
Millcreek Township Government Transition

A Complete Implementation Plan

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34 pages • 10-section administrative code • 7-phase implementation plan • \$100K budget •
20-month timeline • 4 appendices

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What This Document Is and Why I Wrote It

I have spent over three weeks on this document. I used multiple AI research tools and internet searches to gather as much information as I could. I read the Government Study Commission's 55-page final report multiple times. I studied every municipality the GSC researched during their process, plus three more that stood out for how a transition like this can succeed or fail. I thought through the risks (they're in the appendices). I looked at what other townships did right and what they got wrong. Then I put it all together into what you're reading now.

I did apply to be on the Transition Advisory Committee. I want to show Millcreek that I'm ready on day one. Not to learn. To act.

I run and have scaled two Millcreek businesses. I know what it looks like to build operational systems from scratch, hire leadership, and manage change at scale. This document is how I'd approach the transition.

I'm not presenting this as the final answer. These are my opinions and recommendations based on research. The codification firm and legal counsel will determine the final language. But I wanted to show that I'm serious. And that I've already started.

Before you judge me or this document, take a look at what I've studied and created. Then I'd ask you this: it's time for Millcreek to come together and do the work. I'd love to see more people put their thoughts out there on how to make this transition succeed. This community is full of smart, capable people. The more of us who show up with ideas instead of just opinions, the better the outcome for everyone. This transition belongs to all of us.

What's in this document:

- A proposed administrative code outline (10 sections with reasoning)
- An ordinance revision process based on what Ferguson Township did
- A manager recruitment approach with timing considerations
- An employee communication plan and knowledge capture process
- A public transparency framework
- A \$100,000 transition budget with line items
- A 20-month master timeline
- Appendices: employee FAQ, knowledge template, risk register, PA comparables

What the Evidence Shows

For background: Millcreek adopted the Council-Manager Plan under Pennsylvania's Optional Plans Law (53 Pa.C.S. Chapters 29 through 31). The township still operates under the Second Class Township Code for everything the plan doesn't cover.

I have looked at and researched all the municipalities that the Government Study Commission studied during their process. Cranberry, Lower Macungie, College Township, Indiana Township, Lower Paxton, Bensalem, and Hempfield. I also found three more that stood out in how a transition like this can succeed or fail.

Hampton Township, PA adopted an Optional Plan (Executive-Council) and it proved, in the words of the PA Department of Community and Economic Development, "politically unworkable." Within a few years, voters had to approve a second study commission to replace it with a home rule charter. The failure wasn't the concept. It was the implementation. The administrative code was weak. The roles were poorly defined. The old power dynamics survived the structural change.

Ferguson Township, Centre County got it right. After voters approved their charter, the Board of Supervisors immediately appointed a transition committee that hired a professional codification firm (Bartell Associates). That firm reviewed every existing ordinance against the new charter and prepared 33 replacement ordinances and 5 resolutions. The new government had a complete operational framework on day one. Ferguson has since undergone two full recodifications (1989 and 2003), which tells you the initial code work was built to last.

Concord Township, Delaware County got the public engagement right. Their study commission hired the Pennsylvania Economy League as consultants, distributed interim reports to every household, posted hearing transcripts online, and maintained a dedicated webpage. They treated transparency as a core deliverable, not an afterthought.

The difference between Hampton and Ferguson wasn't luck. It was preparation. The committee that builds Millcreek's new government will determine whether this township functions better in 2028 or worse. There is no neutral outcome.

What the Transition Committee Must Deliver

Let me be clear about what I believe "done" looks like.

Deliverable 1: A Complete Administrative Code

This is the whole ballgame. The administrative code is the operating manual for the new government. It says what the manager can do. What council can do. How departments work. How

money gets spent. How people get hired and fired.

Without it, the new government has no rules. With a weak one, the rules don't work.

Deliverable 2: Revised Personnel Rules and Regulations

Every reference to "supervisor" as employer needs to change. The reporting structure needs to point to the manager. Job descriptions for department heads need to reflect the new chain of command.

Deliverable 3: A Comprehensive Ordinance Revision Package

Every ordinance that says "Board of Supervisors" in an operational context needs to be reviewed. Some get changed to "Council." Some get changed to "Manager." It depends on whether the action is legislative or administrative. There are dozens of these scattered through the code of ordinances.

Deliverable 4: A Manager Recruitment Framework

The committee won't make the final hire. The new five-member council does that. But the committee needs to build everything else: the job description, the compensation analysis, the search firm selection, the evaluation criteria. If this work isn't done before the council takes office, the township starts January 2028 with a new government and nobody to run it.

Deliverable 5: An Institutional Knowledge Archive

Right now, three supervisors serve as the full-time administrators of a \$30+ million operation. When their administrative role ends, decades of knowledge about vendors, contracts, projects, and relationships walks out the door. Unless somebody captures it first.

Deliverable 6: A Public Communication Record

Every draft. Every decision. Every meeting summary. All public. Not because the law requires it (though it does). Because when people can see the work, it's harder for anyone to quietly change the outcome.

Target completion: December 31, 2026. The study commission recommended this deadline. It can be extended by written request to the Board of Supervisors, but pushing it compresses everything downstream.

1 Phase 1: Organize the Committee (Weeks 1 through 4)

Week 1: Structure and Rules

Meeting 1 agenda:

Elect a chair, vice chair, and secretary. The chair runs meetings and serves as the public spokesperson. The vice chair fills in. The secretary ensures every meeting is documented.

Adopt operating rules. Use Robert's Rules of Order as a baseline but keep it practical. The committee is advisory, not legislative. The goal is to make good decisions quickly, not to run parliamentary procedure drills.

Set the meeting schedule. Twice a month at minimum. Same day, same time, same place every meeting. Post the full schedule to the township website within 48 hours of the first meeting.

Why twice a month: Weekly is too aggressive for a volunteer committee with day jobs. Monthly is too slow given the December 2026 deadline. Twice a month gives the committee time to do work between meetings while keeping momentum.

Week 2: Define the Scope

Draft a one-page scope document. Three paragraphs. What the committee does, what it does not do, and what authority it has.

The committee drafts the administrative code, revises personnel rules, prepares ordinances, advises on the manager search, and recommends a transition timeline. The committee does not set township policy, make hiring decisions, direct township employees, or spend money without Board approval. The committee operates in an advisory capacity to the Board of Supervisors, which retains all legal authority until January 1, 2028.

