UPPER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP

EST. 1891

August 2021

Upper Gwynedd Township 2040 Comprehensive Plan

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

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MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

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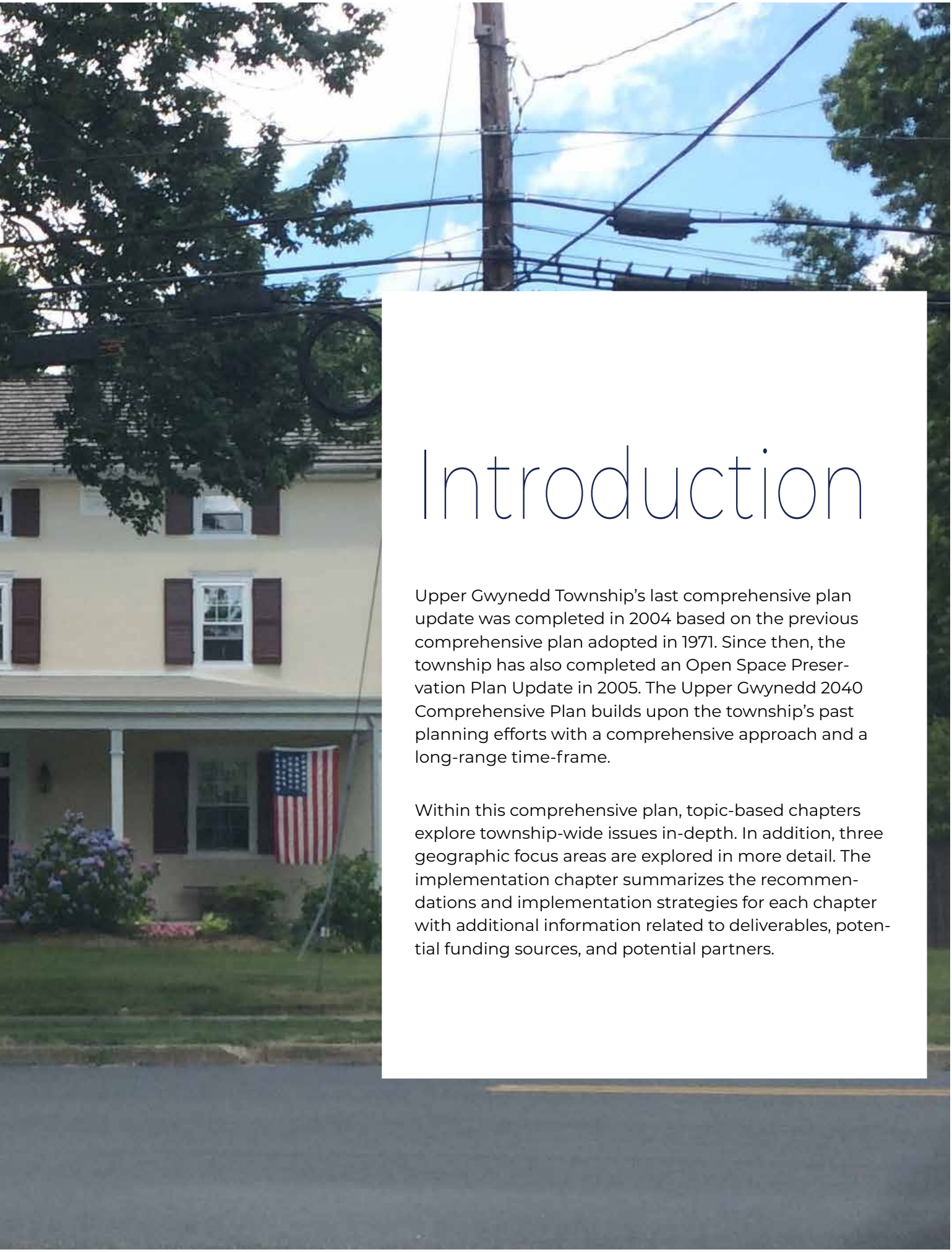
Historic home in Upper Gwynedd Township



Introduction

Upper Gwynedd Township's last comprehensive plan update was completed in 2004 based on the previous comprehensive plan adopted in 1971. Since then, the township has also completed an Open Space Preservation Plan Update in 2005. The Upper Gwynedd 2040 Comprehensive Plan builds upon the township's past planning efforts with a comprehensive approach and a long-range time-frame.

Within this comprehensive plan, topic-based chapters explore township-wide issues in-depth. In addition, three geographic focus areas are explored in more detail. The implementation chapter summarizes the recommendations and implementation strategies for each chapter with additional information related to deliverables, potential funding sources, and potential partners.

Upper Gwynedd 2040 Planning Process

The Upper Gwynedd 2040 Comprehensive Plan will serve as Upper Gwynedd Township's long-range community vision and establish the policies, priorities, and guidelines to achieve that desired vision. The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) requires that a community's zoning ordinance, subdivision and land development ordinance, and capital improvements program be generally consistent with the community's comprehensive plan. All of these documents and ordinances influence the daily administration of the township, and should therefore be supported by a strong, long-range, and comprehensive community vision in order to implement the broader goals of the comprehensive plan.

The MPC outlines the required components of a municipal comprehensive plan, including discussions of many of the physical components of a community, such as land use, housing, and infrastructure. The plan should outline how the physical components of the community will meet the anticipated future needs of the community, and demonstrate an understanding of the interrelationships between plan components. In addition, a comprehensive plan should discuss general consistency with the long-range plans of adjacent municipalities, as well as the county comprehensive plan.

Diverse public outreach strategies were utilized throughout the planning process to ensure that the vision and planning recommendations reflect the community as a whole by hearing from as many individual viewpoints as possible.

- Social media outreach and township newsletter updates (Fall 2018 – ongoing)
- Public open house #1 (February 2019)
- Community survey (Spring-Summer 2019)
- Community vision statement survey (Spring 2020)
- Virtual listening session (January 2021)
- Virtual public open house #2 (February 2021)
- Public meetings to discuss draft plan (Spring 2021)

See Appendix A for a detailed summary of public engagement feedback.

Upper Gwynedd 2040 Community Vision

With a long history as a prominent agricultural community in central Montgomery County, Upper Gwynedd Township is now characterized by a combination of residential neighborhoods, large employers, and preserved open space. Accessible by multiple modes of transportation, Upper Gwynedd is home to many regionally-significant employers, including Merck & Co., Inc. Recognized as a desirable place to both live and work, Upper Gwynedd is located in an excellent school district, supported by private schools and child care centers; and is known for its quality municipal services, Park-Sci Playground, and robust network of trails and green space.

In 2040, Upper Gwynedd will be…

- A community of safe, walkable, and family-friendly neighborhoods with a range of affordable, quality housing options; accessible, convenient retail and services; and diverse community institutions that meet the needs of residents of all ages and abilities.
- A community that values and actively promotes walking, biking, and public transit as alternative transportation modes while maintaining and improving the existing road infrastructure through multi-municipal and inter-agency coordination.
- A community that exemplifies sustainable practices with a continued focus on preservation of environmentally sensitive landscapes, development of an integrated regional trail network, and enhancement of the township's parks.
- A community that offers diverse employment opportunities, modern commercial centers, and high-quality shopping and dining opportunities.
- A community that encourages community engagement at all levels and collaborates with residents, the business community, the school district, adjacent municipalities, and other key stakeholders in order to advance economic development, open space preservation, and other important endeavors.

Relationship to Other Plans

Montco 2040: *A Shared Vision*

Montco 2040: A Shared Vision is the Montgomery County comprehensive plan that was adopted in January 2015. *Montco 2040* provides an overall land use and growth management framework for local municipal plans and provides guidance on multi-municipal and regional issues such as flooding and transportation. *Montco 2040* is structured around the implementation of three interrelated themes: connected communities, sustainable places, and vibrant economy.

The *Montco 2040* future land use plan is consistent with the township's future land use plan in terms of the distribution of residential and non-residential land uses, the preservation of township parkland and stream corridors, and the continuation of the township's established business areas.

Municipal Comprehensive Plans

Lansdale Borough

The Borough of Lansdale is located to the north of Upper Gwynedd Township and recently adopted a new comprehensive plan in 2020. Sections of the Liberty Bell Trail, which is planned to pass through the center of Upper Gwynedd Township, have been constructed in Lansdale. Both the Lansdale and Upper Gwynedd comprehensive plans recommend continued multi-municipal coordination to advance regional trail projects including the Liberty Bell Trail and the Powerline Trail. In addition, Lansdale Borough owns Whites Road Park, which is located on Whites Road in Upper Gwynedd Township.

The Pennbrook SEPTA train station is located just over the municipal line in Lansdale. The continued transit-oriented development of the area around the Pennbrook station is of interest to both municipalities. Lansdale's comprehensive plan recommends expanding the borough's Transit-Oriented Design zoning overlay district to apply to additional industrially-zoned lands within the borough in order to ensure new development complies with design standards, provides common open space, and is connected to the station and other developments through pedestrian connections.

Lansdale's future land use plan also reflects the township's existing land use pattern of residential and open space along the southern boundary of Lansdale Borough, with mixed-use and employment land uses concentrated along South Broad Street and around the Pennbrook Station.

Lower Gwynedd Township

Lower Gwynedd Township is located to the east of Upper Gwynedd Township. Swedesford Road, and a portion of Dekalb Pike/Route 202, generally follow the township line between Lower Gwynedd and Upper Gwynedd. The Gwynedd Wildlife Preserve is located in both Upper Gwynedd and Lower Gwynedd townships. Lower Gwynedd's most recent comprehensive plan was adopted in 2000.

The future land use plans for both municipalities show the continuation of the established single-family residential character of the shared Swedesford Road corridor. A small area of commercial land use in Upper Gwynedd is located near the intersection of Route 202 and Welsh Road.

Montgomery Township

Montgomery Township is located to the north of Upper Gwynedd Township. Welsh Road between North Wales Road and Route 202 forms the boundary between Montgomery and Upper Gwynedd. The Power Line Trail which is planned to connect Upper Gwynedd and Montgomery, generally follows an existing power line corridor. An update to Montgomery Township's comprehensive plan was most recently adopted in 2008.

In regards to future land use, Montgomery Township's comprehensive plan proposes the maintenance of Welsh Road as a commercial corridor which is compatible with the established land use pattern of office and preserved farmland on the Upper Gwynedd side of Welsh Road.

North Wales Borough

Upper Gwynedd Township completely surrounds North Wales Borough, which is a 0.6 square mile borough in the eastern half of the township. Important shared vehicular corridors pass through North Wales Borough including Sumneytown Pike (called Main Street through the borough) and

North Wales Road (called Walnut Street through the borough). In addition, the North Wales SEPTA train station is located in North Wales Borough, but in proximity to both residential and commercial areas in the township. Residents of North Wales Borough use Parkside Place Park, especially the Nor-Gwyn Pool, which is accessible from the borough via a pathway from Center Street. The North Wales Area Library is also an important resource shared between North Wales and Upper Gwynedd.

The borough recently adopted a comprehensive plan in 2018. In terms of future land use, the 2018 comprehensive plan recommends expansion of the Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) overlay district around the North Wales train station and coordination with Upper Gwynedd regarding land use and development design standards along Sumneytown Pike. The North Wales comprehensive plan also recommends that the borough coordinate with Upper Gwynedd on bike routes and additional trail connections.

Towamencin Township

Towamencin Township borders Upper Gwynedd Township to the west. Valley Forge Road forms the municipal boundary between Towamencin and Upper Gwynedd. The public high school and technical high school for the North Penn School District (which includes Upper Gwynedd Township) are located in Towamencin Township near the intersection of Valley Forge Road and Sumneytown Pike. Towamencin's most recent comprehensive plan was adopted in 1988 with a strategic plan adopted more recently in 2007.

Due to the age of Towamencin's most recent comprehensive plan, their current zoning map may be a more timely indicator of their current future land use goals. Similar to Upper Gwynedd's future land use plan, Towamencin's zoning map shows a continuation of mostly residential land use along Valley Forge Road with commercial areas and multi-family residential concentrated near the intersections of Valley Forge Road and Sumneytown Pike and Valley Forge Road and Allentown Road.

Whitpain Township

Whitpain Township borders Upper Gwynedd to the south. Township Line Road between North Wales Road and Swedesford Road represents the municipal line between Whitpain and Upper Gwynedd. Whitpain's most recent comprehensive plan was adopted in 2016.

Whitpain's "Existing and Future Land Use Map" identifies much of the land along their shared border with Upper Gwynedd as "Vacant." Therefore, additional coordination may be beneficial as potential land uses in this area of Whitpain Township are further clarified.

Worcester Township

Worcester Township also borders Upper Gwynedd to the south. Morris Road between Valley Forge Road and North Wales Road represents the municipal line between Worcester and Upper Gwynedd. Worcester's most recent comprehensive plan was adopted in 2008, however the township is currently working on a comprehensive plan update.

Worcester's 2008 future land use plan shows a continuation of the residential character of the Morris Road corridor, which is consistent with Upper Gwynedd's future land use plan. In addition, Worcester's future land use plan shows several regional trails that would connect Worcester and Upper Gwynedd, including the Power Line Trail.

The entrance to Park-Sci Playground in the snow

Circa 1970s aerial view looking north towards Lansdale Borough. The intersection of Sumneytown Pike and Church Road is in the foreground.

Circa 1970s aerial view of the former Leeds & Northrup facility on Sumneytown Pike near the western border of North Wales Borough.

Background

Geographic Context

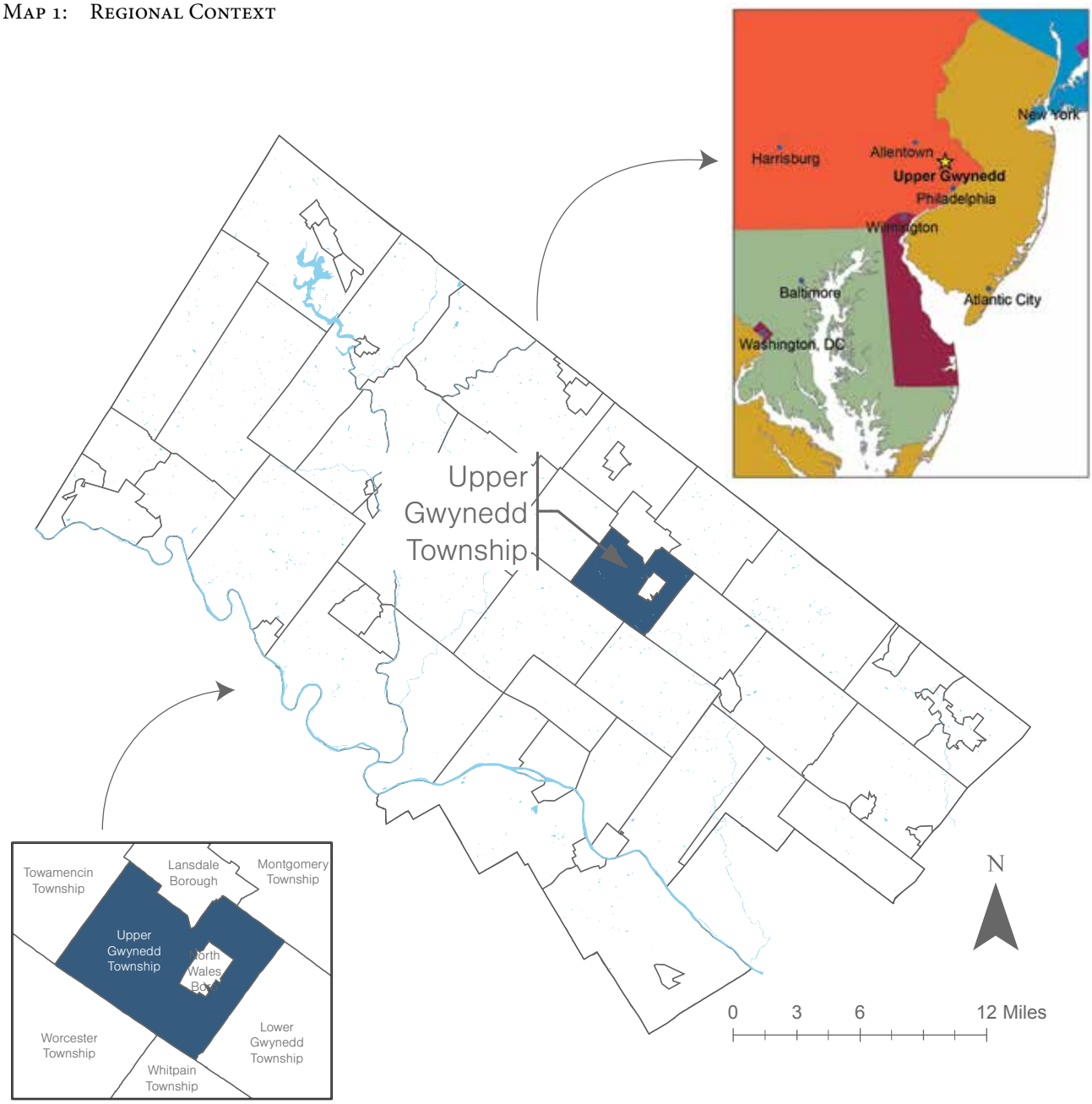
Upper Gwynedd Township is an 8.13-square-mile community in central Montgomery County, Pennsylvania (see Map 1 on the following page). Upper Gwynedd is bounded to the north by Lansdale Borough and Montgomery Township; to the west by Towamencin Township; to the south by Worcester and Whitpain townships; and to the east by Lower Gwynedd Township. In addition, Upper Gwynedd Township completely surrounds the Borough of North Wales. The township's roadway, transit, and trail networks allow it to be closely connected to the immediate neighboring municipalities.

Background Photo: View from observation deck in Dodsworth Run Preserve on Dickerson Road

Circa 1970s aerial view of Merck & Co., Inc.'s West Point campus on Sumneytown Pike.

Circa 1970s aerial view looking south from the Pennbrook Train Station. The large building on the left is now the site of The Point at Pennbrook Station development.

Map 1: Regional Context



Historical Context

Gwynedd was originally settled in 1690 by Welsh-Quaker immigrants. Early industry in the area was focused on agriculture and grist mills which were powered by local streams, such as the Wissahickon Creek. Upper Gwynedd Township in its current form dates back to 1891 when Gwynedd Township was divided into Upper Gwynedd Township and Lower Gwynedd Township; however small areas of the township were subsequently annexed by the adjacent boroughs of North Wales and Lansdale.

The early Welsh settlers named the area "Gwynedd," a derivation of the Welsh term, Gwinith, which means white, pure land.

Early roads in the area, such as Welsh Road, North Wales Road, and Swedesford Road, were built in the early 1700s to connect the area's grist mills and provide access to Philadelphia. The township's only village, West Point (formerly known as "Lukens" or "Lukens Station") dates back to the mid-1800s

when the construction of two railroads further increased access to the township. The North Penn Railroad Company connected Philadelphia to Gwynedd in 1855 and was subsequently extended to Lansdale, Doylestown, and Bethlehem. SEPTA currently runs commuter rail service on this line as far as Doylestown with stops near Upper Gwynedd at North Wales Station (in North Wales Borough) and Pennbrook Station (in Lansdale Borough). A second railroad, the Stony Creek Branch, was completed in 1874 with a stop in West Point. This rail line is now used for freight rail.

Although the population and commercial activity of West Point Village grew beginning in the mid-1800s, the remainder of the township remained largely rural until the 1950s as increased individual automobile ownership and highway construction improved access between Upper Gwynedd and the greater Philadelphia region. In fact, nearly 80% of the township's current housing units were constructed between 1950 and 2000.

Demographics

Population Characteristics

Population Growth: 1930-2010

Figure 1 below shows that Upper Gwynedd Township was a relatively small community of less than 2,000 persons in 1930; however the township's population has been steadily growing since 1940. The total township population as of the 2010 Decennial Census was 15,552 persons. Population estimates released by the U.S. Census Bureau estimated the township's population in 2019 at 15,817 persons.[1]

Although Upper Gwynedd has experienced steady population growth since 1940, the neighboring municipalities of Montgomery Township and Towamencin Township experienced significant population growth in the 1970s and 1980s. On the other hand, the populations of the adjacent boroughs of North Wales and Lansdale both peaked in 1970 and have declined slightly in recent decades.

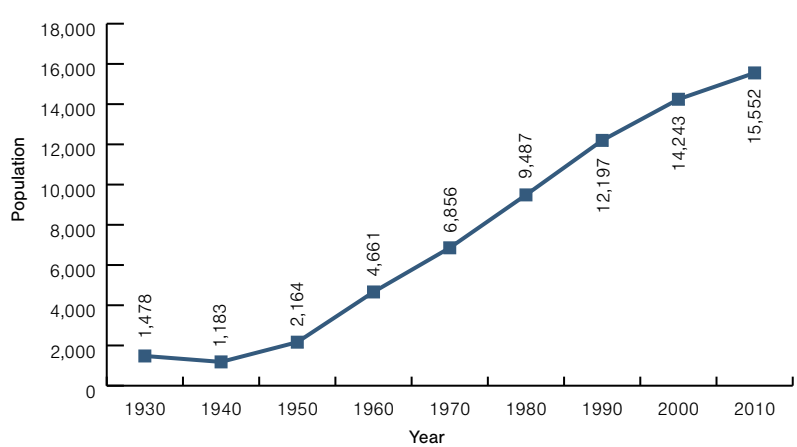
At 1,920 persons per square mile, Upper Gwynedd has the highest population density of the neighboring townships, except for Montgomery Township. The neighboring boroughs both have much higher population densities due to their historic, transit-oriented development patterns.

Population Forecasts: 2015-2045

Based on population forecasts from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), the population of Upper Gwynedd is anticipated

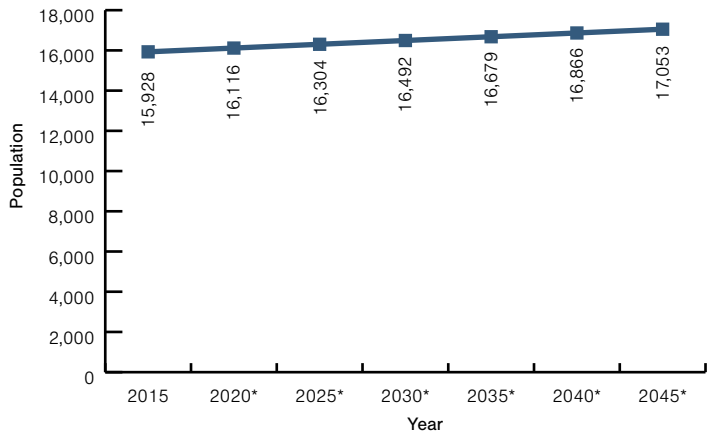
1 U.S. Census Bureau, "Annual Census Estimates of the Population for Municipalities in Montgomery County, April 1, 2010 – July 1, 2019"

Figure 1: Population Change: 1930-2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 1930-2010

Figure 2: Forecasted Population: 2015-2045



* Forecasted values

Source: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

to increase to 17,053 people by 2045, or a 7.1% increase over the 2015 population (see Figure 2 above). Upper Gwynedd is forecasted to grow at a slower rate than the county overall. Over the same time period, DVRPC forecasts a population increase of 13.9% (or 113,556 persons) for Montgomery County as-a-whole.

DVRPC's population forecasts are based on existing conditions and recent trends such as land use changes and development activity. The township's 2004 comprehensive plan update included a township-level population estimate for the year 2010 based on the 2000 Census population, completed and proposed residential developments, and a small factor for "future infill lots."[2] The 2004 plan update estimated that the township's 2010 population would be 16,076; which is greater than both the actual 2010 population of 15,552 and the 2019 estimated population of 15,817. A small decrease in the average household size and the economic downturn in the late 2000s may have contributed to the township's population growth being less than that predicted by the 2004 comprehensive plan update

Age Group Trends (2010)

Figure 3 on the following page shows the township's population classified by gender and separated into five-year age groups using 2010 Decennial Census data.

The school-age population (under 18 years) makes up almost 20% of Upper Gwynedd's total population, which is slightly less than all of the adjacent municipalities and Montgomery County overall. The senior population (65 years and older) makes up a significant component of the township's population at 18.3%. This percentage is higher than the county and most of the adjacent municipalities, except for Lower Gwynedd Township (see Table 1 on the following page).

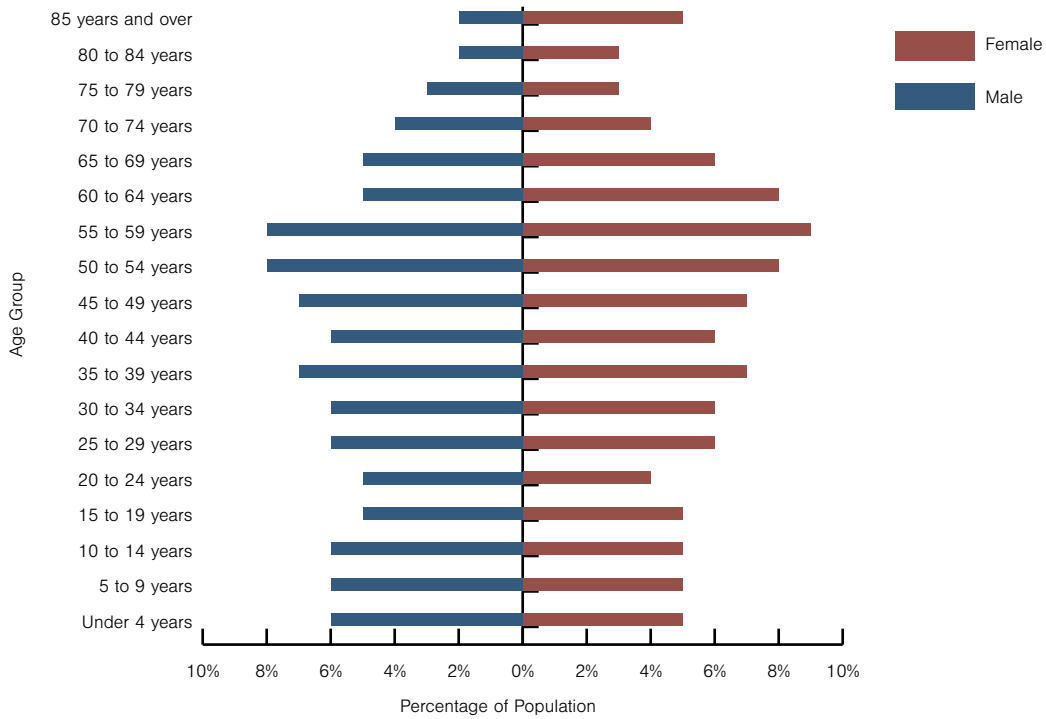
Overall, the township's population has a median age of 44.6 years, which is older than the county overall and most of the adjacent municipalities, except for Lower Gwynedd Township where almost 25% of the population is 65 years or older.

Racial Composition

Table 2 on the following page shows the racial composition of Upper Gwynedd Township as compared to Montgomery County overall. The township and county both have similar percentages of the population that are white, but the township's African American population by percentage is much lower than the county. However, the percentage of the township's population that is Asian American is approximately double that of the county overall.

2 Upper Gwynedd Township. "Comprehensive Plan Update 2004." March 2004

Figure 3: Age-Sex Pyramid: 2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census: 2010

Table 1: Age Characteristics: 2010

MUNICIPALITY	MEDIAN AGE	% UNDER 18	% 65 AND OVER
Upper Gwynedd Township	*44.6 years*	*19.7%*	*18.3%*
North Wales Borough	*39.3 years*	*21.9%*	*14.2%*
Lansdale Borough	*38.1 years*	*21.4%*	*14.2%*
Lower Gwynedd Township	*49.2 years*	*21.0%*	*24.5%*
Montgomery Township	*41.3 years*	*25.4%*	*13.1%*
Towamencin Township	*43.8 years*	*21.4%*	*18.2%*
Worcester Township	*44.0 years*	*25.3%*	*16.0%*
Montgomery County	*40.6 years*	*22.9%*	*15.1%*

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census: 2010

Table 2: Racial Composition: 2018

	UPPER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP	MONTGOMERY COUNTY
White	*78.9%*	*79.4%*
Black or African American	*3.5%*	*9.1%*
American Indian or Alaska Native	*0.1%*	*0.1%*
Asian	*15.5%*	*7.5%*
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
Some Other Race	*1.0%*	*1.3%*
Two or More Races	*1.0%*	*2.5%*
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	*2.4%*	*5.0%*

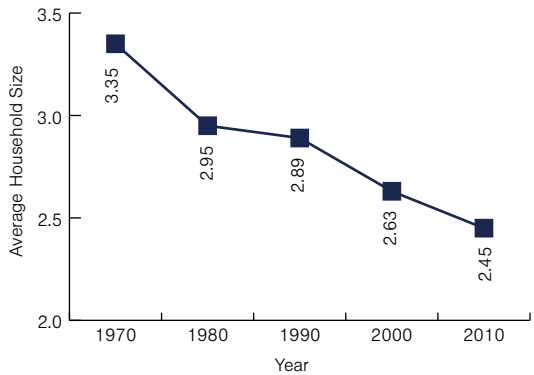
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Housing Characteristics

Average Household Size

Upper Gwynedd Township has seen a decline in the average household size in recent decades; down from an average of 3.35 persons per household in 1970, to 2.45 persons per household in 2010 (see Figure 4 below). This general trend can also be observed in all of the neighboring municipalities and at the county-level. This general decline can be attributed to many societal factors, such as decreased birth rates and an increase in single-parent and single-person households.

Figure 4: Average Household Size (Persons per Household): 1970-2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census: 1970-2010

Percent of Household Types

In 2018, approximately 49% of all households in Upper Gwynedd identified as having at least one resident aged 60 years or over, an increase of approximately 4% since 2013 (see Table 3 below). This percentage is similar to that for Towamencin and Worcester townships and the county overall, but less than the neighboring boroughs and some of the neighboring townships.

In addition, 25% of households in the township have at least one person under the age of 18, an approximately 4% decrease from 2013. This percentage is less than all of the neighboring municipalities and the county overall. There was a slight decrease in the percentage of single-person households in Upper Gwynedd from 27.4% in 2013 to 24.9% in 2018, which is similar to the county overall.

Median Housing Value

In 2018, the median housing value for Upper Gwynedd Township was $346,100, which is nearly $23,000 greater than the county-wide median housing value (see Table 4 on the following page). The median housing values for 2010 have been adjusted for inflation to 2018 levels using the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Consumer Price

Table 3: Household Types: 2013 vs. 2018

	Households with one or more persons under 18 years		Households with one or more persons 60 years and over		Householder living alone	
	2013	2018	2013	2018	2013	2018
Upper Gwynedd Township	29.7%	25.3%	44.8%	48.9%	27.4%	24.9%
North Wales Borough	27.7%	27.6%	26.8%	39.3%	36.2%	27.3%
Lansdale Borough	29.5%	31.8%	33.7%	35.5%	33.4%	29.5%
Lower Gwynedd Township	27.2%	27.8%	53.5%	57.3%	31.7%	32.4%
Montgomery Township	35.7%	33.5%	36.9%	42.4%	22.3%	23.5%
Towamencin Township	28.7%	28.1%	42.0%	47.2%	29.9%	30.2%
Worcester Township	35.5%	35.2%	33.5%	49.0%	23.2%	21.1%
Montgomery County	32.2%	32.1%	37.1%	41.0%	27.0%	25.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 & 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Index (CPI) Inflation Calculator[3] for an easier comparison. Median housing values fell across the county between 2010 and 2018. Upper Gwynedd and Worcester townships' median housing values decreased the least when compared to the adjacent municipalities; however the percentage decline in median housing value at the county-level was slightly less than Upper Gwynedd.

3 United Stated Department of Labor; Bureau of Labor Statistics: CPI Inflation Calculator. http://www.bls.gov/data/inflation_calculator.htm

Housing Tenure & Occupancy Status

The percentage of total housing units that were renter-occupied as opposed to owner-occupied rose by approximately 5% between 2013 to 2018 (see Table 5 below). The percentage of renter-occupied housing units in adjacent North Wales Borough and Lower Gwynedd Township decreased during the same time period. However, the percentage of renter households rose by nearly 1.5% county-wide, which may reflect large rental apartment developments coming on-line during this time period.

Table 4: Median Housing Value: 2010 vs. 2018

	MEDIAN HOUSING VALUE		% Change 2010*-2018
	2018	2010*	
Upper Gwynedd Township	$346,100	$372,681	-7.1%
North Wales Borough	$240,200	$288,833	-16.8%
Lansdale Borough	$232,000	$260,808	-11.0%
Lower Gwynedd Township	$487,100	$551,014	-11.6%
Montgomery Township	$345,900	$380,688	-9.1%
Towamencin Township	$314,400	$345,342	-9.0%
Worcester Township	$460,500	$497,708	-7.5%
Montgomery County	$323,400	$339,965	-4.9%

* Adjusted for inflation to 2018 levels

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010; 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Table 5: Owner- vs. Renter-Occupied Housing Units: 2013 vs. 2018

	OWNER-OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS		RENTER-OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS	
	2013	2018	2013	2018
Upper Gwynedd Township	74.8%	69.7%	25.2%	30.3%
North Wales Borough	65.7%	74.0%	34.3%	26.0%
Lansdale Borough	57.0%	51.5%	43.0%	48.5%
Lower Gwynedd Township	71.7%	75.3%	28.3%	24.7%
Montgomery Township	91.0%	88.9%	9.0%	11.1%
Towamencin Township	71.8%	70.0%	28.2%	30.0%
Worcester Township	83.5%	82.1%	16.5%	17.9%
Montgomery County	73.2%	71.8%	26.8%	28.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 and 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Economic Characteristics

Income, Poverty, and Unemployment Characteristics

In 2018, the median household income for Upper Gwynedd Township was $92,663, approximately $4,500 more than the county-wide median and more than $30,000 greater than the median value for Pennsylvania as-a-whole. Upper Gwynedd Township's unemployment rate is similar to Montgomery County, the State, and neighboring municipalities. In addition, the township's poverty rate is lower than the neighboring boroughs, Montgomery County, and the State (see Table 6 below).

Educational Attainment

A community's educational attainment level can often indicate the community's overall income potential and economic status. In 2018, 56% of Upper Gwynedd's population had a Bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 48% at the county-level (see Figure 5 below). Only 3% of Upper Gwynedd's population aged 25 and over does not have a high school diploma, which is approximately half of the percentage for the county overall.

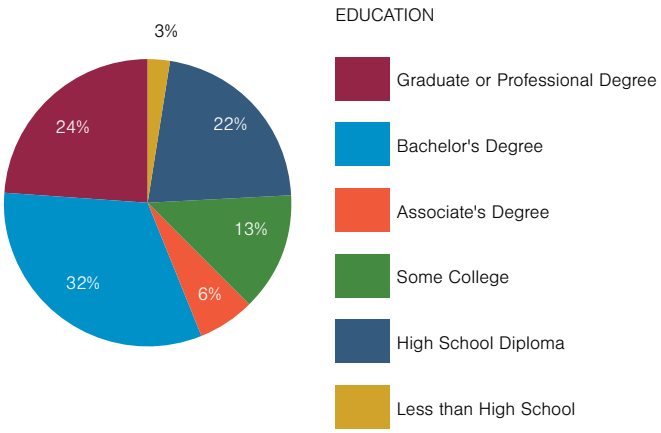
Table 6: Income, Poverty, and Unemployment Characteristics: 2018

	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME	PER CAPITA INCOME	% OF FAMILIES IN POVERTY	% UNEMPLOYED
Upper Gwynedd Township	$92,663	$50,665	2.5%	4.8%
North Wales Borough	$86,583	$40,403	5.8%	4.5%
Lansdale Borough	$65,433	$32,216	5.2%	4.2%
Lower Gwynedd Township	$101,116	$72,340	2.9%	3.8%
Montgomery Township	$104,839	$50,495	2.2%	4.1%
Towamencin Township	$83,295	$45,792	2.2%	3.9%
Worcester Township	$119,179	$62,496	2.0%	6.0%
Montgomery County	$88,166	$46,776	4.1%	4.6%
Pennsylvania State	$59,445	$32,889	8.7%	5.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

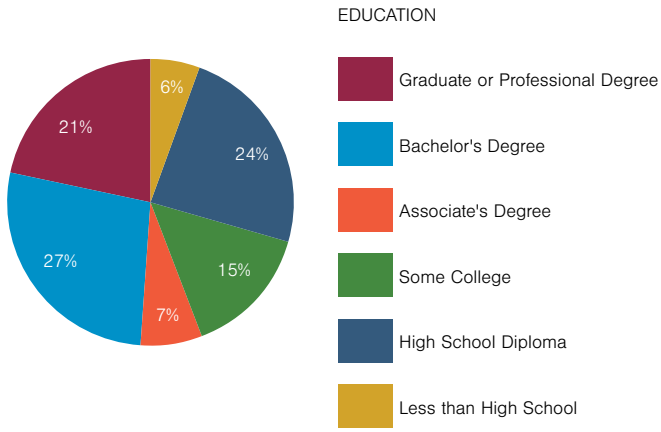
Figure 5: Educational Attainment: 2018

Upper Gwynedd Township



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Montgomery County



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Commercial businesses along West Point Pike

Photo Credit: John Tierney

Historic home along Swedesford Road

Land Use

Upper Gwynedd's existing diverse land uses range from heavy industrial and manufacturing to neighborhood shopping centers, and from distinct residential neighborhoods of varying densities to preserved farmland. Understanding the distribution of the township's land uses currently, trends in recent land development, and the desired future land use pattern of the township is an essential component of the comprehensive plan.

Existing Land Use

Map 2 on the following page shows the existing land use within Upper Gwynedd Township. Figure 6 below shows the existing land use composition of the township in terms of the percent of the township's total land area that is currently used for each land use.

