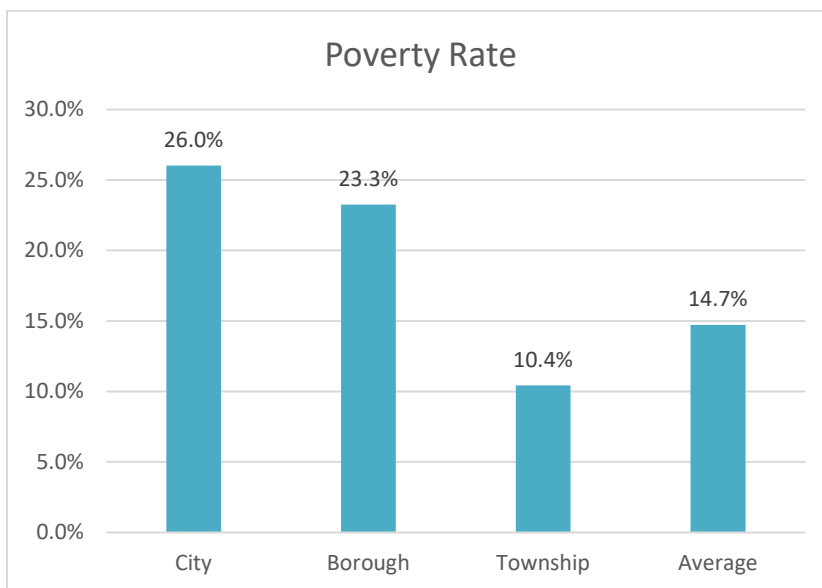
## Age

- As of 2021, 63% of the focus area’s population was between 18-65; 18% was under 18, and 18% was over 65. The statewide averages are Under 18 (20%), 18-64 (61%) and over 65 (18%), so this focus area matches Pennsylvania averages closely, though it has a slightly higher 18-64 population.
- Cities within the focus area had a smaller percentage of residents 18-64 (59%), and a much higher proportion of residents under 18 (24%).
- Boroughs had a significantly higher proportion of residents 18-64 (70%), while residents under 18 and residents over 65 were both lower, both at 15% of the total.
- The focus area’s population over 65 has grown from 16% of the population in 2014 to 18% in 2021. This mirrors growth in the statewide population over 65.
- The median age has been increasing since 2010 across all counties apart from Montour County, where it has decreased slightly. Most counties are above the statewide median age of 40.7, except for Union County at 39.6 and Centre County, which is by far the lowest at 33.5.



## Poverty

- Poverty within this focus area (14.7%) is much higher than the statewide average (11.8%). However, this poverty is not evenly distributed. Cities and boroughs in the focus area have high poverty rates of 26% and 23.3%, while townships have a lower rate of 10.4%.
- Poverty rates also vary widely across the counties. Poverty is very high in Centre County at 17.2% and high in Mifflin County at 15.3%. Northumberland County and Union County are above the state average at 12.4 and 12.5%, while Juniata, Montour, and Snyder Counties are all below the statewide average.





## Survey Results

The following findings and survey results are from PA SHPO’s unscientific online public survey developed to inform the 2024-2034 statewide plan. It was available to the public, partners, stakeholders, and others from September 2023 through May 2024.

### Key Findings

- Around 65% of both focus area respondents and statewide respondents selected that historic places ‘protect Pennsylvania’s unique stories and heritage for future generations.’ Response rates to other selections varied, with more respondents from this region selecting that historic places help teach and remind us about the past than statewide respondents. Focus area respondents were much less likely than statewide respondents to select that historic places ‘improve the beauty and quality of life of my community’.
- When asked which historic places they felt were most threatened, focus area respondents selected traditional downtown commercial and shopping areas, and places that reflect local/regional history and culture. They were much more likely than statewide residents to select agricultural buildings and landscapes.
- Focus area respondents were very split when asked about the greatest threats to historic places in their region. They were less likely to select the most popular selections statewide, development pressures and vacancy. They were much more likely than statewide respondents to cite a lack of historic preservation advocates as a threat.
- Similar to statewide respondents, focus area respondents selected funding as a top item that would assist preservation efforts in their region.

### Focus Area Highlights

For this section, comparisons were drawn between statewide responses to survey question in contrast to focus area responses. Cells below are highlighted to show which responses are over or underrepresented by the focus area’s respondents. In total, this region had 68 respondents out of the 2,238 statewide respondents, the lowest number of responses of any focus area. However, this is 3% of all respondents, matching that this focus area contains 3% of Pennsylvania’s total population.

#### *Legend:*

Response rate 10%+ higher than statewide
Response rate 3%-9% higher than statewide
Response rate within 2% of statewide
Response rate 3%-9% lower than statewide
Response rate 10%+ lower than statewide



Q5. Which of the following are the most important contributions you think historic places make to your community or region? Select up to 2.	Focus Area Responses	Statewide Responses
They help sustain my community through heritage tourism.	19%	15%
They provide unique economic development opportunities.	15%	12%
They help teach and remind us about the past.	50%	40%
They protect Pennsylvania’s unique stories and heritage for future generations.	63%	64%
They encourage sustainable, walkable, ‘green’ communities.	8%	10%
They improve the beauty and quality of life of my community.	15%	25%
They are a big part of our community/regional identity.	26%	28%
Not sure / I haven't really thought about it before.	2%	0%
None of these / I don’t think they make valuable contributions.	0%	0%
Other (please specify)	3%	3%