Get the Board of Supervisors to formally acknowledge this scope at their next meeting. This prevents two problems. First, it stops the committee from overreaching into areas that create political conflict. Second, it stops the Board from claiming the committee acted without authorization.

Week 3: Hire Professional Help

The committee needs two outside resources. In my opinion, neither is optional.

Resource 1: A Municipal Codification Firm

This is the firm that will draft the administrative code and review every existing ordinance for compatibility with the new government structure. This is specialized work. It requires knowledge of the Second Class Township Code, the Optional Plans Law, and the practical realities of council-manager government.

I'd recommend engaging a specialized municipal codification firm for this work rather than relying on the township solicitor. Not because there's anything wrong with the solicitor. It's just a different kind of expertise. The solicitor should absolutely review the final product. But the drafting should be done by a firm that specializes in writing administrative codes for new government structures.

How to select the firm: Issue a Request for Qualifications to at least three firms. The Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors and the Governor's Center for Local Government

Services maintain lists of qualified providers. Bartell Associates handled Ferguson Township's codification. General Code publishes municipal codes for hundreds of PA municipalities. The Pennsylvania Economy League supported Concord Township's study commission.

Evaluation criteria: Experience with council-manager transitions specifically (not just general municipal law). Familiarity with the Optional Plans Law. At least two references from municipalities that completed successful transitions. Ability to meet the December 2026 deadline.

Budget: approximately \$35,000. This number comes from comparable engagements in PA municipalities of similar size. It covers the initial code draft, ordinance review, revision cycles, and final document preparation.

Why this is worth the money: Ferguson Township's codification work produced 33 ordinances and 5 resolutions that were ready for adoption. Mt. Lebanon skipped a comprehensive review and spent the next 20 years patching problems, including \$18,000 per year in unnecessary newspaper notice costs because nobody updated the public notice requirements. The codification investment pays for itself within the first year of the new government.

Resource 2: The ALOM/Public Partners Advisory Team

Jerry Andree and Michael Foreman guided the study commission through its entire seven-month process. Andree is retired from Cranberry Township with 45 years in Pennsylvania local government. Foreman is a Local Government Policy Specialist with PA DCED's Center for Local Government Services. They've already studied Millcreek's operations, interviewed township officials, and compared Millcreek to dozens of comparable municipalities.

Retaining them on a limited advisory basis (monthly check-in calls, review of key documents, availability for specific questions) preserves institutional knowledge that would otherwise be lost when the study commission disbanded. They don't need to attend every meeting. They need to be available when the committee hits a decision point where PA-specific expertise matters.

Budget: approximately \$10,000 for advisory support through December 2026.

Week 4: Assign Workstreams and Build the Master Timeline

Seven committee members. Four workstreams. Every member leads or co-leads one workstream. Nobody is a spectator.

Workstream 1: Administrative Code and Ordinances (3 members)

This is the heaviest lift. It needs the most people. One member should have legal or regulatory experience. One should have operational or management experience. One should have financial experience.

Workstream 2: Manager Recruitment Preparation (2 members)

Develops the job description, compensation benchmarks, search firm RFP, and evaluation criteria.

Workstream 3: Employee and Institutional Knowledge Transition (1 member)

Coordinates with department heads to document processes, captures institutional knowledge, and develops the employee communication plan.

Workstream 4: Public Communication and Transparency (1 member)

Maintains the public webpage, drafts meeting summaries, coordinates with media, and organizes public forums.

Build a master timeline on a shared document (Google Sheet works fine) with every deliverable, every deadline, and every dependency. Print it. Post it at every meeting. Update it every two weeks. I've included the full timeline at the end of this report.

FIGURE 3 | Who Does What: Council vs. Manager Authority

Council hires and fires the manager. The manager hires and fires everyone else.

COUNCIL (5 Elected)	MANAGER (Hired)
• Pass and repeal ordinances	• Hire, promote, discipline, fire all other employees
• Approve the annual budget	• Prepare and present the annual budget
• Set the township tax rate	• Administer the budget after adoption
• Approve contracts over \$25,000	• Execute contracts up to \$25,000
• Hire/fire manager, solicitor, auditor, engineer	• Direct all department heads and operations
• Create or abolish departments	• Recommend organizational changes
• Appoint boards and commissions	• Represent township in intergovernmental affairs

THE BRIGHT LINE: No council member may give orders to any employee except through the manager. No council member may participate in hiring, promotion, or discipline below the manager level.

FIGURE 4 | How Money Gets Spent: Procurement Thresholds

AMOUNT	REQUIREMENT	WHO APPROVES
Under \$5,000	Manager's judgment	Manager alone
\$5K to \$25K	3 written quotes	Manager alone
Over \$25,000	Competitive bidding	Council vote
Emergency (\$50K)	Manager acts now	Manager + notify 48hrs

2 Phase 2: Write the Administrative Code (June through November)

This is where I think the transition succeeds or fails. The administrative code defines power. Who has it. Who doesn't. What happens when there's a dispute. In my opinion, everything else the committee does is secondary to this document.

Section by Section: What I Believe the Code Should Address

What follows is my recommendation for what the administrative code should cover, based on studying codes from McCandless, Ferguson, Cranberry, and other municipalities that have made this transition. These are my opinions on best practices. The codification firm and legal counsel will determine the final language.

The simplest way to understand the new structure: Council hires and fires the manager. The manager hires and fires everyone else. That's the whole model. Everything in the code should reinforce that division.

SECTION 1: ESTABLISHMENT OF THE TOWNSHIP COUNCIL

Five members elected at-large for four-year staggered terms. This comes directly from the study commission's recommendation. The code needs to specify:

Quorum is three members. No business can be conducted without a quorum. This prevents two members from holding a private meeting and making decisions.

All votes require a simple majority of the full council (three of five), not a majority of those present. This prevents two members from passing an ordinance at a poorly attended meeting.

The chairperson is selected by council vote from among its members at the organizational meeting in January of each year. The chairperson presides at meetings, signs official documents, and serves as the ceremonial representative of the township. The chairperson does NOT have veto power. The chairperson does NOT have authority beyond any other council member outside of meeting procedures.

Why at-large elections matter: The study commission recommended at-large rather than ward-based elections. This means every council member represents the entire township, not a geographic slice of it. At-large elections reduce parochial decision-making ("I'll vote for your road project if you vote for mine") and ensure council members are accountable to all 54,000 residents.