Residential Land

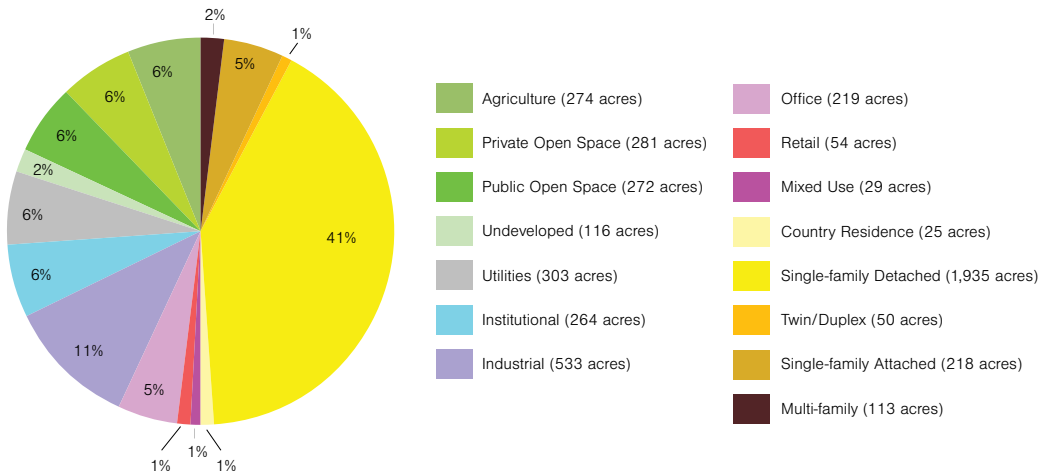
Approximately 50% of the township's land area is in residential use of various types and densities, including single-family detached, single-family attached (townhouses), twins/duplexes, multi-family, and country residence (which are homes on properties of 5 acres or greater). The majority of the township's residential land use, in terms of both number of units and number of acres, is single-family detached.

Commercial Land

Commercial land use, including mixed use, retail, office, and industrial properties, accounts for nearly 18% of the township's land area.

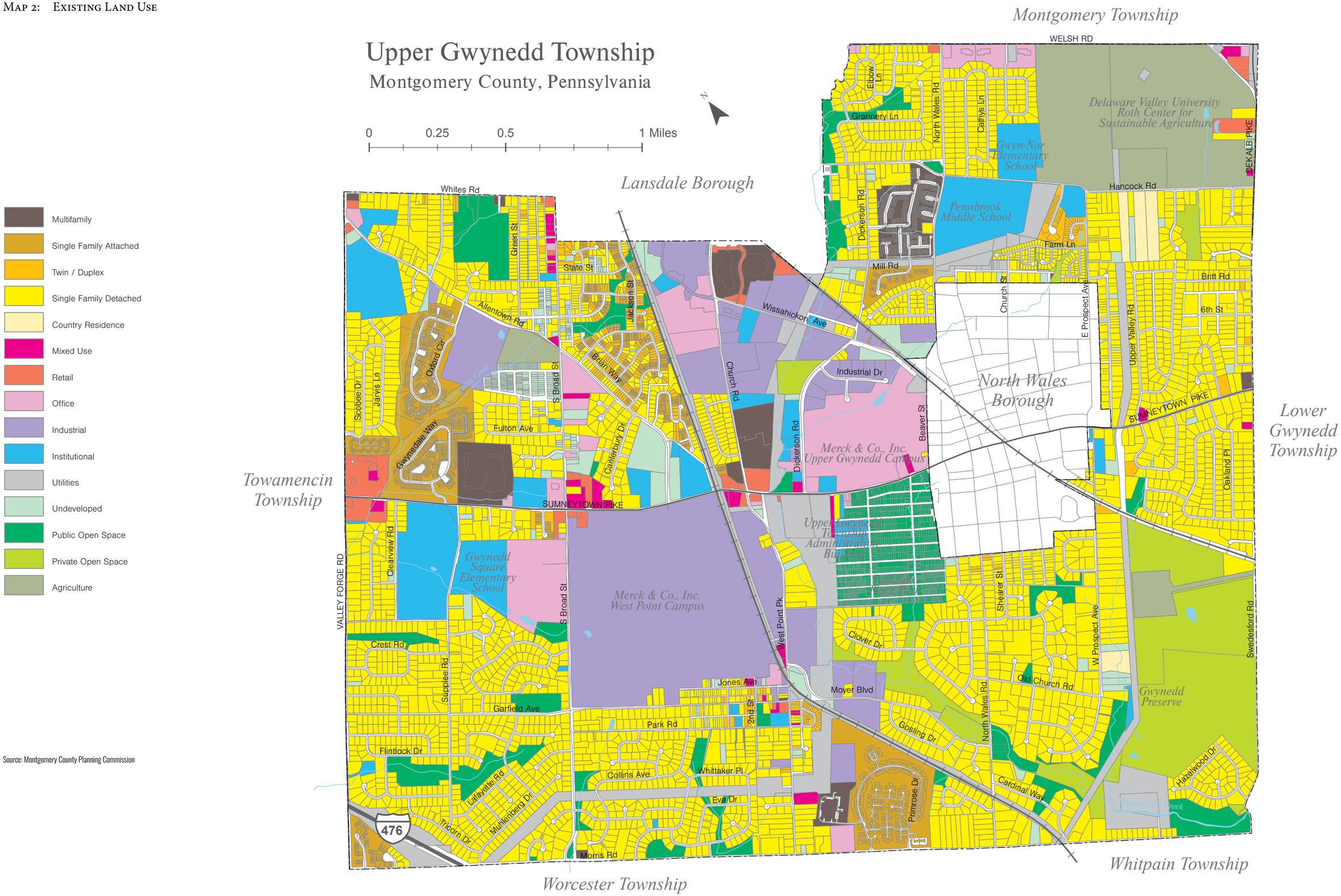
- **Retail** properties make up only 1% of the township's land area. Retail uses are concentrated along Sumneytown Pike between Valley Forge Road and North Wales Borough; as well as scattered commercial properties in West Point Village, along South Broad Street near the border with Lansdale Borough, and near the intersection of Welsh Road and Dekalb Pike.
- **Industrial** properties make up 11% of the township's land area. The largest industrial property is Merck's West Point campus on Sumneytown Pike. Additional industrial properties are located on Wissahickon Avenue, Church Road, Dickerson Road, Moyer Boulevard, and Allentown Road.
- **Office** properties make up 5% of the township's land area. The largest office property is Merck's Upper Gwynedd campus on Sumneytown Pike. Additional office properties are located on South Broad Street, Church Road, Morris Road, and Welsh Road.
- **Mixed use** properties make up only 1% of the township's land area. Mixed use properties are scattered throughout the township with the greatest groupings along South Broad Street and Sumneytown Pike.

Figure 6: Existing Land Use



Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission

Map 2: Existing Land Use



Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission

The Point at Pennbrook Station

Institutional Land

Institutional land uses in Upper Gwynedd Township include schools, religious institutions, the municipal building, two assisted living facilities, three cemeteries, multiple day care centers, and the Upper Gwynedd Fire Department. Institutional uses make up 6% of the land area of the township and are distributed relatively evenly across the township.

Open Space, Agriculture, Utilities, and Undeveloped Land

Collectively, private open space, public open space, and agricultural lands make up 18% of the township's land area. Of these, private open space is the largest category, including lands owned by conservation organizations. In general, communal lands associated with condominium and townhouse developments are shown as residential land use in Map 2. Public open space is primarily composed of township-owned parks and open lands.

Four parcels totaling approximately 274 acres are currently classified as agricultural land use, including the Roth and Rupp farms in the northeastern corner of the township, which are both permanently preserved through the Montgomery County Farmland Preservation Program.

Utilities, including power substations, wastewater treatment plants, transmission line corridors, and railroads make up 6% of the township's land area. Utility land uses are located throughout the township.

Approximately 116 acres, or approximately 2.5% of the township's land area, is undeveloped.

Recent Land Developments

As part of the existing land use analysis and future land use planning, recent land developments were evaluated and compiled for the time period between January 1, 2003 and December 31, 2019. This time period was selected so as to include all developments that have occurred since land use change was analyzed for the time period between 1971 and 2002 for the township's 2004 comprehensive plan update.

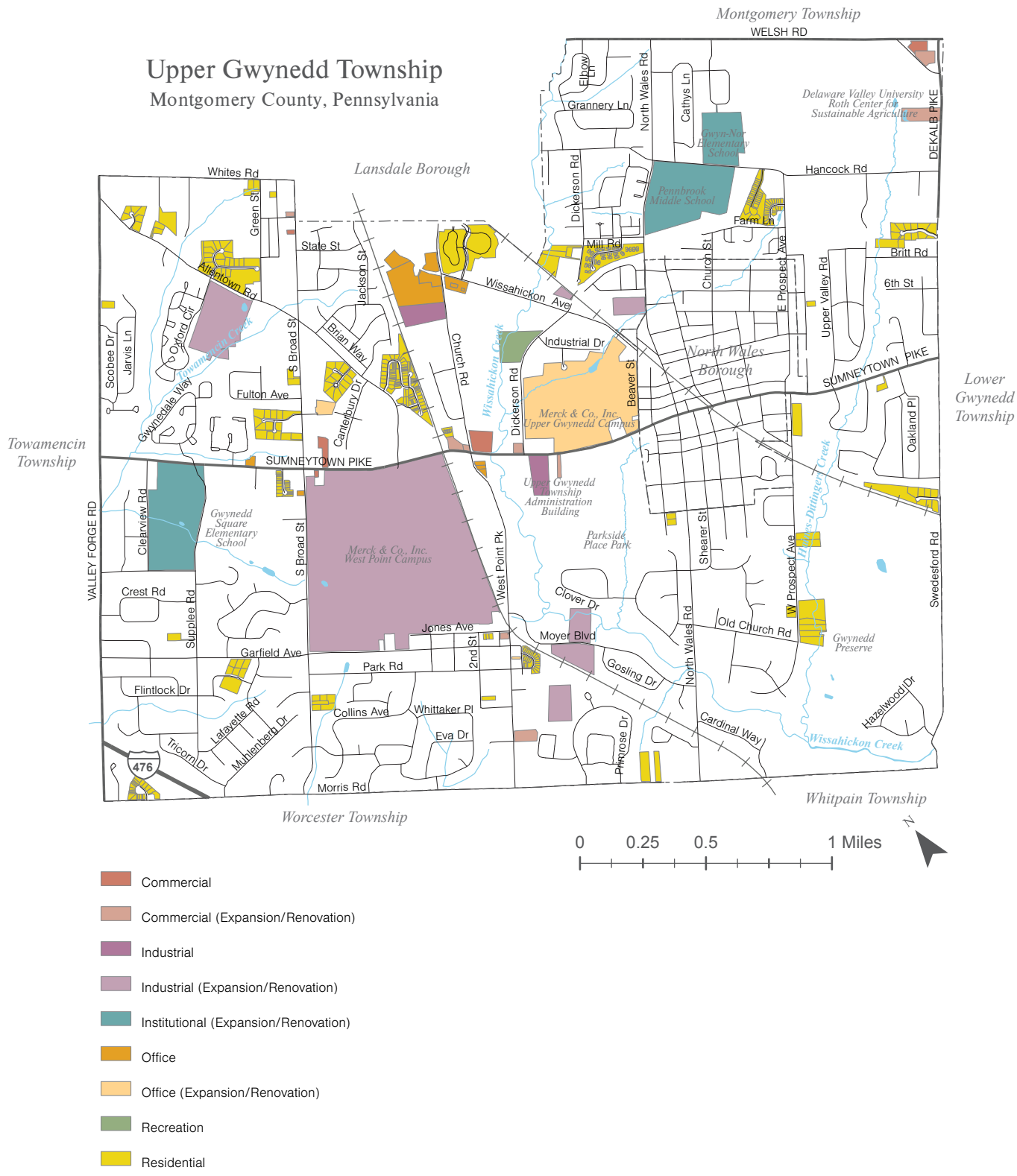
Map 3 on the following page shows the locations of completed or recently proposed developments and subdivisions throughout the township between 2003 and 2019, classified into general land use categories. The characteristics of these recent developments are summarized in Table 7 below for each land use category.

Table 7: Characteristics of Recent Land Developments: 2003-2019

LAND USE CATEGORY		NEW BUILDING AREA (SQ. FT.)	NEW DWELLING UNITS
Residential	Single-Family Detached	--	163
	Single-Family Attached	--	181
	Multi-family	--	346
Commercial		41,428	--
Commercial - Expansion/Renovations		9,259	--
Office		308,408	--
Office - Expansion/Renovations		79,689	--
Institutional - Expansion/Renovations		95,833	--
Industrial		182,537	--
Industrial - Expansion/Renovations		557,097	--
TOTAL		**1,274,251 square feet**	**690 dwelling units**

Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission, Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, Upper Gwynedd Township

Map 3: Recent Land Developments: 2003-2019



Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission, Upper Gwynedd Township

Residential Development Patterns

A total of 690 residential units were constructed or proposed between 2003 and 2019. The new housing units developed include a wide-range of housing types including single-family detached, twins, and townhouses. The only multi-family residential development constructed during this time period was the 346-unit Station Square development (now known as The Point at Pennbrook Station). In addition, several age-restricted housing developments were constructed in the township during this time period. A number of the smaller residential subdivisions in the past few years have created "flag lots" which are lots that do not have a primary frontage on a public street, but rather have access via a narrow strip of land.

Commercial Development Patterns

A total of 41,428 square feet of new commercial development occurred during this time period. In addition, multiple projects to expand or renovate existing commercial properties also occurred resulting in an additional 9,259 square feet of commercial building area.

Office Development Patterns

A total of 308,408 square feet of new office development occurred between 2003 and 2019. In addition, office expansion projects creating 79,689 square feet of office building area were completed. Office developments during this time period were concentrated in the north-central portion of the township along Pennbrook Parkway, Wissahickon Avenue, and Church Road.

Institutional Development Patterns

All institutional development that occurred between 2003 and 2019 were expansions and renovations to existing institutional properties, including the Township Administration Building and the Corpus Christi school.

Industrial Development Patterns

New industrial developments between 2003 and 2019 resulted in 182,537 square feet of building area. In addition, multiple projects to expand or renovate existing industrial properties, including several projects on Merck's West Point campus, also created 557,097 square feet of industrial building area.

Overall Observations

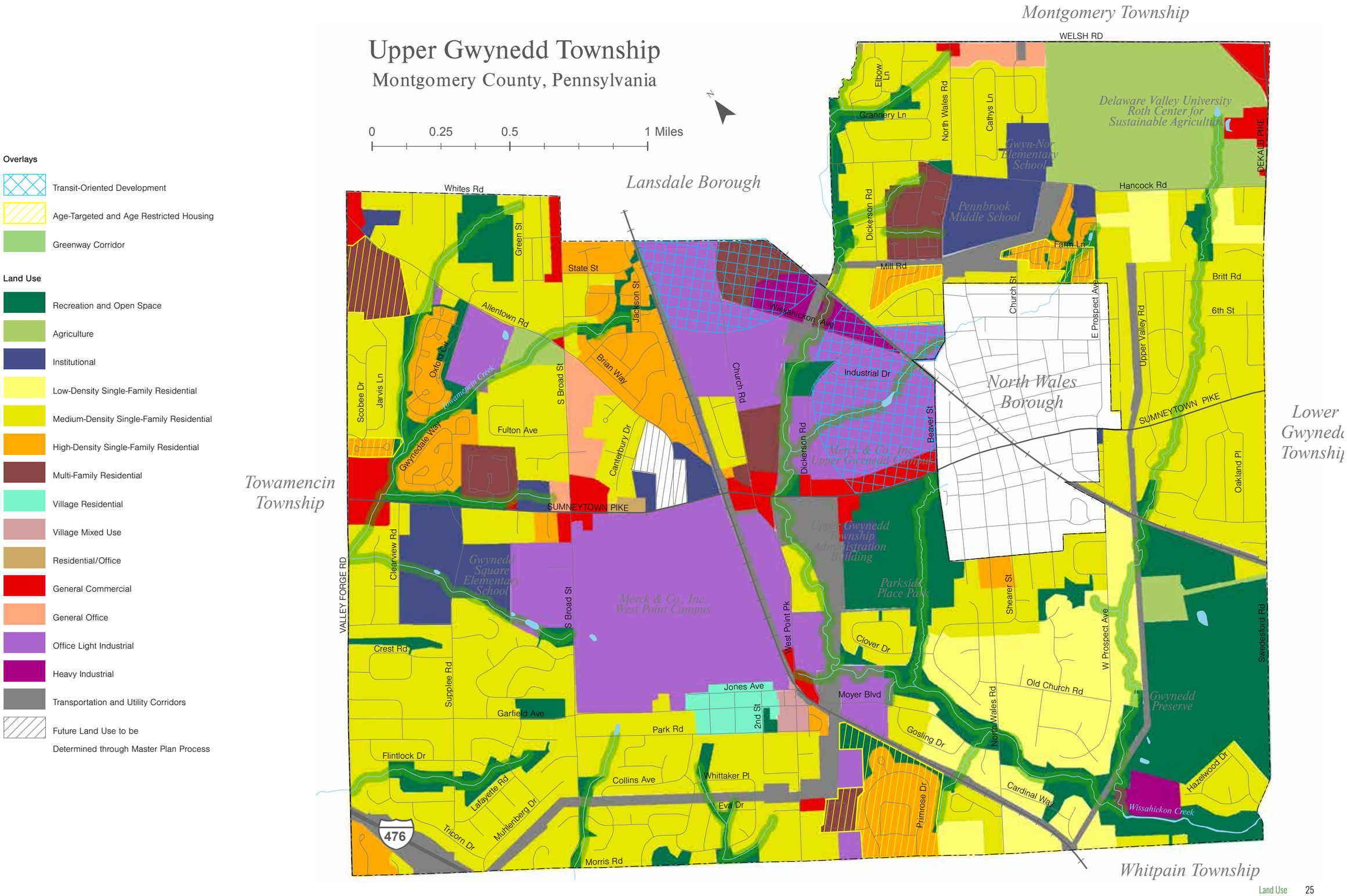
Except for one multi-family residential development, all of the new residential units developed since the last comprehensive plan, have been either single-family detached or single-family attached units. Looking to the future, it is unlikely that large new residential developments will occur due to reduced land availability. However, demand for new housing in the township is expected to remain high, meaning that small-scale subdivisions and infill residential development are likely to continue.

In terms of non-residential land development, it is anticipated that expansions and modernizations of existing commercial properties will continue. However, other than targeted redevelopment along Sumneytown Pike and within the Transit-Oriented Development areas (see Future Land Use discussion below), major new commercial developments are not expected to occur due to the scarcity of vacant commercial land.

Future Land Use

The Future Land Use Plan (see Map 4 on the following page) recognizes the economic and social benefits of the township's strong commercial land use component and identifies areas where new land uses and investment could revitalize and reconnect neighborhoods and create opportunities for targeted commercial area revitalization. The importance of maintaining the township's established residential neighborhoods and open spaces is also reflected in the Future Land Use Plan. Although the Future Land Use Plan is not a zoning map and does not affect the township's current zoning ordinances and maps, it should serve as a guide for future municipal ordinance amendments and regulations that relate to the township's desired land use distribution and characteristics moving forward.

The Upper Gwynedd 2040 Future Land Use Plan is generally consistent with the future land use categories in the Montgomery County Future Land Use Plan. Other than township parkland, preserved farmland, and other conservation lands, the entire township is shown as part of the Designated Growth Area in the "Development Potential Map" in the Montgomery County Comprehensive Plan: *Montco 2040: A Shared Vision*.


Upper Gwynedd Township
Montgomery County, Pennsylvania
0
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N
Overlays
Transit-Oriented Development
Age-Targeted and Age Restricted Housing
Greenway Corridor
Land Use
Recreation and Open Space
Agriculture
Institutional
Low-Density Single-Family Residential
Medium-Density Single-Family Residential
High-Density Single-Family Residential
Multi-Family Residential
Village Residential
Village Mixed Use
Residential/Office
General Commercial
General Office
Office Light Industrial
Heavy Industrial
Transportation and Utility Corridors
Future Land Use to be
Determined through Master Plan Process
Montgomery Township
Lansdale Borough
North Wales Borough
Towamencin Township
Whitpain Township
Lower Gwynedd Township
WELSH RD
Whites Rd
Green St
State St
Jackson St
Allentown Rd
Wissahickon Ave
Elbow Ln
Grannery Ln
North Wales Rd
Cathys Ln
Delaware Valley University Roth Center for Sustainable Agriculture
DEKALB PIKE
Gwyn-Nor Elementary School
Hancock Rd
Pennbrook Middle School
Dickerson Rd
Mill Rd
Farm Ln
Church St
E Prospect Ave
Britt Rd
6th St
Upper Valley Rd
Oxford Cir
Towamencin Creek
Brian Way
Church Rd
Industrial Dr
Scobee Dr
Jarvis Ln
S Broad St
Gwynedale Way
Fulton Ave
Canterbury Dr
Merck & Co., Inc. Upper Gwynedd Campus
Beaver St
SUMNEYTOWN PIKE
Oakland Pl
Upper Gwynedd Township Administration Building
Clearview Rd
Gwynedd Square Elementary School
Merck & Co., Inc. West Point Campus
West Point Pk
Parkside Place Park
Shearer St
W Prospect Ave
Swedesford Rd
VALLEY FORGE RD
Crest Rd
Supplee Rd
Clover Dr
Jones Ave
Moyer Blvd
Old Church Rd
Gwynedd Preserve
Garfield Ave
2nd St
Park Rd
Gosling Dr
North Wales Rd
Flintlock Dr
Lafayette Rd
Collins Ave
Whittaker Pl
Eva Dr
Primrose Dr
Cardinal Way
Hazelwood Dr
Wissahickon Creek
Mühlenberg Dr
Tricorn Dr
476
Morris Rd

The Point at Pennbrook Station

The following general future land use categories are shown on the Future Land Use Plan and represent major categories of land use type and function as they relate to the township's desired future development characteristics. It is intended that the recommendations and strategies described throughout the comprehensive plan, including the specific Focus Area Plans, will result in land use and development patterns similar to that shown in the Future Land Use Plan.

Future Land Use Categories

The future land use for the three undeveloped parcels on Allentown Road shown with gray hatching on Map 4 on the previous page will be determined through a subsequent master planning process. Please see the Sumneytown Pike West Corridor section of the Focus Areas chapter for more information regarding the recommended master planning process for these parcels.

Agriculture

Those lands that are actively being used for farming, or are Act 319 properties, where preservation of the land for agriculture or open space is desired.

Recreation and Open Space

Publicly- and privately-owned lands used for recreation and sports facilities. Permanently preserved open space, such as lands owned by Wissahickon Trails and Natural Lands, are also shown in this category. The preservation of these lands for recreation is strongly desired to support the needs of the township's residents.

Institutional

Large, established institutions such as churches, schools, cemeteries, and municipal facilities. The continuation of the use of these lands for institutional use is desired to support the needs of the community.

Low-Density Single-Family Residential

Predominantly single-family detached homes on lots of one acre or greater; however some neighborhoods in this land use category were developed under township regulations that allow for cluster development where smaller individual lot sizes are created in exchange for natural resource and open space preservation.

Agriculture

Recreation and Open Space

Institutional

Medium-Density Single-Family Residential

Predominantly single-family detached homes on lots of less than one acre. Appropriate secondary land uses include recreation and institutional land uses. Sidewalks provide pedestrian connections between individual neighborhoods and amenities such as schools, parks, and commercial areas.

High-Density Single-Family Residential

A range of residential dwelling types, including single-family detached, twins, duplexes, quadraplexes, and townhouses on smaller lots (generally less than one-quarter acre) - sometimes mixed within the same block. Appropriate secondary land uses include recreation and institutional land uses. Sidewalks provide pedestrian connections between individual neighborhoods and amenities such as schools, parks, and commercial areas.

Multi-Family Residential

Multi-family developments made up of buildings with three or more residential units in each building, generally consisting of apartment complexes or condominium buildings. These areas are generally located along arterial roads. Multi-family developments incorporate amenities such as walking trails and recreational facilities.

Village Residential

Mix of residential dwelling types, conversion of single-family homes to multiple units, preservation of historic structures is desired. Sidewalks provide pedestrian connections to nearby amenities such as West Point Park and the Village Mixed Use area.

Medium-Density Single-Family Residential

High-Density Single-Family Residential

Multi-Family Residential

Village Residential

Village Mixed Use

Mix of low-impact commercial uses that support the needs of the village residents, including bakeries, cafes, restaurants, gift boutiques, and salons. Significant traffic generation is not desired due to proximity to residential neighborhoods.

Residential/Office

Low-impact office uses, or conversion of residential dwellings to offices, to serve as a transition and buffer between single-family detached neighborhoods and arterial roads.

General Commercial

Wide range of retail, restaurant, office, and personal service uses – either on individual sites or in shopping centers. Streetscape design, pedestrian connections, transit facility enhancements (where applicable), stormwater management, and green parking improvements will be encouraged in these areas as redevelopment occurs.

Village Mixed Use

General Commercial

General Office

Medical and professional offices – either on individual sites or in small office park developments. Streetscape design, pedestrian connections, stormwater management, and green parking improvements will be encouraged in these areas as redevelopment occurs. Significant traffic generation is not desired due to proximity to residential neighborhoods.

Office Light Industrial

Mix of office and warehouse or flex/light industrial space, office parks, business centers, and self-storage facilities. New light industrial uses such as artisan manufacturing, co-working, and craft breweries and distilleries are encouraged. As redevelopment occurs, additional amenities and improvements related to green parking and pedestrian circulation will be integrated, where appropriate. A 50-foot-wide landscaped buffer should be provided where this land use abuts a residential land use, including if the residential land use is across a street, on the other side of a railroad right-of-way, or located in an adjacent municipality.

Heavy Industrial

Established heavy industrial uses throughout the township. A 50-foot-wide landscaped buffer should be provided where this land use abuts a residential land use, including if the residential land use is across a street, on the other side of a railroad right-of-way, or located in an adjacent municipality.

Office Light Industrial

Transportation and Utility Corridors

Linear corridors used for utility transmission and transportation corridors (highways and railroads) to connect Upper Gwynedd to the larger region. Some of these corridors, especially the transmission line corridors, present unique opportunities to explore the creation of additional trail connections or stormwater management facilities.

Transportation and Utility Corridors

Overlays

The Future Land Use Plan also shows three overlays which reflect more specific information about where certain land uses are most appropriate.

Transit-Oriented Development

Areas of land within ½-mile of a train station where a mix of land uses is desired and a greater intensity of development can be accommodated by focusing on enhancing the transit connections.

See the Economic Development chapter for more information.

Age-Targeted and Age-Restricted Housing

Multiple age-targeted and age-restricted housing developments have been constructed in the township representing a mix of residential dwelling types including townhouses and multi-family residential. Some of these developments, but not all, include complementary services and additional support for a range of individual medical needs and other personal assistance.

See the Housing & Neighborhoods chapter for more information.

Age-Targeted and Age-Restricted Housing

Greenway Corridor

Areas of land within 100 feet of a stream or water body where existing vegetation should be preserved and where green connections could be provided.

See the Environmental Sustainability chapter for more information.

Greenway Corridor

Upper Gwynedd residence

Housing & Neighborhoods

Summary of Recommendations

- *Encourage the conservation of existing housing units and maintain the overall scale and character of the township's established residential neighborhoods.*
- *Provide sufficient housing opportunities to meet the housing needs of the forecasted population growth over the next 20 years based on population forecasts from DVRPC while continuing to provide for a variety of housing types and densities.*

Background

Residential land use is typically the most prominent land use within any community. The township's current and future population is supported by the township's diverse housing supply and established neighborhoods. Upper Gwynedd's range of housing types and neighborhoods is part of what makes the township a desirable place to live.

According to the comprehensive plan community survey, 97% of township residents who responded stated that they would rate the township as an "excellent" or "good" place to live. Neighborhood character is the number one township characteristic that drew people to relocate to the township. In addition, over 79% of survey respondents indicated that maintaining a "safe, quiet, family-friendly neighborhood character" was one of their top three priorities for their neighborhood.

Housing Distribution

Housing Unit Characteristics

Based on recent U.S. Census data, Upper Gwynedd Township has 15,849 residents living in a total of 6,600 housing units.[1] Approximately 70% of all housing units are owner-occupied with the remaining 30% of homes being renter-occupied units. The current distribution of housing units by housing unit type is shown in Map 5 on the following page. Nearly half of the township's housing units are single-family detached homes on individual lots (see Table 8 below).

The second most common housing type is multifamily residential, which makes up approximately 29% of the township's housing.

Townhouses and twins are two types of single-family attached housing where homes share one or more party walls with adjacent units. This type of housing makes up over 23% of the township's housing stock.[2]

Although the township's early agrarian development dates back to the late 1600s, nearly 80% of the township's current homes were developed between 1950 and 2000. Map 6 on page 34 illustrates the approximate age of the township's housing stock based on the year built data provided by the Montgomery County Board of

1 U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

2 U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Table 8: Housing Units by Type: 2018

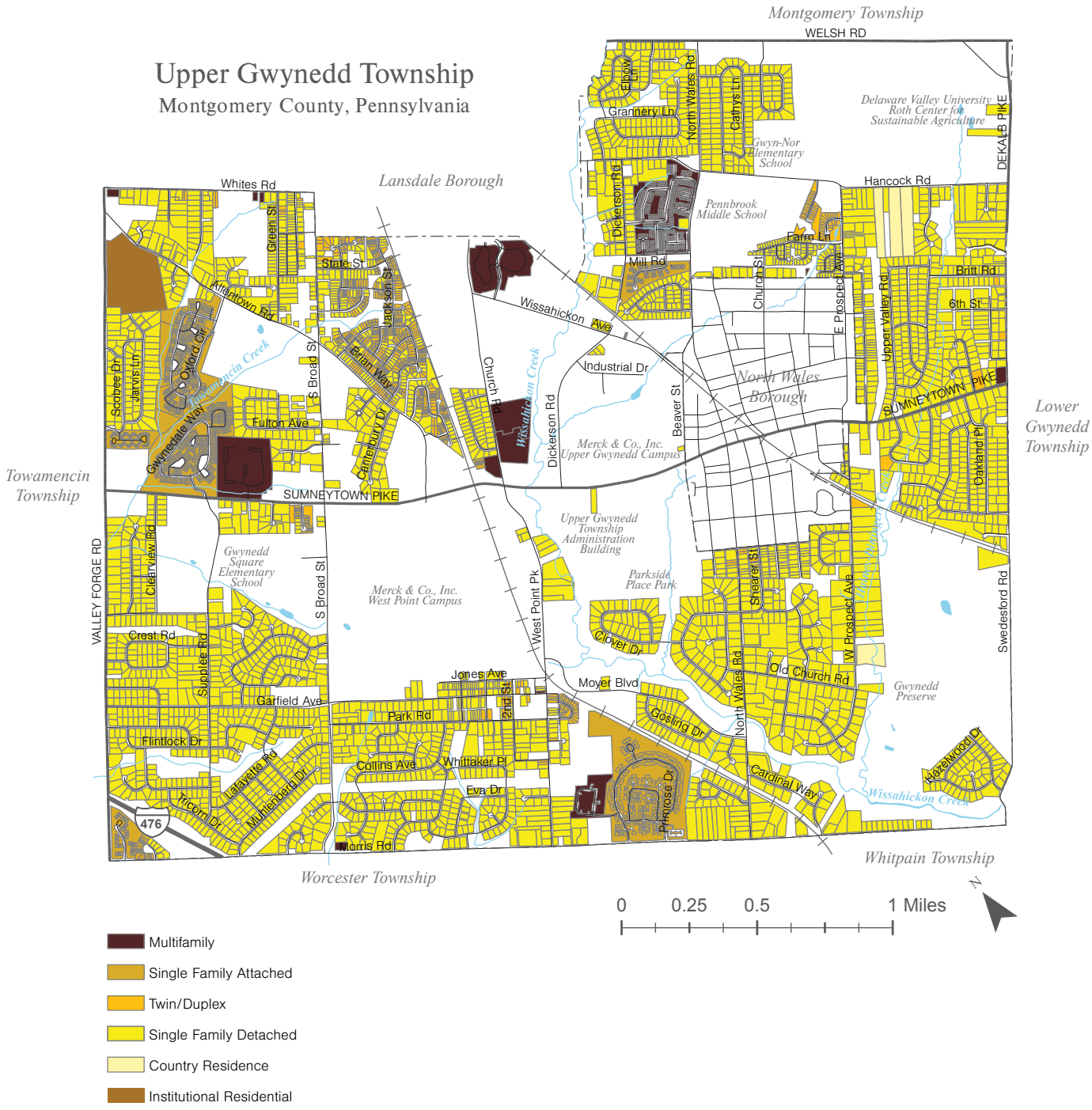
HOUSING UNIT TYPE	NUMBER OF HOUSING UNITS	% OF HOUSING UNITS
Single Family Detached	3,127	47.4%
Single Family Attached	1,533	23.2%
Multifamily	1,899	28.8%
• 2-4 units/building	267	4.0%
• 5-9 units/building	309	4.7%
• 10+ units/building	1,323	20.0%
Mobile Homes	41	0.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year

Townhomes, such as these in the Stony Creek Village development, account for over 23% of the township's housing stock.

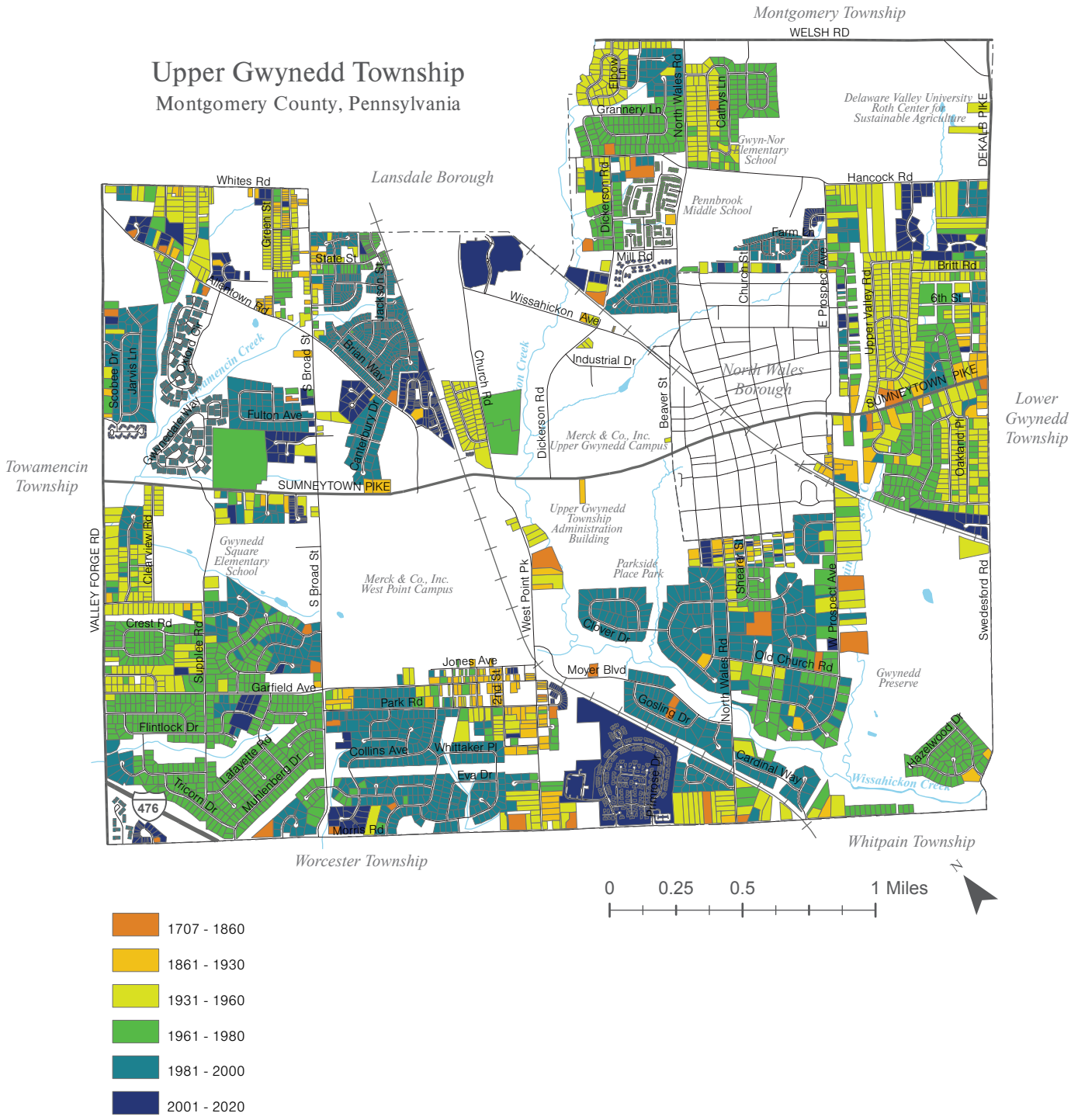
Although the township has a long history, only 8% of the township's current housing stock was constructed prior to 1950.

Map 5: Housing Units by Type



Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission

Map 6: Housing Units by Year Built



Source: Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals

The most recent multi-family residential development in the township is The Point at Pennbrook Station near the border with Lansdale Borough.

Twins and townhouses account for over 60% of new housing built in the township since 2010.

Assessment Appeals. In recent years, new single-family residential development has primarily taken the form of infill development where a large lot is subdivided to create one or two additional lots. In addition, several larger residential developments, including The Point at Pennbrook Station and The Reserve at Gwynedd were developed as part of the comprehensive redevelopment of formerly commercial sites.