Q6. Which of the following types of older and historic places would you prioritize for preservation in your community? Select up to 3.	Focus Area Responses	Statewide Responses
Cemeteries/burial places	32%	35%
Pre-historic archaeological sites	13%	18%
Historic archaeological sites	41%	36%
Sacred spaces/religious properties	11%	18%
Transportation infrastructure	5%	7%
Residential neighborhoods	29%	30%
Downtown commercial districts	30%	31%
Public buildings	17%	21%
Institutional buildings	6%	6%
Educational buildings	14%	7%
Agricultural properties	27%	18%
Industrial areas	5%	5%
Landscapes	24%	27%
Recreational places	11%	13%
None of these should be preserved	0%	0%
Other (please specify)	6%	9%



<b>Q7. What types of places do you think are most threatened in your community? Select no more than 3.</b>	<b>Focus Area Responses</b>	<b>Statewide Responses</b>
Places that reflect local/regional history and culture	40%	43%
Buildings constructed from 1960 through the early 1980s	8%	10%
Archaeological sites	13%	14%
Places associated with underrepresented histories (for example, African American, LGBTQ+, specific ethnic/racial communities)	16%	24%
Recreational places (for example, amusement parks, swimming pools, etc.)	11%	11%
Older industrial areas	6%	15%
Traditional downtown shopping/commercial areas	38%	33%
Residential areas built before 1950	24%	24%
Planned suburban housing developments/neighborhoods built after 1950	2%	2%
Religious buildings/sacred spaces	10%	14%
Agricultural buildings/landscapes	37%	27%
Unusual and/or landmark buildings	33%	28%
Cemeteries/burial places	17%	14%
Other (please specify)	5%	6%

<b>Q8. Thinking about your response to the above question, what do you think is threatening those places? Select all that apply.</b>	<b>Focus Area Responses</b>	<b>Statewide Responses</b>
Development pressures (rural, suburban, urban, etc.)	57%	65%
Gentrification	10%	19%
Changes in community demographics (aging populations, loss of population, etc.)	40%	39%
Vacancy/disinvestment/deferred maintenance	44%	50%
Lack of local protection/regulation	43%	43%
Local zoning practices	29%	24%
Little or no interest in historic preservation	43%	46%
Few or no preservation advocate(s)	37%	27%
Misguided or misinformed development (parking lots, housing density, widescale demolition)	38%	39%
Interest in preservation but don't know where to start	11%	14%
Other (please specify)	19%	11%





<b>Q10. Choose up to 5 things that you think would encourage and/or assist historic preservation efforts where you live.</b>	<b>Focus Area Responses</b>	<b>Statewide Responses</b>
Increased public funding for historic preservation.	74%	72%
Municipal employees with greater knowledge of local, state, and/or federal preservation programs.	41%	41%
Access to knowledgeable technical experts.	19%	18%
Access to qualified contractors and tradespeople.	24%	21%
Access to reputable and easy-to-understand online resources.	17%	23%
Local ordinances/regulation to protect older and historic places.	43%	48%
Informed elected officials knowledgeable about historic preservation.	45%	46%
Increased public awareness of the older and historic places in the community.	62%	59%
Adding more properties to the National Register of Historic Places.	16%	15%
Gathering and maintaining up-to-date information about older and historic places, including archaeological sites.	28%	28%
Identification and preservation of places associated with underrepresented history.	24%	25%
Connecting preservation with sustainability, economic development, and planning.	57%	52%
Other (please specify)	7%	4%

<b>Q11. When you think about needing more funding/money for historic preservation, what 3 specific things would you like to have?</b>	<b>Focus Area Responses</b>	<b>Statewide Responses</b>
Financial support for private residential property owners.	33%	30%
More money to history/preservation organizations and municipalities for construction projects.	40%	45%
Expand access the Pennsylvania Historic Preservation Tax Credit for income-producing properties.	29%	28%
Funding for preservation plans to help manage change in communities.	26%	31%
Money for surveys to identify historic places in a community.	22%	18%
Funding to support or restart local preservation networks and advocates.	29%	26%
Financial support for municipalities interested in starting a historic preservation program.	29%	28%
Grant or other incentive to preserve specific threatened resources.	48%	52%
Funding for local training programs for municipal employees, tradespeople, contractors, etc.	22%	21%
Other (please specify)	5%	5%



Q12. If you think education about and greater awareness of historic preservation is important, what 3 tools do you think would be most useful?	Focus Area Responses	Statewide Responses
Specific and replicable examples of successful preservation construction projects.	52%	47%
Specific and replicable examples about community archaeology projects.	16%	12%
Case studies of successful preservation planning efforts or save a threatened resource.	<b>28%</b>	38%
User and resource guides for finding information, researching a historic property, using state or federal preservation programs, etc.	57%	58%
Toolkits for preserving specific types of historic places, like agricultural buildings or cemeteries.	38%	40%
Toolkit for talking about historic preservation and the importance of historic places.	41%	35%
101-type information about historic preservation, including vocabulary, state and federal laws, etc.	33%	34%
101-type information about archaeology, including vocabulary, types of sites, etc.	3%	9%
I don't think education/awareness is important.	0%	0%
Other (please specify)	7%	6%

Q14. Did you know that Pennsylvania has a state preservation agency, the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office (PA SHPO)?	Focus Area Responses	Statewide Responses
Yes	70%	70%
I think so, but I'm not sure	11%	12%
No	20%	18%
Other (please specify)	0%	1%

## Themes & Issues Summary

Analysis of the data compiled through the statewide planning process:

- The three top historic preservation themes for Region 5 are: incentives, community, and planning.
- The three top historic preservation issues for Region 5 are: apathy, preservation trades, and funding.
- This area lacks access to grants and funding for historic preservation initiatives as several local economies are struggling and preservation is not a primary focus.
- Although there are preservation successes in the area, there is also apathy which can be addressed through the creation of HARBS as well as more enforceable zoning and planning for preservation throughout the region.