Compensation is capped at \$8,385 per member per year per the Second Class Township Code maximum. Total council compensation: approximately \$42,000. Compare this to the current structure where three supervisors earn approximately \$86,000 each as employees, totaling roughly \$258,000 in salary alone, or approximately \$368,000 with benefits. This is where a significant portion of the estimated \$500,000 in annual savings originates.

Council meetings shall be held at least twice per month, on a regular schedule, at a publicly accessible location. All meetings are subject to the PA Sunshine Act. Special meetings require 24 hours notice.

SECTION 2: POWERS AND DUTIES OF COUNCIL

This is the section I think makes or breaks the whole thing. Based on what I've read about McCandless and Cranberry, the townships that got this right drew a hard line between council and manager. The ones that kept it vague ended up with council members running operations through the back door. In my opinion, if this line is blurry, it fails.

Council sets policy. That's it. They pass ordinances. They approve the budget. They set the tax rate. They approve big contracts. They hire and fire the manager, solicitor, auditor, and engineer. They create boards and commissions. They adopt the comprehensive plan.

I think what council does NOT do is just as important and needs to be spelled out clearly:

No council member gives orders to any township employee. Not publicly. Not privately. Not through a back channel. The only way council communicates with staff is through the manager.

No council member participates in hiring, promoting, disciplining, or firing any employee other than the manager, solicitor, auditor, and engineer.

No council member interferes with how the manager runs day-to-day operations.

Why this matters so much: McCandless Township put this exact prohibition in their charter. Cranberry Township operated under clear separation for decades under Jerry Andree. When this boundary is vague, council members start calling department heads directly. They start telling the public works director which road to pave. They start undermining the manager. And within a year, you've recreated the supervisor model with a different name on the door.

The study commission identified the dual supervisor/administrator role as the core problem. In my opinion, the code should make it structurally impossible to recreate that problem. McCandless put this exact kind of prohibition in their charter decades ago and it's worked.

If a council member violates this rule, the code should spell out what happens. Formal warning by the chairperson. Recorded in the minutes. Repeated violations get referred to the solicitor.

SECTION 3: TOWNSHIP MANAGER

The manager runs the township. Not in a figurehead way. In an "every department reports to me, I hire and fire, I present the budget" way.

Appointment: Council hires the manager by majority vote (three of five). The hire has to be based on education, training, and experience. Not politics. Not who you know. Not which party you belong to. Professional qualifications only.

That language comes from the Optional Plans Law and the ICMA Code of Ethics. It's there for a reason. The first manager sets the tone for every manager after them. Get it right.

Termination: I think it should take four of five votes to fire the manager. Not three. Here's why. A simple majority means one election cycle flips two seats and the manager is gone. That turns the position into a political football. A supermajority means firing the manager requires real consensus, not a faction. ICMA recommends this. It protects the manager from getting punished for making the right call when the right call is unpopular.

The manager should also get at least six months severance if fired without cause. Without that protection, good candidates won't apply. Municipal management is a small world. Word gets around. If Millcreek develops a reputation for burning through managers, the only people who will apply are the ones nobody else will hire.

These are my recommendations based on ICMA best practices for attracting and keeping top candidates. The final decision on both belongs to council.

What the manager does (and I think this list needs to be specific, not vague):

Hires, promotes, disciplines, and fires all employees except those appointed by council (solicitor, auditor, engineer). That includes department heads.

Prepares and presents the annual budget. Runs the budget after council adopts it.

Signs contracts up to \$25,000 without a council vote. Anything over \$25,000 goes to council.

Why \$25,000: Cranberry, Lower Macungie, and College Township all use similar thresholds. Too low and the manager can't buy a truck tire without a meeting. Too high and big money moves without elected oversight. Twenty-five thousand is the sweet spot.

Attends all council meetings. Participates in the discussion. Does not vote.

Runs all departments. All department heads report to the manager. Not to council. Not to individual council members.

Gives council a written monthly report covering finances, projects, personnel actions, and anything significant.

Recommends organizational changes. Council approves or denies them.

Represents the township in dealings with other governments.

Residency: The manager should live in Millcreek within twelve months of getting hired. You should live where you work. It creates a different kind of accountability when your neighbors are the people you serve.

SECTION 4: DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE

List every department by name. Define the chain of command explicitly.

Department of Police. Department of Public Works. Department of Parks and Recreation.
Department of Code Enforcement and Zoning. Department of Finance and Administration.

Every department head reports directly to the township manager. No exceptions.

The manager may recommend to council the creation, merger, or reorganization of departments.
Council must approve by majority vote.

Why I think this needs to be in the code and not left to the manager's discretion: If the organizational structure isn't codified, a future council could pressure a future manager to eliminate a department for political reasons. In my opinion, codifying the structure means reorganization requires a public vote, not a backroom conversation.

SECTION 5: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Annual budget calendar: Manager submits proposed budget to council by October 1. Council holds public hearing by November 15. Council adopts final budget by December 31. Budget takes effect January 1.

Independent audit: The township shall engage a certified public accounting firm to conduct an annual audit of all township funds. The audit report shall be presented to council and made available to the public within 120 days of the fiscal year end.

Why CPA audit and not an elected controller: The study commission recommended against creating a controller position. I agree. An elected controller adds politics to what should be a numbers job. A CPA firm is independent, answers to professional licensing standards, and costs less than a controller's salary and benefits. Better work for less money. That's the whole point of this transition.

Procurement: Purchases under \$5,000 require manager approval. Purchases between \$5,000 and \$25,000 require three written quotes and manager approval. Purchases over \$25,000 require formal competitive bidding and council approval. Emergency purchases may be authorized by the manager up to \$50,000 with notification to council within 48 hours.

Reserve fund: The township shall maintain an unassigned general fund balance of no less than 15% of annual operating expenditures. This protects against revenue shortfalls, emergencies, and economic downturns.

SECTION 6: PERSONNEL SYSTEM

To be clear on who hires and fires: the manager has sole authority to hire, promote, discipline, and terminate all township employees. The only exceptions are the manager themselves, the solicitor, the auditor, and the engineer. Those four are council's. Everyone else is the manager's call.

All appointments and promotions should be based on merit. No political consideration. No nepotism. No patronage.

Define nepotism explicitly: No person related by blood or marriage to any council member or to the township manager within the second degree (parent, child, sibling, spouse, grandparent, grandchild) shall be hired as a township employee while that council member or manager serves in office.

Background checks required for all new hires. Drug testing required for safety-sensitive positions.

Annual performance reviews for all employees, conducted by the immediate supervisor (department head) and reviewed by the manager.