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code requires that all municipal comprehensive plans include a plan to meet the current and future housing needs of the community's population. Specifically, the housing plan should address the "accommodation of expected new housing in different dwelling types and at appropriate densities for households of all income levels." In general, a community that provides for a range of permitted residential dwelling types and densities in their zoning ordinance creates opportunities for potential residents with a range of household incomes to find housing to meet their needs. Table 8 on page 32 shows that Upper Gwynedd's current housing stock of 6,600 housing units is distributed between approximately 47% low-density housing (single-family detached units) and 53% high-density housing (all other types of housing), which demonstrates the diversity of housing type options in the township.

Table 9 below summarizes recent housing development in the township. Since 2010, a total of 224 new housing units have been built. In 2019, 35 new housing units were constructed, which is

Table 9: Recent Housing Units Built by Type: 2010-2019

YEAR	SINGLE-FAMILY DETACHED	SINGLE-FAMILY ATTACHED	MULTIFAMILY	TOTAL
2010	*9*	*18*	*32*	*59*
2011	*8*	*23*	*6*	*37*
2012	*3*	*11*	*0*	*14*
2013	*3*	*21*	*0*	*24*
2014	*2*	*8*	*0*	*10*
2015	*6*	*15*	*0*	*21*
2016	*5*	*3*	*0*	*8*
2017	*0*	*7*	*0*	*7*
2018	*3*	*6*	*0*	*9*
2019	*10*	*25*	*0*	*35*
Total Units Built 2010-2019	*49*	*137*	*38*	*224*
Percent of Units Built 2010-2019	*21.9%*	*61.2%*	*17.0%*	

Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission

Building Better Townhome Communities

Townhome developments are a common housing type in Upper Gwynedd Township with large developments such as Gwynedale and Stonegate being constructed in the 1980s and 1990s. Townhomes can be an attractive housing choice for many households based on factors such as affordability and reduced home maintenance responsibilities. The street layout, building design, and amenities in new townhome developments can affect how well the new development fits into established communities.

The Montgomery County Planning Commission guidebook "Building Better Townhome Communities" offers several best practices to help new townhome communities better meet the changing needs of residents and retain long-term value for the municipalities that they are located in.

For more information visit: https://www.montcopa.org/DocumentCenter/View/19028/Building-Better-Townhome-Communities_Final-webversion

Examples of Townhome Design in Other Communities

Street trees within townhome developments can contribute to a more aesthetically-pleasing streetscape and neighborhood.

Rear-loaded garages, which are often accessed by common alleys, can be encouraged to help improve the appearance and walkability of a development.

Developments with an integrated system of sidewalks and pedestrian walkways allow residents to more easily access the amenities within the development.

The architectural style and range of building materials utilized within a development can impact the desirability and long-term value of a townhouse community. Because several townhome units are attached side-by-side in a single structure, creating visual interest by articulating individual units allows each unit to have its own identity.

the greatest amount of new housing constructed in the township in a single year since 2011. Overall, over 60% of the new housing units built since 2010 have been single-family attached units, commonly townhouses or twins. No new multifamily units have been constructed in the township since 2011.

Forecasted Housing Need

Upper Gwynedd is expected to see an increase in population size of 1,125 individuals between 2015 and 2045 based on population forecasts from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)[3]. Table 10 below shows a calculation for the estimated future 2045 housing demand for the township based on the forecasted 2045 population and other demographic factors.

Table 10: Forecasted Housing Need

UPPER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP	
2045 Forecasted Population *Source: DVRPC*	*17,053*
2045 Forecasted Group Quarters Population (2018 value: 1.97%) *Source: U.S. Census Bureau*	*336*
2045 Forecasted Household Population (Forecasted population minus forecasted group quarters population)	*16,717*
2045 Forecasted Average Household Size *Source: MCPC*	*2.43*
2045 Forecasted Number of Households (Forecasted household population divided by forecasted average household size)	*6,879*
Estimated Total Number of Housing Units Needed by 2045 (Forecasted number of households plus the number of forecasted vacant units (2018 value: 2.9%)) *Source: U.S. Census Bureau*	*7,079*
2018 Total Number of Housing Units *Source: U.S. Census Bureau*	*6,600*
Estimated Number of Housing Units Remaining to be Built by 2045 (Total estimated number of housing units minus housing units built as of 2018)	*7,079* *- 6,600* **479**

Group quarters are defined by the U.S. Census Bureau as "places where people live or stay in a group living arrangement. These places are owned or managed by an entity or organization that provides residents with housing and/or services." Source: https://2020census.gov/en/conducting-the-count/gq.html

3 Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. "County and Municipal-Level Population Forecasts, 2015-2045." https://www.dvrpc.org/webmaps/PopForecast/

Diverse Housing Types

Upper Gwynedd Township offers diverse housing options for residents, ranging from mid-rise apartments and garden apartments to townhouses and single-family detached homes.

Multifamily units at The Reserve at Gwynedd

Willowyck Apartments on Sumneytown Pike

Townhouses near Allentown Road

Single-family detached home

Based on this analysis, it is estimated that 479 new housing units would need to be constructed by 2045 to accommodate the forecasted increase in the township's population over this time period. To meet this forecasted housing need, an average of 18 housing units per year would need to be constructed over the next 27 years.

As a point of reference, a total of 224 dwelling units were constructed during the ten-year time period between 2010 and 2019 (see Table 9 on page 35). Because there is relatively little land left for the construction of new homes on undeveloped lots, additional housing units will likely primarily be created through small-scale infill development.

In addition, the areas around the Pennbrook and North Wales train stations are considered areas for targeted development, including higher-density residential that would be walkable to the train station. *See the Economic Development and Transportation chapters for more discussion of transit-oriented development.*

Housing Values

Housing prices and property values can fluctuate over time based on factors such as inflation, market conditions, and development trends; however a home is typically considered affordable if the homeowner or renter's total housing costs do not exceed 30% of the household's total income. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, over 26% of Upper Gwynedd households have housing costs that are greater than 30% of their household income. [4] A greater percentage of renter households (39%) spend more than 30% of their household income on housing costs than do owner-occupied households (21%).[5]

Including a household's costs related to transportation in this calculation can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the general affordability of living in Upper Gwynedd Township. For example, transportation costs are typically lower for communities with convenient access to public transit, walkable communities, and communities with a high number of jobs in close proximity (and therefore a shorter commute to work). It is typical to see housing costs decrease the further a community is located from urban centers. However, a household's transportation costs often rise the further the home is located from urban centers due to a lower-density land use pattern and more limited access to alternative modes of transportation.

The Center for Neighborhood Technology (CNT) has created a way to model the typical transportation costs for a community based on characteristics such as employment access, transit access and connectivity, household and population density, and intersection density. Typically, if the combined housing and transportation costs for a household do not exceed 45% of the household's income, the community is considered affordable.

Based on the Center for Neighborhood Technology's analysis, Upper Gwynedd's household transportation costs range between 20% and 24% of the median household income. In total, Upper Gwynedd

4 U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

5 U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Housing development in recent years has often occurred through the subdivision of existing, large lots.

According to the 2019 community survey, "maintaining neighborhood character" is a priority for township residents.

households spend between 47% and 69% of their household income on combined housing and transportation costs each year.[6] Therefore, all areas of the township exceed the combined total of 45% that is typically considered affordable. However, these percentages are similar to or less than nearby townships such as Lower Gwynedd and Towamencin. As another point of comparison, the county-wide average annual combined housing and transportation costs are 57% of household income.

Aging-in-Place

The comprehensive plan community survey showed that over 60% of respondents who were township residents have lived in the township for more than 10 years. The community survey also asked township residents how long they plan to live in the township and over 43% of respondents indicated that they plan to stay in the township for 20 or more years. This suggests that a large portion of the township's current population may wish to be able to stay in their homes, or at least within the township, as their lifestyles and families continue to evolve.

Aging-in-Place vs. Aging-in-Community

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention define "aging-in-place" as "the ability to live in one's own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income, or ability level" with a focus on ensuring an individual home is accessible and safe.[7]

In recent years, planners have begun promoting a broader "aging-in-community" approach that focuses on the design of the built environment, such as ensuring sidewalks and curb ramps are ADA-compliant. This approach also recommends offering a broad range of housing options and integrating land uses, so that individuals can remain comfortable and independent within the same community, but not necessarily in the same housing unit.

6 The Center for Neighborhood Technology. "The Housing and Transportation Affordability Index." http://htaindex.cnt.org

7 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Healthy Places Terminology." https://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/terminology.htm

Upper Gwynedd has multiple active adult communities, such as The Reserve at Gwynedd shown here, in addition to assisted living and rehabilitation centers to serve the specialized needs of the elderly population.

In 2018, nearly 50% of households in Upper Gwynedd Township had one or more persons who were 60 years old or older, an increase of over 4% since 2013 (see Table 3 on page 14). The construction of The Reserve at Gwynedd development with over 400 units of age-restricted housing may account for part of this increase in recent years; however the population may also be aging in general, as indicated by an increase in the median age of the township's population from 39.9 years in 2000 to 44.6 years in 2010.[8]

As they age, many people may choose to remain in their current home; however the township's diverse housing also creates opportunities for individuals and families to move amongst different types of housing units depending on their stage in life, space needs, and other factors such as cost. For example, a young professional or couple may choose to live in an apartment or townhouse community at first; then move to a larger, single-family home as their family grows. As that family's children move out, their housing preferences may change; however, the township's several age-restricted housing developments offer options for downsizing while maintaining access to the township's quality open space resources and employment centers.

There are five age-restricted or age-targeted housing developments in Upper Gwynedd Township (see Map 7 on the following page). These developments account for 1,073 dwelling units and provide a range of housing type options for the township's senior residents ranging from rental apartments at Brittany Pointe Estates to single-family detached homes at The Reserve at Gwynedd.

While most of Upper Gwynedd's age-restricted housing is located within active adult communities where residents live independently, the Brittany Pointe Estates development at the corner of Allentown Road and Valley Forge Road is a Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC) that offers a continuum of housing options, and additional amenities and services, based on individual resident's needs.

Despite the township's diverse age-restricted housing options, only 68% of township residents who responded to the comprehensive plan community survey rated Upper Gwynedd as an "excellent" or "good" place to retire.

In addition to housing options, transportation access, community programs to reduce social isolation, and nearby food stores and pharmacies can all contribute to ensuring Upper Gwynedd remains an attractive place to retire or "age-in-community" generally.

Accessory Dwelling Units

Accessory dwelling units (ADUs), sometimes referred to as "in-law suites" or "granny flats," are living quarters that are secondary to and independent from the primary dwelling unit on the lot. ADUs can be either interior to the primary dwelling unit (e.g., attic space) or detached from the primary dwelling unit (e.g., above a garage).

The Upper Gwynedd Township Zoning Code (section 195-9.F.(1)(g)) currently permits an additional living quarters to be accessory to a single-family detached dwelling. The occupants of the additional living quarters are limited to no more than two persons who are related to the principal occupant of the single-family home and the additional cooking facilities must be removed when the additional living quarters are no longer occupied.

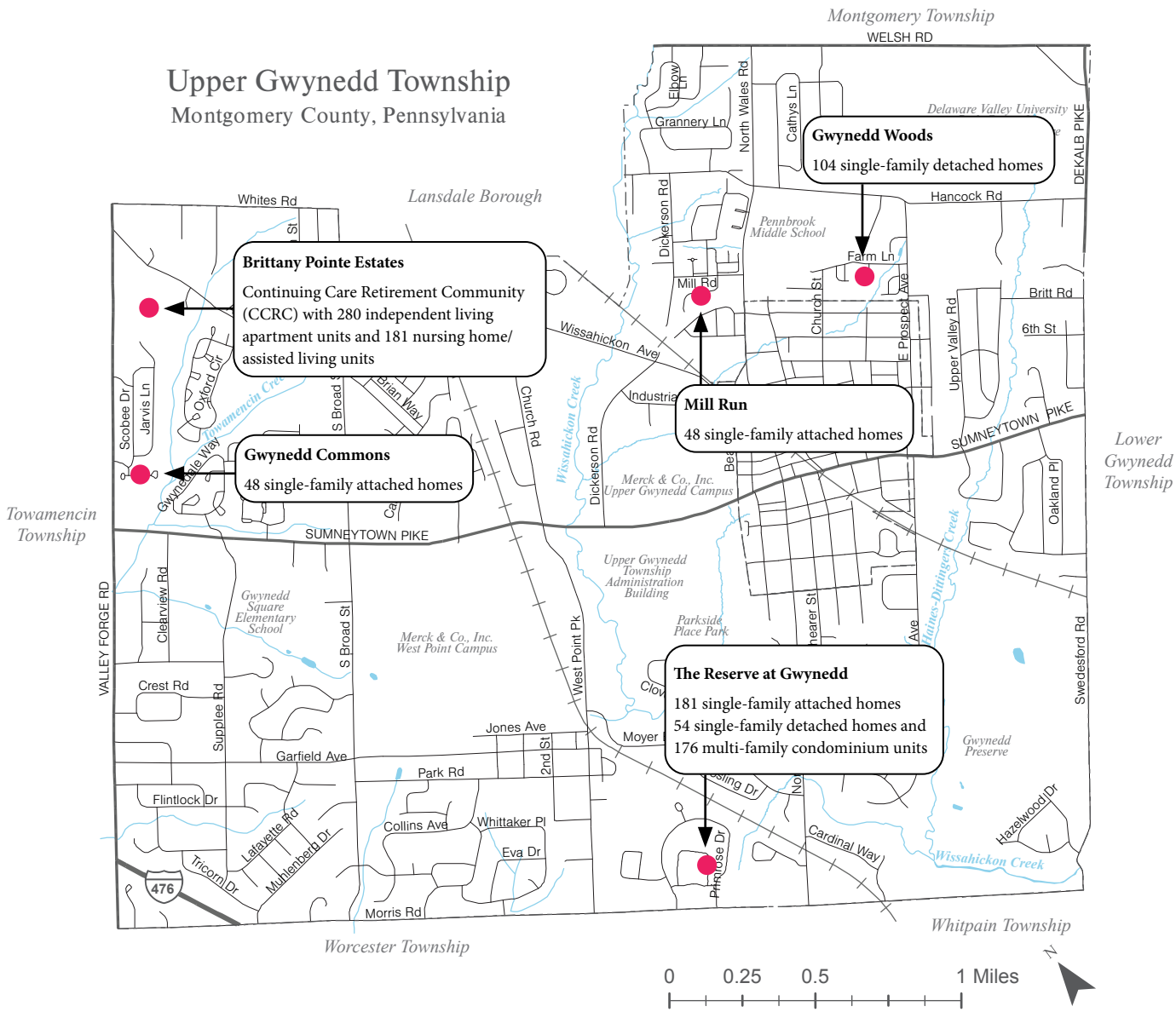
In this sense, accessory dwelling units can allow multiple generations of a family to live together longer by incorporating an additional living unit and kitchen on the same property as the main house.

On the other hand, allowing the addition of an ADU on a large property can also provide continuous income for older individuals, making it more affordable to live in and maintain their homes longer, even after retirement.

Potentially expanding the applicability of ADUs within the township by not limiting the occupants of ADUs to related family members, could create new housing within the community and further support aging-in-place. For example, Lower Merion Township permits ADUs by-right in historic structures and by special exception as an "alternative housing option for the elderly."

8 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census: 2000 and 2010

Map 7: Existing Age-Restricted and Age-Targeted Housing



Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission

Recommendations

See the Land Use Chapter for the desired location of different types of residential land use.

Recommendation 1

Encourage the conservation of existing housing units and maintain the overall scale and character of the township's established residential neighborhoods.

Implementation Strategies

a. Modify the existing residential zoning standards to ensure any new infill development is compatible with each neighborhood's existing character and scale.

b. Update the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance to ensure the design of residential neighborhoods and subdivisions encourages walkability and street interconnections.

c. Enhance the walkability and pedestrian connections within existing neighborhoods. *See the Transportation chapter – Walkability recommendations for more information.*

d. Rezone large residential properties shown as low-density single-family residential on the Future Land Use Plan to a residential zoning district with a one acre per unit maximum density.

Recommendation 2

Provide sufficient housing opportunities to meet the housing needs of the forecasted population growth over the next 20 years based on population forecasts from DVRPC while continuing to provide for a variety of housing types and densities.

Implementation Strategies

a. Consider expanding the existing transit-oriented development (TOD) overlay to include all areas within one-half mile of the Pennbrook and North Wales train stations. Evaluate allowing higher-density residential land uses within the TOD overlay, where appropriate. *See the Economic Development and Transportation chapters for more information on transit-oriented development.*

b. Draft ordinance language to permit the addition of accessory dwelling units to existing single-family detached homes, where appropriate.

c. Work with Montgomery County and adjacent municipalities to explore opportunities to address housing affordability within the region.

Upper Gwynedd residential street

Photo Credit: Cory Lippert

Office building on West Point Pike

Economic Development

Summary of Recommendations

- *Maintain and enhance Upper Gwynedd's established diverse economic base, including commercial corridors, shopping centers, and employment areas.*
- *Continue to build partnerships and support major employers within the township.*
- *Ensure new commercial development and redevelopment incorporates amenities and facilities that encourage walkability and other forms of multi-modal transportation.*
- *Incentivize economic revitalization and redevelopment of vacant and underutilized commercial properties.*
- *Encourage transit-oriented development near SEPTA regional rail stations.*

Commercial Land Use Distribution

Enhancing existing commercial areas by attracting a mixture of high-quality businesses, and implementing physical improvements to the streetscape and walkability of commercial districts, will allow Upper Gwynedd Township to attract new residents. Currently, commercial land uses, including mixed use, retail, office, industrial, and utility properties, account for just over 24% of the township's land area. Map 8 on the following page shows the current geographic distribution of commercial land uses in the township.

According to the comprehensive plan community survey, "redevelopment of vacant properties and shopping centers" is the number one township-wide priority with 53% of survey respondents selecting this as one of their top three priorities.

"[...] we feel like Lansdale/Upper Gwynedd is not as developed, thriving, or exciting as Doylestown and Ambler. If we were to move [...], we would look at areas that have more walking areas, more of a local retail/restaurant presence."

– Community Survey Respondent

Retail and Mixed Use

Retail properties make up just over 1% of the township's land area. Retail uses, including restaurants, are concentrated along Sumneytown Pike and near the intersection of Route 202 and Welsh Road.

Mixed use properties make up less than 1% of the township's land area and are scattered throughout the township with the greatest groupings along South Broad Street near the border with Lansdale Borough, at the intersection of Sumneytown Pike and South Broad Street, and in West Point Village.

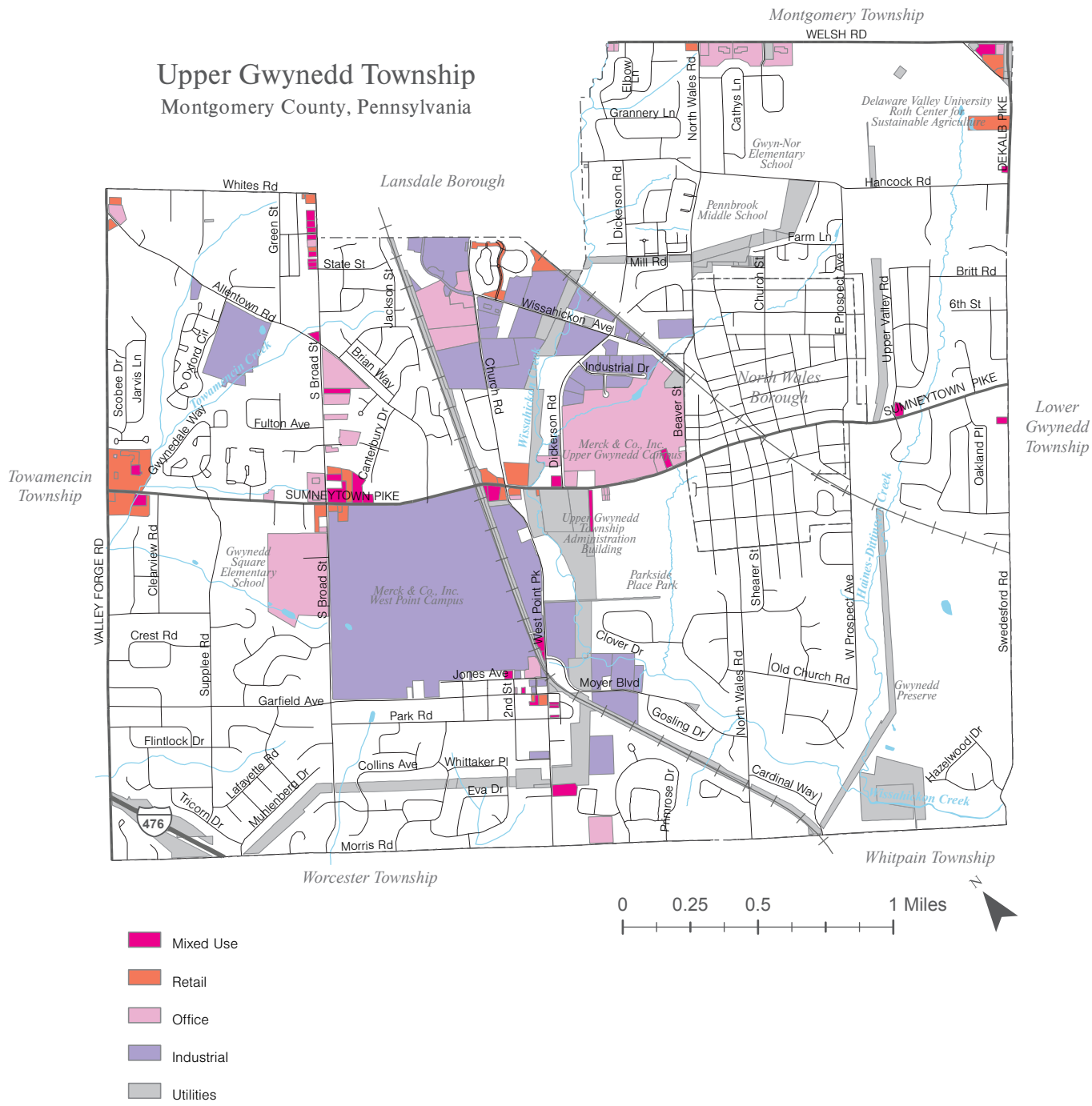
Retail Spending Analysis

A retail spending analysis was conducted for Upper Gwynedd to identify retail categories where there is currently unmet spending potential. The demand for a category of retail products or services is based on the surveyed spending patterns of individual households within certain income brackets, multiplied by the number of households within the study area. This provides an estimate of the demand, or sales potential, for that category of retail goods or services. Typically, food at home (i.e., grocery stores), food away from home (i.e., restaurants), motor vehicle purchases, and gasoline are the highest retail spending categories for households. When the demand, or sales potential, for a certain retail category is greater than the observed actual sales within the

A small grouping of commercial properties, including this restaurant, is located at the intersection of Sumneytown Pike and Dickerson Road.

A new hair salon contributes to the commercial area along South Broad Street near the border with Lansdale Borough.

Map 8: Commercial Land Use



Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission

same geographic area, this indicates that there is likely an opportunity for a new business to provide that particular good or service more locally. Table 11 below displays retail opportunity potential in various retail categories for Upper Gwynedd.

In terms of retail spending, the township has a surplus in electronics and appliance stores, building materials, garden equipment and supply stores, health and personal care stores, shoe stores, and special food services. Retail leakage is occurring in all other retail categories indicating that those who live and work in Upper Gwynedd have more disposable income on average than they are likely to spend at the existing retail establishments in the township. There is potentially more market demand in Upper Gwynedd for commercial retail; however, this should be considered within the context of the several established retail centers within driving distance of the township. For example, the nearby municipalities of North Wales and Lansdale provide strong small town retail experiences; while municipalities including Montgomery, Horsham, and Plymouth have significant groupings of big box retail stores offering goods such as groceries, furniture, and home improvement supplies. Additional big box retail stores are likely not feasible within the township due to the lack of available commercially-zoned land and other factors such as roadway capacity. However, other categories of retail goods and services may be more appropriate and should be targeted for recruitment for Upper Gwynedd. These categories are shown in bold and underlined text in Table 11 below.

The 2019 community survey indicated that the township's retail and restaurant options are not a major reason why people choose to locate in Upper Gwynedd. The survey also provided insights into what types of retail businesses the community would most like to see in the township. Over 82% of respondents indicated that they would like to see more restaurants in the township. More grocery stores, retail shops, and entertainment businesses are also desired.

Table 11: Retail Opportunity Categories

RETAIL OPPORTUNITY	TOWNSHIP BOUNDARY TRADE AREA
≥ $10 Million Unmet Retail Demand	• Automobile Dealer ($51.8 M) • **General Merchandise Store ($50.3 M)** • **Restaurant ($19.0 M)** • **Grocery Store ($19.1 M)** • **Clothing Store ($10.7 M)**
≥ $5 Million and < $10 Million Unmet Retail Demand	• **Sporting Goods, Hobby, Musical Instrument Store ($8.8 M)** • RV, Boat, etc. Dealer ($7.4 M) • **Furniture Store ($7.0 M)** • Gas Station ($6.9 M) • Auto Parts, Accessories, and Tire Store ($3.3 M)
≥ $1 Million and < $5 Million Unmet Retail Demand	• **Home Furnishings Store ($4.1 M)** • **Jewelry, Luggage, Leather Goods Store ($3.7 M)** • **Office Supplies, Stationery, Gift Store ($3.5 M)** • **Specialty Food Store ($2.9 M)** • **Drinking Place ($2.1 M)** • **Book, Periodical, Music Store ($1.4 M)** • Used Merchandise Store ($1.4 M)
< $1 Million Unmet Retail Demand	• **Beer, Wine, Liquor Store ($0.9 M)** • **Florist ($0.6 M)**

Small-Format Grocery Stores

There is only one full-service grocery store located within Upper Gwynedd; however, the township's central location and road network provide access to several grocery store options within a few miles *(see the Community Facilities & Institutions Chapter for a map of food stores in the vicinity)*. Nonetheless, nearly 60% of respondents to the 2019 community survey indicated that they would like to see more grocery stores in the township.

Although available commercially-zoned land large enough to accommodate a traditional full-scale grocery store is scarce, a small-format grocery store (10,000-30,000 square feet) could potentially fit into the community and improve food access for township residents.

With the increasing availability of grocery delivery services, as well as complete meal kits that can be delivered to your home, some major grocery store chains are creating small-format brands that can fit into denser communities. Small chains such as LIDL and ALDI have also been opening stores in suburban settings. In addition, independent food stores and co-ops can provide access to groceries at the neighborhood-level, as well as serve as community gathering places.

Office

Office properties make up just under 5% of the township's land area. Office uses are concentrated along Church Road, Sumneytown Pike, and South Broad Street. Merck & Co., Inc.'s Upper Gwynedd campus, which is over 90 acres, is the township's largest office property.

The township's multiple child care centers, centrally located primarily along Sumneytown Pike, South Broad Street, and Dickerson Road, are convenient to the township's concentrations of office workers. Maintaining and potentially expanding upon this will help to attract office workers and young families to the township.

Industrial & Utilities

Industrial properties make up over 11% of the township's land area. Industrial uses are concentrated along Sumneytown Pike, Allentown Road, Moyer Boulevard, Wissahickon Avenue, and Industrial Drive. Merck & Co., Inc.'s West Point Campus, which is over 300 acres, is the largest industrial property in the township.

Utilities, consisting primarily of transportation corridors, power line corridors, electric substations, and the sewage treatment plant, make up approximately 6.5% of the township's total land area.

Office properties are scattered throughout the township, including this one at South Broad Street and Sumneytown Pike.

Photo Credit: Cory Lippert

Industrial properties, such as this one on Walnut Street, make up over 11% of the township's land area.

Employment

Upper Gwynedd is a net importer of jobs, meaning more non-residents commute into the township to work ,than residents who commute out of the township for work. In fact, in 2015, a total of 25,009 people were employed in the township[1] – over three times the number of township residents who are employed. Therefore, the vast majority of the persons employed in Upper Gwynedd Township commute to work from outside the township.

The daytime spending potential of this large number of daily commuters presents an opportunity to develop additional food and personal service businesses to serve the increased daytime population within the township.

1 County- and Municipal-Level Employment Forecasts, 2015-2045. DVRPC. http://www.dvrpc.org/webmaps/empforecasts/

Figure 7: Resident Job Occupation: 2018

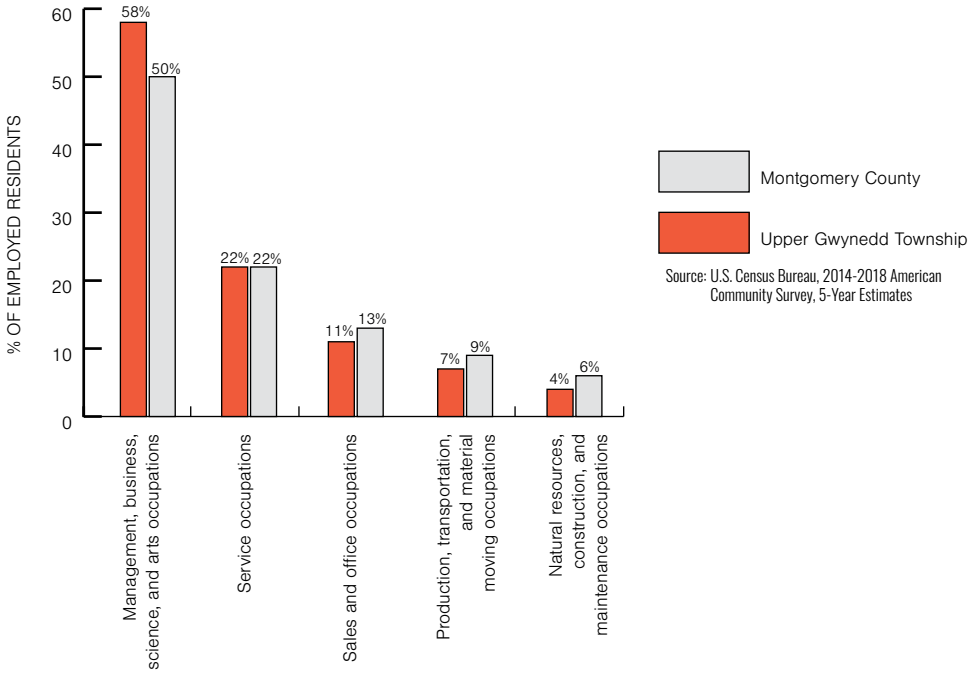
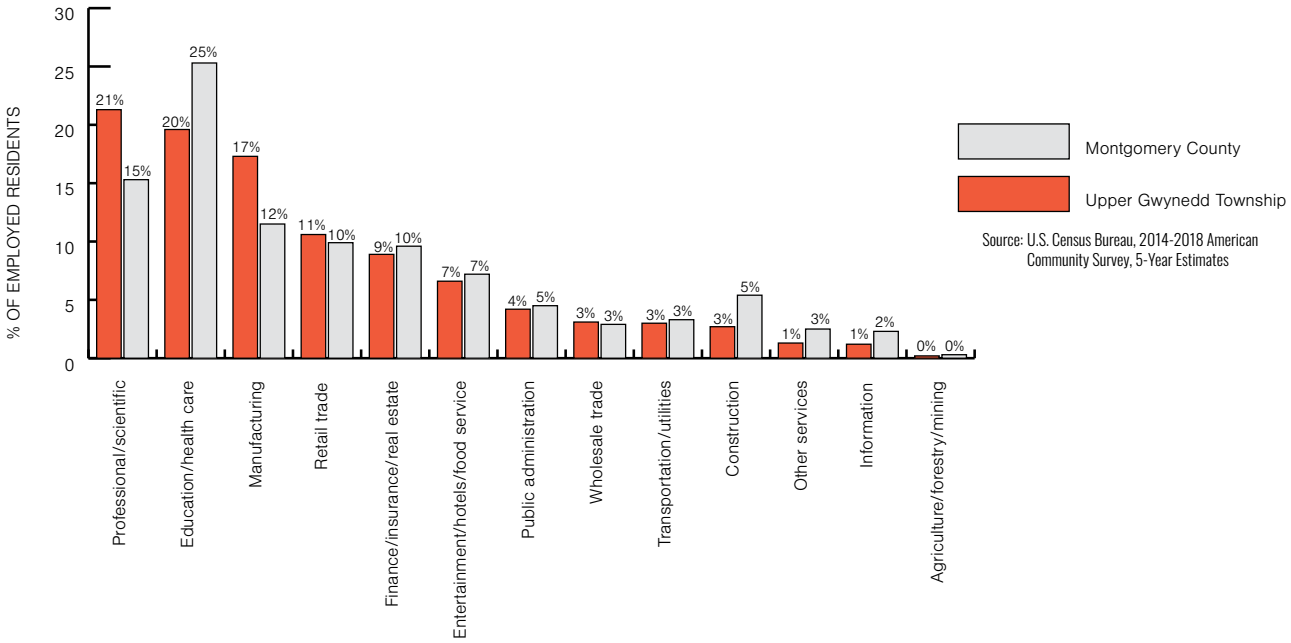


Figure 8: Resident Job Industry: 2018



Job Occupation & Industry

The American Community Survey tracks the job occupation and job industry of township residents who are employed. This data is shown in Figures 7 and 8 on the previous page, as compared to Montgomery County. Township residents are commonly employed in the professional/scientific, education/health care, and manufacturing industries where they typically hold management, business, science, and arts occupations.

Employment Forecasts

Based on the employment forecasts created by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), Upper Gwynedd is expected to see an increase of 1,500 jobs (or a 5.98% job growth) by 2045.[2] However, Upper Gwynedd's forecasted job growth rate is much lower than that forecasted for Montgomery County as a whole (18.2%) for the same time period.

Major Employers

By far the largest employer in the township is Merck & Co., Inc. (Merck) which has two large campuses within the township and where 10,000-11,000 workers, visitors, and outside contractors come every day.[3] Merck is an international bio-pharmaceutical company that advances clinical research for the prevention and treatment of many diseases including cancer, HIV, ebola, and emerging animal diseases. [4]

Merck's Upper Gwynedd campus is home to the human health clinical research and sales and marketing divisions, while the West Point campus is where the majority of the company's vaccine manufacturing, packaging, and testing takes place.

Synergies between Merck and local companies that can provide supplies and services to Merck have developed over the years. For example, Colorcon, which also has a location in Upper Gwynedd, produces materials and coatings for the manufacture of pills.

Additionally, there are several other significant employers within the township, including healthcare, office, industrial, and manufacturing jobs. Other significant employers include ICON, Lehigh Valley Dairy Farms (now a brand of Dean Foods), SICOM Systems, Herman Goldner Co., Kieffer's Appliances, Newtech Dental Laboratories, Annie International, Inc., Triumph Controls, Geissele Automatics, and Gwynedd Manufacturing.

In addition to dozens of individual medical offices, professional offices, and health care services, the township is also home to the Brittany Pointe Estates retirement community and the Gwynedd Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center, which are also larger employers within Upper Gwynedd.

2 County- and Municipal-Level Employment Forecasts, 2015-2045. DVRPC. http://www.dvrpc.org/webmaps/empforecasts/

3 Merck & Co., Inc. representative.

4 Merck & Co., Inc. "Company Overview." https://www.merck.com/company-overview/

Merck & Co., Inc.'s Upper Gwynedd campus is located on Sumneytown Pike across from Parkside Place Park.

ICON has offices located off of Pennbrook Parkway in Upper Gwynedd Township.

Transit-Oriented Development

Although Upper Gwynedd does not have any rail stations within the township's boundaries, the close proximity of regional rail stations in North Wales and Lansdale boroughs creates a unique opportunity to jointly plan with the adjacent municipalities for transit-oriented development around the stations.

Transit-oriented development (TOD) is a type of development that encourages increased use of alternative modes of transportation, particularly public transportation, by locating a mixture of land uses within walking distance of a transit station. Enhanced landscape and building design, wide sidewalks, and central public gathering spaces are also key elements of a TOD.

In general, the township is an attractive place to both residents and employers, increasing the potential for successful mixed-use developments around the North Wales and Pennbrook train stations.

See the Transportation Chapter for more information about the Pennbrook and North Wales SEPTA regional rail stations.

Multi-Municipal Planning for Transit-Oriented Development

In the early 2000s, the township partnered with Lansdale Borough to create a Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) overlay zoning district on a portion of land near the Pennbrook Train Station that resulted in a walkable, mixed-use development, now known as The Point at Pennbrook Station.

There is potential to expand this mixed-use, transit-oriented concept to additional areas of the township that are within a 1/2-mile of either the Pennbrook or North Wales train stations. The areas being recommended for an expanded TOD overlay are shown in the Future Land Use Plan (Map 4 on page 25) and are discussed in further detail below.

Expanded TOD Overlay around the Pennbrook Station

The Pennbrook Train Station is located in Lansdale Borough, just north of Upper Gwynedd Township, along Church Road. The Pennbrook Station is a stop on the Lansdale-Doylestown line within SEPTA's Regional Rail network.

Although the township and Lansdale Borough both already have a TOD zoning district that applies to portions of the land near the Pennbrook Station on

The Point at Pennbrook Station, located partially in Upper Gwynedd and Lansdale Borough, consists of one- to three-story buildings with a total of 346 multi-family residential units (left) and just under 50,000 square feet of commercial space (right).

the east side of Church Road, there is an important opportunity to consider expanding this type of zoning. For example, expanding the TOD overlay to apply to lands on the west side of Church Road, could encourage the development of existing surface parking lots or undeveloped lands as part of a cohesive development centered on the train station.