A basic employee grievance process should be included. Nothing complicated. Just a clear path for employees to raise concerns internally before anything goes external.

All existing collective bargaining agreements remain in full force and effect. Based on statements by the ALOM consultants to the study commission, no employee's pension or retirement benefits can be diminished by the change in government under the Optional Plans Law. I recommend stating this explicitly in the code to prevent unnecessary anxiety among current employees.

SECTION 7: ETHICS AND TRANSPARENCY

Financial disclosure: Council members and the manager shall file annual financial interest statements with the township.

Conflicts of interest: No council member or manager shall participate in any official action in which they have a direct or indirect financial interest. Violations are subject to removal from office.

Post-employment cooling off: No council member shall be hired as a township employee for two years following the end of their term. No manager shall be hired by any vendor doing business with

the township for one year following termination.

Open records: The township shall comply with the PA Right-to-Know Law and shall adopt an open records policy that designates the township manager or their designee as the open records officer. Response time for records requests shall not exceed the statutory maximum of five business days.

Public meetings: All meetings of council and all advisory boards shall comply with the PA Sunshine Act. Meeting agendas shall be posted to the township website at least 48 hours in advance. Meeting minutes shall be posted within 10 business days of the meeting.

SECTION 8: TRANSITION PROVISIONS (Temporary)

This section governs the period from January 1, 2028, until the transition is complete. It is removed from the code after its purpose is served.

The transition provisions need to address how current supervisor terms align with the new council. Under the Optional Plans Law, supervisors elected at large can continue to the end of their terms if the new plan has at least as many at-large seats. Based on when each supervisor was elected, the terms don't all run past January 1, 2028. Supervisor Bock (re-elected 2023, term through 2029) and Supervisor Morris (elected 2025, term through 2031) both have terms that extend past the transition date. Supervisor Clear's term (elected 2021) expires at the end of 2027. The November 2027 election will fill the remaining seats.

The exact details should be worked out with the solicitor and the ALOM consultants. The code needs to spell this out clearly so voters and candidates know exactly what's on the ballot.

Compensation for supervisors who carry over to council changes to the council stipend (\$8,385 maximum). Not their current supervisor salary.

All existing ordinances, resolutions, rules, and regulations remain in effect to the extent they are consistent with the new government structure and are not superseded by the administrative code.

All pending contracts, litigation, obligations, and agreements continue in full force and effect.

All township employees continue in their current positions. No employee shall be terminated or have their compensation reduced solely as a result of the change in government.

All township property, records, and assets transfer to the new government.

SECTION 9: AMENDMENT AND REVIEW

The administrative code may be amended by ordinance of council following a public hearing with at least 30 days' notice.

Mandatory review: Council shall appoint a five-member code review committee every five years to evaluate the administrative code and recommend amendments. The committee shall submit its

report within six months of appointment.

Why mandatory five-year review: Mt. Lebanon went 39 years without updating their charter. Provisions that made sense in 1974 cost the township real money by 2013. Building the review into the code ensures it happens regardless of who's on council.

3 Phase 3: Ordinance Review and Revision (August through December)

This runs parallel to the administrative code work. The codification firm handles most of it, but the committee must understand the scope.

What Needs to Change

Every Millcreek ordinance that assigns operational authority to the Board of Supervisors needs to be reviewed. Here's what that means in practice:

Governance ordinances: Every reference to "Board of Supervisors" in a decision-making capacity must be evaluated. Some become "Council." Some become "Manager." The distinction depends on whether the action is legislative (council) or administrative (manager).

Example: "The Board of Supervisors shall approve all zoning variance applications." Under the new structure, the Zoning Hearing Board still hears variances, but the administrative referral process goes through the manager's office, not through a supervisor's desk.

Example: "The Board of Supervisors shall appoint members to the Planning Commission." Under the new structure, council retains this appointment power. This reference stays. But other references where supervisors direct staff or approve operational decisions change to the manager.

Personnel ordinances: Every reference to supervisors as the hiring authority, disciplinary authority, or supervisory authority changes to the manager.

Procurement ordinances: The bid thresholds, approval authorities, and contract execution procedures all need to reflect the new structure.

Financial ordinances: Budget preparation, fund management, investment policy, and audit procedures need to reference the manager and council in their proper roles.

Zoning and land use ordinances: The approval chains and administrative procedures need to reflect the new reporting structure.

The Process

The codification firm inventories every existing ordinance (Step 1: June through July 2026). They produce a change matrix showing each ordinance, what needs to change, and why (Step 2: August 2026). The committee reviews the matrix and approves the approach (Step 3: September 2026). The firm drafts replacement ordinances (Step 4: October 2026). Public comment on the drafts (Step 5: November 2026). Final adoption by the Board of Supervisors (Step 6: December 2026).

Ferguson Township required 33 ordinances and 5 resolutions. Millcreek should expect a comparable number.

In my opinion, these priority ordinances need to be done before January 1, 2028:

Governance procedures (council meeting rules, agenda format, voting requirements). Personnel system (merit hiring, job classifications, grievance procedures). Procurement and bidding (thresholds, competitive bid requirements, emergency purchases). Financial management (budget calendar, fund structure, audit requirements). Organizational chart (departments, reporting lines, positions).

Everything else can be updated in batches during the first year of the new government.

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Phase 4: Manager Recruitment (October 2026 through December 2026)

Why I Think This Must Start in October 2026

The math is simple. Writing a job description takes a month. Finding and hiring a search firm takes a couple months. Posting the position and screening candidates takes a few more. Interviews. An offer. Relocation time. You're looking at ten months minimum from start to a manager walking in the door.

If we start in October 2026, we can have someone identified by summer 2027. If we wait until early 2027, the math doesn't work and Millcreek enters the new government with nobody running it.

How the Committee Should Approach This

The committee's job is to build the recruitment framework, not to write the final job description in a vacuum. I think we should work with the ALOM consultants and the codification firm to define the role based on what the administrative code says the manager will actually do. The study commission estimated a salary range of \$145,000 to \$230,000 including benefits. Comparable PA townships like Cranberry and Lower Macungie pay their managers in that range. The committee should benchmark against those numbers and present a compensation recommendation to the Board.

For the actual search, ICMA recommends using an executive search firm for first-time manager positions. I agree. This is too important to run internally. The committee should issue an RFP to

qualified firms and budget around \$25,000 for the search.

A Timing Consideration

One thing the committee will need to think through is who actually makes the final manager hire. The new council doesn't take office until January 1, 2028. So the committee should work with the Board early on to figure out the best way to handle the handoff between the search process and the final hiring decision. There's plenty of time to sort this out if the conversation starts early.

FIGURE 5 | What Changes vs. What Stays the Same

The transition changes leadership structure. It does not change services, staffing, or how residents interact with their township.

WHAT CHANGES	WHAT STAYS THE SAME
▲ 3 supervisors become 5 part-time council	● All 150+ employees keep their jobs
▲ Professional manager runs operations	● All union contracts stay intact
▲ Dept. heads report to manager	● All pensions protected (state law)
▲ Council focuses on policy only	● Police, public works, parks continue
▲ Supervisor salaries replaced by stipends	● Tax rates and services unchanged
▲ Manager hired on qualifications	● Same offices, staff, phone numbers

5 Phase 5: Employee and Institutional Knowledge Transition (June)

Why Employees Are the Biggest Risk Nobody Talks About

Any time a government changes structure, employees feel it first. They hear about it before the details are worked out. They fill in the blanks with worst-case scenarios. That's human nature.

Here's what every township employee is thinking right now: Will I still have a job? Will my boss change? Will my pay change? Will the new manager reorganize my department?

If nobody answers those questions, the best employees start looking elsewhere. The institutional knowledge leaves before anyone writes it down. Morale drops. Service gets worse. And the new government inherits a workforce that's scared and checked out.

Concord Township in Delaware County addressed employee communication head-on during their transition. They distributed reports to every household, posted hearing transcripts online, and maintained open communication channels. Millcreek needs the same approach applied directly to its workforce.

The Employee Communication Plan

Month 1 (June 2026): Publish a written FAQ for all township employees. Distribute it directly to every employee through department heads, not through the supervisors' office. Post it on the township's internal communication channels.

Key messages for the FAQ:

Your job is protected. The Optional Plans Law explicitly provides that the change in government shall not diminish any rights or privileges of any present municipal employee regarding pension or retirement benefits. All collective bargaining agreements remain in force.

Your day-to-day work doesn't change on January 1, 2028. You'll still do the same job in the same department. The difference is that your department head will report to a professional manager instead of to the Board of Supervisors.

Your voice matters in this transition. The committee welcomes input from township employees on what works well and what could be improved in current operations. Direct all input to [committee email address].

Quarterly updates (September 2026, December 2026, March 2027, June 2027, September 2027): The committee member assigned to the employee workstream sends a written update to all employees summarizing transition progress and upcoming milestones. Short. One page. No jargon.

October 2027: Hold an all-hands employee meeting. The committee chair and a representative from the Board present the transition timeline for the final 90 days. Answer questions directly.

Institutional Knowledge Capture

This is the work nobody wants to do and everybody regrets not doing.

Millcreek's supervisors have served as full-time administrators for years. They know which vendors to call when the sewer line breaks on a holiday. They know which state agencies have grant money available. They know the history behind every intergovernmental agreement. They know which Board meeting in 2019 led to the current parking enforcement policy. None of this is written down.

When the supervisors transition to part-time council members with no administrative authority, that knowledge becomes inaccessible. Unless we capture it first.

Department-by-department knowledge capture (October 2026 through June 2027):

For each department (Police, Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Code Enforcement, Finance and Administration), the committee should:

Schedule a two-hour structured interview with the department head. Use a standard template covering: departmental mission and core functions, annual budget and major expense categories, staffing (positions, vacancies, organizational chart), key vendor relationships (contracts, terms, contacts), ongoing projects and their status, recurring obligations (grants, reports, certifications), informal processes that aren't documented anywhere, pain points and improvement opportunities.

Request copies of all existing written procedures, manuals, and operational guides.

Create a shared digital folder for each department containing all documentation.

Township-wide knowledge capture:

All intergovernmental agreements (with the county, school district, other municipalities, state agencies) listed with terms, renewal dates, and responsible contacts.

All active grants with reporting requirements and deadlines.

All active litigation with status summaries.

All capital improvement projects with timelines, budgets, and contractor information.

All technology systems (software, licenses, contracts, support contacts).

Insurance policies (property, liability, workers comp) with carriers, premiums, and renewal dates.

Why this matters: When a new government takes over without transition documents, the new leadership spends months figuring out where things are, who to call, and what obligations exist. Millcreek has 20 months to build an institutional knowledge archive. Use them.

6 Phase 6: Public Communication and Transparency (Ongoing)

The study commission built public trust by being open about their process. Four forums. Public meetings. A dedicated website. The transition committee has to match that standard or the trust erodes.

People supported this change because they believed it would make government better. If the transition happens behind closed doors, that belief turns into suspicion. Communication isn't a nice-to-have workstream. It's how you keep the public mandate alive through 20 months of implementation.

The Communication Infrastructure

Dedicated webpage on millcreektownship.com: The township has already committed to transparency around the transition. The committee should maintain a dedicated page with every

meeting agenda (posted 48 hours in advance), every set of meeting minutes (posted within 10 business days), all draft documents (administrative code, ordinances, position descriptions), the master timeline with regular updates, a public comment form, and a FAQ document updated monthly.

Monthly email update: Build an email list from the township's existing communications, the study commission's list, and sign-ups on the transition webpage. Send a plain-language summary each month: what happened, what's coming next, and how residents can participate. Keep it short. Five paragraphs maximum.

Media engagement: Brief Erie Times-News, Erie News Now, and YourErie reporters quarterly. Provide written summaries. Return calls within 24 hours. Be proactive with information. If the committee doesn't tell the story, someone else will tell it inaccurately.

Quarterly Public Forums

Forum 1 (Fall 2026): Present the draft administrative code. Walk through each section. Explain what it does. Explain why. Take questions. Record it and post the video.

Forum 2 (Winter 2026/2027): Present the ordinance revision plan and the manager recruitment strategy. Show the timeline. Explain the search process. Take questions.

Forum 3 (Spring 2027): Present the final administrative code and a manager search progress update. This is the last public input opportunity before the code goes to the Board for adoption.

Forum 4 (Fall 2027): Present the complete transition plan for the final 90 days. Explain what happens on January 1, 2028, in practical terms. What changes. What stays the same. Where to go with questions.

Why four forums and not just the legally required hearings: The study commission held four public forums and built strong community support for the change. The transition committee should match that level of engagement. Public trust is earned through transparency, not assumed through authority.

7

Phase 7: The Final 90 Days (October through December 2027)

October 2027:

All ordinances finalized and adopted by the Board of Supervisors.

Administrative code formally enacted by ordinance.