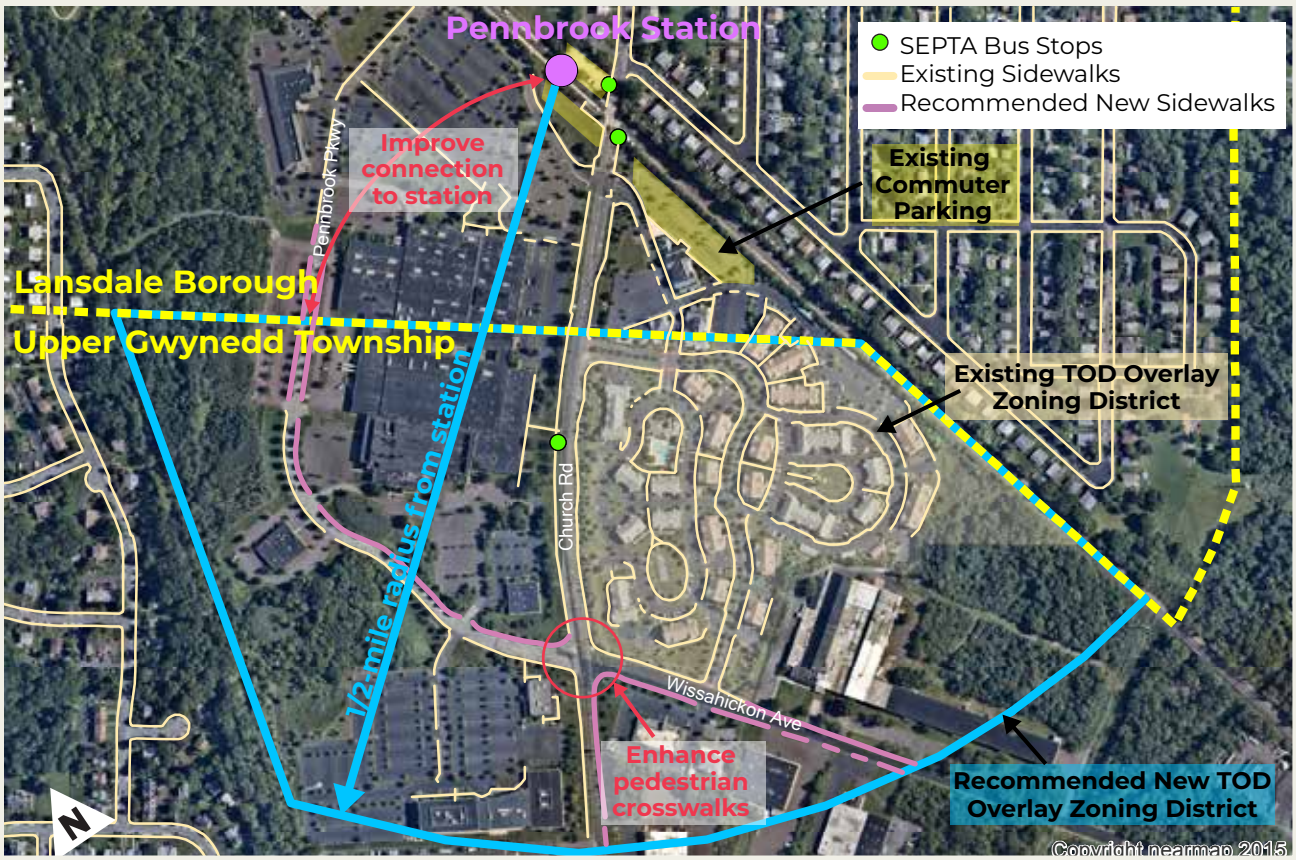
Both the Lansdale Borough comprehensive plan (adopted 2020) and the Future Land Use Plan of the Upper Gwynedd 2040 comprehensive plan recommend an expansion of the TOD area around the Pennbrook Station.

The Lansdale Future Land Use Plan identifies the area around the Pennbrook Station, on both sides of Church Road, as a TOD Overlay where the emphasis is on creating mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly development that is supportive of and oriented towards the rail station. In particular, the plan recommends expanding the current TOD zoning overlay district "so that it applies to the rest of the land bounded by the Stoney Creek Freight Railroad line, Hancock Street, and the municipal boundary with Upper Gwynedd." Additional TOD requirements should apply to development in this area, such as design standards for pedestrian connections and common open spaces.

The Pennbrook Station is located just north of the intersection of Church Road and Pennbrook Parkway in adjacent Lansdale Borough.

Figure 9 below illustrates the area around the Pennbrook Train Station that is being targeted for additional transit-oriented development.

Figure 9: Pennbrook Station TOD Recommendations



The Upper Gwynedd Future Land Use Plan also calls for the increased development of certain areas of land within ½-mile of the Pennbrook train station with a mix of land uses and design elements that encourage transit ridership. In particular, areas that could be considered for potential TOD-style development include surface parking lots and undeveloped lands along Pennbrook Parkway.

New TOD Overlay around the North Wales Station

The North Wales Train Station is located in North Wales Borough, just east of Upper Gwynedd Township, along Beaver Street. The North Wales Station is a stop on the Lansdale-Doylestown line within SEPTA's Regional Rail network. Considering multi-municipal planning for TOD-style development around the North Wales station is also an important opportunity.

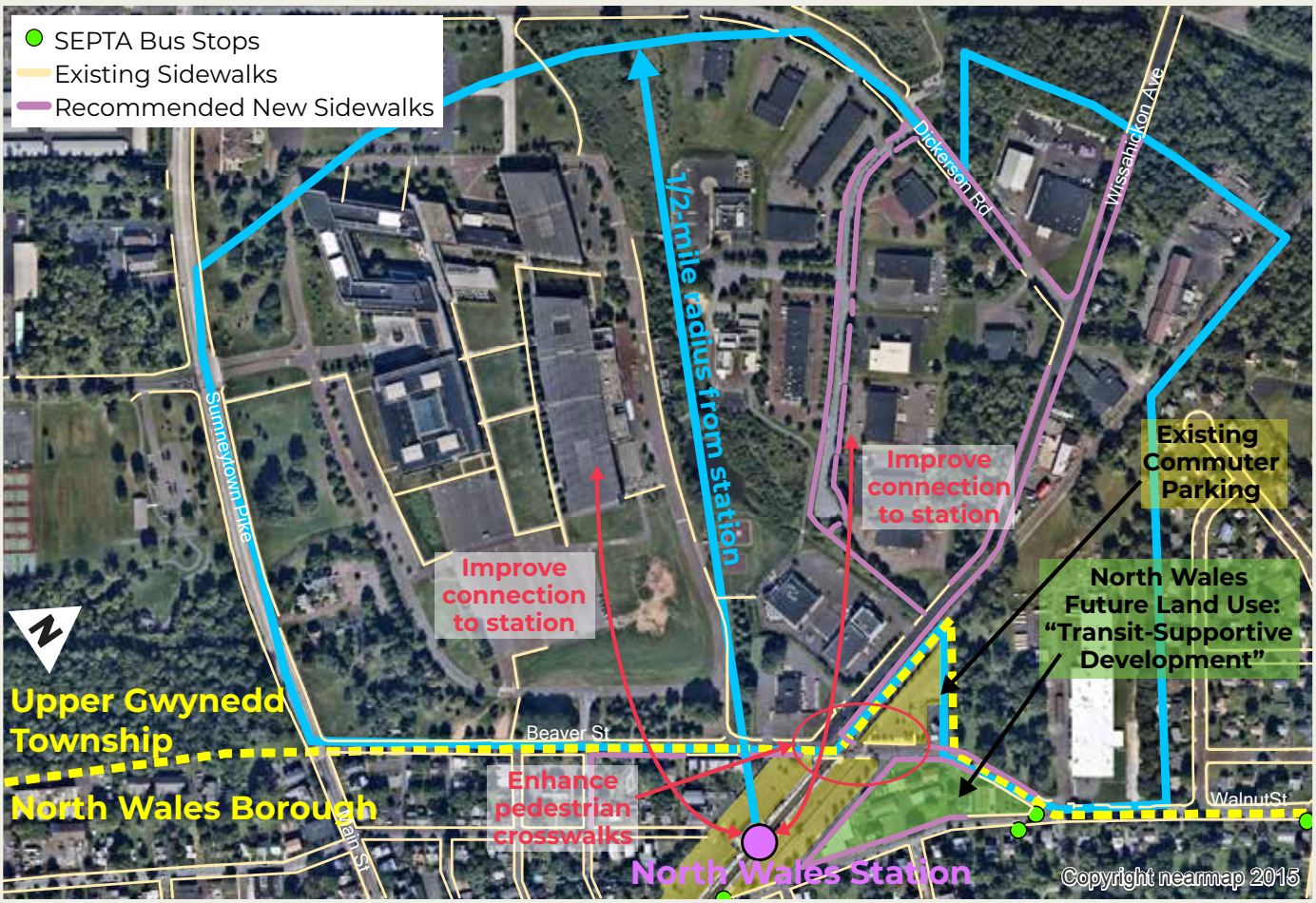
In 2019, DVRPC completed a Safe Routes to Transit memo for the North Wales Station[5] that included recommendations to improve multi-modal connections around the station. In addition to sidewalk improvements on the borough side of Beaver Street, the memo also recommended collaborating with Upper Gwynedd Township and the property owners on the west side of Beaver Street to complete the sidewalk between the Station Drive residential area and the SEPTA parking lot and station.

Both the North Wales Borough comprehensive plan (adopted 2018) and the Future Land Use Plan of the Upper Gwynedd 2040 comprehensive plan recommend the consideration of additional TOD-style development around the North Wales Station.

In addition to maintaining SEPTA's convenient parking adjacent to the station, the North Wales Future Land Use Plan calls for "transit-supportive development" around the North Wales station. In particular, the North Wales Comprehensive Plan recommends supporting the redevelopment of parcels adjacent to

5 DVRPC. Safe Routes to Transit. North Wales Strategic Planning Session Meeting Notes and Next Steps. https://www.dvrpc.org/SafeRoutesToTransit/pdf/DVRPC-SRTT-North-Wales-Station-Memo.pdf

Figure 10: North Wales Station TOD Recommendations



The North Wales Station is located at the intersection of Beaver Street and Wissahickon Avenue in adjacent North Wales Borough.

the train line to create higher-density multi-family housing or mixed-use buildings "that could serve as a transition use between the railroad and neighboring single-family housing."

Figure 10 on the previous page illustrates the area around the North Wales Train Station that is being targeted for additional transit-oriented development.

Similarly, the Upper Gwynedd Future Land Use Plan calls for the increased development of certain areas of land within ½-mile of the North Wales train station with a mix of land uses and a focus on enhancing pedestrian and transit connections. Within Upper Gwynedd, areas that could be considered for potential TOD-style development include portions of Merck & Co., Inc.'s Upper Gwynedd campus where buildings are not currently located, and undeveloped lands along Wissahickon Avenue and Beaver Street.

The Madison Lansdale Station development is another example of a "transit-supportive development." The development includes a combination of rental housing, retail spaces, and outdoor community gathering areas in close proximity to the Lansdale train station and Liberty Bell Trail.

Trends in Commercial Land Use and Development

Mixed-Use Town Center

In recent years, a trend towards designing shopping centers around "main streets" or "village squares" has been observed. In general, by recreating the scale and mix of commercial uses found in traditional town centers, modern shopping centers can create more of a focus on pedestrian accessibility and create a unique experience that is welcoming to shoppers.

Flexible Commercial & Office Spaces

Continued technological advances and changes in working styles have created increased opportunities for working from home or working remotely. Co-working is a term for an office space configuration where amenities and resources are shared across several tenants, which can reduce the operating costs for start-ups, entrepreneurs, freelancers, and others. Co-working sites are an increasingly popular way to provide an office environment and amenities, and provide opportunities for social interaction for those who choose to work remotely or independently.[6]

Small-Scale Industry & Manufacturing

Modern industrial and manufacturing techniques can allow for new types of high-tech industrial activities to be accommodated in smaller spaces, even in retrofitted existing industrial buildings.

- **Industrial Design** – the "maker movement" is invigorated by a young, technology-savvy, creative class. Examples of growing technology-based manufacturing industries include robotics, 3D printing, laser cutting, and graphic design.
- **Artisan Industrial** – older industrial buildings across the region are being converted to unique workspaces for mediums such as small-scale metalworking, glassblowing, pottery, and screen printing.
- **Specialty Food Production** – as demonstrated in the retail spending analysis (see Table 11 on page 48), there is unmet demand for specialty food stores, which could include an ice cream store, a candy maker, a bakery or bagel shop, coffee roasters, catering companies, and a cheese or olive oil store.
- **Small-Scale Alcohol Production** – a resurgence in interest in craft alcoholic beverages, including liquor and beer, is taking place across the country. Small-scale breweries and distilleries often incorporate tasting rooms that attract visitors and add vibrancy to commercial areas.

6 "What's Next? Real Estate in the New Economy." Urban Land Institute. 2011. http://uli.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/WhatsNext1.pdf

Recent commercial developments in the county, such as the Village at Valley Forge, (above) have incorporated central green spaces that can be utilized for a variety of family-friendly events and activities that also support the businesses within the shopping center.

Office parks, such as this one in King of Prussia, have begun adding creative amenities such as parklets and walking paths to attract companies and workers.

Walkable Commercial & Office

A shift in workplace culture away from isolated suburban office park campuses and towards mixed-use and walkable office is a noticeable trend nationally. Although current societal factors such as social distancing due to Covid-19 precautions have created some uncertainty regarding the future of the traditional office environment, a trend towards increased remote work options was also already underway. In general, office environments that offer substantial outdoor space, walking opportunities, and access to public transit and nearby quality housing are likely to remain competitive in the future.

Tech Incubators

Similar to co-working sites, tech incubators provide office space and communal amenities; however, tech incubators also have labs and other facilities to encourage high-tech research and development. Partnerships with colleges or universities, economic development organizations, or for-profit technology companies also provide members with access to valuable mentoring and grant funding opportunities.

Placemaking

The prevalence and convenience of online shopping has increasingly made going out to shop in a physical store no longer necessary. However, people still crave the in-person interactions and experiences of shopping and dining. For example, shopping experiences that are paired with entertainment within unique physical settings are likely to be more attractive to shoppers in the future. Main Street-style shopping areas with substantial outdoor dining, integrated green spaces, and a mixture of dining and shopping options are in a better position to attract businesses and flexibly adapt to societal and economic conditions in the future.

Streets as Places: Principles & Strategies from the Project for Public Spaces

Public streets account for a large proportion of the publicly-owned land within a community. Incorporating design elements that allow public streets to also serve as engaging public places can add economic and social value to a community.

Great Activities and Destinations – activities and destinations that create a "buzz of activity" along a street can make it feel vibrant and dynamic and give visitors a reason to visit and linger

Safe – speeding cars and any real or perceived threat of criminal activity can deter visitors; however, traffic calming and activities that encourage pedestrian activity can reduce the likelihood and opportunities for crimes to occur

Inviting & Rich in Detail – a streetscape that presents visitors with rich detail and interesting features creates an inviting feeling

Designed for Lingering – people are more likely to spend more time in a place where they feel comfortable, where there are features that they find visually interesting, and where their basic needs are being met (e.g., food and beverages, seating)

Interactive & Social – streets can spark interaction between people (such as through public art, water features, entertainment, etc.) that also builds a sense of community

Unique – streets that have a recognizable identity are more memorable and can be used to communicate the community's values and history

Accessible – great streets should be accessible to people of all ages and abilities, and welcoming to people of diverse backgrounds and ethnicities

Flexible – streets that are usable year-round, and can accommodate multiple types of events, are most successful as places

For more information, visit: Project for Public Spaces. http://www.pps.org/reference/8-principles-streets-as-places/

Streetscaping

Streetscaping generally refers to programs that improve the streetscape conditions, or the physical environment and design of the roadway and sidewalks. Distinctive physical accents within the streetscape, such as landscaping and street furniture (e.g., street lights, benches, garbage cans) beautify the space, encourage walking, and can slow down vehicular traffic passing by. Further detail such as the material and pattern used on the pavement, and the design of adjacent storefronts, also contributes to the vibrancy of a commercial area.

A continuous and quality streetscape can contribute to a commercial area's walkability, comfort, sense of place, and safety. Incorporating cohesively-designed wayfinding signage within the streetscape can help ease the visitor experience. Ensuring that the streetscape's lighting, landscaping, crosswalks, and other decorative elements are adequate and attractive can contribute to an atmosphere that is inviting for pedestrians to walk to and from their destinations. Appropriate streetscape elements can also alert drivers to the presence of pedestrian activity, and encourage safer driver behaviors.

Sidewalk Width & Streetscape Improvements

New commercial development should incorporate a sidewalk of at least eight (8) feet in width, wherever feasible.[7] This width allows several people to walk comfortably side-by-side while still providing room for street trees, street furniture, and outdoor displays and dining areas. In addition, a verge of at least five (5) feet in commercial areas can help buffer pedestrians from moving vehicular traffic. Where sidewalks are currently of this width, low-cost additions such as pedestrian-scaled lighting, seating, and wayfinding or directional signage can be used to create a more welcoming streetscape.

7 Montgomery County Planning Commission. "Walk Montco: Montgomery County Walkability Study. 2016. https://www.montcopa.org/DocumentCenter/View/9839/Walkability-Plan_Final_web-version (page 65)

EXAMPLE

Incorporating additional landscaping and comfortable walking paths through shopping centers, such as this one in New Jersey, creates a more enjoyable shopping experience.

EXAMPLE

Streetscape elements, such as a wide verge between the sidewalk and roadway with street trees, can enhance walkability along busy or wide roadways, such as this example on Dekalb Pike through Upper Merion Township.

Recommendations

See the Focus Areas Chapter for additional economic development recommendations for three specific geographic focus areas within the township.

See the Land Use Chapter for the desired location of different types of commercial land use.

Recommendation 3

Maintain and enhance Upper Gwynedd's established diverse economic base, including commercial corridors, shopping centers, and employment areas.

Implementation Strategies

a. Update the zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances to encourage physical improvements and redevelopment of existing business and industrial areas that are vacant or underutilized.

b. Require site greening and building design standards as part of new development and redevelopment projects. Green spaces within commercial developments should incorporate amenities such as benches or other outdoor seating, bike parking, and shade, where space allows.

c. Coordinate with adjacent municipalities where commercial corridors or commercial nodes (such as the intersection of Sumneytown Pike and Valley Forge Road) are shared across multiple jurisdictions to discuss appropriate land uses and development intensities of each commercial area, and explore the creation of consistent streetscape standards for each shared commercial corridor or node, including wayfinding signage and new sidewalk connections, where applicable.

d. Work with property owners to explore opportunities to consolidate existing driveway access points along arterial roadways. Create zoning standards to incentivize or require shared driveway and parking access as part of new commercial developments and redevelopments.

e. Connect current and potential business and property owners to resources and programs provided by the Montgomery County Commerce Department.

Recommendation 4

Continue to build partnerships and support major employers within the township.

Implementation Strategies

a. Continue regular coordination meetings with representatives from Merck & Co., Inc. to proactively plan for campus improvements and identify other opportunities for collaboration and partnership.

b. Explore opportunities to partner with businesses within the township to improve the sidewalk infrastructure and streetscape around their properties.

c. Promote business development and networking opportunities offered by the Chamber of Commerce for Greater Montgomery County.

d. Explore the potential creation of a tech incubator to support entrepreneurial business development and research with support from local employers.

Recommendation 5

Ensure new commercial development and redevelopment incorporates amenities and facilities that encourage walkability and other forms of multi-modal transportation.

Implementation Strategies

a. Require new commercial development and redevelopment projects to incorporate transit facilities (where applicable), green space, bicycle amenities, and pedestrian connections through updated design standards in the zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances.

b. Incorporate additional site design standards into the township's commercial zoning districts, including enhanced landscaping and streetscaping requirements.

c. Consider creating an official map showing the township's planned locations of future trail connections so that future development and redevelopment projects along the trail routes can incorporate the trail right-of-way and interconnections, where applicable.

Recommendation 6

Incentivize economic revitalization and redevelopment of vacant and underutilized commercial properties.

Implementation Strategies

a. Update the commercial zoning standards to reflect new commercial uses such as technology-based manufacturing, artisan industrial, co-working offices, and small-scale alcohol production.

b. Consider working with property owners or developers of vacant or underutilized commercial properties to create a LERTA district (see callout box below) to encourage redevelopment and revitalization of properties where unique conditions make redevelopment more challenging.

Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance (LERTA)

"An approved LERTA allows for the abatement of taxes on qualifying new construction and/or improvements to existing structures for a period of up to ten years. The Montgomery County Commerce Department is the liaison to municipalities that are working with property owners/investors who are interested in creating pre-approved LERTA districts. The Commerce Department will work with a municipality through each step in the process."

For more information, visit: Montgomery County Commerce Department. "Montgomery County Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance Act (LERTA) Process/Application Procedures." https://www.montcopa.org/DocumentCenter/View/24764/Montgomery-County-LERTA-Procedures---05-2019

Recommendation 7

Encourage transit-oriented development near SEPTA regional rail stations.

Implementation Strategies

a. Work with Lansdale Borough to explore expanding the existing transit-oriented development zoning overlay district to encourage continued transit-oriented development in proximity to the Pennbrook SEPTA regional rail station.

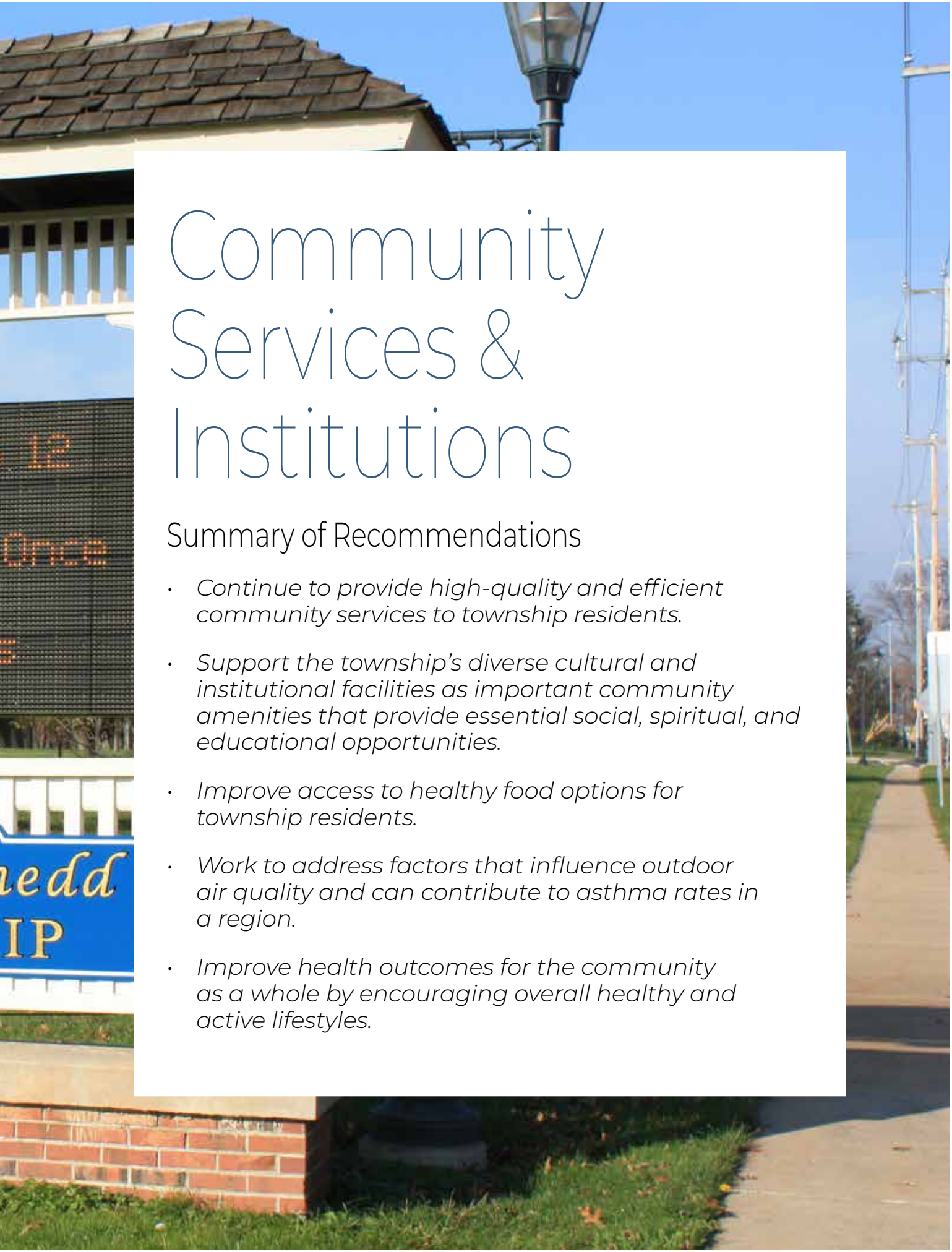
b. Work with North Wales Borough to explore creating a joint transit-oriented development zoning district to encourage transit-oriented development in proximity to the North Wales SEPTA regional rail station.

See the Transportation Chapter for more information on multi-modal transportation improvements and transit-oriented development.

West Point Village

Photo Credit: Liz McNaney

Upper Gwynedd Township sign on Sumneytown Pike



Community Services & Institutions

Summary of Recommendations

- *Continue to provide high-quality and efficient community services to township residents.*
- *Support the township's diverse cultural and institutional facilities as important community amenities that provide essential social, spiritual, and educational opportunities.*
- *Improve access to healthy food options for township residents.*
- *Work to address factors that influence outdoor air quality and can contribute to asthma rates in a region.*
- *Improve health outcomes for the community as a whole by encouraging overall healthy and active lifestyles.*

Background

Upper Gwynedd's dedicated staff provides many administrative, maintenance, and public safety services to the township's residents and businesses. Community facilities and institutions, including schools, libraries, and religious institutions are essential resources that contribute to the quality of life and overall well-being for all township residents. This chapter also discusses the area's health care and food resources.

Community Services

The township's administrative offices, police department, and public works department are located within an integrated township complex centrally-located within the township, adjacent to Parkside Place Park. There are no major facilities changes anticipated at this time.

The township's public works department currently has 12 employees. The department is tasked with a broad range of maintenance responsibilities including the installation and management of storm and sanitary sewers; snow removal; the maintenance of township roads, traffic signals, and open space; and the management of township facilities.

Public Safety

Upper Gwynedd Police Department

The Upper Gwynedd Township Police Department was established in 1951 with one part-time and three full-time police officers.[1] The Police Department headquarters have been located in Parkside Place Park as part of the municipal complex with the administration and public works departments since 1969. The department's current

1 "History." Upper Gwynedd Township Police Department. https://montgomery.crimewatchpa.com/uppergwyneddpd/6404/content/history

The township's administrative offices are centrally located off of Sumneytown Pike next to Parkside Place Park.

authorized strength consists of 21 officers and three full-time civilian administrative support staff. The hiring of one additional officer in 2021 will allow the department to add a K9 unit.

See the Transportation chapter for more information on the Upper Gwynedd Township Police Department's neighborhood-based traffic calming efforts.

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)

CPTED is an approach to deterring criminal behavior through the physical design of our environment in a way that makes crime less appealing and reduces the opportunities for criminal behavior. Three of the principles of CPTED are: natural access control, natural surveillance, and maintenance.

Natural Access Control: fencing can help to restrict access to private property and visually define the public space from the private space; however, fencing should be limited in height and transparent so it does not create hiding opportunities for criminals to take advantage of.

Natural Surveillance: commercial ground floor spaces should have significant open window area to allow for visibility into and out of the structure. Criminals will likely be deterred by the fact that people walking by can easily see what is happening inside the building. People inside the building will also have a stronger ability to observe activity outside their store windows.

Maintenance: well-maintained properties demonstrate to passers-by that the property and neighborhood are cared for and that irregular activity would be noticed and reported.

Elements of each of these strategies are already present in Upper Gwynedd or could be applied to Upper Gwynedd in the future. When implemented in the design and maintenance of a property, many of these strategies also enhance the general public's feeling of personal security which can make individuals feel more comfortable lingering in Upper Gwynedd and make them more likely to visit again.

Upper Gwynedd Fire Department

The Upper Gwynedd Township Fire Department was originally founded as the West Point Volunteer Fire Company in 1908.[2] The Fire Department is an independent non-profit organization that has been designated by Upper Gwynedd Township as their official fire and emergency responder and responds to approximately 400 calls each year, on average. The department is entirely volunteer-supported with 60 members who are firefighters, emergency medical technicians, fire police, and administrative support. The department operates three pieces of apparatus including an attack engine, a rescue/pumper, and a tower ladder.

2 "About Us." Upper Gwynedd Township Fire Department. https://www.ugfd.org/about/

The Upper Gwynedd Township Fire Department is currently located in the West Point Village area of the township. The original building was built in 1942 and has been renovated and added to over the years.

Across the state, the number of volunteer firefighters has declined drastically in the last twenty years. Only 15 fire departments in Montgomery County are still entirely volunteer-supported.

Fire Department Facility Needs

The Upper Gwynedd Township Fire Department has outgrown their current facility in the West Point Village area of the township and is working with the township to explore potential sites for a new facility. The challenges related to the current facility include the fact that several major building systems are failing, the inability to store all vehicles and ancillary equipment indoors, the lack of sufficient room to conduct hands-on training exercises, and the lack of privacy provided in the current bunk rooms.

In response to the challenges identified with the current facility, and in order to serve the township's growing population, the fire department has identified general criteria for a new site and facility.

In general, a level site large enough to accommodate a 30,000 square foot building with apparatus bays large enough to accommodate newer apparatus, that are typically heavier and wider, is desired. In addition, a centrally-located site away from residential neighborhoods that could accommodate a site design that would allow for drive-through bays to minimize trucks in reverse, is preferred. Ideally, a new facility should also include some live-in space and new training facilities.

Emergency Medical Services

The greater North Penn area receives year-round, 24/7 emergency ambulance services from the Volunteer Medical Services Corp of Lansdale (VMSC).[3] VMSC provides additional assistance through rescue operations and by supporting other ambulance squads, police departments, and fire companies.

VMSC operates three stations, including one in Upper Gwynedd Township at the intersection of Allentown Road and Valley Forge Road, and is staffed by a combination of volunteer and professional paramedics, emergency medical technicians, and office staff.

3 Volunteer Medical Service Corps of Lansdale. https://www.vmsclansdale.org/

Institutions

Institutional properties are uses that provide public services. As indicated by the community survey results, the quality of schools within the township (both public and private) is of great importance to the community and part of the identity of the township. Additional community facilities and institutions such as libraries and religious organizations also serve the community. Map 9 on the following page shows the locations of several types of community facilities and institutions in the township.

Public Schools

Upper Gwynedd Township is part of the North Penn School District, which also serves North Wales Borough, Lansdale Borough, Hatfield Borough, Montgomery Township, Towamencin Township, and Hatfield Township. The district administers a total of 17 schools: 13 elementary schools, 3 middle schools, and 1 high school. The district's total enrollment for the 2019-2020 school year was nearly 13,000 students.[4]

The district is also part of a five-district technical high school which serves over 1,000 students in 21 technical programs including advertising design, culinary arts, HVAC, and automotive technology.[5,6] The North Montco Technical Career Center, which also offers continuing education programs and evening classes for the general public, is located in Towamencin Township and opened in 1967.

There are three North Penn School District facilities located within Upper Gwynedd:

- **Gwynedd Square Elementary School** is located on Supplee Road across from the Corpus Christi Church and School and was built in 1991. The school contains a full-day Kindergarten program and grades 1 through 6. The school had a total enrollment of 566 students during the 2019-2020 school year.[7]

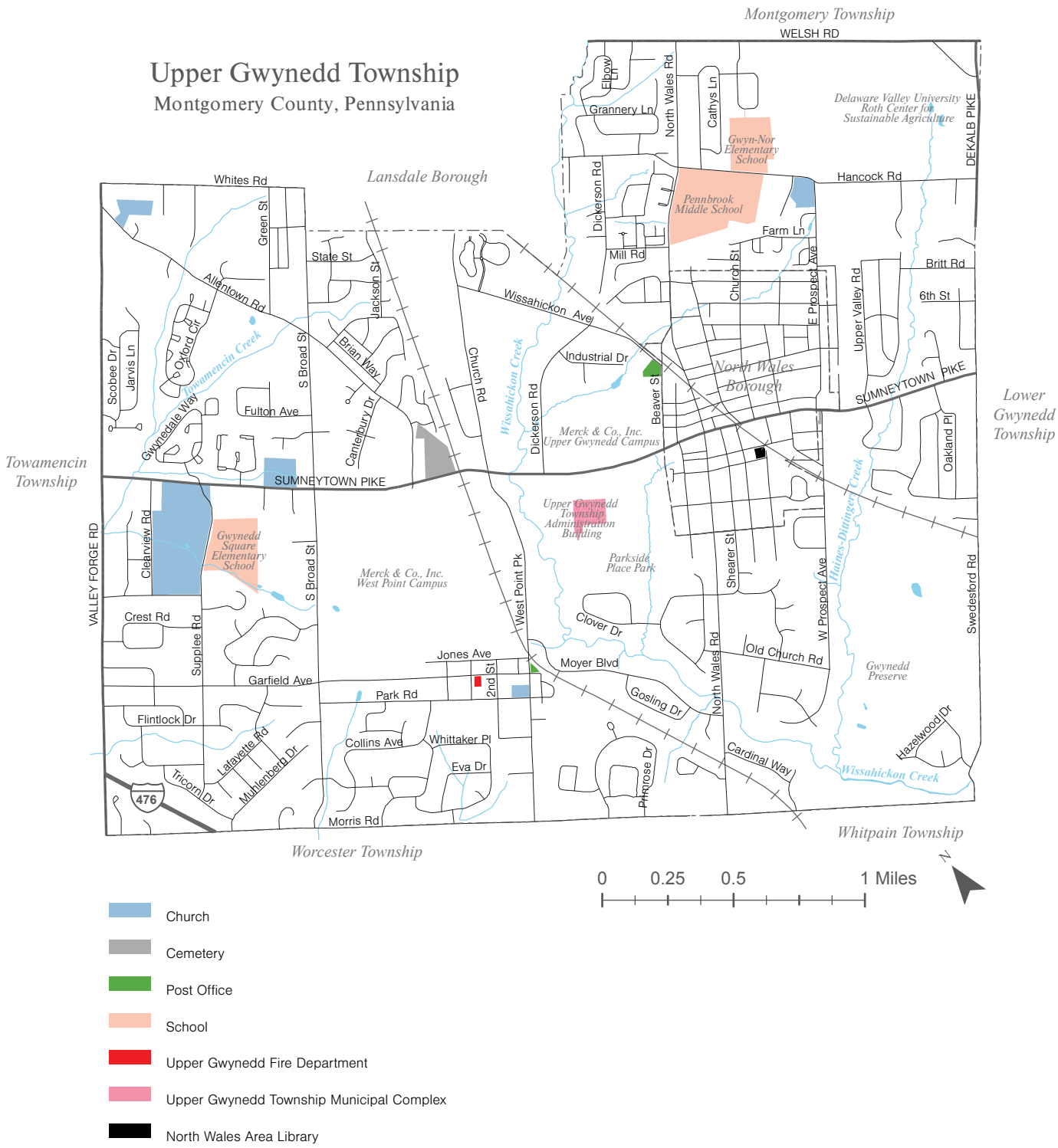
4 "Public School Enrollment Reports: Public School Enrollments 2018-2019." Pennsylvania Department of Education. https://www.education.pa.gov/DataAndReporting/Enrollment/Pages/PublicSchEnrReports.aspx

5 "Public School Enrollment Reports: Public School Enrollments 2018-2019." Pennsylvania Department of Education. https://www.education.pa.gov/DataAndReporting/Enrollment/Pages/PublicSchEnrReports.aspx

6 "North Montco Technical Career Center." https://www.nmtcc.org/

7 "Public School Enrollment Reports: Public School Enrollments 2018-2019." Pennsylvania Department of Education. https://www.education.pa.gov/DataAndReporting/Enrollment/Pages/PublicSchEnrReports.aspx

Map 9: Institutions & community facilities



Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission

Gwynedd Square Elementary School *Photo Credit: Cory Lippert*

Gwyn-Nor Elementary School

Pennbrook Middle School

Students from the southwestern portion of the township, as well as areas along Allentown Road and Church Road, attend Gwynedd Square Elementary School. The site contains a playground, a regulation Little League/softball field, and a soccer field.

- **Gwyn-Nor Elementary School** is located on Hancock Road across the street from the Pennbrook Middle School and was built in 1965. The school contains a full-day Kindergarten program and grades 1 through 6. The school had a total enrollment of 580 students during the 2019-2020 school year.[8] Students from the northeastern portion of the township attend Gwyn-Nor Elementary School. The site contains a playground and a soccer field.
- **Pennbrook Middle School** is located at the intersection of Hancock Road and North Wales Road and was built in 1959. The school contains 7th, 8th, and 9th grades and had a total enrollment of 886 students during the 2019-2020 school year.[9] Students from the eastern portion of the township attend Pennbrook Middle School. The site contains five baseball fields, two softball fields, one T-Ball field, three Little League fields, multiple soccer and football fields, and a track.

A July 2016 enrollment study[10] conducted by the Montgomery County Planning Commission indicated a general trend towards a slight decrease in total enrollment of 2.3% between 2016 and 2026. However, if birth activity increases and all recently proposed developments are constructed, a total enrollment increase of about 0.5% is also possible. Other factors influencing school enrollment include a general decrease in private school enrollment and an increase in residential sales activity that will likely bring younger households with school-age children into the area.

Preliminary discussions with the North Penn School District indicated that there are no facility changes planned at Gwynedd Square or Gwyn-Nor Elementary Schools. However, plans to remove the modular classroom units at Pennbrook Middle School within the next 10 years would require a building addition.