Plan for day-one management coverage in place.

IT department updates all systems: email addresses, org charts, phone directories, internal documents, public-facing website.

Township letterhead, business cards, and official correspondence templates updated to reflect new titles and structure.

November 2027:

New council members elected to fill open seats on the five-member council.

Within two weeks of election certification, schedule orientation for all council members.

Orientation covers: the administrative code and what it means for their role, council-manager government principles (ICMA has excellent training materials), the PA Sunshine Act and open meetings requirements, financial oversight responsibilities, and the practical differences between being a part-time policy maker and a full-time administrator.

Joint transition session to formally transfer all operational knowledge, pending issues, and open items.

December 2027:

Final Board of Supervisors meeting under the current structure.

All pending contracts, projects, and obligations documented in a written transition binder for the incoming manager.

Fourth and final public forum presenting the complete transition.

Press release announcing the transition is complete and the new government begins January 1, 2028.

January 1, 2028:

Five-member council holds organizational meeting. Elects chairperson. Adopts rules of procedure.

Professional manager assumes operational authority (or interim coverage begins, depending on the search timeline).

The transition committee's work is complete. It formally dissolves.

Getting the Administrative Code Right

In every government transition I studied, the administrative code is where things either hold together or fall apart. Not because of bad intentions. Just because writing a code that truly defines a new power structure is hard work.

The code will be adopted by the current Board of Supervisors before the new council takes over. That's how the law works. I think the best way to make sure the code reflects what the voters approved is straightforward: do the work in the open.

Make every draft public. Post it on the website. Present it at public forums. Ground every provision in best practices from McCandless, Ferguson, and other PA municipalities that have done this successfully. When the work is visible and well sourced, the final product tends to reflect the community's intent.

I also think the committee should document the process. If the Board makes changes to the committee's recommendations, publish a side-by-side showing what changed and why. Not as a confrontation. As a public record. That's how Concord Township built trust during their transition.

Budget Estimate

In my opinion, the transition can be done for around \$100,000. Here's how I'd break it down:

Codification firm: \$35,000. This is the biggest line item and the most important. Ferguson Township's codification work is the reason their transition worked.

ALOM/Public Partners advisory support: \$10,000. Monthly check-ins and document review through December 2026.

Executive search firm for manager recruitment: \$25,000. Standard for a municipal search at this level.

Legal review (code adoption, employment agreement): \$10,000.

Public communication (website updates, printing, mailing): \$5,000.

Council orientation and training: \$5,000.

Contingency: \$10,000.

Total: approximately \$100,000.

The study commission estimated annual savings of approximately \$500,000 from the structural change. The transition investment pays for itself within the first few months of the new government.

Master Timeline

May 2026: Committee organized. Chair elected. Operating rules adopted. Scope document approved and acknowledged by Board.

June 2026: Codification firm hired. ALOM advisory engagement in place. Workstreams assigned. Employee FAQ drafted and distributed.

July 2026: Ordinance inventory begins. Administrative code outline developed. First workstream reports.

August 2026: Administrative code first draft (Sections 1 through 3: Council, Manager, Departments). Ordinance change matrix completed by codification firm.

September 2026: Administrative code first draft (Sections 4 through 7: Finance, Personnel, Ethics, Transition). Employee communication second quarterly update. First public forum: present draft code.

October 2026: Administrative code public comment period opens. Manager job description finalized. Search firm RFP issued. Institutional knowledge capture begins (department interviews).

November 2026: Administrative code public comment period closes. Committee revises code based on public input. Search firm proposals due and reviewed. Second public forum: ordinance and recruitment plans.

December 2026: Administrative code finalized and submitted to Board for adoption. Search firm selected and under contract. Personnel policies drafted and submitted. Priority ordinances submitted.

January 2027: Manager position posted nationally (60-day window). Ordinances adopted in first batch.

February 2027: Continued posting. Ordinance second batch. Institutional knowledge capture continues.

March 2027: Manager posting closes. Search firm begins screening. Third public forum: code update and recruitment progress.

April 2027: Semifinalist review. Committee selects three to five finalists.

May 2027: In-person interviews. Community meet-and-greet with finalists.

June 2027: Top candidate(s) identified. Offer framework developed.

July 2027: Manager search continues. Final ordinance batch submitted.

August 2027: All administrative documents finalized.

September 2027: Employee quarterly update. Final transition preparations underway.

October 2027: All ordinances adopted. Code enacted. IT systems updated. Fourth public forum.

November 2027: Council election. Orientation sessions scheduled.

December 2027: Transition binder complete. Final public communication.

January 1, 2028: New government operational. Committee dissolved.

A Note on Why I Wrote This

I wasn't the guy holding a sign for this. I had doubts. Some of those doubts were legitimate. Some I've let go of after studying how this has played out in other communities.

But here's what I know for certain. The voters decided. And when 54,000 people are counting on a transition to go right, showing up with doubts and no plan helps nobody. Showing up with doubts and a detailed plan helps everybody.

I run and have scaled two Millcreek businesses. I've lived here a long time. I've coached at Prep for 16 years. I'm invested in this community in ways that don't show up on a resume.

I wrote this because I wanted to prove something. Not that I'm the smartest person in the room. That I'm serious. That I did the work. That I studied what McCandless, Ferguson, and Mt. Lebanon did right and what Hampton did wrong. That I thought through every section of the administrative code, every step of the manager search, every risk that could derail this, and every way to prevent it.

I hope this document shows people that I should be on this committee. Not because I was the loudest voice for the change. Because I'm the person who will grind through the details to make sure it actually works.

If I'm not selected, everything in here is still public. Use it. All of it. The templates. The timelines. The risk register. None of it belongs to me. It belongs to Millcreek.

I want this to succeed. That's the whole story.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Employee FAQ (Draft, Ready for Distribution)

MILLCREEK TOWNSHIP GOVERNMENT TRANSITION: WHAT EMPLOYEES NEED TO KNOW

What is changing?

Millcreek Township voters approved a new form of government in November 2025. Starting January 1, 2028, the township will be governed by a five-member part-time council and a professional township manager. Current supervisors whose terms haven't expired may transition to council roles depending on when their terms end. The remaining seats will be filled by election in November 2027.

Will I lose my job?