Private Schools

In addition to the three North Penn School District schools located in the township, Upper Gwynedd is also home to the Corpus Christi Catholic School which serves a total of 530 students[11] in Pre-

8 "Public School Enrollment Reports: Public School Enrollments 2018-2019." Pennsylvania Department of Education. https://www.education.pa.gov/DataAndReporting/Enrollment/Pages/PublicSchEnrReports.aspx

9 "Public School Enrollment Reports: Public School Enrollments 2018-2019." Pennsylvania Department of Education. https://www.education.pa.gov/DataAndReporting/Enrollment/Pages/PublicSchEnrReports.aspx

10 "North Penn School District Enrollment Projections." 2017. https://www.montcopa.org/DocumentCenter/View/24911/North-Penn-SD-Projections-Report-2017

11 "Corpus Christi Catholic Church: History." http://corpuschristilansdale.org/welcome/history/

Kindergarten through 8th grade. The school, which is located in the western part of the township off of Sumneytown Pike, serves both Catholic and Non-Catholic families from the greater region. The site also contains significant open space and recreational facilities, including a playground, two Little League/softball fields, a running track, and baseball diamonds.

Library

Although not located within the township boundaries, the North Wales Area Library is the official library of both Upper Gwynedd Township and North Wales Borough, and also services all of the North Penn School District municipalities. Previously located in the basement of the North Wales Elementary School, the North Wales Area Library moved to its current location on Swartley Street in North Wales Borough in 2010.

The North Wales Area Library is an independent public library; however, the library receives additional services as part of the Montgomery County Libraries system and the PA State Libraries system. This allows library users to access materials from around the county, state, and beyond. The library prides itself on also serving as a community center for residents. In addition to their growing catalog of digital and print materials and programming for all ages, the library offers co-working space and community meeting rooms.

Upper Gwynedd Township contributes financially to the North Wales Area Library and supports the museum and attraction pass program. The library is also supported in part by the Friends of the North Wales Library, which is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.

The North Wales Area Library is the official library of both Upper Gwynedd Township and North Wales Borough.

Religious Institutions & Cemeteries

Religious institutional properties are often large, architecturally-distinct buildings with significant open space, and are commonly located in residential neighborhoods. Upper Gwynedd is home to several active church properties that represent a diversity of religions and provide a range of community services.

There are currently three cemeteries located in Upper Gwynedd Township totaling approximately 11.5 acres; however, they are not associated with any religious institutions located within the township. Cemeteries are relatively stable land uses and can also contribute to the sense of open green space within a community.

The largest cemetery in the township is the Green Lawn Cemetery located off of Allentown Road.

U.S. Post Offices

There are two post offices located in Upper Gwynedd Township: the West Point Post Office (zip code 19486) located in West Point Village and the North Wales Post Office (zip code 19454) located at the intersection of Wissahickon Avenue and Beaver Street.

Community Health

The two closest hospitals to Upper Gwynedd Township are Abington Lansdale Hospital – Jefferson Health in Hatfield Township and Einstein Medical Center Montgomery in East Norriton Township. In addition to these two hospitals, there are several urgent care centers, skilled nursing facilities, and other health care resources such as

pharmacies and dialysis centers in and around Upper Gwynedd Township (see Map 10 on the following page).

Community Health Needs Assessment

A Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) is a requirement of the Healthcare Reform Act starting in 2013. These studies, which must be completed by tax-exempt hospitals every three years, identify and prioritize health needs in each hospital's service area and include strategies and implementation plans to address the priority needs that were identified.

Abington Lansdale Hospital – Jefferson Health

Abington Lansdale Hospital – Jefferson Health is a 140-bed acute care general hospital located just north of Lansdale Borough in Hatfield Township. The 2016 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) for the hospital[12] defined the hospital's community benefit (or service) area as including the Upper Gwynedd zip codes of 19446 and 19454, within the "North Penn Area" (see light blue area in Figure 11 below from the 2016 CHNA), for the purposes of reporting community health indicators.

12 "Abington Lansdale Hospital – Jefferson Health – Community Health Needs Assessment Report," 2016. https://www.abingtonhealth.org/app/files/public/4984/2016-Lansdale-Community-Health-Needs-Assessment.pdf

Figure 11: Abington Lansdale Hospital Community Benefit Area Map

Abington Lansdale Hospital – Jefferson Health is a 140-bed hospital just north of Lansdale Borough

Einstein Medical Center Montgomery is a 146-bed hospital near the Norristown Farm Park.

The following information is based on data gathered through the Public Health Management Corporation's (PHMC) 2015 Household Health Survey,[13] as reported in the Abington Lansdale Hospital 2016 CHNA. The PHMC Household Health Survey tracks self-reported health concerns and perceptions.

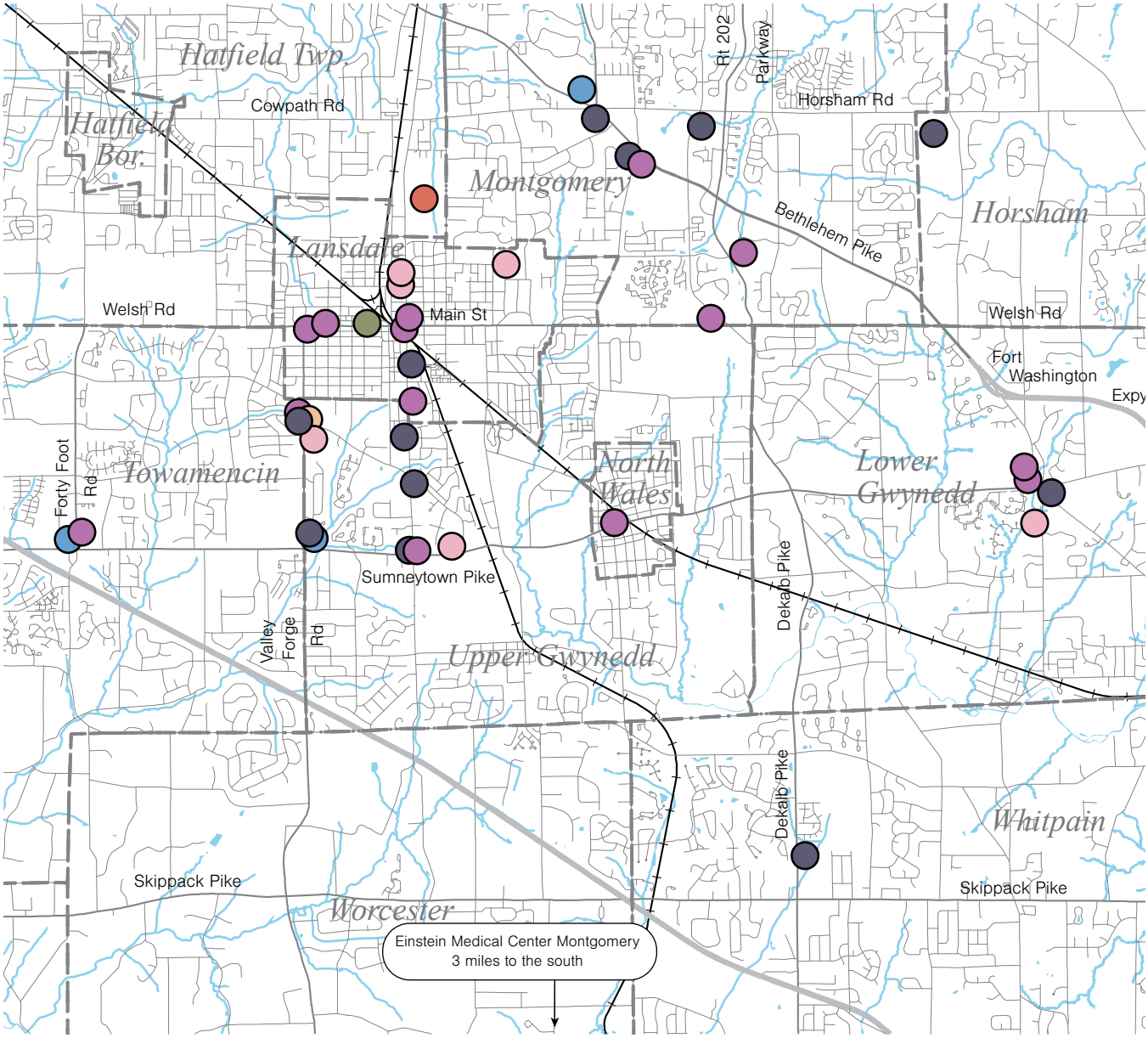
Access to Healthy Food

Food insecurity was not identified as a major concern for Upper Gwynedd; however 5.5% of North Penn residents surveyed reported the quality of groceries in their neighborhood as fair/poor. Recommendations from the 2016 CHNA related to access to healthy and affordable food are still relevant to the township:

- Increase local food retailers
- Local government should focus on safe, walkable access to healthy food retailers

13 Public Health Management Corporation. "Research & Evaluation Group at PHMC: Southeastern Pennsylvania Household Health Survey." https://www.phmcresearch.org/52-project-spotlight/248-southeastern-pennsylvania-household-health-survey

Map 10: Hospitals and Other Health Resources



- Hospital
- Ambulance Station
- Urgent Care Center
- Skilled Nursing Facility
- Montco Dept of Health and Human Services
- Pharmacy
- Other Healthcare*

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

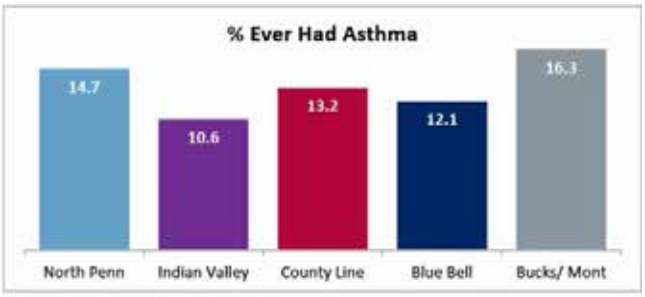
N

Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission

Asthma

Nearly 15% of North Penn residents surveyed during the 2015 Household Health Survey reported having asthma at some point in their lives (see Figure 12 below from the 2016 CHNA). This rate is slightly lower than the combined Bucks/ Montgomery County rate; however it is slightly higher than the other sub-areas studied.

Figure 12: Percent Ever Had Asthma

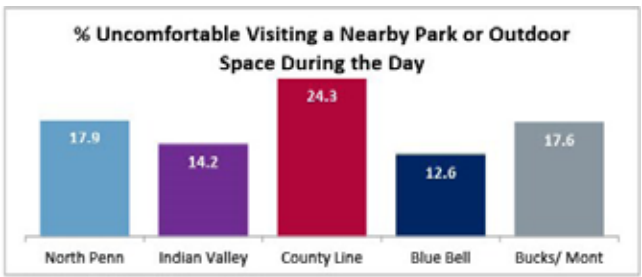


PHMC Household Health Survey 2015

Parks & Outdoor Space

Nearly 18% of North Penn survey respondents indicated that they were uncomfortable visiting a nearby park or outdoor space during the day (see Figure 13 below from the 2016 CHNA). This rate is similar to the combined Bucks/Montgomery County rate and much lower than the County Line sub-area; however it is higher than the Indian Valley and Blue Bell sub-areas.

Figure 13: Percent Uncomfortable Visitng a Nearby Park or Outdoor Space During the Day



PHMC Household Health Survey 2015

Several of the recommendations related to community safety and physical activity from the Abington Lansdale Hospital 2016 CHNA are relevant to Upper Gwynedd

<u>Community safety recommendations:</u>

- Explore "walking bus" intervention to improve student safety
- Police Athletic Leagues and municipal sports programs are good resources for activities for kids

Upper Gwynedd Township is part of the North Penn Area Police Athletic League.

<u>Physical activity recommendations:</u>

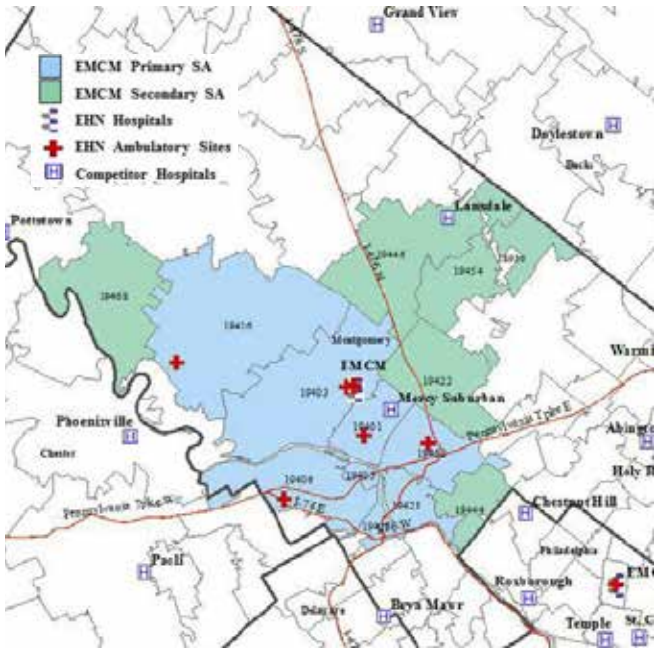
- Promote bike share programs and walkable communities
- More school and community physical activity opportunities for youth and older adults

See the Transportation chapter for more information on the North Penn School District's Safe Routes to School policy and other walkability and bikeability recommendations.

Einstein Medical Center Montgomery

Einstein Medical Center Montgomery is a 146-bed, technologically-advanced acute care hospital and ambulatory facility that opened in East Norriton Township in 2012. According to the 2016 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA)[14] for the hospital, Upper Gwynedd Township zip codes (19446 and 19454) are in the hospital's secondary service area (see Figure 14 below from the 2016 CHNA).

Figure 14: Einstein Medical Center Montgomery Service Area Map



14 "Einstein Medical Center Montgomery Community Health Needs Assessment," Public Health Management Corporation, 2016. https://www.einstein.edu/upload/docs/Health%20Needs%20Montgomery.pdf

Many health indicators (obesity rates, health screenings, asthma rates, etc.) in the hospital's service area are better than, or similar to, Montgomery County and Southeastern Pennsylvania as-a-whole. However, the 2016 CHNA did identify challenges related to access to care and access to healthy food, more so for low-income households.

In addition, the report found that only 20% of children (18 years or younger) met physical activity guidelines, perhaps due to a lack of sufficient safe outdoor neighborhood play locations or social factors. One strategy related to this issue in the 2019 Implementation Plan for the hospital[15] is to "support community efforts to create and utilize green spaces and community gardens that influence the health and wellbeing of its patients."

Community Health and Livability

Whereas communicable diseases such as influenza, pneumonia, and tuberculosis were common causes of death in the early 20th-Century, the major causes of death are now more commonly related to chronic diseases such as heart disease, cancer, and stroke. Chronic health conditions are commonly tied to health behaviors such as nutrition, physical activity, and smoking. Although not all health concerns can be addressed through the physical planning of a community, this health data offers some insights into possible opportunities to enhance healthy living for all community residents.

15 "Community Health Needs Assessment Implementation Plan – Einstein Medical Center Montgomery – November 2019." https://www.einstein.edu/upload/docs/Einstein/About_EHN/Community/Community_Outreach/Implementation%20Plan%20EMCM%20Nov%202019.pdf

The Weis grocery store in the North Penn Marketplace at Sumneytown Pike and Valley Forge Road is the only full-scale grocery store located within Upper Gwynedd.

Food Access

Although there is only one full-scale grocery store located within the boundaries of Upper Gwynedd Township, township residents also have easy access to additional large grocery stores in nearby municipalities. Large-scale grocery stores are typically located along arterial roadways which can make access to these facilities more challenging for pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transit users.

While Upper Gwynedd is not considered a "food desert" *per se*, pedestrian access to nearby grocery stores has been identified as a challenge by several township residents. Map 11 on the following page shows the location of different types of food stores in the vicinity of Upper Gwynedd Township ranging from full-scale grocery stores to convenience stores, which includes large pharmacies that have a food section. In addition, a one-mile radius around full-scale grocery stores is shown, which demonstrates that a large part of the township is not located within one mile of a full-scale grocery store.

What is a Food Desert?

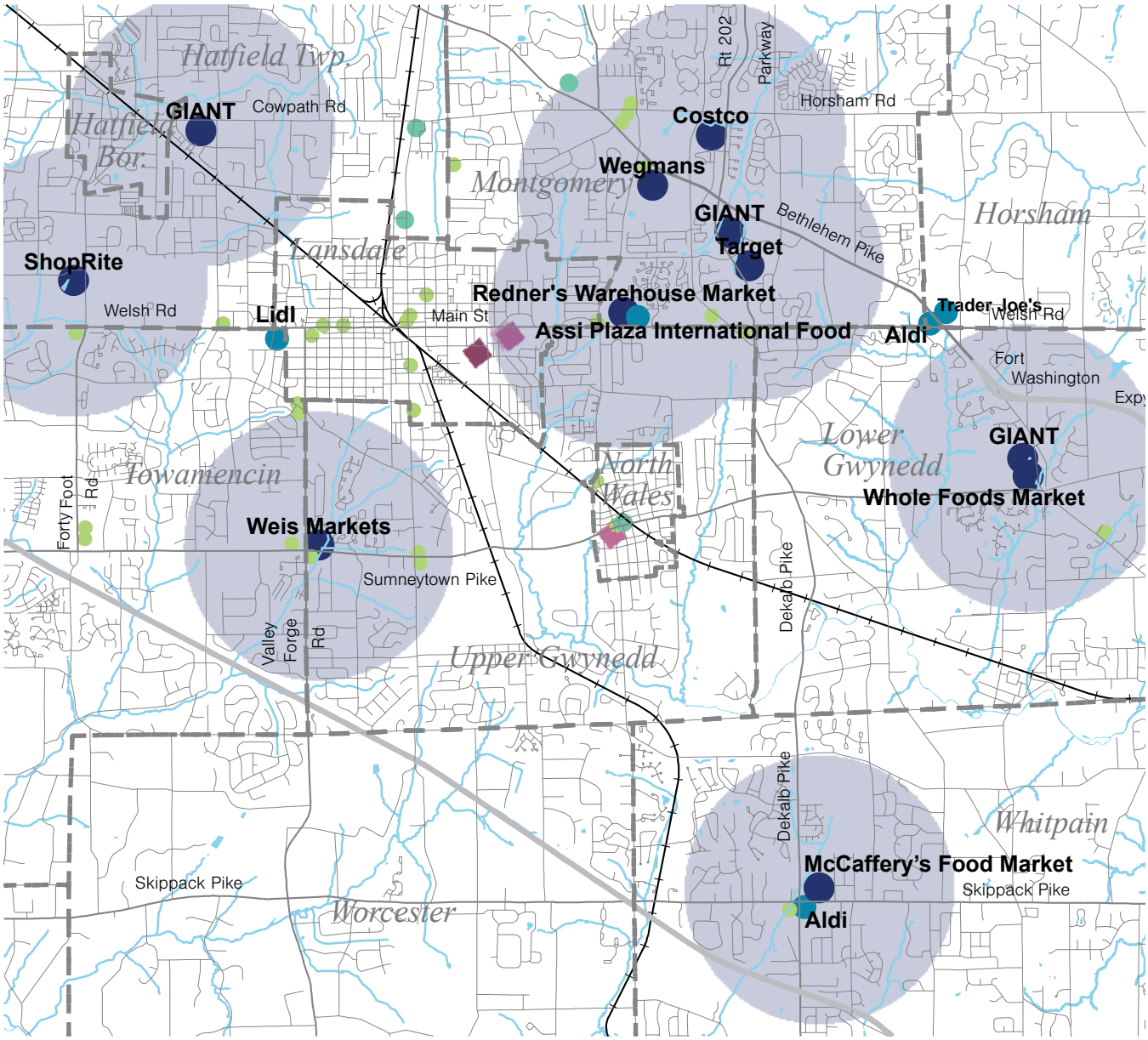
The language in the 2008 Farm Bill defines a food desert as an "area in the United States with limited access to affordable and nutritious food, particularly such an area composed of predominantly lower income neighborhoods and communities."[16]

Asthma Rates and Air Quality

Asthma can be attributed in part to air pollution from sources like vehicle exhaust, industrial emissions, and household mold and dust. Proximity to pollution-emitting sources, such as heavy manufacturing or industrial land uses and nearby roadways with heavy truck traffic, increases the risk of developing asthma. Additionally, air quality inside of homes can affect the prevalence of asthma. For example, cigarette smoke and particulate matter from inadequately maintained older homes, including mold spores and dust, can also contribute to asthma.

16 USDA. "Access to Affordable and Nutritious Food: Measuring and Understanding Food Deserts and Their Consequences." https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/42711/12716_ap036_1_.pdf

Map 10: Large Specialty Food Stores



0 0.5 1 2 Miles

N

- Full-Scale Grocery Store
- Large Specialty Food Store
- Small Specialty Food Store
- Convenience Store (including pharmacies)
- 1-mile Radius from Full-Scale Grocery Stores
- Farmer's Market
- Food Bank
- Soup Kitchen

Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission

Physical Activity & Obesity

Physical activity can take on many shapes and forms. It can be done intentionally, like going to the gym for a workout; or as part of daily activities, like running errands or cleaning the house.

One of the ways Upper Gwynedd could increase the rates of physical activity is to increase the number of destinations for residents to walk to, such as shopping/dining locations or fitness businesses like yoga and karate. Additionally, the routes and pathways that people take to access these destinations need to be safe, well-lit, and convenient.

An increased availability of parks and playgrounds can also encourage physical activity and provide increased recreation space for residents. New destination green spaces can be created by converting undeveloped or underused township open spaces into "parklets" for recreation and relaxation.

Health Spark Foundation

The Health Spark Foundation (formerly known as the North Penn Community Health Foundation) was formed in 2002 from the sale of the North Penn Hospital. In 2016, the foundation expanded to serve all of Montgomery County. Health Spark supports "safety net" services that provide short-term interventions, such as violence prevention, substance abuse treatment, housing assistance, and job training.

For more information, visit: Health Spark Foundation. https://healthspark.org/

Several of the township's parks provide recreational opportunities within walking distance of residential neighborhoods.

Recommendations

See the Land Use Chapter for the desired location of different types of institutional land use.

Recommendation 8

Continue to provide high-quality and efficient community services to township residents.

Implementation Strategies

a. Continue to plan for necessary improvements and upgrades to township facilities, including continued partnership with the Upper Gwynedd Township Fire Department to explore facility expansion or construction opportunities.

b. Periodically assess township communication strategies to ensure residents of all ages, abilities, and ethnicities are aware of essential community services and facilities.

c. Continue to partner with North Wales Borough and pursue multi-municipal cooperation opportunities, as applicable. Upper Gwynedd Township and North Wales Borough currently partner on trail planning, the Nor-Gwyn Pool, and the North Wales Area Library; however, additional opportunities for multi-municipal cooperation may be mutually-beneficial in the future.

Recommendation 9

Support the township's diverse cultural and institutional facilities as important community amenities that provide essential social, spiritual, and educational opportunities.

Implementation Strategies

a. Continue to support the North Wales Area Library and cross-promote library programming such as the attraction pass program.

b. Continue to partner with the North Penn School District on long-term facilities planning as well as shorter-term improvements such as sidewalk connections (Safe Routes to School), trail development, and stormwater management.

c. Coordinate with the township's other institutional properties to understand and plan for their long-term facility needs.

Recommendation 10

Improve access to healthy food options for township residents.

Implementation Strategies

a. Increase neighborhood-based access to food retail sites by encouraging small-scale specialty food stores.

b. Evaluate current ordinance language to ensure that community gardens and farmers markets are permitted and encouraged in appropriate locations.

c. Promote existing food resources such as the Lansdale Farmer's Market and local food banks.

See the Transportation chapter for relevant implementation strategies related to priority sidewalk construction to improve pedestrian access to nearby food stores.

Recommendation 11

Work to address factors that influence outdoor air quality and can contribute to asthma rates in a region.

Implementation Strategies

a. Implement measures to reduce the amount of truck traffic that passes through the township to limit vehicular air pollution. In particular, periodically reevaluate signal timing on major corridors, such as Sumneytown Pike, to minimize truck idling.

b. Coordinate with industrial property owners and other partners such as the Montgomery County Health Department to monitor the air and water quality impacts of industrial land uses within the township. Take actions as necessary to address any issues identified.

See the Environmental Sustainability chapter for relevant implementation strategies related to maintaining and enhancing the township's tree

canopy coverage which can also have air quality benefits.

Recommendation 12

Improve health outcomes for the community as a whole by encouraging overall healthy and active lifestyles.

Implementation Strategies

a. Encourage new fitness-oriented businesses and businesses that are walking destinations through ordinance updates and community programming (e.g., pop-up yoga, fun run) that highlights fitness.

b. Pursue partnerships and opportunities to address public health and safety issues such as childhood obesity, drug use, and drunk driving.

See the Transportation chapter for relevant implementation strategies related to safe routes to school and priority sidewalk construction.

See the Parks & Open Space chapter for relevant implementation strategies related to a township-wide parks and open space master plan and continued trail development.

West Point Pike

Transportation

Summary of Recommendations

- *Improve traffic flow and safety in the township.*
- *Ensure high-quality and consistent maintenance of all township-owned roads.*
- *Discourage heavy cut-through traffic in residential neighborhoods.*
- *Enhance the safety and connectivity of the pedestrian network throughout the township.*
- *Ensure adequate pedestrian infrastructure exists to connect the township's residential areas to target walkability areas: train stations, schools, parks, libraries, and shopping centers.*
- *Create additional opportunities for residents to safely bicycle from their homes to parks, trails, and other destinations within the township.*
- *Encourage the use of public transportation.*

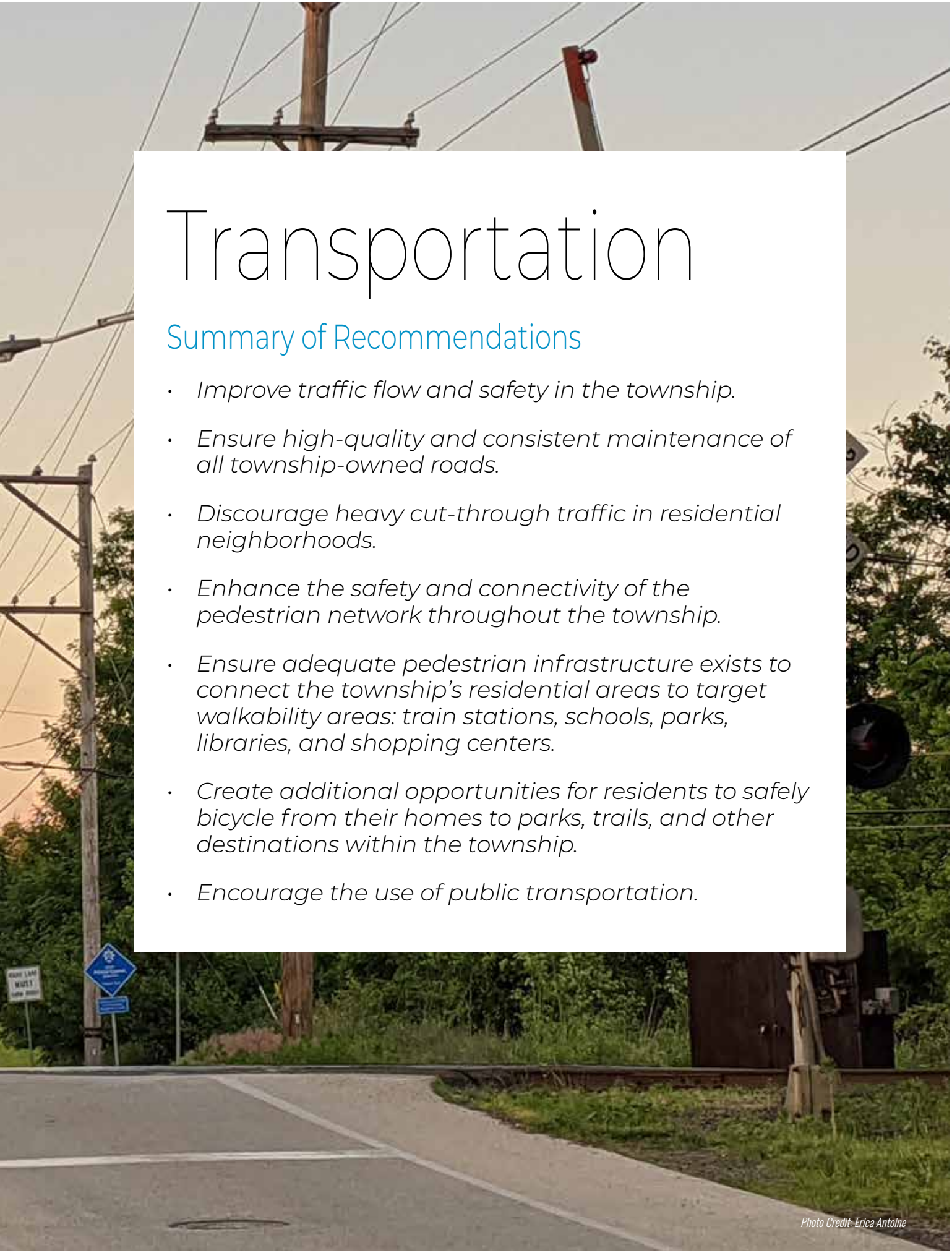


Photo Credit: Erica Antoine

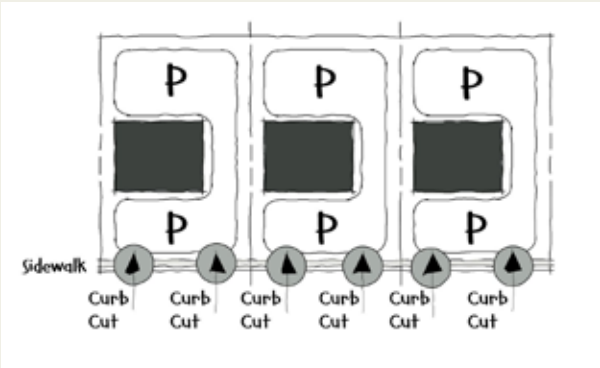
Community Transportation Patterns

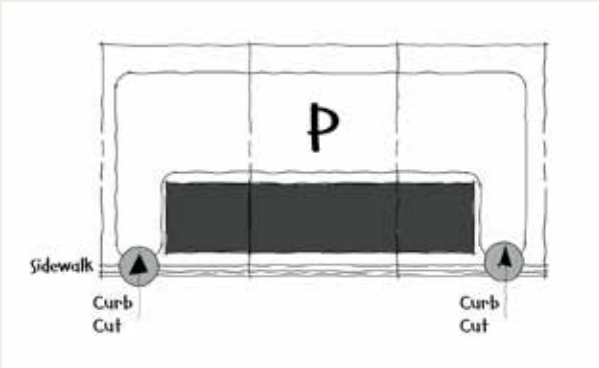
A community's transportation network allows for the daily movement of people and goods. Driving, walking, bicycling, and taking public transit are the most commonly used "modes" of transportation. "Multi-modal" roadways and corridors are designed to serve more than one of these modes. Evaluating and appropriately planning for all of these "modes" of travel is important to maintaining the township's safety, community character, and economic development. In addition, having safe and efficient access to a variety of transportation options can also make an area more attractive to new residents.

The comprehensive plan public outreach process identified several common transportation concerns for the community, including improving traffic flow and enhancing walking and bicycling opportunities. For example, Sumneytown Pike is a common location where residents would like to see more interconnected sidewalks. *See the Focus Areas Chapter – Sumneytown Pike Corridor East & West for more information on recommendations to enhance walkability along this important corridor.*

A pedestrian bridge along Sumneytown Pike crosses over the Wissahickon Creek.

Example of Redevelopment Scenario with Shared Parking and Fewer Curb Cuts





Excess vehicular access points associated with auto-oriented commercial development along a corridor can contribute to a roadway's congestion and safety issues. Access management improvements could be achieved through redevelopment by encouraging shared parking and parking lot connectivity so as to reduce the number of curb cuts directly onto the main roadway.

Minimizing the number of curb cuts that cross pedestrian walkways will provide a safer pedestrian environment and decrease the number of un-signalized vehicular access points that contribute to congestion. In addition, reducing the amount of parking in front of buildings will allow for improvements such as wider sidewalks, increased landscaping, or public seating areas that contribute to a vibrant and attractive commercial area.

Approximately 64% of Upper Gwynedd households own two or more vehicles (see Table 12 below) and nearly 83% of Upper Gwynedd residents drive alone during their commute to work (see Table 13 below). The average commute time for Upper Gwynedd residents is 31 minutes, which is similar to neighboring townships but two minutes longer than the county average (see Table 13 below).

Table 12: Number of Vehicles per Household: 2018

	% of Households by # of Vehicles per Household			
	NO VEHICLE AVAILABLE	1 VEHICLE AVAILABLE	2 VEHICLES AVAILABLE	3 OR MORE VEHICLES AVAILABLE
Upper Gwynedd Township	2.7%	33.3%	46.3%	17.7%
North Wales Borough	5.9%	27.1%	43.4%	23.7%
Lansdale Borough	8.3%	38.3%	38.7%	14.7%
Lower Gwynedd Township	7.2%	32.6%	33.7%	26.4%
Montgomery Township	3.6%	26.1%	45.9%	24.4%
Towamencin Township	6.9%	34.6%	39.0%	19.5%
Worcester Township	5.1%	20.4%	45.3%	29.2%
Montgomery County	5.8%	31.7%	42.2.%	20.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Table 13: Commute to Work Characteristics: 2018

	% of Workers 16 Years and Over						
	DRIVE ALONE	CARPOOL	PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION	WALK	OTHER (INCLUDING BICYCLE)	WORK FROM HOME	AVERAGE COMMUTE TRAVEL TIME TO WORK (MINUTES)
Upper Gwynedd Township	82.6%	3.7%	5.3%	1.1%	0.5%	6.8%	31.0
North Wales Borough	76.3%	1.3%	8.8%	0.3%	0.7%	3.6%	23.8
Lansdale Borough	78.1%	10.0%	4.6%	2.8%	1.0%	3.5%	27.0
Lower Gwynedd Township	80.4%	3.6%	6.6%	2.4%	0.4%	6.6%	33.1
Montgomery Township	80.7%	5.5%	3.4%	1.6%	0.8%	8.0%	29.7
Towamencin Township	83.5%	6.6%	3.1%	0.6%	0.3%	6.0%	30.7
Worcester Township	79.9%	5.1%	1.6%	0.4%	0.5%	12.5%	34.6
Montgomery County	78.7%	6.4%	5.4%	2.3%	0.8%	6.5%	29.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Vehicular Transportation

Many of Upper Gwynedd's major roads today, such as Sumneytown Pike and Swedesford Road, date back to the township's early history as an agrarian community. However, the majority of the township's residential neighborhoods were developed post-World War II, often on large enough lots to accommodate the parking of multiple vehicles for each household. The township's commercial areas were primarily developed during this time frame as well, and are therefore oriented primarily to vehicular traffic.

New Technologies & Trends in Transportation

When planning for the long-range future of a community, it is valuable to consider how new technologies and trends in transportation could impact the community. For example, app-based companies such as Uber and Lyft have increased the convenience of ridesharing and ridehailing. Denser communities can also benefit from services such as car share and bike share that allow individuals to reserve and utilize cars and bikes on an as-needed basis, which reduces the demand for parking.

In addition, it is anticipated that some vehicular trips could be accommodated using autonomous vehicle technology in the future. Although the time frame for implementation of this type of technology is uncertain, it is possible that autonomous vehicles could be used for deliveries before they are used more readily for personal vehicular trips.

See the Environmental Sustainability chapter for a discussion of electric vehicle technology.

Road Ownership

The majority of the residential roads within the township are owned and maintained by the township; however, many of the higher-traffic roads through the township are owned by either Montgomery County or PennDOT (see Map 12 on the following page).

Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission

The Northeast Extension of the Pennsylvania Turnpike, which runs through the far southwest corner of the township, is owned by the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission. The nearest interchange is located approximately two miles to the west along Sumneytown Pike, in Kulpsville.

PennDOT Roads

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) owns several major roads through Upper Gwynedd Township including Valley Forge Road, Allentown Road, Welsh Road, and North Wales Road. PennDOT reviews any Highway Occupancy Permit (HOP) applications for new developments that will have vehicular driveways on a state-owned road.