No. The Home Rule Charter and Optional Plans Law (53 Pa.C.S. Chapters 29 through 31) includes provisions protecting current township employees during a government transition. ALOM consultant Michael Foreman confirmed to the study commission that the change in government cannot diminish any rights or privileges of any present municipal employee regarding their pension or retirement system, and all collective bargaining agreements remain intact. Your position, your compensation, and your benefits continue under the new structure. I recommend verifying the specific statutory protections with the township solicitor, but the principle is clear: this is state law, not a policy choice.

Who will I report to?

Your immediate supervisor stays the same. Your department head stays the same. The difference is that department heads will report to a professional township manager instead of to the Board of Supervisors. For most employees, the day-to-day experience will feel the same with one change: the person at the top of the organizational chart will be a hired professional whose full-time job is managing township operations.

What happens to the supervisors?

Current supervisors whose terms extend past January 1, 2028 will transition to council roles. They will set policy, approve budgets, and pass ordinances. They will no longer manage daily operations, direct employees, or serve in administrative roles. Their compensation changes from full-time salaries to part-time stipends capped at \$8,385 per year.

Who is the township manager?

The manager hasn't been hired yet. The transition committee will develop the job description, qualifications, and recruitment plan. The final hiring decision belongs to the new five-member council. The manager will be selected based on education, training, and experience in professional municipal management.

When does all of this happen?

The transition committee is working through 2026 and 2027 to prepare all documents and systems. The new government structure takes effect January 1, 2028. There will be no sudden changes. You will receive regular updates throughout the process.

How can I provide input?

The transition committee welcomes your perspective. You know how this township actually works better than anyone. If you have insights about current operations, processes that could be improved, or concerns about the transition, contact the committee at [committee email address]. Your input will be kept confidential if you request it.

Where can I get updates?

The transition committee will post all documents, meeting minutes, and progress updates on the township website. Quarterly written updates will be distributed to all employees.

Appendix B: Institutional Knowledge Capture Template

Use this template for each department head interview. Schedule two hours per department. Record the interview with permission. Create a written summary within one week.

DEPARTMENT: _____

DEPARTMENT HEAD: _____

DATE: _____

INTERVIEWER: _____

SECTION 1: MISSION AND FUNCTIONS

What are the three to five core functions of this department?

How many full-time employees? Part-time? Seasonal?

What is the department's annual budget (approximate)?

What are the three largest expense categories?

SECTION 2: REPORTING AND AUTHORITY

Who does the department head currently report to (which supervisor)?

What decisions can the department head make independently?

What decisions require supervisor approval?

How often does the department head meet with the supervisors? In what format?

SECTION 3: KEY VENDOR AND CONTRACTOR RELATIONSHIPS

List every active contract or ongoing vendor relationship. For each, provide: vendor name, service provided, approximate annual cost, contract expiration date, primary contact person.

Which vendors are critical (meaning if they disappeared tomorrow, operations would be disrupted within 48 hours)?

SECTION 4: ONGOING PROJECTS

List every active project. For each: project name, current status, budget, timeline, responsible staff member, any external partners or contractors involved.

Are there projects in the pipeline that have been approved but not started?

SECTION 5: RECURRING OBLIGATIONS

List all grant-funded programs. For each: granting agency, grant amount, reporting requirements, deadlines, staff member responsible for compliance.

List all intergovernmental agreements. For each: partner entity, purpose, terms, renewal date.

List all required reports, certifications, or filings. For each: what it is, who files it, when it's due.

SECTION 6: TECHNOLOGY AND SYSTEMS

What software does the department use daily? Who is the vendor? Where is the login information stored?

What data does the department maintain? Where is it stored (physical, digital, cloud)?

Are there systems that only one person knows how to operate?

SECTION 7: UNWRITTEN KNOWLEDGE

What processes exist only in someone's head and are not documented anywhere?

What informal agreements or understandings exist with other departments, other municipalities, or outside organizations?

If you were hit by a bus tomorrow, what would your replacement need to know that isn't written down anywhere?

What are the three biggest operational challenges the department faces right now?

What would you change about how this department operates if you could change anything?

Appendix C: Risk Register

Every transition has predictable failure points. Naming them in advance doesn't create problems. It prevents them.

RISK 1: Administrative code adopted with weak manager authority

Likelihood: Medium to High.

Impact: Critical. A weak code means the new government starts structurally handicapped.

Trigger: The code ends up with vague role definitions or provisions that don't clearly separate council policy-making from manager operations. This can happen in any transition when the document goes through multiple revisions.

Evidence: Hampton Township (PA) adopted an optional plan with insufficient structural clarity. It proved "politically unworkable" within years and required a second study commission.

Mitigation: Full public transparency on every draft. Document all changes between committee recommendation and Board adoption. Ground every provision in cited best practices from McCandless, Ferguson, Cranberry, and ICMA standards. Engage media and public in review process so any weakening is visible.

Contingency: If adopted code is materially weaker than recommended, committee publishes a formal dissent documenting every change and its anticipated consequences.

RISK 2: No manager in place on January 1, 2028

Likelihood: Medium.

Impact: High. Without professional management, the new council has no one to run daily operations.

Trigger: Recruitment timeline slips, top candidate declines, or new council rejects committee's recommended candidates.

Evidence: Other PA municipalities that changed structure without a manager in place on day one experienced confusion and delayed projects.

Mitigation: Begin recruitment October 2026 (16 months of lead time). Plan for interim coverage if the permanent hire isn't in place by January 1, 2028.

Contingency: The committee should present interim management options to the Board and incoming council well before the transition date.

RISK 3: Key employees leave during transition

Likelihood: Medium.

Impact: High, especially in Police, Finance, and Public Works where institutional knowledge is concentrated.

Trigger: Uncertainty about reporting structures, job security, or new management direction causes experienced employees to seek other positions.

Mitigation: Employee FAQ distributed immediately. Quarterly communication updates citing specific legal protections. Direct confidential access to committee for employee questions. Explicit statement in every communication that all jobs, benefits, and collective bargaining agreements are protected by state law.

Contingency: If a department head departure becomes likely, immediately prioritize that department's institutional knowledge capture.

RISK 4: Public confusion or organized opposition

Likelihood: Low to Medium.

Impact: Medium. Public opposition during implementation can slow the process and create political cover for obstruction.

Trigger: Misinformation, organized resistance from those who voted against the change, or perception that the transition is mismanaged or politically motivated.

Mitigation: Quarterly public forums. Monthly email updates. Proactive media engagement. Every document public. Every meeting open. Every decision explained with evidence. The study commission built strong public support through transparency. The transition committee must match that standard.

Contingency: Respond to specific claims with specific facts and documentation. Never respond to rhetoric with rhetoric.