Although not located within the township, a PennDOT project to widen Route 202 in adjacent Whitpain and Lower Gwynedd townships will influence traffic flow in the township. This project, which is anticipated to be completed by 2024, will widen Route 202 from two lanes to five lanes over a 2.6-mile stretch of the roadway from Morris Road to Swedesford Road. Additional turn lanes will be created and intersection improvements will be completed, as well as a new bridge over the Wissahickon Creek. In addition, bike lanes and traffic signal optimization will be integrated into the project.[1]

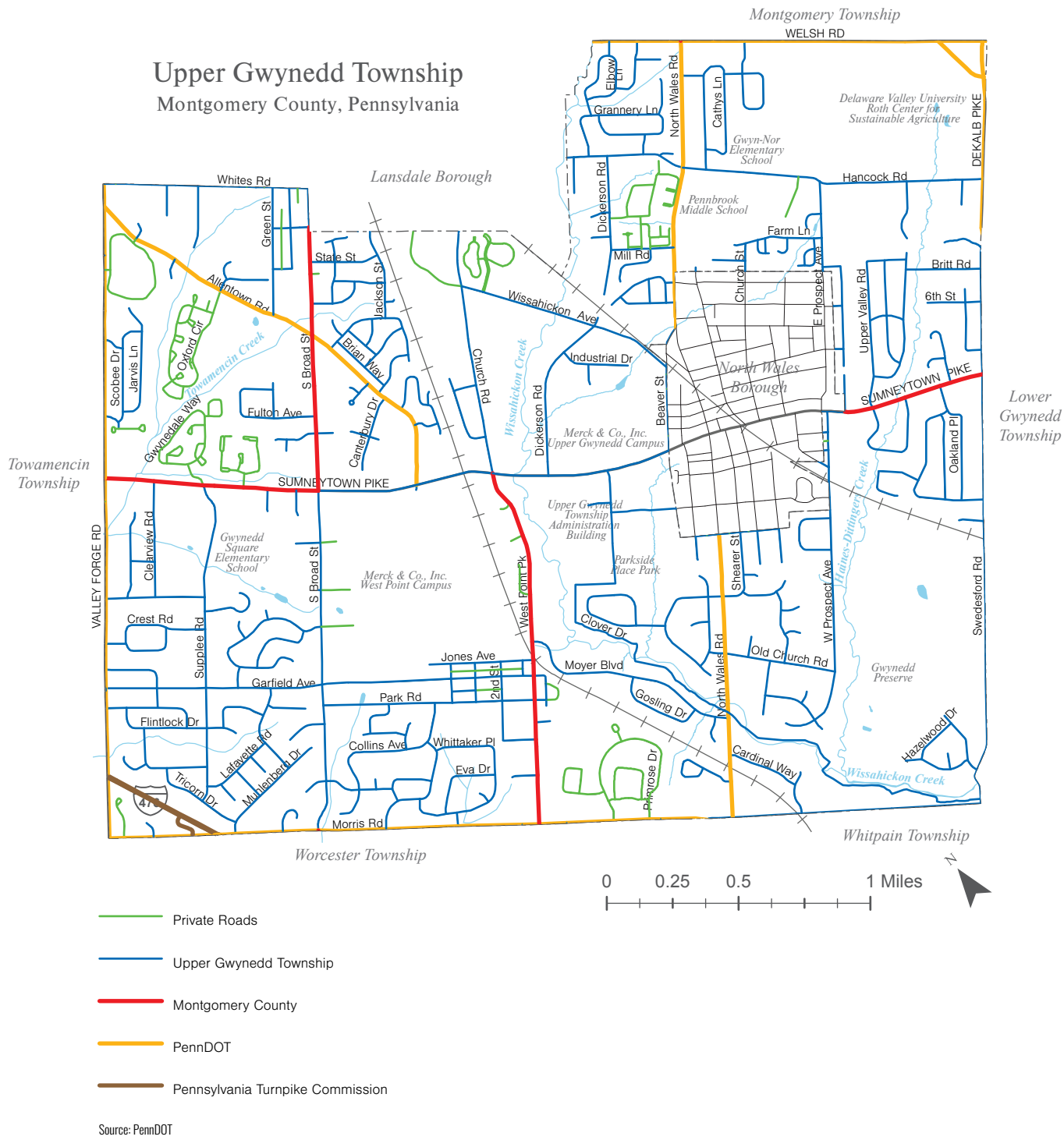
A relatively new program called "PennDOT Connects" has a greater focus on coordinating with municipalities earlier in the project planning for roadway and bridge projects. This allows PennDOT to work with municipalities in order to help identify and incorporate multi-modal improvements based on local priorities.

Montgomery County Roads

Montgomery County owns West Point Pike through Upper Gwynedd Township, as well as South Broad Street north of Sumneytown Pike and Sumneytown Pike west of South Broad Street and east of North Wales Borough. The Montgomery County Roads and Bridges Department maintains county-owned roads, and also reviews any Highway Occupancy Permit (HOP) applications for new

1 DVRPC. Draft FY2021 Transportation Improvement Program for Pennsylvania (FY21-24). https://www.dvrpc.org/TIP/Draft/pdf/mont21d.pdf

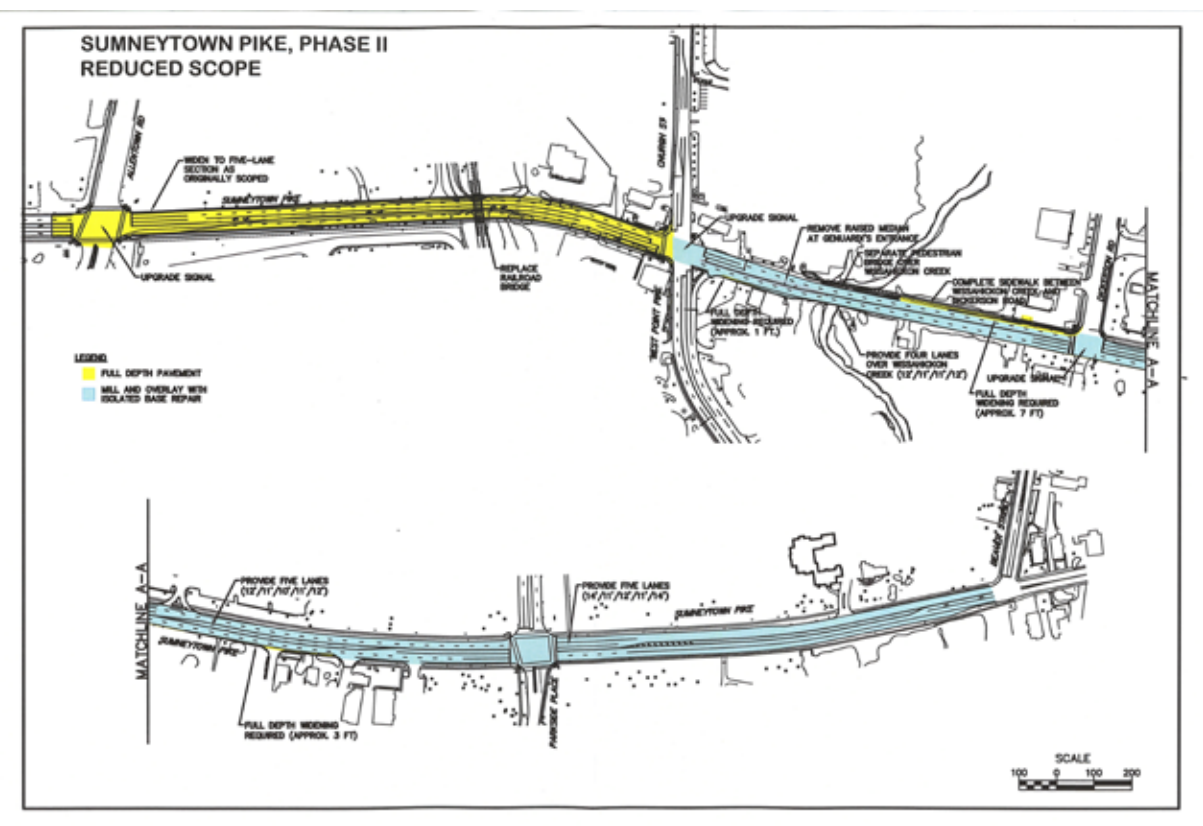
Map 12: Road Ownership



Source: PennDOT

Sumneytown Pike Widening Project

For many decades, Sumneytown Pike through Upper Gwynedd was constrained to one lane in each direction by a narrow railroad overpass near Allentown Road. In 2010, a project to widen Sumneytown Pike between South Broad Street and Beaver Street was completed. This project included replacing the railroad overpass and adding a pedestrian bridge on the north side of Sumneytown Pike over the Wissahickon Creek. In particular, this road widening project improved vehicular access to Merck & Co., Inc.'s campuses in Upper Gwynedd Township, which rely on trucks for deliveries. The approximately $7.7 million project was funded in part by Montgomery County, Merck & Co., Inc., and Upper Gwynedd Township.



developments that will have vehicular driveways on a county-owned road.

The county-owned sections of Sumneytown Pike are being studied as part of the *Montco Pikes*[2] corridor study in order to plan for future transportation needs along the corridor. This study, which is expected to be completed by the end of 2021, will create a long-term vision for the Sumneytown Pike corridor, in terms of both character and function. Recommended improvements could include additional travel lanes, sidewalks, and bike lanes.

Upper Gwynedd Township Roads

The majority of roads within the township are township-owned and maintained. The township Public Works Department is responsible for many road maintenance tasks, including pothole repair and snow removal.

Private Roads

Some more recent developments, especially those along single cul-de-sac roads, incorporate roads that are maintained privately, often by a homeowner's association.

2 Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. Montco Pikes: A Vision Plan for Six County Corridors. https://www.montcopa.org/montcopikes

Act 209 Transportation Impact Fee

In order to help fund off-site road improvements necessitated by new land development, many Montgomery County municipalities have enacted a Transportation Impact Fee ordinance, as authorized by the Municipalities Planning Code.

The first step in creating a transportation impact fee is to form a Transportation Impact Fee Advisory Committee. The municipality then passes a resolution establishing the transportation impact fee and completes the following documents prior to establishing the actual fee amount: (1) Land Use Assumptions Report; (2) Roadway Sufficiency Analysis; and (3) Capital Improvements Plan. Funds received through the transportation impact fee must be segregated from general funds. Developers can receive credit for right-of-way and off-site transportation improvements installed as part of their construction project.

Municipal Liquid Fuels Program

Municipal Liquid Fuels funds can be used to pay for maintenance, repair, construction, and reconstruction of public roads. The amount of funding each municipality receives is based on its population and miles of road on their approved Liquid Fuels Inventory. Based on the 2020 Municipal Liquid Fuels Allocations Report, Upper Gwynedd's gross allocation under this program was $470,408.65.[1]

1 PennDOT. 2020 Municipal Liquid Fuels Allocations Report. https://www.penndot.gov/Doing-Business/LocalGovernment/LiquidFuels/MunicipalLiquidFuelsProgram/Documents/2020-MLF-Allocation-Report.pdf

Road Classification

Each road segment in the township is also classified based on the role that it serves as part of the overall roadway network (see Map 13 on the following page). Characteristics of each of the road classifications are outlined in Table 14 on page 89. Although the majority of arterial roadways in the township are not township-owned, Church Road and Sumneytown Pike between South Broad Street and North Wales Borough are examples of township-owned arterial roads.

Traffic Counts

Traffic count data from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) for the last ten years is shown in Map 14 on page 87. DVRPC collects traffic count data using several different methods and time frames. Adjustment factors are applied to calculate an estimated Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT). The principal arterials of Sumneytown Pike (with as many as 18,000 cars per day) and Welsh Road/Route 63 (with as many as 16,500 cars per day) are the two most heavily-traveled roadways in the township.

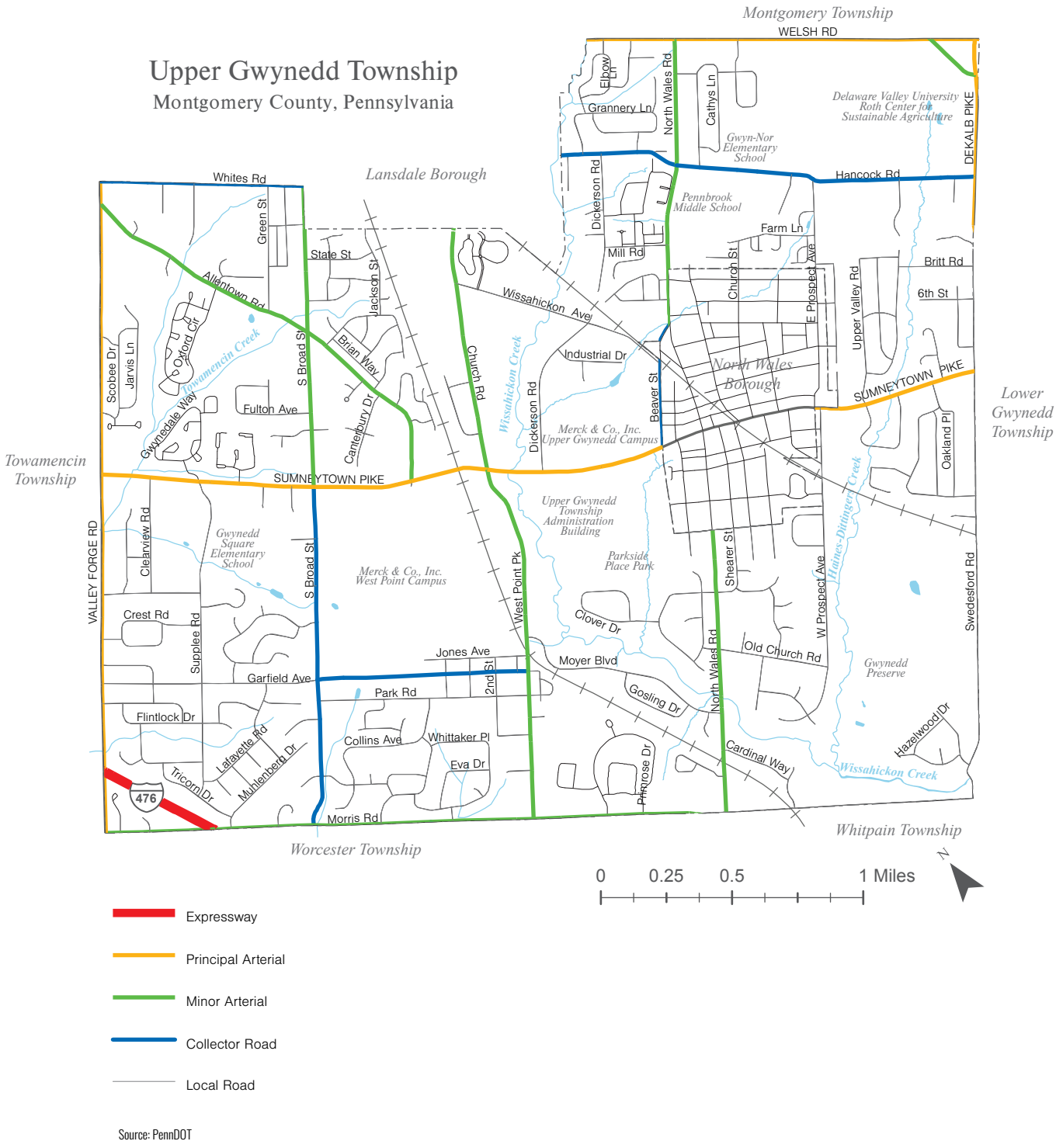
Crash Data and Patterns

Map 15 on page 88 highlights areas of the township where there has been a greater density of reportable crashes[3] between 2015 and 2019.[4]

3 A reportable crash is defined as "a crash resulting in a death within 30 days of the crash; or injury in any degree, to any person involved; or crashes resulting in damage to any vehicle serious enough to require towing" (PennDOT).

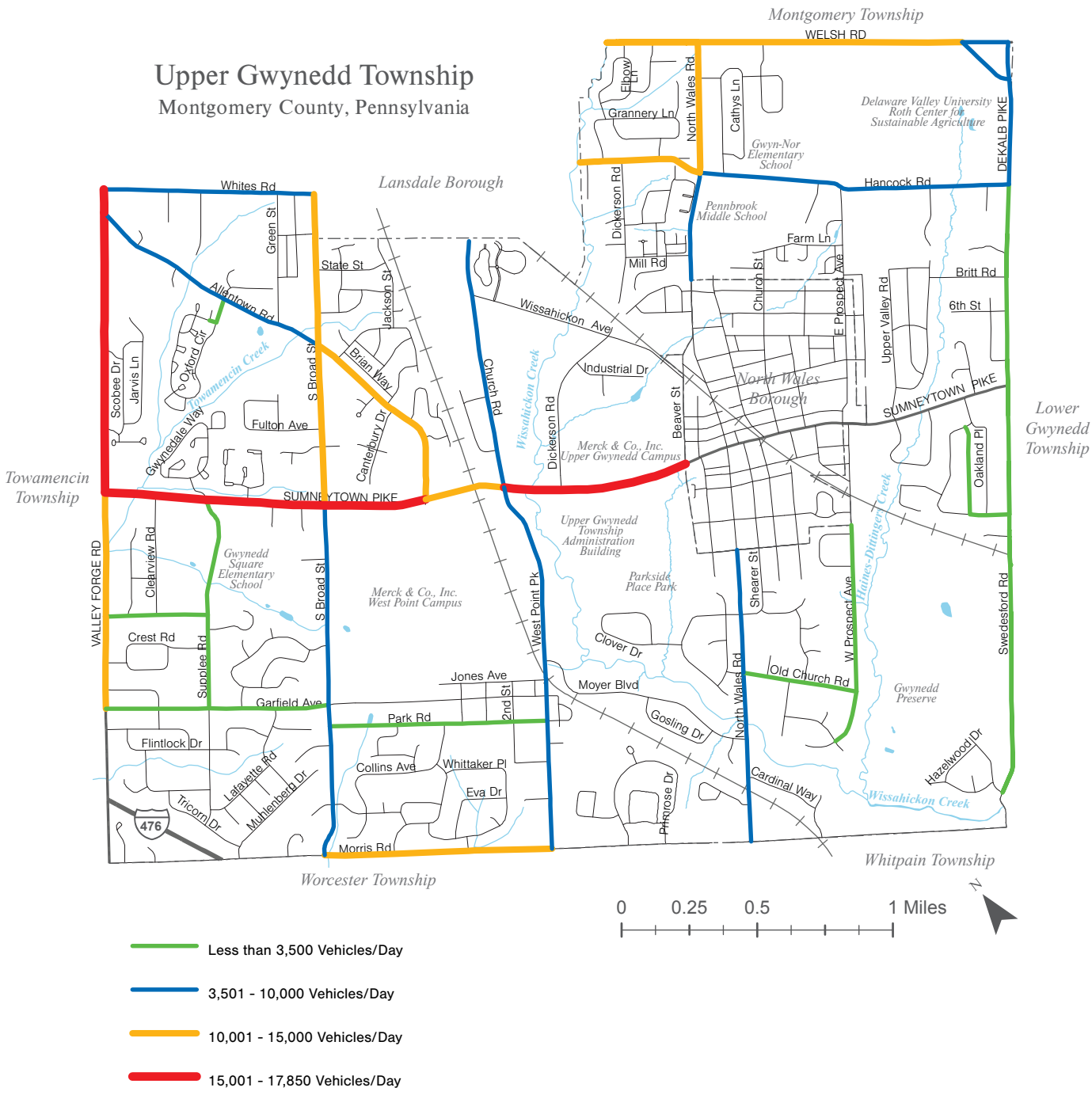
4 Crash data is available online through PennDOT's "Pennsylvania Crash Information Tool": https://crashinfo.penndot.gov/PCIT/welcome.html

Map 13: Road Classification



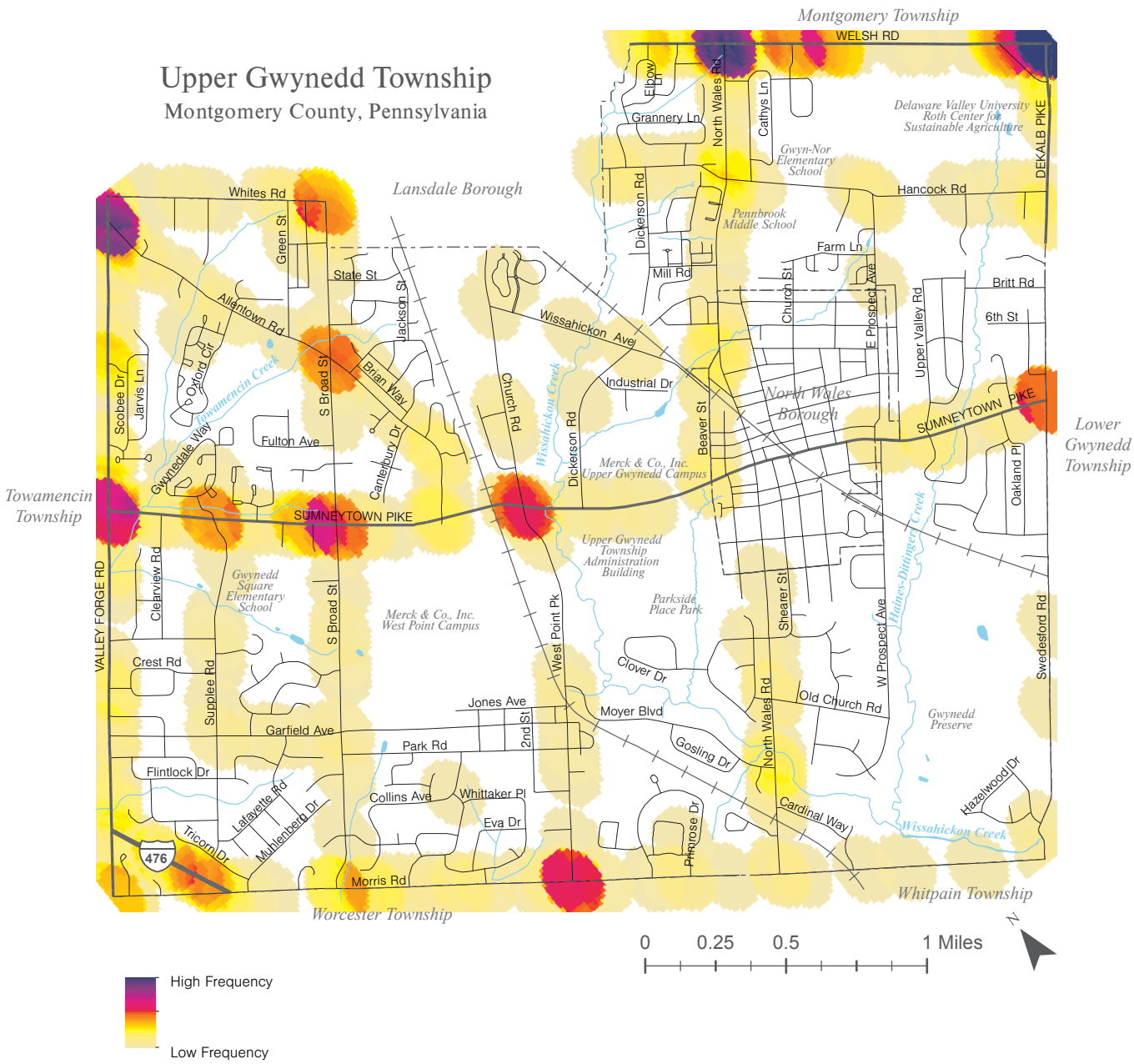
Source: PennDOT

Map 14: Traffic Counts (Vehicles per Day)



Source: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. "Traffic Counts" http://www.dvrpc.org/webmaps/TrafficCounts/

Map 15: Crash Density:2015-2019



Source: PennDOT

Table 14: Road Classification Description

CLASSIFICATION	PRIMARY PURPOSE	UPPER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP EXAMPLES
Expressway	Provide limited access routes	· Route 476
Principal Arterial	Serve major activity centers and provide longer-distance inter-area travel; Carry high proportion of area travel	· Sumneytown Pike · Welsh Road · Valley Forge Road
Minor Arterial	Interconnect with principal arterials and accommodate trips of moderate length	· Church Road · West Point Pike · North Wales Road · Allentown Road · Morris Road
Collector	Distribute trips from arterials through residential areas, collect traffic from local roads, and connect to arterial roads	· South Broad Street · Garfield Avenue · Hancock Road
Local Road	Provide direct access to individual homes and businesses and not meant to accommodate thru-traffic or long-distance traffic	· West Prospect Avenue · Supplee Road · Moyer Boulevard

The Upper Gwynedd Township Police Department has a Traffic Safety Officer who identifies where improvements could be made to reduce the incidence of crashes and improve efficiency in traffic flow.

For example, traffic safety improvements were implemented recently at the intersection of Swedesford Road and Sumneytown Pike. The intersection was converted to a four-way stop intersection and pavement markings, including stop bars, were installed on all sides of the intersection. In addition, vegetation was cleared away from some of the corners to improve sight distance at the intersection.

Traffic Calming

The township's Traffic Safety Officer also evaluates opportunities for neighborhood-based traffic calming efforts focused on engineering, signage, and pavement markings. Although a percentage of drivers will always choose to drive over the speed limit, no matter what the posted speed limit is, implementing physical changes to the roadway to encourage drivers to slow down can reduce the likelihood of severe injuries as the result of crashes.

Streetscape enhancements such as street trees, pedestrian-scaled lighting, and on-street parking can also have traffic calming benefits. Other traffic calming efforts, such as narrowing overly-wide roadways and installing bulb-outs at wide intersections, can discourage cut-through traffic because they encourage drivers to travel at slower speeds through neighborhoods. Overall, within the township's residential neighborhoods, traffic calming efforts should be focused on reducing average vehicular speeds, and improving pedestrian and bicycle access to neighborhood amenities such as parks and schools.

A combination of corner bumpouts, signage, and unique pavement materials helps to calm traffic through this intersection in Haddonfield, New Jersey.

Walkability

Improving sidewalk connectivity was identified as an area for improvement through the comprehensive plan public outreach process, especially along major roads such as Sumneytown Pike that connect residential neighborhoods to destinations such as public schools and shopping centers.

Sidewalks

Areas of the township where new sidewalks will be prioritized to improve pedestrian safety and accessibility are shown in Map 16 on the following page. Priority areas for sidewalk construction were identified by drawing a buffer walking distance of a 1/2-mile around trains stations and public schools and a 1/4-mile around public parks, retail commercial areas, and the North Wales Area Library.

The crosswalk at the intersection of Sumneytown Pike and Dickerson Road is currently a traditional crosswalk of two parallel lines. A continental-style (also referred to as ladder-style) crosswalk could help make this pedestrian crossing more visible.

Complete Streets Policy

A complete streets policy aims to balance the needs and comfort of, and enable safe access for, all roadway users. Examples of complete streets strategies include:

- Widening sidewalks along individual blocks, or installing corner bump-outs, to increase pedestrian safety and comfort
- Adding bike amenities at destinations such as schools, commercial areas, and parks to encourage residents and visitors to bike to these locations rather than driving
- Providing dedicated and prioritized space for alternative transportation modes such as buses and carpool vans

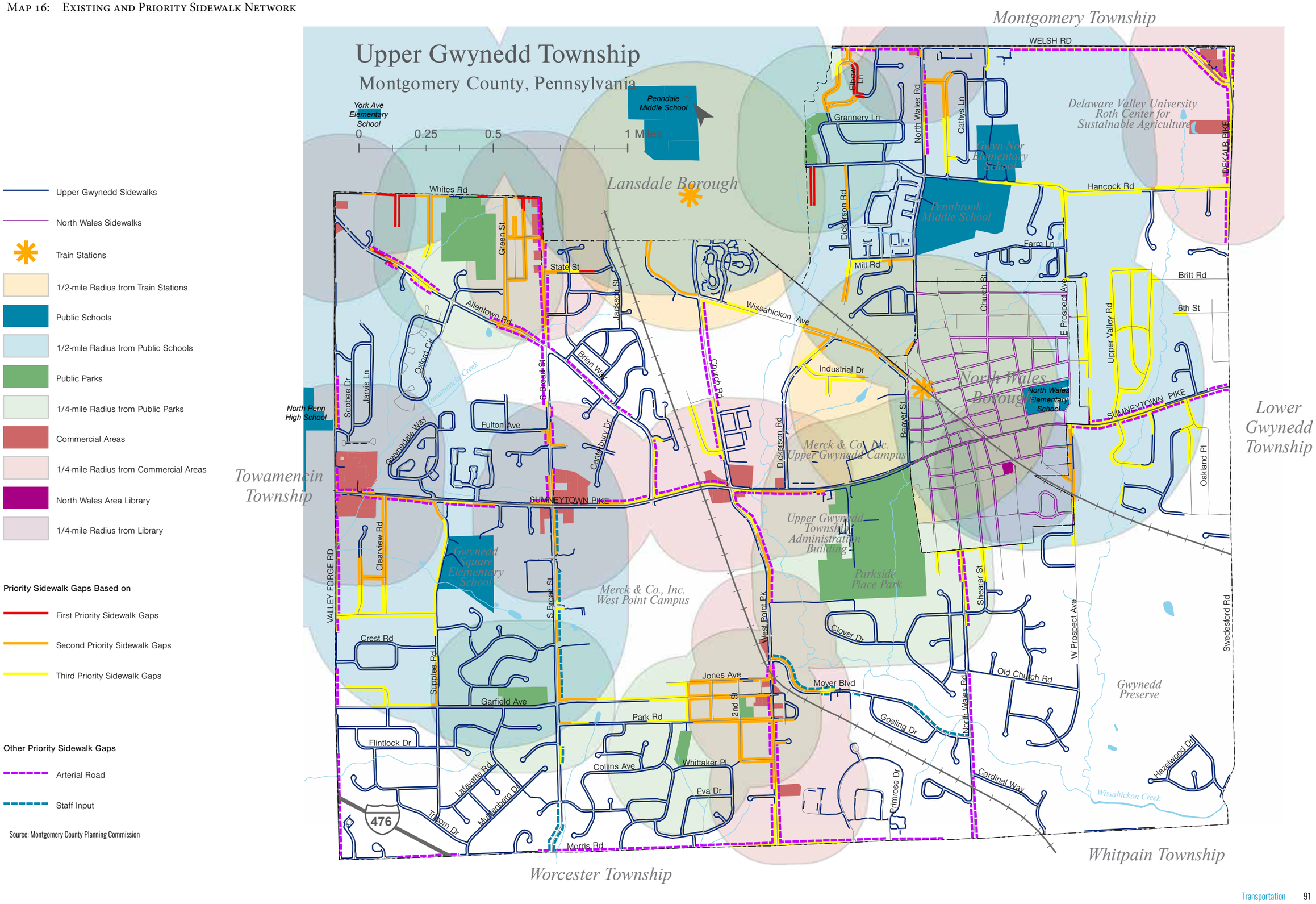
In 2019, Montgomery County adopted a complete streets policy for all county-owned roads, including South Broad Street, West Point Pike, and parts of Sumneytown Pike. The county's complete streets policy can be used as a model for municipalities considering adopting a policy for local roads.

For more information, visit: https://www.montcopa.org/DocumentCenter/View/26174/2019MontcoCompleteStreetsPolicy_WebFinal

This pedestrian crossing within a recent residential development in West Point Village is highlighted through a combination of a corner bumpout, signage, and a high-visibility crosswalk.

Signage can help communicate traffic safety messages to drivers and encourage traffic calming in residential neighborhoods.

Map 16: Existing and Priority Sidewalk Network



Stony Creek railroad corridor through Upper Gwynedd

The Existing and Priority Sidewalk Network Map (Map 16 on the previous page) uses different color lines to indicate locations where the installation of additional sidewalks is a higher priority based on whether one or more of the priority walking areas identified overlap in that location. In other words, the higher the priority, the more amenities a sidewalk in that location would improve pedestrian access to. In addition to this analysis, some sidewalk gaps are shown as higher priorities because of either their location along arterial roadways, or feedback from the public and township staff.

Crosswalks

In addition to installing sidewalks in the priority walking areas of the township, ensuring pedestrian crosswalks are clearly marked within the priority walking areas shown in Map 16 is also important. Many communities are increasingly installing continental-style crosswalks as they have been shown to be more visible to approaching motorists, especially during inclement weather (see illustrations on the following page).

Although traditional-style crosswalks may be appropriate in some locations, continental-style crosswalks should be installed at intersections where pedestrian safety issues have been identified, adjacent to pedestrian destinations such as schools and parks, and on roadways where high levels of pedestrian activity and/or high volumes of vehicular traffic have been observed. In general, all of the crosswalks at an intersection should be painted in the same pattern or style.

Safe Routes to School

Safe Routes to School generally refers to programs that expand and improve opportunities for school children to safely and conveniently access their schools by walking or bicycling. Typically, children who walk or bicycle to school are able to incorporate additional physical activity into their school day, which can contribute to their overall health. A combination of programming, education, and infrastructure improvements can be implemented to advance the goals of a Safe Routes to School program.

Many of Upper Gwynedd's residential neighborhoods, such as this one near Garfield Park, have sidewalks. However, filling key sidewalk gaps and adding crosswalks and traffic calming improvements, especially around neighborhood amenities such as parks and schools, would be beneficial.

Continental, or ladder, style crosswalks (right) with solid white blocks parallel to the motorist's line of sight have been shown to be more noticeable to approaching motorists than traditional crosswalks (left) which consist of two parallel lines which can blend into other roadway markings and are less visible, especially during inclement weather.

Source: SRTS Guide: "Marking and Signing Crosswalks," http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/engineering/marked_crosswalks.cfm

Bikeability

Although the arterial and collector roads that run through the township provide the most direct access between destinations, these roadways tend to have higher volumes of vehicular traffic and no bicycle infrastructure, making bicycling more challenging. Although there are several trails within the township, bicycling is generally not permitted on unpaved trails, including the Green Ribbon Trail.

Bicycle Routes

Bike Montco: The Bicycle Plan for Montgomery County (adopted in 2018)[5] includes recommended design improvements and key policies for bicycle safety. *Bike Montco* also establishes a county-wide network of strategic planned bicycle improvements.

5 "Bike Montco: The Bicycle Plan for Montgomery County," 2018. Montgomery County Planning Commission. https://www.montcopa.org/DocumentCenter/View/21389/Bike-Montco-Book-2018_ADOPTED

Safe Routes to School

The North Penn School District Local School Wellness Policy includes the statement:

"The district shall cooperate with local municipalities, state agencies, public safety agency, police departments and community organizations to develop and maintain safe routes to school. District administrators shall seek and utilize available federal and state funding for safe routes to school, when appropriate."[6]

Although ADA curb ramps are present, a marked crosswalk is missing at the intersection of North Wales Road, a state road, and Mill Street in front of the Pennbrook Middle School.

Because the intersection of North Wales Road and Mill Street is uncontrolled, a crosswalk in this location could be paired with additional features such as pedestrian-activated flashing lights and signage to alert drivers to the presence of pedestrians (such as in the above example on Presidential Boulevard in Lower Merion Township).

6 North Penn School District Administration Regulations: Local School Wellness Policy #5140. https://www.npenn.org/central_office/school_nutrition_services_department/district_wellness_guidelines

The county-wide planned bicycle network, which was identified using an analysis of level of traffic stress data and other best practices, consists of 783 miles of roadway where on-road bicycle infrastructure is recommended in order to connect citizens to the county trail network and other destinations.

Map 17 on the following page shows the *Bike Montco* planned bicycle network, which highlights those roads where bicycle facilities should be installed. Although bicycling is not permitted on the township's existing, unpaved trails, the planned Power Line and Liberty Bell trails would be designed to accommodate bicycles. The location of these trails, as shown in the township's 2005 Open Space Preservation Plan Update, are also shown in Map 17.

Several options for the most appropriate type of bicycle facility (e.g., bike lane, sharrow, paved shoulder) on each roadway segment shown on the Planned Bicycle Network Map in *Bike Montco* are summarized in Figure 15 below. The recommended bicycle facility type is based on the roadway type and speed limit.

Several roadways in Upper Gwynedd Township are identified as part of the *Bike Montco* planned bicycle network, including Sumneytown Pike, South Broad Street, Church Road, Garfield Avenue, and West Point Pike. These roads within the township were identified as part of a county-wide framework for on-road bicycle facilities, but could be complemented by additional local bicycle facilities.

In addition, Morris Road along the southern border of the township and Route 202 in the northeast corner of the township are identified as part of the Priority Bike Route in *Bike Montco*.

Figure 15: Recommended Facility Types for the Planned Bicycle Network

Average Daily Trips (ADT)

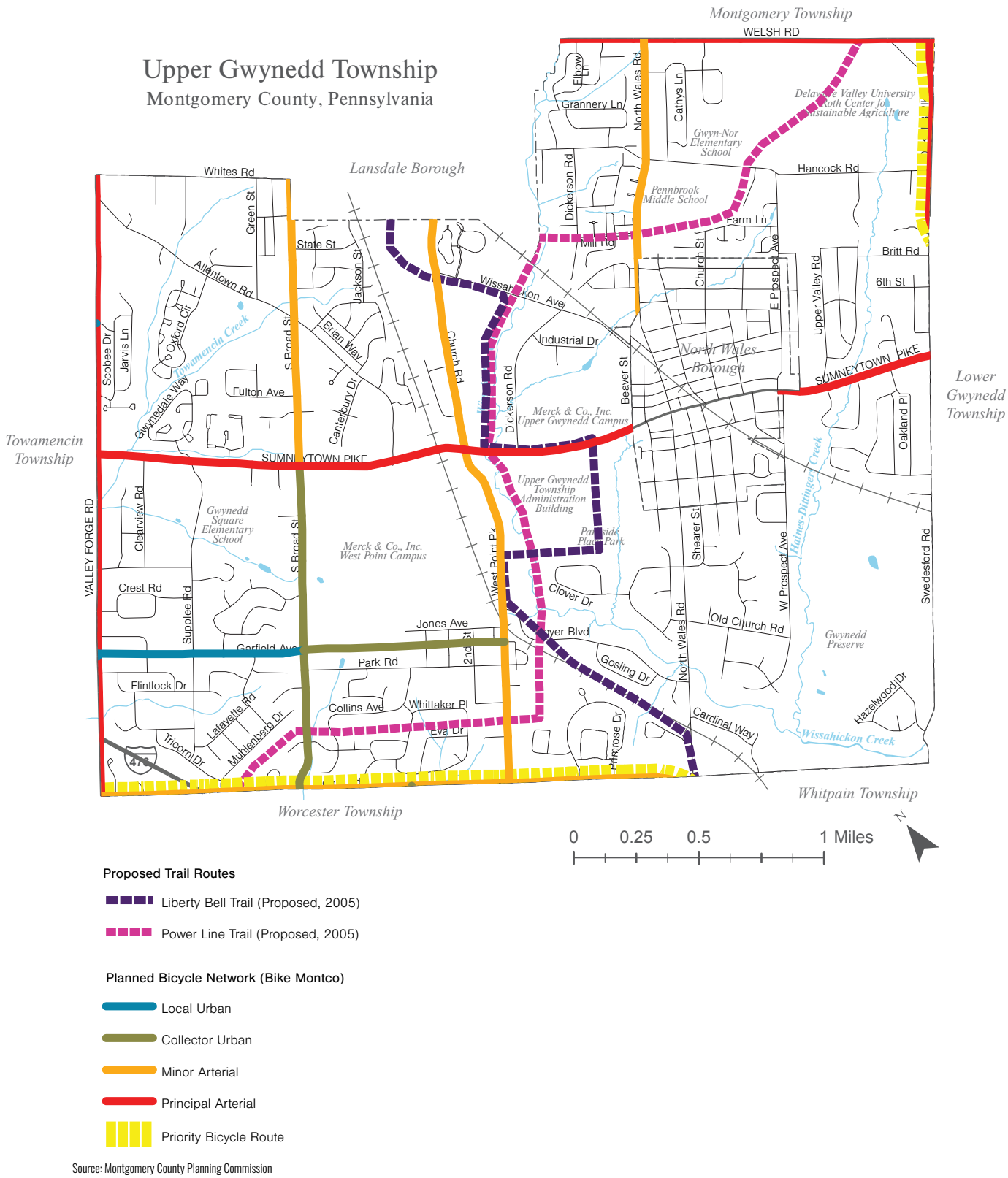
Least ↕ Most

Roadway Type	SPEED LIMIT: 25 MPH	35 MPH	40–55 MPH
Local Rural/Scenic	Marked shared lane Shared lane (no provisions)	Paved shoulder Marked shared lane Shared lane (no provisions)	
Local Urban	Bicycle lane Bicycle boulevard Marked shared lane	Buffered bicycle lane Bicycle lane Marked shared lane	
Collector Rural/Scenic	Buffered bicycle lane Bicycle lane Paved shoulder Wide outside lane	Buffered bicycle lane Bicycle lane Paved shoulder Wide outside lane	
Collector Urban	Protected bicycle lane Buffered bicycle lane Bicycle lane Paved shoulder Wide outside lane	Protected bicycle lane Buffered bicycle lane Bicycle lane Paved shoulder Wide outside lane	
Minor Arterial	Protected bicycle lane Buffered bicycle lane Bicycle lane Paved shoulder* Wide outside lane	Protected bicycle lane Buffered bicycle lane Bicycle lane Paved shoulder* Wide outside lane	Protected bicycle lane Buffered bicycle lane Paved shoulder*
Principal Arterial		Protected bicycle lane Buffered bicycle lane Paved shoulder*	Protected bicycle lane Buffered bicycle lane Paved shoulder*

**Paved shoulders on arterial roads should be at least 6 feet wide.*
NOTE: This table lists the suggested bicycle facilities in order of most protection to least protection. Whenever possible, the facility that provides the most protection should be utilized.

Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission

Map 17: Proposed Bicycle Routes and Trail Connections



Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission

Bike Montco Priority Bike Route

"The highest-priority segments of the network are highlighted in yellow. Their identification as 'priority' means they should be targeted for improvements as soon as possible. When completed with bicycle facilities, these routes will connect the county trail system and establish long-distance on-road routes in areas of the county where there are no planned trails."[7]

7 "Bike Montco: The Bicycle Plan for Montgomery County," 2018. Montgomery County Planning Commission. https://www.montcopa.org/DocumentCenter/View/21389/Bike-Montco-Book-2018_ADOPTED

Bicycle Amenities

Providing amenities such as secure, convenient, and covered bike parking at strategic locations such as transit centers, large office buildings, and popular commercial areas throughout a community has been shown to encourage greater bicycle activity. Promoting designated bike routes and connections to paved trails through signage and public outreach, combined with amenities that make bicyclists feel more welcome and comfortable can also have economic development benefits.

Designated bike lanes can encourage more biking within a community.

Off-Road Trails

In addition to the unpaved Green Ribbon Trail, which is not open to bicycling, there are two planned off-road trails that run through the township. *See the Parks and Recreation chapter for a more detailed discussion of the Power Line Trail and Liberty Bell Trail.*

Public Transportation

Railroad development within the township dates back to 1855 when the North Penn Railroad Company opened a rail line between Gwynedd and Philadelphia. These tracks are now part of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transit Authority's (SEPTA) Lansdale-Doylestown Regional Rail line. In addition, between 1902 and 1912, a Montgomery Traction Trolley line ran along Garfield Avenue in the township.

SEPTA Regional Rail

Although there are no station stops located within the township currently, two SEPTA regional rail stations are located within walking distance of the township: North Wales Station in North Wales Borough and Pennbrook Station in Lansdale Borough (see Map 18 on the following page). In 2019, over 16,000 people rode the Lansdale/Doylestown Regional Rail line on an average weekday.[8]

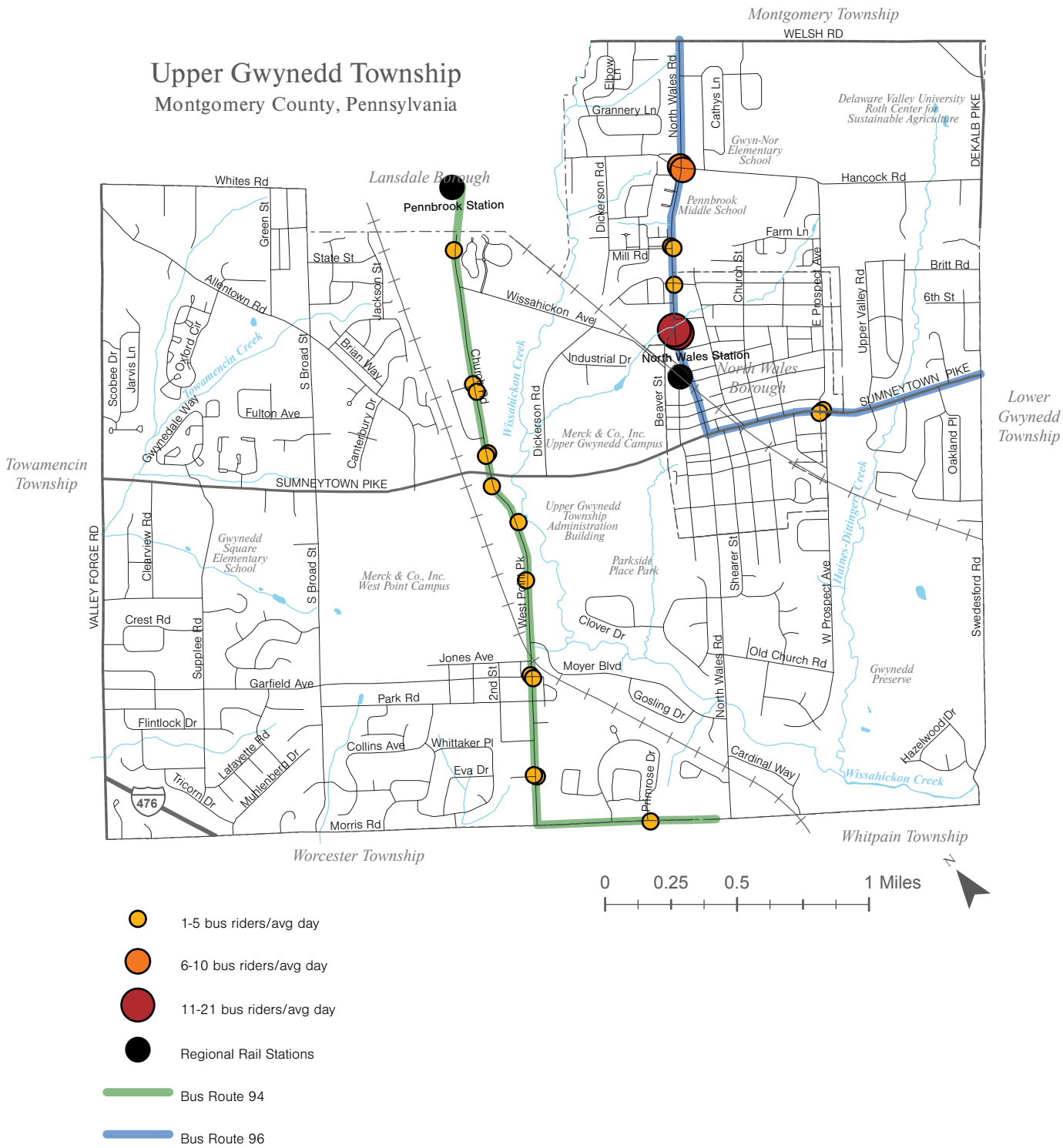
Surveys are periodically conducted of license plates on vehicles parked at train stations in order to determine each train station's park-and-ride catchment area. The number of vehicles registered to Upper Gwynedd Township residents parked at nearby stations is listed in Table 15 on page 98. In addition, it is possible that some township residents choose to walk or bike to a nearby train station; however these numbers are not reflected in this analysis.

SEPTA Buses

SEPTA operates two bus routes with stops in Upper Gwynedd (see Map 18 on the following

8 SEPTA Route Statistics 2019." SEPTA Service Planning Department. http://septa.org/strategic-plan/2019%20Route%20Statistics.pdf

Map 18: Existing Public Transportation Network and Ridership



Source: SEPTA

Table 15: Vehicles from Upper Gwynedd Township Parked at Nearby SEPTA Stations

STATION	VEHICLES FROM UPPER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP PARKED AT STATION	YEAR	REGIONAL RAIL LINE
Lansdale	*4*	*2017*	Lansdale/Doylestown
Pennbrook	*40*	*2011*	Lansdale/Doylestown
North Wales	*69*	*2012*	Lansdale/Doylestown
Gwynedd Valley	*7*	*2017*	Lansdale/Doylestown

Source: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

page and Table 16 below). The Route 94 bus runs along Morris Road, West Point Pike, and Church Road and provides access to destinations such as Lansdale Borough, the Montgomery Mall, and Ambler Borough. In addition, the Route 96 bus runs along Sumneytown Pike, North Wales Road, and Welsh Road. This bus route also provides access to the Montgomery Mall and Lansdale Borough, in addition to the Norristown Transportation Center. Within the township, bus ridership is heaviest along North Wales Road.

Paratransit Services

Paratransit services provide low-cost transportation access to seniors and individuals with physical challenges that reduce their ability to use regular public transportation. SEPTA's Customized Community Transportation (CCT) Program is a door-to-door service available to individuals that are functionally unable to use regular, accessible public transportation for some or all of their transportation needs. Service is provided within 3/4-mile of all regular, fixed-route buses and rail services, only during the hours that the regular transit service is provided.

Table 16: SEPTA Bus Route Statistics: 2019

BUS ROUTE	DESTINATIONS OUTSIDE OF THE TOWNSHIP	TOTAL AVERAGE WEEKDAY RIDERSHIP
94	*Montgomery Mall, Lansdale, Montgomery County Community College (Blue Bell), Ambler, Chestnut Hill*	*533*
96	*Montgomery Mall, Lansdale, North Wales, Montgomery County Community College (Blue Bell), Norristown Transportation Center*	*1,371*

Source: "SEPTA Route Statistics 2019." SEPTA Service Planning Department. http://septa.org/strategic-plan/2019%20Route%20Statistics.pdf

Recommendations

Vehicular Transportation

Recommendation 13

Improve traffic flow and safety in the township.

Implementation Strategies

a. Perform two road safety audits per year, prioritizing intersections for study based on crash data, community input, and guidance from the Upper Gwynedd Township Police Department.

b. Work with property owners to explore opportunities to consolidate existing driveway access points on major arterial roadways and incentivize or require shared driveway and parking access as part of new commercial developments and redevelopments.

c. Amend the township's zoning and/or subdivision and land development ordinances to minimize the creation of new vehicular access points directly onto arterial roadways through requiring or encouraging shared driveways and other standards such as minimum spacing between driveways.

d. Explore using dynamic enforcement technology to encourage traffic calming along major arterial roadways.

e. Work with PennDOT and the township's traffic engineer to periodically evaluate the effectiveness of traffic signal timing along major arterial roadways to encourage drivers to travel at the posted speed limit while minimizing major delays.

f. Install additional signage and pavement markings to encourage drivers to obey traffic laws.

g. Continue to target speed enforcement and traffic safety improvements around school and park properties.

h. Work with Montgomery County to implement recommendations from the Montco Pikes corridor study (once completed) for the county-owned sections of Sumneytown Pike.

i. Partner with North Wales Borough to explore traffic flow improvements on Sumneytown Pike/Main Street through the borough. For example, installing dedicated left turn lanes and/or left turn signals at busy intersections could improve traffic flow along the corridor overall.

Recommendation 14

Ensure high-quality and consistent maintenance of all township-owned roads.

Implementation Strategies

a. Provide a mechanism that allows township staff, residents, and members of the public to report and track observed issues, such as potholes.

b. Continue to coordinate with utility companies and others to ensure the roadway (including the pavement, street markings, official signage, curbing, sidewalks, and landscaping) is properly restored in a timely manner after utility work and other projects are completed.

c. Continue to coordinate with PennDOT (through PennDOT Connects), and other appropriate agencies, regarding proposed and ongoing roadway and bridge projects and any proposed detours that could have impacts on local roads.

d. Continue to ensure high-quality and consistent maintenance of all township-owned roads, including pavement markings.

Recommendation 15

Discourage heavy cut-through traffic in residential neighborhoods.

Implementation Strategies

a. Identify common cut-through traffic corridors and install physical traffic calming strategies such as corner bulb outs, roundabouts, or diverters, in addition to educational strategies such as signage and pavement markings that discourage speeding and cut-through traffic.

Walkability

Recommendation 16

Enhance the safety and connectivity of the pedestrian network throughout the township.

Implementation Strategies

a. Install sidewalks along all public street frontages of all township-owned properties.

b. Work with property owners to explore opportunities to consolidate existing driveway access points on major arterial roadways and incentivize or require shared driveway and parking access as part of new commercial developments and redevelopments.

c. Continue to work with property owners and developers to create pedestrian paths to connect individual neighborhoods and residential subdivisions to schools, parks, and trails, where feasible.

d. Coordinate with PennDOT (through the PennDOT Connects program) to install pedestrian infrastructure, including ADA curb ramps, on state-owned roads as repaving projects occur.

e. Coordinate with the Montgomery County Roads and Bridges Department to install pedestrian infrastructure, including ADA curb ramps on county-owned roads as repaving projects occur.

f. Coordinate with Montgomery County and adjacent municipalities to implement the general recommendations of the *Walk Montco* plan.

g. Create and implement a township-wide plan to install ADA curb ramps at all intersections and crosswalks.

Pedestrian pathways, such as these, can help to connect neighborhoods and provide pedestrian access to neighborhood amenities where the street network does not have direct connections.

Recommendation 17

Ensure adequate pedestrian infrastructure exists to connect the township's residential areas to target walkability areas: train stations, schools, parks, libraries, and shopping centers.

Implementation Strategies

a. Maintain a township-wide map of existing sidewalks and require sidewalk installation as part of all new land developments, targeting sidewalks shown in Map 16: Existing and Priority Sidewalk Network map on page 91 due to proximity to, and ability to improve pedestrian access to, walking destinations such as schools, parks, commercial areas, libraries, and train stations.

b. Work with the North Penn School District to pursue funding opportunities to install sidewalks, crosswalks, ADA ramps, and signage around schools through a Safe Routes to School program.

<u>Examples where pedestrian access to schools could be improved include:</u>

- Two driveways to the Pennbrook Middle School on North Wales road where ADA curb ramps are currently located
- The intersection of North Wales Road and Mill Road near the Pennbrook Middle School
- The intersection of Hancock Road and Marlyns lane near the Pennbrook Middle School
- The intersections of East Prospect Avenue and 4th Street and East Prospect Avenue and 2nd Street near the North Wales Elementary School

c. Work with the North Penn School District to create and promote events that encourage walking, such as a Walk to School Day.

d. Install signage at major intersections to remind drivers to yield to pedestrians. Install "no turn on red" signs where conflicts between vehicular traffic and pedestrians have been observed.

e. Add push button pedestrian signals, count-downs, and continental-style crosswalks at all signalized intersections where sidewalks are located.

f. Update the township's zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances to require wider sidewalks with grass buffers and streetscape landscaping along arterial and collector roads as redevelopment occurs.

Bikeability

Recommendation 18

Create additional opportunities for residents to safely bicycle from their homes to parks, trails, and other destinations within the township.

Implementation Strategies

a. Install bicycle infrastructure, such as bike lanes and sharrows, on township-owned roads where low-volume neighborhood streets could be used to improve bicycle access to amenities such as parks and trails.

b. Continue to coordinate with Montgomery County and adjacent municipalities to expand and connect existing trails within the township, including the Liberty Bell Trail and Power Line Trail.

c. Coordinate with PennDOT (through the PennDOT Connects program) to install bicycle infrastructure on roads as repaving projects occur.

d. Increase trailhead and amenities and parking to encourage biking on trails.

e. Coordinate with Montgomery County and adjacent municipalities to implement the general recommendations of the Bike Montco plan.

f. Evaluate the placement and effectiveness of new bike amenities such as bike parking on township-owned properties.

g. Amend the township's zoning and/or subdivision and land development ordinances to require bike amenities such as bike parking as part of all new multi-family and commercial developments and redevelopments.

h. Work with major employers to increase awareness and use of the trail connections within the township for their employees' commuting and recreation.

i. Consider creating an official map showing the township's planned locations of future trail connections so that future development and redevelopment projects along the trail routes can incorporate the trail right-of-way and interconnections, where applicable.

Public Transportation

Recommendation 19

Encourage the use of public transportation.

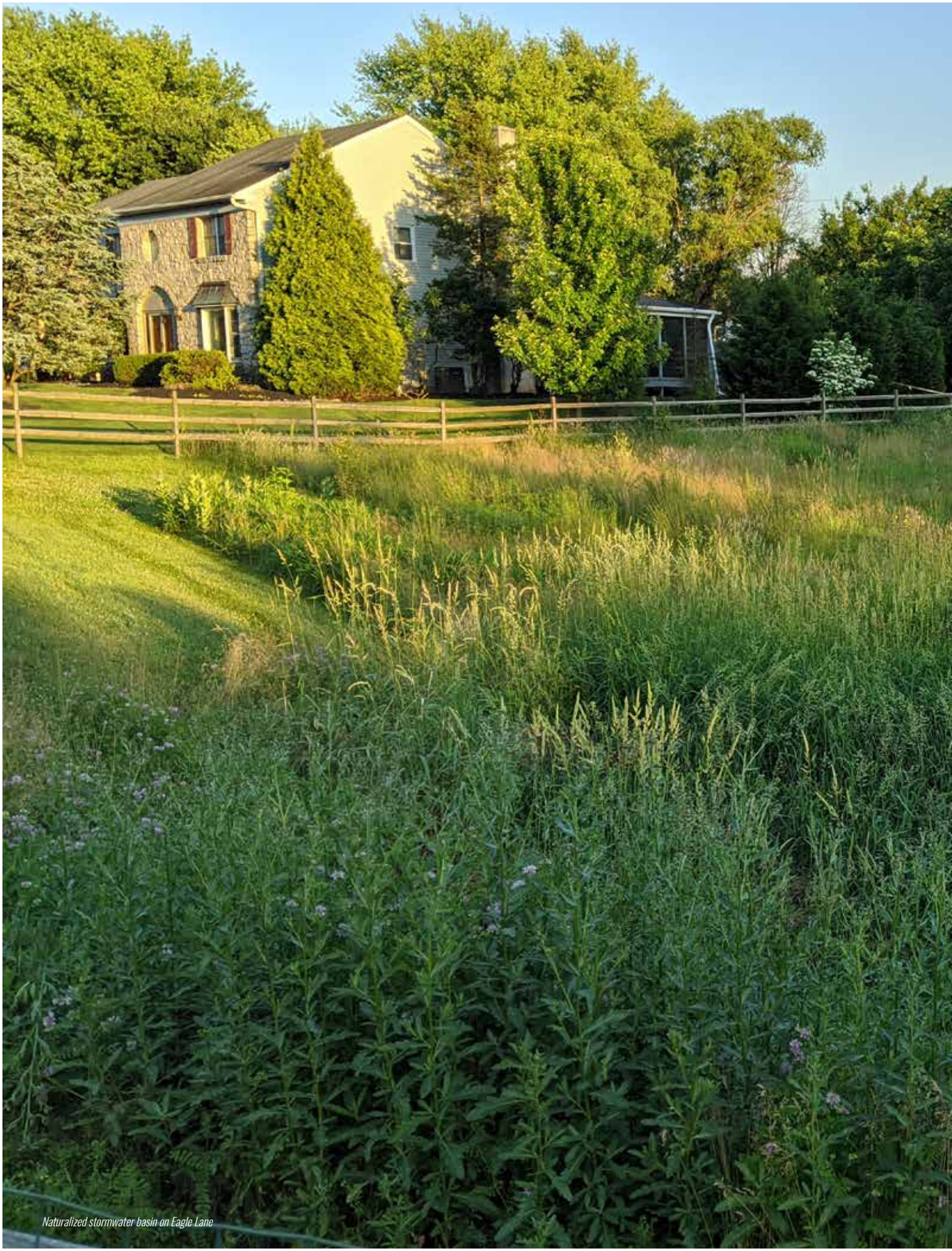
Implementation Strategies

a. Work with Lansdale Borough to explore expanding the existing transit-oriented development zoning overlay district to encourage continued transit-oriented development in proximity to the Pennbrook SEPTA regional rail station. *See the Economic Development chapter for a more detailed discussion of the potential for additional transit-oriented development around the Pennbrook Station.*

b. Work with North Wales Borough to explore creating a joint transit-oriented development zoning district to encourage transit-oriented development in proximity to the North Wales SEPTA regional rail station. *See the Economic Development chapter for a more detailed discussion of the potential for additional transit-oriented development around the North Wales Station.*

c. Coordinate with SEPTA staff to periodically evaluate bus routes and bus stop locations based on feedback from community members and the Upper Gwynedd Township Police Department regarding the safety and usability of existing bus stop locations.

d. Explore installing bus shelters where ridership levels warrant. Explore branding or advertising opportunities to fund the installation and maintenance of new bus shelters.



Naturalized stormwater basin on Eagle Lane

Environmental Sustainability

Summary of Recommendations

- *Encourage community involvement to advance sustainability in all areas of the township's government.*
- *Preserve and enhance the township's natural resources, including streams, floodplains, riparian corridors, and wooded areas.*
- *Encourage stormwater best management practices and water recycling as part of the township's MS4 permit requirements.*
- *Encourage the increased use of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies.*
- *Continue to provide for the long-term maintenance and planning of integral infrastructure systems.*
- *Increase the township's recycling rate and reduce the township's overall production of solid waste.*

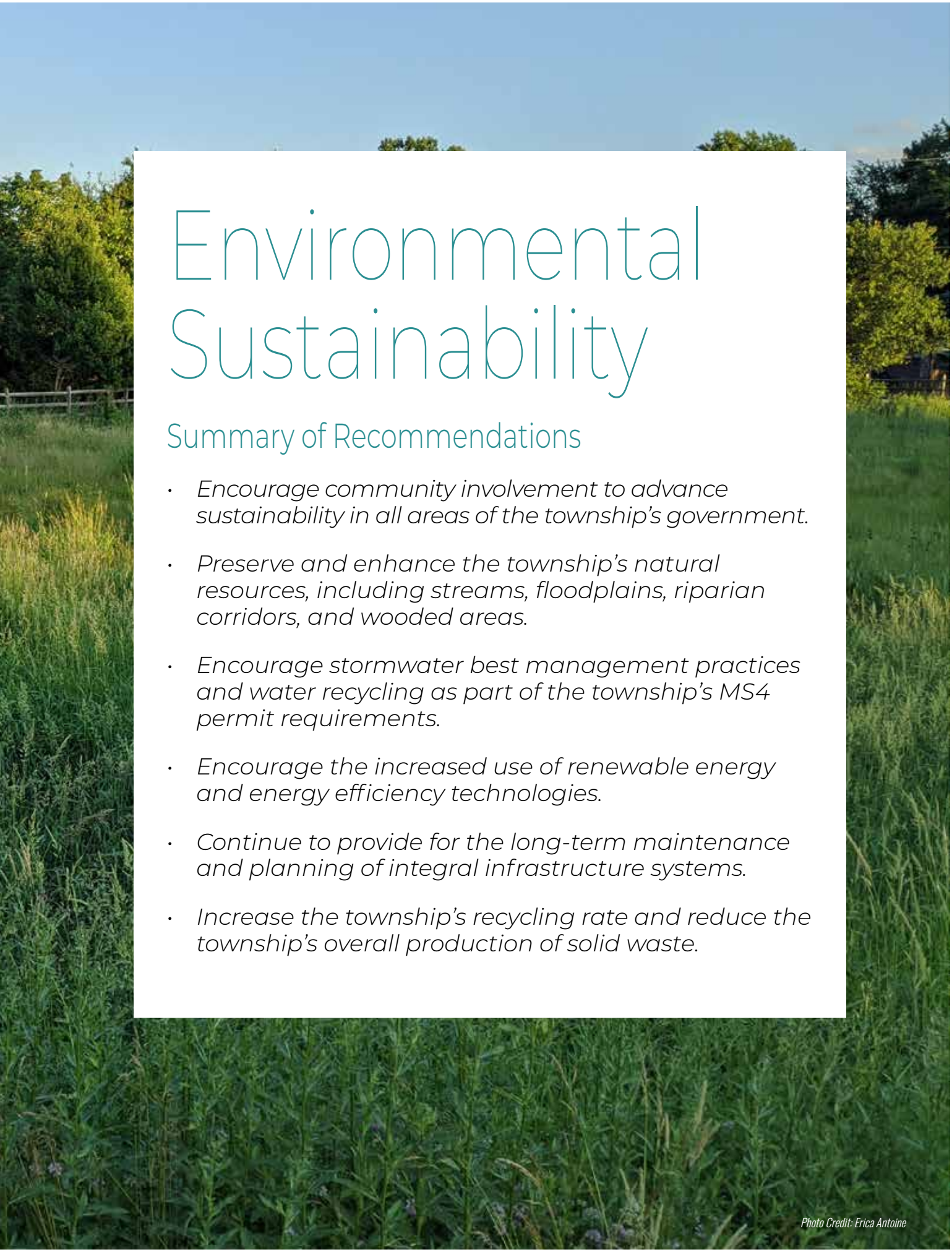


Photo Credit: Erica Antoine

Ecological Stewardship

Geology

A region's geology influences characteristics of local natural resources including topography, soils, hydrology, and vegetative character of a community. Geology also influences site suitability and the cost of construction, and therefore the development potential in a region. The township's underlying bedrock geology is shown in Map 19 on the following page. A region's bedrock, which is the parent material for the local soils, can impact other factors such as infiltration rates, nutrient content, and agricultural capacity.

The two alternating rock formations that make up the bedrock of Upper Gwynedd Township are described below:

- The ***Lockatong Formation*** is characterized by dark-gray to black metamorphic and sedimentary rock including argillite, shale, and limestone deposited during the Triassic era. These deposits were formed from mud and silt layers on river floodplains and in shallow lakes.[1]
- The ***Brunswick Formation*** is characterized primarily by mudstone, a reddish-brown sedimentary rock also deposited during the Triassic era. Secondary rock types include siltstone, shale, and argillite[2].

Soils

Soil is the accumulation of particulate matter from weathered bedrock, the deposition of organic matter, and the activity of soil organisms. As the area was developed, human activity also influenced the soil type and makeup of the region. Soils are characterized based on many different factors, including color and mineral characteristics. Two important soil classifications are shown in Map 20 on page 106: hydric soils and important agricultural soils.

Hydric soils are soils that are periodically-wet and are located in areas that often support the growth of wetland vegetation. Hydric soils are concentrated on the eastern side of the township, primarily on the Gwynedd Wildlife Preserve and the Rupp and Roth Farms, which are all permanently-protected lands. Isolated areas of hydric soils are also located in the central portion of the township.

Important Agricultural Soils are located throughout the township, but primarily in areas with less history of earth disturbance such as preserved open space, utility line corridors, and along streams. The agricultural potential of soils is determined by measuring fertility, depth to bedrock and groundwater, texture, erodibility, and slope.

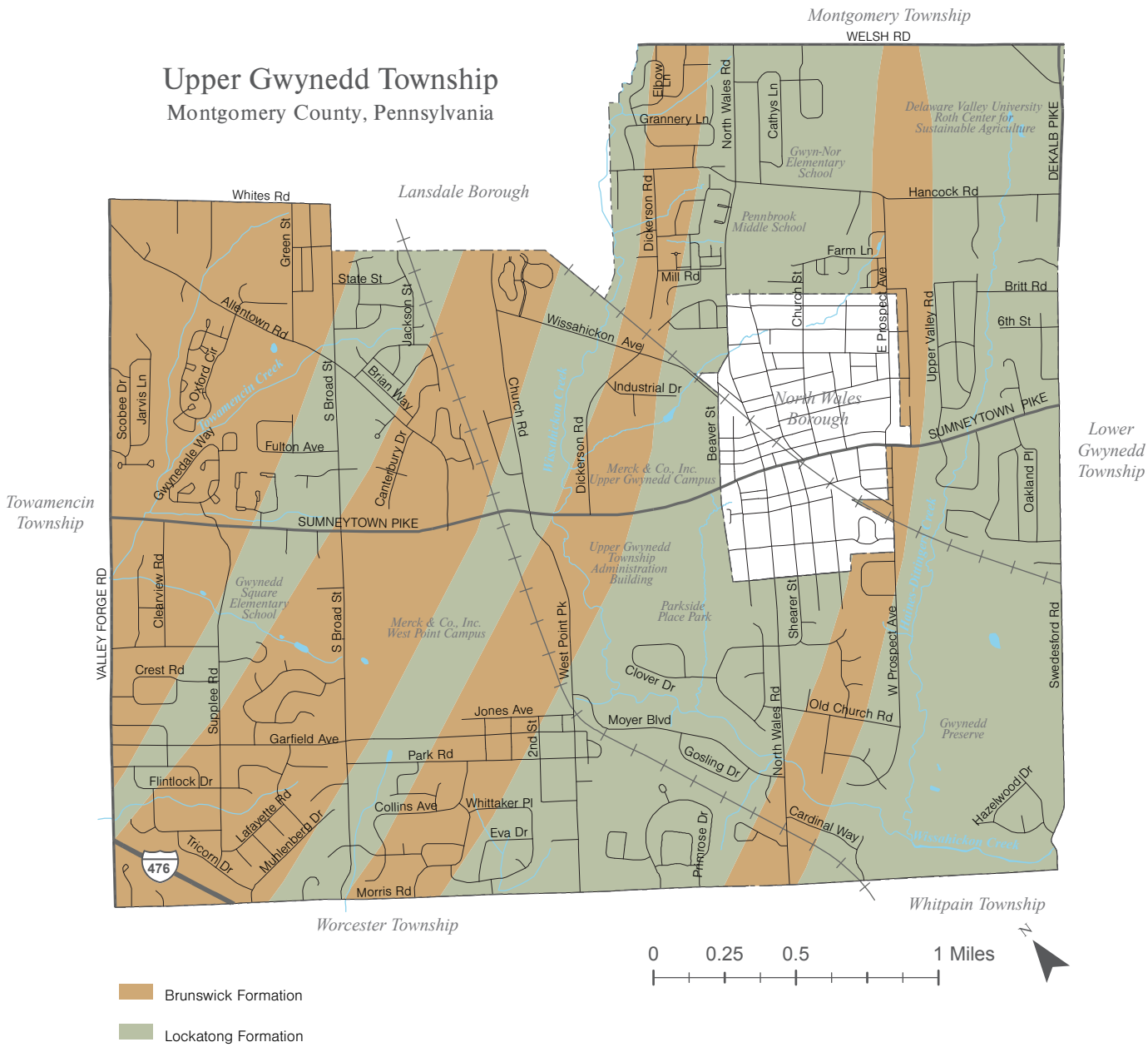
- *Prime Agricultural Soils* are deep, well-drained, and moderately-sloped soils that can support high yields of crops with little management.
- *Agricultural Soils of Statewide Significance* include soils that support cultivation but require careful crop management.

Most of the soils with the Gwynedd Wildlife Preserve are classified as Agricultural Soils of Statewide Significance.

1 "Lockatong Formation" USGS. http://mrdata.usgs.gov/geology/state/sgmc-unit.php?unit=PATRI%3B3

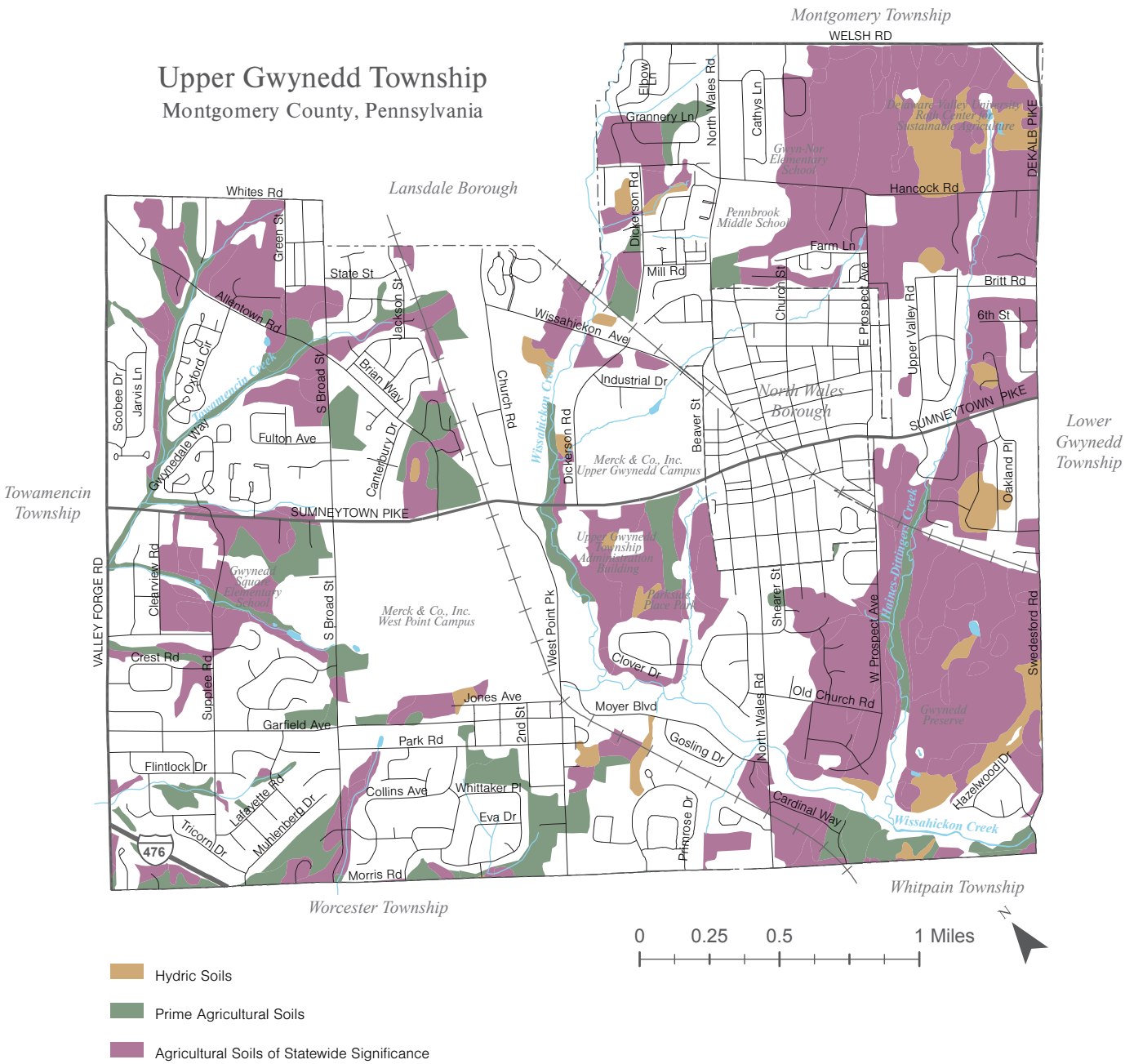
2 "Brunswick Formation" USGS. http://mrdata.usgs.gov/geology/state/sgmc-unit.php?unit=PATRb%3B3

Map 19: Geology



Source: Pennsylvania Geological Society

Map 20: Soils



Source: Natural Resources Conservation Service

Steep Slopes

Map 21 on the following page illustrates the topography of the township and highlights areas of greater than 8% slope. Areas with slopes in excess of 25% are considered undesirable for development because of the increased risk of erosion and runoff, and the amount of grading needed for building site stabilization.

There are areas with slopes in excess of 25% along stream corridors, within the Gwynedd Wildlife Preserve, and in the vicinity of the Pennsylvania Turnpike Northeast Extension. Areas of moderate slope (15-25% slope) are primarily located in the western portion of the township.

Tree Cover

Shade trees provide many social and environmental benefits to a community, including improving air quality, providing shade cooling, and enhancing the visual appearance of a neighborhood. Trees also help infiltrate rainwater which can reduce stormwater runoff. Tree canopy can also provide essential habitat for a variety of birds, insects, and animals.

Map 22 on page 109 shows where trees are located in the township and the approximate height of the tree cover, based on a 2015 Pennsylvania Horticultural Society analysis. The taller the tree, presumably the older and more mature the tree is. Taller trees are more concentrated within the residential neighborhoods in the eastern and southeastern parts of the township, as well as in the Rupp and Roth Farms and within Parkside Place Park. Groupings of established trees are also located along stream corridors, on conservation lands, and on undeveloped lands.

Due to the township's agrarian history, remaining forested lands are somewhat fragmented resulting in the "edge effect." Edge forests and fragmented woodlands degrade the quality of the forest habitat and encourage invasive plants and nest parasites. Deer also thrive in edge forests where they can overbrowse native vegetation and cause public health and safety issues as they enter more heavily populated areas.

Areas of the township where there is very little tree coverage include most of the large industrial, commercial, and institutional properties, as well as some of the newer residential developments such as the Reserve at Gwynedd and the Point at Pennbrook Station, where perhaps trees planted as

The established tree canopy in many of Upper Gwynedd's residential areas contributes to the township's distinctive neighborhood character.

Trees planted along streams and drainage swales can help slow down stormwater runoff and encourage infiltration of water during storm events.