RISK 5: Budget conflict over transition costs

Likelihood: Low to Medium.

Impact: Medium. Without funding for the codification firm and search firm, the committee cannot do its job.

Trigger: Board of Supervisors refuses to allocate funds or restricts the budget below what's needed.

Evidence: The study commission estimated annual savings of approximately \$500,000. The transition budget of around \$100,000 represents a fraction of one year's savings.

Mitigation: Present the full budget with payback analysis at the earliest possible Board meeting. Frame every expenditure as a documented investment with a specific return.

Contingency: If full budget is not approved, prioritize the codification firm (essential for the administrative code) and search firm (essential for the manager hire). Defer other costs.

RISK 6: Transition timeline slips past December 2026

Likelihood: Medium.

Impact: Medium to High. Delays compress the manager search, ordinance adoption, and employee preparation.

Trigger: Codification work takes longer than expected, public comment generates major revisions, or Board delays adoption vote.

Mitigation: Build two-week buffers into every milestone. Start every workstream as early as possible. The study commission set the December 2026 deadline and published it. Extensions require a written request to the Board and a Board vote, creating public accountability for delays.

Contingency: Request extension in writing no later than October 2026. Specify the new deadline. Publish the request and the reasons publicly.

RISK 7: Institutional knowledge isn't captured before the transition

Likelihood: Medium.

Impact: High. The current supervisors and department heads hold operational knowledge about vendor relationships, ongoing projects, and informal processes that may not be documented anywhere.

Trigger: The transition moves fast and nobody schedules the time to sit down and document what lives in people's heads.

Mitigation: Start the knowledge capture process early. Use the template in Appendix B. Work primarily through department heads since they hold the most day-to-day operational knowledge. Make it a standing agenda item at every committee meeting.

Contingency: If gaps remain, the incoming manager will need extra onboarding time and should plan to spend the first 90 days learning what wasn't written down.

Appendix D: Comparable Municipality Reference Sheet

These municipalities were either directly studied by the Government Study Commission during its research process, or have completed transitions similar to what Millcreek is about to do. The committee should obtain their governing documents and contact their administrators directly.

Municipalities Interviewed or Visited by the GSC

The study commission visited Cranberry Township in person on February 18, 2025, and conducted virtual interviews with Lower Macungie, College Township, and Indiana Township the same day. They also planned comparisons with Lower Paxton and Bensalem. ALOM consultant Jerry Andree cited Hempfield Township as another council-manager optional plan municipality.

Cranberry Township, Butler County, PA

Population: ~35,000. Council-manager government. One of the most professionally managed townships in western PA. Jerry Andree (Millcreek's ALOM consultant) served as manager here for decades. Annual budget comparable to Millcreek's. Bruce Mazzone, Cranberry Supervisor (elected 2009), presented to the GSC. Key lesson: Long-tenured professional management produces consistent, high-quality municipal operations.

Lower Macungie Township, Lehigh County, PA

Population: ~35,200. Five-member board of supervisors with an appointed township manager. Similar population and budget scale to Millcreek. Interviewed virtually by the GSC. All supervisors serve in a legislative capacity only. Key lesson: The council-manager separation works at Millcreek's scale in a suburban PA township.

College Township, Centre County, PA

Population: ~42,500. Five-member board of supervisors with an appointed township manager. Larger than Millcreek in population. Uses similar procurement thresholds (\$25,000). Interviewed virtually by the GSC. Key lesson: Professional management scales effectively for large second-class townships.

Indiana Township, Allegheny County, PA

Population: ~7,500. Five-member board of supervisors with an appointed township manager. Smaller than Millcreek but operates under the same council-manager structure. Interviewed virtually by the GSC. Key lesson: The model works across different township sizes in PA.

Lower Paxton Township, Dauphin County, PA

Population: ~51,400. Board of supervisors with an appointed township manager. Third-largest second-class township in PA behind Bensalem and Millcreek. Studied by the GSC as a direct peer comparison. Key lesson: The closest population comparison to Millcreek among professionally managed second-class townships.

Bensalem Township, Bucks County, PA

Population: ~62,500. Operates under a council/mayor optional plan (not council-manager). Largest second-class township in PA. Studied by the GSC to compare different optional plan structures. Key lesson: Even the largest second-class township in PA uses an optional plan with professional management.

Hempfield Township, Westmoreland County, PA

Population: ~42,000. Operates under a council-manager optional form of government. Cited by ALOM consultant Jerry Andree during GSC proceedings as a relevant comparable. Key lesson: Another large PA township successfully operating under the same optional plan Millcreek adopted.

Additional Reference Municipalities

McCandless Township (Town of McCandless), Allegheny County, PA

Population: ~28,000. Adopted home rule charter November 1974. Seven-member council, appointed town manager. Charter available at ecode360.com (Chapter 35347869). Toby Cordek served as manager for 35 years (1984-2019), succeeded by Robert Grimm. Charter Article XVI contains comprehensive transition provisions covering status of officials, employees, ordinances, litigation, and property. Key lesson: Strong charter language explicitly prohibiting council interference with administration. The model for Millcreek's administrative code Section 2.

Ferguson Township, Centre County, PA

Population: ~19,000. Adopted home rule charter May 1974. Five-member board of supervisors (policy-only role), appointed manager. Hired Bartell Associates as codifiers. Produced 33 replacement ordinances and 5 resolutions. Has undergone two full recodifications (1989 and 2003). Key lesson: Hire a professional codification firm. Don't rely on the solicitor or volunteers for this specialized work.

Hampton Township, Allegheny County, PA

Adopted an Optional Plan (Executive-Council) that proved "politically unworkable" per PA DCED. Required a second study commission and adoption of a home rule charter to fix the problems. Key lesson: A weak administrative code with vague role definitions will fail regardless of the intent behind the structural change.

Mt. Lebanon, Allegheny County, PA

Population: ~33,000. One of the first PA municipalities to adopt home rule in 1974. Five-member commission, appointed municipal manager. In 2012-2013, an Ad Hoc Charter Study Committee reviewed the 39-year-old charter and found outdated provisions including \$18,000/year in unnecessary newspaper notice costs. Key lesson: Build mandatory periodic review (every five years) into the administrative code from day one.

Concord Township, Delaware County, PA

Population: ~18,000. Voters approved Government Study Commission November 2014. Hired Pennsylvania Economy League as consultants. Distributed interim report to every household. Posted hearing transcripts online. Key lesson: Go beyond the minimum legal requirements for public engagement.