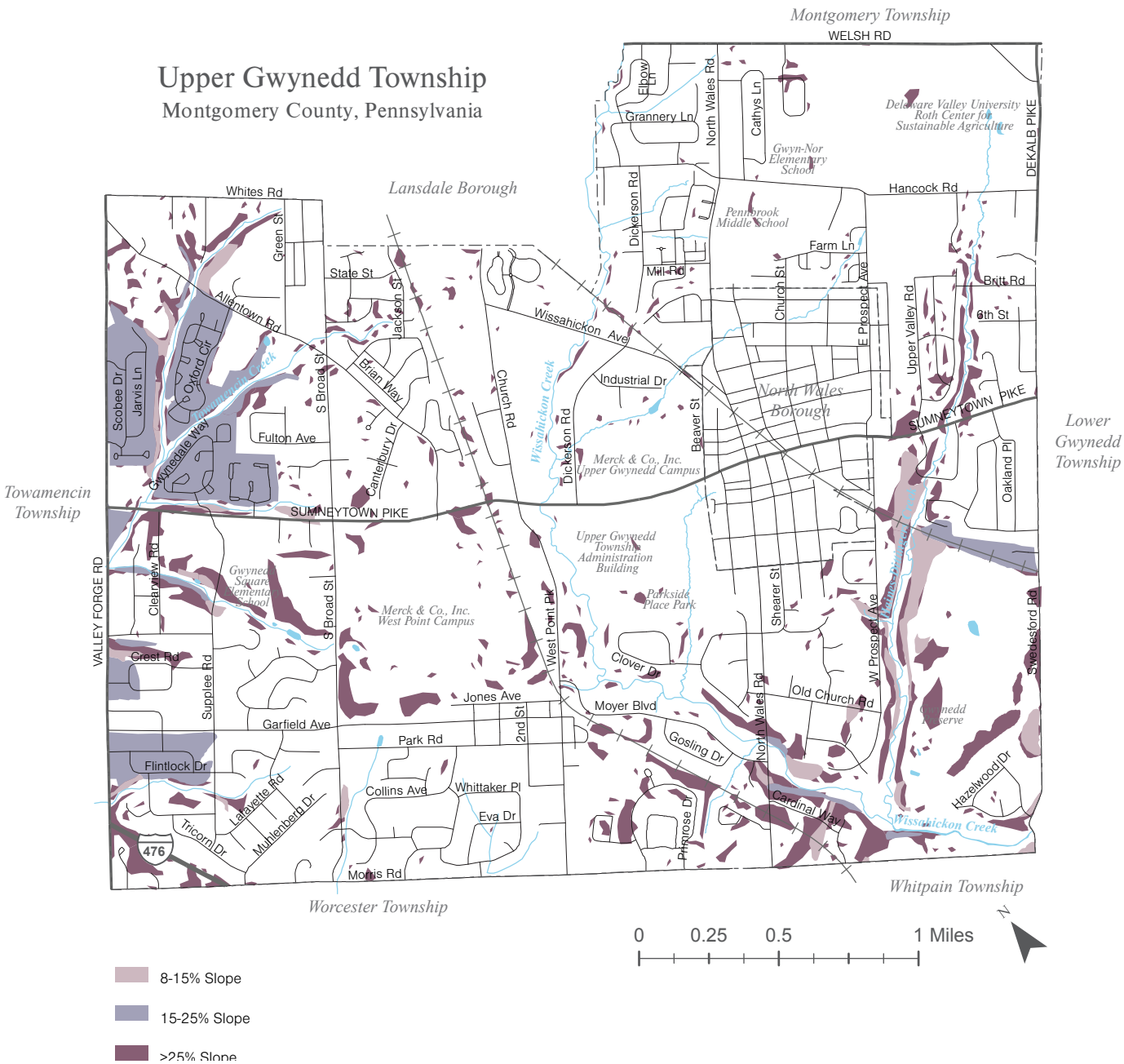
Tree Planting Guidelines

Typically, street trees need 800-1,200 cubic feet of soil to grow in. Where tree planting areas are constrained, smaller trees could be planted, or structural soils could be used underneath the adjacent sidewalk in order to accommodate the preferred soil volume.

In general, smaller trees can be planted underneath utility wires and columnar trees are appropriate where there are shallow setbacks.

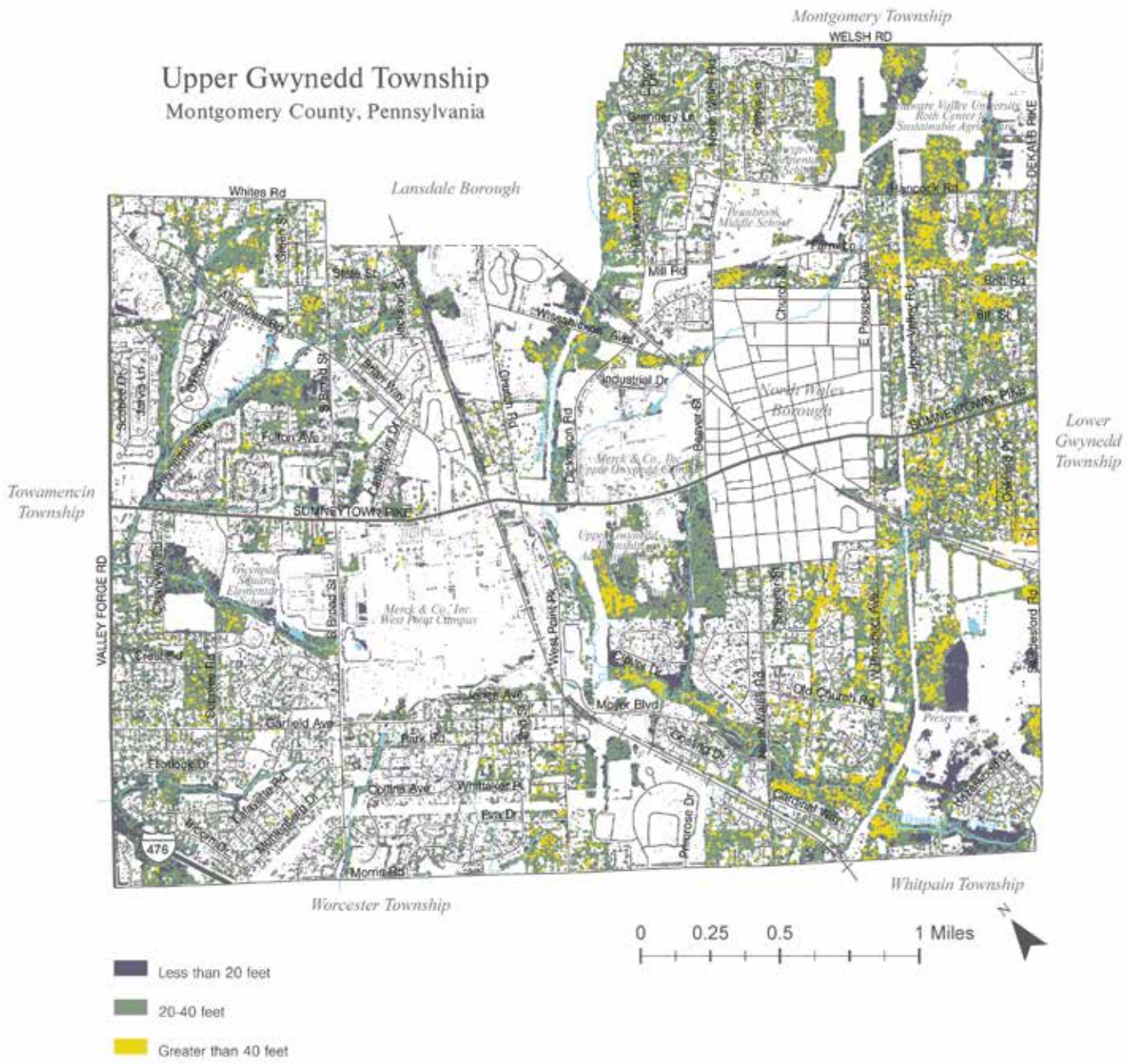
Where the width of a landscape strip is too narrow to accommodate any tree planting; hardy, salt-resistant grasses and low-growing perennial ground covers are suitable alternatives.

Map 21: Topography



Source: US Geological Society

Map 22: Tree Canopy Height



Source: Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (2015)

part of the land developments may not have been fully established as of the 2015 analysis.

Riparian Corridor Protection

Existing woodlands along streams and other water bodies provide important benefits by helping to filter stormwater runoff and stabilize streambanks. Therefore, the preservation and enhancement of vegetated buffer zones within riparian corridors is important to water quality and habitat protection.

That area of land adjacent to stream corridors is known as the "riparian corridor." Maintaining and enhancing existing vegetation within the riparian corridor has many benefits including streambank stabilization, storing and filtering stormwater runoff, and habitat protection. A 2012 study by the Heritage Conservancy evaluated the status of riparian corridors on selected streams in Montgomery and Bucks counties (see Map 23 on the following page). The area within 50 feet of either side of the stream was evaluated and categorized as follows:

a. **No Buffer** – neither side of the stream has 50% or greater tree canopy coverage

b. **Half Buffer** – only one side of the stream has 50% or greater tree canopy coverage

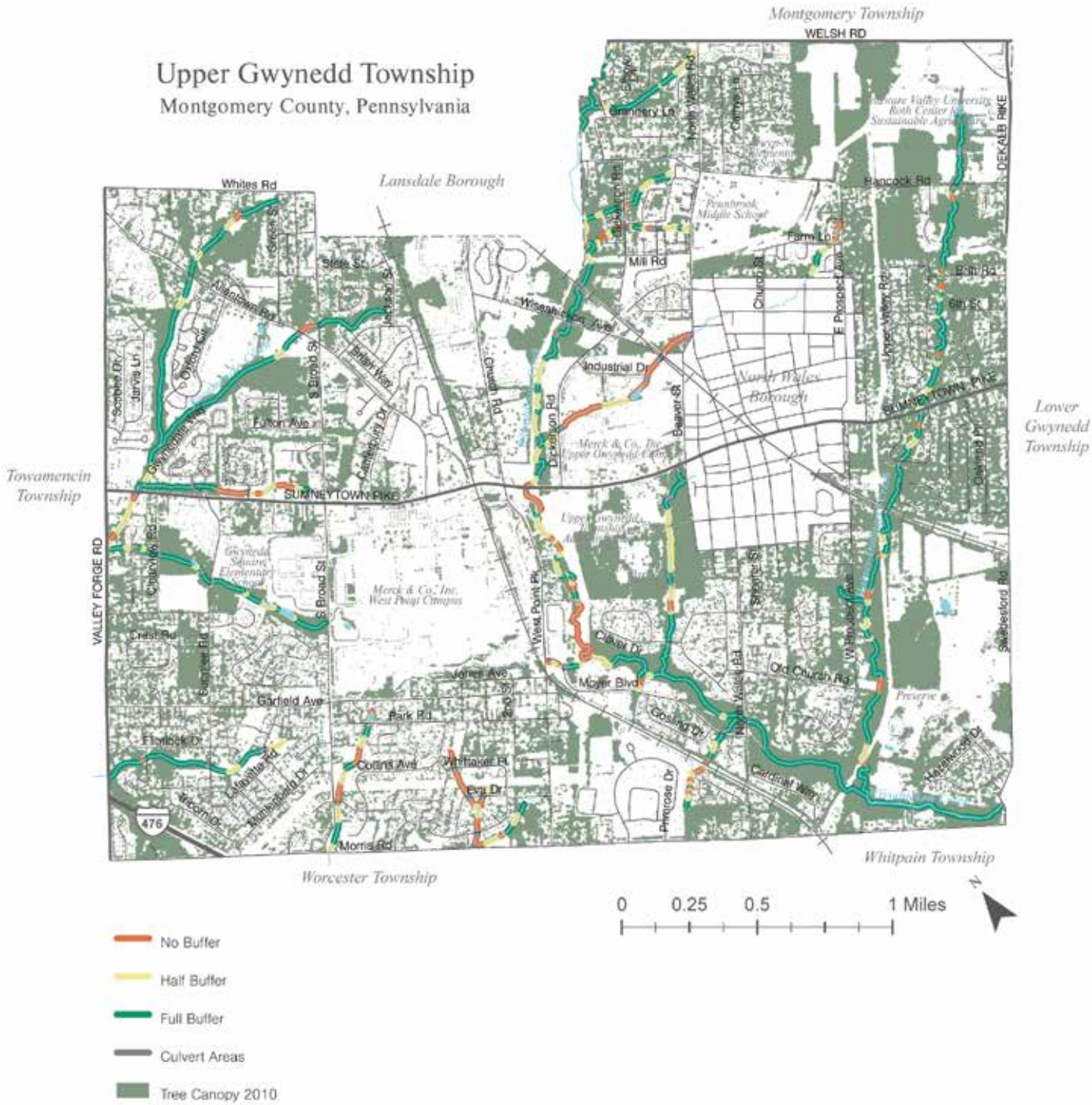
c. **Full Buffer** – both sides of the stream have 50% or greater tree canopy coverage

d. **Culverted Area** – areas where the stream is not visible

Many of the township's stream corridors have significant tree canopy. However, some stream corridors, especially within residential neighborhoods in the south and southwest portions of the township, within the utility corridor in the central portion of the township, and around Merck's Upper Gwynedd campus, could benefit from additional tree canopy.

Maintaining a riparian buffer, or a landscaped zone along streambanks, has many environmental benefits. This walkway along the Haines-Dittinger Creek greenway in the eastern part of the township is also an attractive part of the neighborhood.

Map 23: Existing Tree Canopy and Riparian Buffer Status



Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission; Heritage Conservancy (2012)

Greenways

The future land use plan (Map 4 on page 25) shows a designated greenway corridor encompassing lands within 100 feet of a stream or water body. Existing vegetation in these areas should be preserved and enhanced in order to maximize the environmental benefits of the greenway.

Acquisition of land within these zones as public open space should also be targeted because these greenways provide environmental benefits. In addition, green connections such as trails within the greenway corridors should be explored. Trails and pathways within the township's greenway corridors could build upon the established Green Ribbon Trail and improve the public's access to these natural areas.

Natural Resource Inventory

The actual make up of plant communities within the riparian corridor also influences the stream's health. For example, replacing invasive plants with native vegetation that is suited to the riparian habitat can help further stabilize streambanks and attract native animals.

A natural resource inventory completed for the Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association (now Wissahickon Trails) in 2013[3] describes baseline information of natural resources within the Wissahickon Trails-owned lands, including those in Upper Gwynedd Township and the Green Ribbon Trail.

The Montgomery County, Pennsylvania Natural Areas Inventory Update,[4] also provides background information and recommendations specific to the Wissahickon Creek Conservation Landscape.

Evaluating and inventorying natural resources throughout the township, with a focus on township-owned and undeveloped lands, could help the township make land acquisition and natural resource management decisions.

3 Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania, 2013, "Natural Resources Inventory of Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association Preserves and the Green Ribbon Trail." https://repository.upenn.edu/morrisarboretum_botanyworks/19/

4 Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania, 2007, "Montgomery County, Pennsylvania Natural Areas Inventory Update." https://www.montcopa.org/1092/Natural-Areas-Inventory-NAI-Update

Water Resource Management

Water is a regional natural resource that is essential to all forms of life. As part of the comprehensive plan, it is important to understand naturally-occurring water resources within the region, and factors that influence the quality and quantity of those water resources.

Watershed Protection

The land area in a region where water resources drain into a common water body, either overland or underground, is known as a "watershed". Managing water resources within each watershed helps to maintain healthy waterways by preserving the ecological health of an area, as well as ensuring that water supplies remain unpolluted. Areas with high percentages of impervious coverage can experience greater water runoff volumes and rates during and after storm events, which can cause erosion and sedimentation problems for waterways downstream.

The eastern portion of the township is located in the Wissahickon Creek Watershed, while the western portion of the township is located in the Skippack Creek Watershed.[5]

The *Wissahickon Creek Watershed Act 167 Plan* (2014)[6] provides analysis and recommendations for management of the watershed with a focus on controlling existing runoff and criteria for future development. As part of this plan, each municipality was surveyed regarding problem areas. Upper Gwynedd identified flooding and accelerated erosion as problem areas.

According to the 2018 *Pennsylvania Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report*[7], the Wissahickon Creek is designated as "impaired" for its designated use related to maintaining aquatic life. This means that the creek is polluted to an extent that aquatic life, including insects and macro-invertebrates, are negatively impacted. The most common source of impairment was identified as urban runoff/storm sewers.

5 An Act 167 Plan has not been completed for the Skippack Creek Watershed.

6 Wissahickon Creek Watershed Act 167 Plan, 2014. https://www.montcopa.org/2264/Wissahickon-Creek-Watershed-Act-167-Plan

7 2018 Pennsylvania Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report. https://www.depgis.state.pa.us/2018_integrated_report/index.html

Sustainable Green Parking Lots

Providing adequate parking is an essential component of economic growth and business success in every community. However, it is also important to recognize the significant impact that large paved surfaces, such as parking lots, can have on a community's appearance and the environment through stormwater runoff and the heat island effect (see pages 116-117). Using innovative site and landscaping design techniques, parking lots can be retrofitted or built to be more sustainable and attractive.

The Montgomery County Planning Commission guidebook "Sustainable Green Parking Lots" provides design guidance and sample ordinance language to help communities create "greener" parking lots.

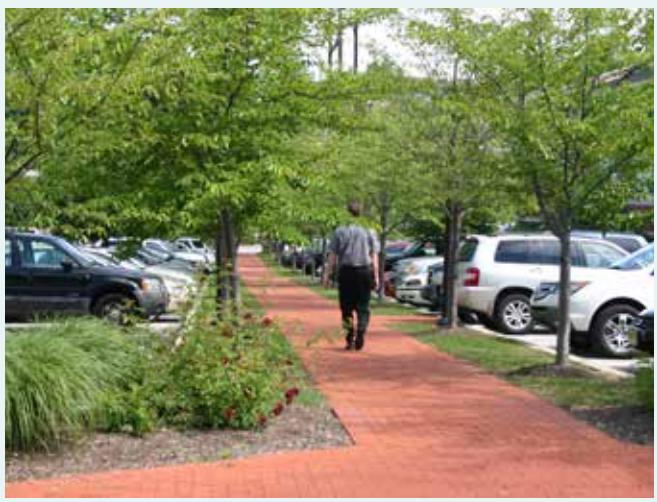
For more information, visit: https://www.montcopa.org/DocumentCenter/View/9735/Green-Sustainable-Parking-Guide-2_10_2016

Examples of Green Parking Lot Design in Other Communities

The parking lot islands at the Einstein Medical Center Montgomery (above) incorporate attractively landscaped biofiltration basins to capture and infiltrate stormwater runoff from the adjacent parking lot.

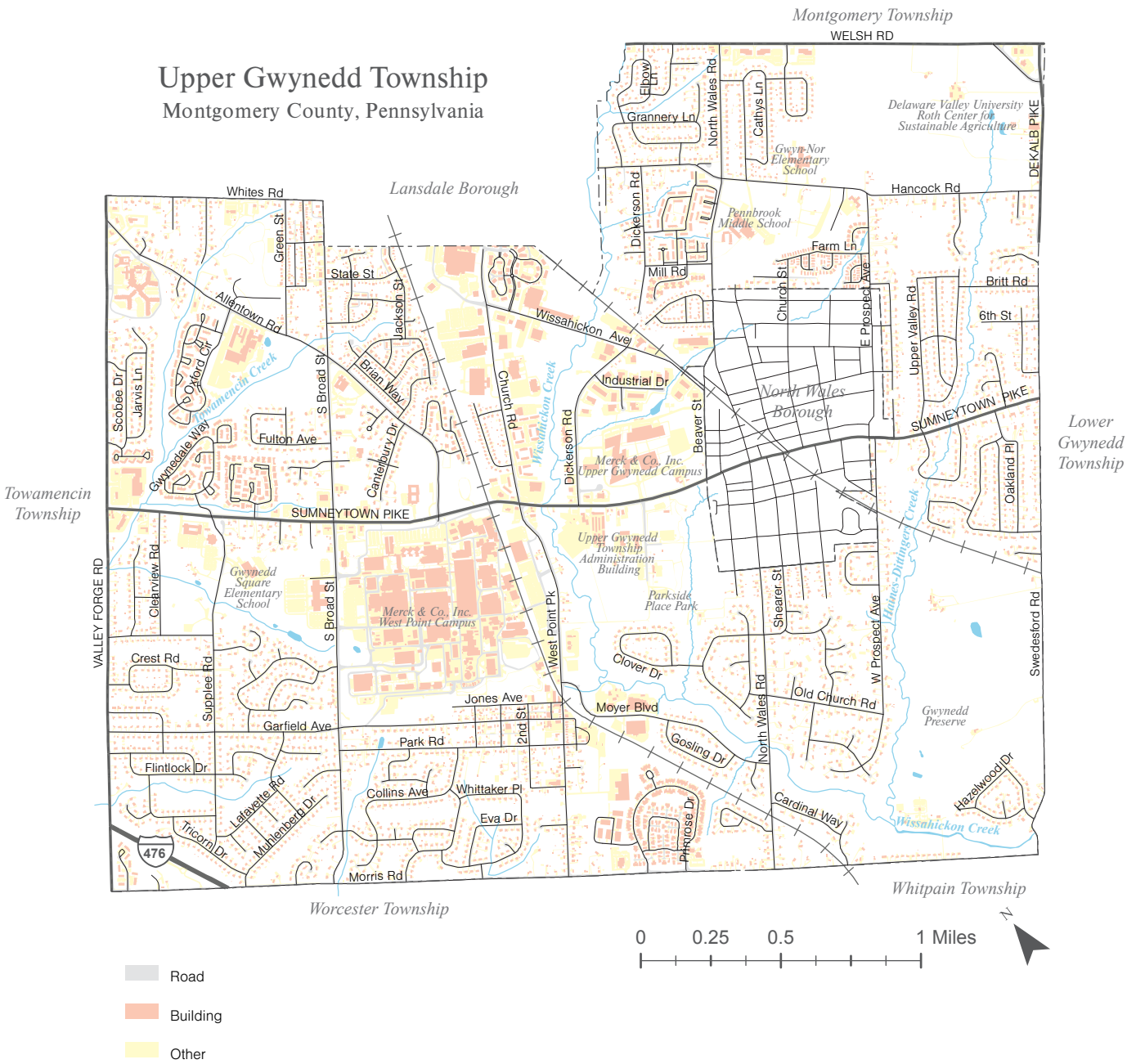
Strategically placed depressions in the curb around parking lot islands can allow runoff to flow into the landscaped area where the stormwater can be infiltrated back into the ground and support the growth of the landscaping.

Planting islands within parking lots should be designed to maximize landscaping areas while helping to define traffic flow.



Parking lots need to be designed to effectively direct vehicular drivers to available parking spaces, while also providing for the safety of pedestrians and motorists. In addition, clear pedestrian pathways can help connect shoppers and employees to nearby transit stops or trails.

Map 24: Existing Impervious Surface



Source: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

Stormwater Management

Most rainfall that falls on impervious surfaces within the township, contributes to stormwater runoff. Map 24 on the previous page shows the existing impervious coverage within the township, including roads, parking lots, and rooftops. Although the township's storm sewer system is designed to manage the runoff from most roadways within the township, additional stormwater runoff generated by private parking lots and other large impervious areas adjacent to these roadways can put additional pressure on the existing drainage infrastructure within the township.

Because the township's stormwater runoff drains into local streams, the township is required to maintain a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) who administers the program as part of the requirements of the federal Clean Water Act. The MS4 permit program requires that municipalities incorporate six minimum control measures (MCMs), each with their own set of associated best management

This recent residential development in West Point Village incorporates several rain gardens. Interpretative signage helps inform the community about the stormwater management benefits of the rain gardens.

One naturalized stormwater basin is located at the intersection of Hancock Road and North Wales Road.

Another naturalized stormwater basin is located along Hancock Road, east of the Pennbrook Middle School.

The third naturalized stormwater basin is located south of the Pennbrook Middle School along North Wales Road and includes a walking path and educational signage.

Naturalized Stormwater Basins

The township recently constructed three rain gardens near the intersection of Hancock Road and North Wales Road to help mitigate downstream flooding and improve water quality. Two of the stormwater management basins are located on the Pennbrook Middle School property, where they also provide educational opportunities about stormwater management. The project was funded by grants from the Growing Greener grant program and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Watershed Restoration and Protection Program totaling $579,000.

practices (BMPs), into their stormwater management programs:[9]

1. Public education and outreach
2. Public involvement and participation
3. Illicit discharge detection and elimination
4. Construction site runoff control
5. Post-construction stormwater management in new development and redevelopment
6. Pollution prevention and good housekeeping for municipal operations and maintenance

Every five years, DEP evaluates the MS4 program and makes adjustments as needed. One recent change requires that municipalities prepare a Pollution Reduction Plan (PRP) for impaired streams and a TMDL plan for streams with a designated Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL). A TMDL is the total maximum amount of a pollutant that can be present in a water body. This is determined by the EPA and it establishes the necessary reduction of one or more pollutants in order for that stream to meet water quality standards.

9 StormwaterPA. "MS4 Program." http://www.stormwaterpa.org/ms4-program.html

Wissahickon Creek

In 1957, the Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association, now "Wissahickon Trails," was formed. This organization continues to work "to engage diverse communities of people to protect and enjoy the land and waterways of the Wissahickon Valley" watershed in Montgomery County.[8]

In August 2016, thirteen municipalities signed an intergovernmental agreement to create the Wissahickon Clean Water Partnership which signifies a commitment to work collaboratively to improve drinking water, mitigate flooding, reduce streambank erosion, protect fish and wildlife, and restore recreation area throughout the Wissahickon Creek corridor.

In September 2019, a draft Wissahickon Creek Water Quality Improvement Plan (WQIP) was released, which is currently under review by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Key watershed-wide policies in the WQIP are related to decreasing impervious surfaces, increasing tree cover, protecting the riparian zone along the creek, and ensuring consistency in stormwater management ordinances.

8 "About Us." Wissahickon Trails. https://wissahickontrails.org/who-we-are/about-us

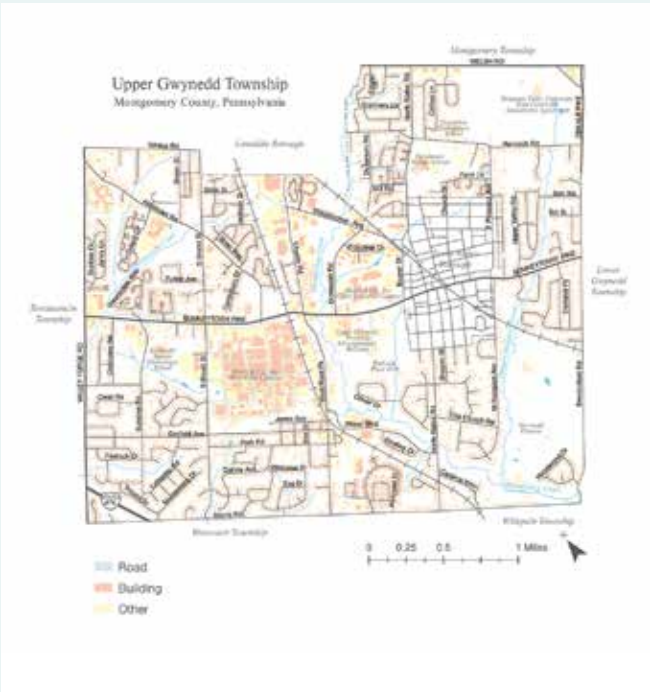
Heat Island Effect

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, "Heat islands can affect communities by increasing summertime peak energy demand, air conditioning costs, air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, heat-related illness and mortality, and water pollution."[10]

The heat island effect map to the right shows the relative difference in the average surface temperature in different parts of the township. Those areas of the township that are more heavily developed with greater concentrations of impervious coverage are noticeably warmer than areas of the township where there is more tree canopy and less impervious coverage. This series of maps helps illustrate the importance of maintaining established tree cover and requiring new canopy trees be planted along roadways and in large surface parking lots. Township parks and open spaces are also important opportunity areas for additional tree planting.

10 United States Environmental Protection Agency. https://www.epa.gov/heatislands

Impervious Coverage



Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission

Green Stormwater Management Strategy Examples

Permeable pavers, which allow rain water to infiltrate through the pavement, can be an attractive option for lower-traffic areas, such as this parking area at the Gwynedd Wildlife Preserve.

Where space and environmental factors allow, rain gardens (such as this one in Abington Township) can be incorporated into the stormwater management and landscape design of a site.

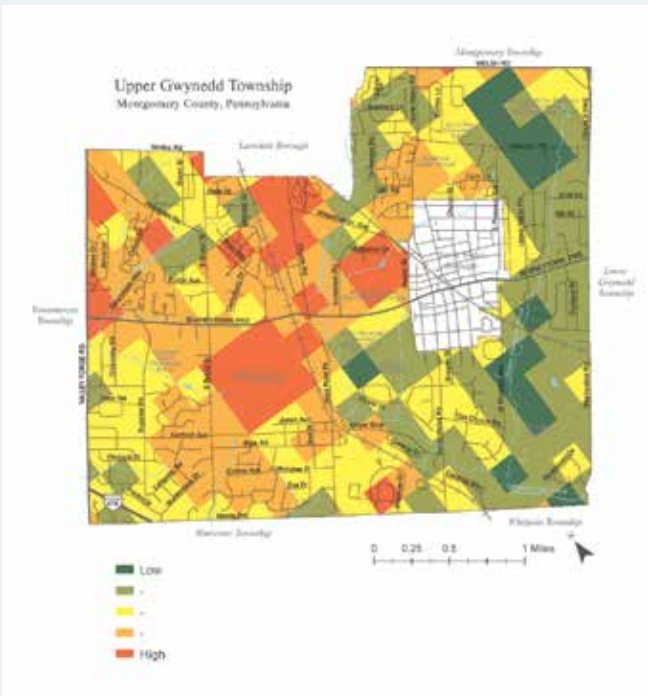
Green roofs, such as this one at the Elmwood Park Zoo, can help manage stormwater runoff that falls on the roof of buildings of all sizes.

Rain barrels allow rain water from a building's roof to be collected on-site and slowly discharged after the rain storm to reduce the peak flow of stormwater in nearby streams that can occur during a storm.]

Tree Canopy Height

Source: Pennsylvania Horticultural Society

Heat Island Effect



Source: USDA, Forest Service, 2014

According to DEP's Municipal MS4 Requirements Table,[11] four creeks in the township (Zacharias Creek, Wissahickon Creek, Towamencin Creek, and Skippack Creek) are impaired for either pathogens, nutrients, or excessive algal growth. As part of the MS4 program, the township needs to prepare and implement a PRP for these four streams. TMDL plans for siltation have already been completed for the Wissahickon Creek and Skippack Creek. In addition, the township completed a *Combined Total Maximum Daily Load & Pollutant Reduction Plan*[12] in June of 2019.

Wetlands

Wetlands are defined as areas of land that are either permanently or seasonally saturated with water. Wetlands provide valuable ecological benefits including riparian habitat, flood and erosion control, groundwater recharge, and filtration of pollutants and sediment from runoff. In addition, certain aquatic and amphibious animals, and different species of grasses, sedges, and wildflowers are part of the unique wetland ecosystem.

Map 25 on the following page shows the locations of wetlands in Upper Gwynedd Township, according to the National Wetlands Inventory. There are small patches of wetlands generally situated along the portion of Wissahickon Creek that is located in the central and southeastern portions of the township. There are also some wetlands located in the western and north-central areas of the township, generally along stream corridors.

Floodplain Protection

Map 25 also shows both the 100-year floodplain (that area of land with a 1% chance of being flooded in any given year) and the 500-year floodplain (that area of land with a 0.2% chance of being flooded in any given year), based on the 2015 Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood insurance rate maps.

Upper Gwynedd's largest floodplains are located along the Wissahickon Creek corridor in the central and southeastern portions of the township. Smaller areas of the 100-year floodplain are located along stream corridors in the western and south-central portions of the township.

Infrastructure & Energy

Infrastructure systems that provide drinking water and convey and treat wastewater are essential to the safety and comfort of the township's residents, workers, and visitors. Energy, typically in the form of electricity or natural gas, is another essential component of the township's infrastructure.

Water Infrastructure

The township's water is primarily supplied by the North Wales Water Authority; however, a small portion of the northwest corner of the township is served by the North Penn Water Authority. In addition, some industrial facilities within the

State Water Plan[13]

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection is charged with maintaining a State Water Plan which studies the water resources supply within the Commonwealth and plans for the projected water needs of the population.

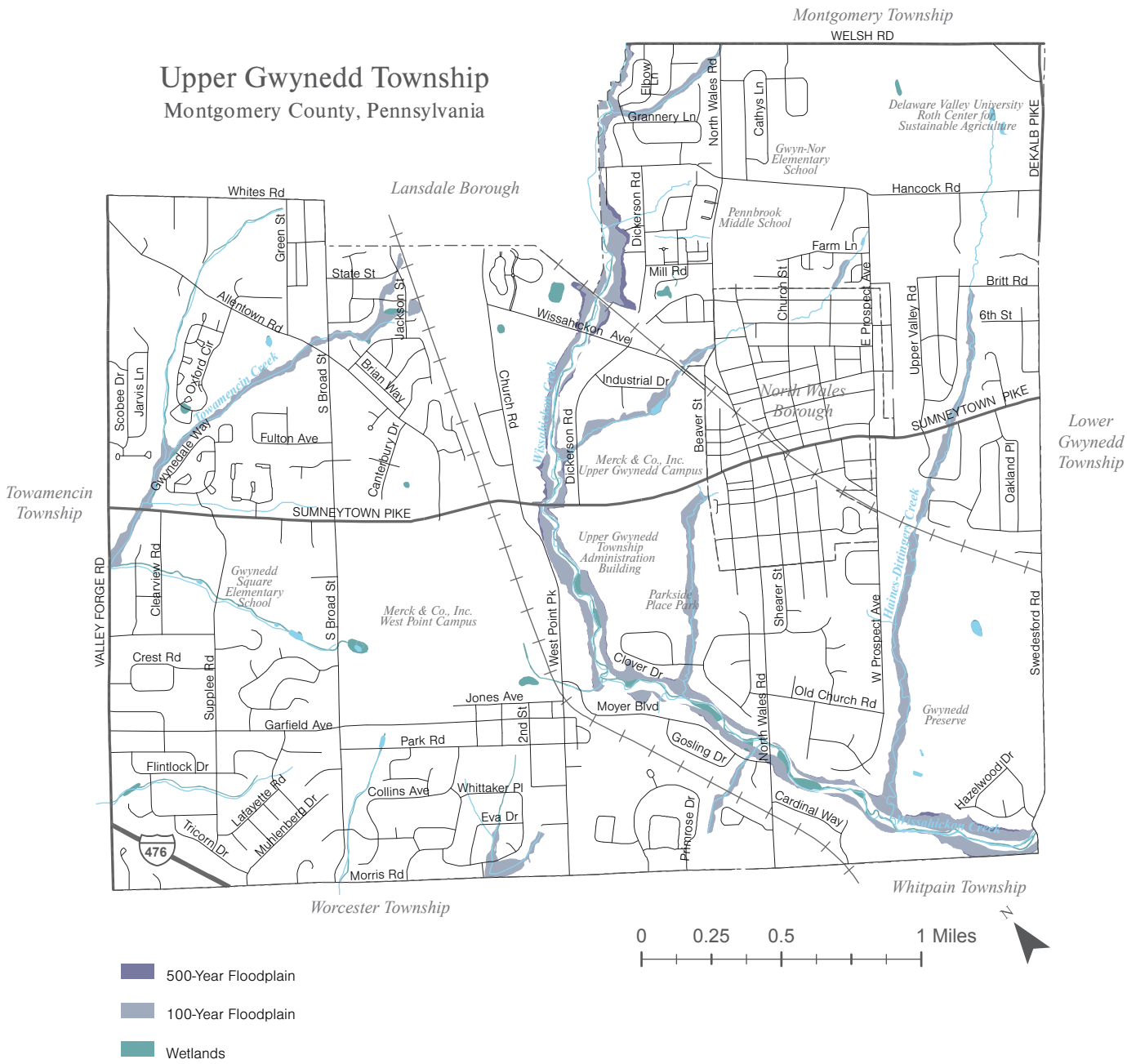
The State Water Plan outlines the regional priorities for the Delaware River drainage basin as: (1) Link land use decisions and water resources management; and (2) Improve management of water resources (including stormwater and wastewater) and waterway corridors to reduce damages from extreme conditions (including floods and droughts).

11 Municipal MS4 Requirements Table.

12 Combined Total Maximum Daily Load & Pollutant Reduction Plan, 2019. https://www.uppergwynedd.org/sites/g/files/vyhlif1351/f/uploads/combined_total_maximum_daily_load_and_pollutant_reduction_plan.pdf

13 Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. https://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/Water/PlanningConservation/StateWaterPlan/Pages/2009-Update.aspx

Map 25: Floodplains and Wetlands



Source: National Wetlands Inventory; Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

township have their own water supply. Based on well data from 2007 to 2017, three new wells/individual water supply units were added in the township, serving approximately 72 individuals.[14]

All public water suppliers are required to provide a water quality report to their customers on an annual basis. Water suppliers test and report on levels of turbidity, chemical and microbial contaminants, and disinfectant residuals and byproducts of disinfection. Levels of heavy metals such as lead and copper are also monitored closely at both the treatment plant and within the distribution system.

The Upper Gwynedd Wastewater Treatment Plant is located off of Morris Road.

Sewer Infrastructure

The majority of the township's sewage is conveyed to the Upper Gwynedd Wastewater Treatment Plant on Morris Road to be treated. The sewage from some areas in the western portion of the township is directed to the Towamencin sewage treatment plant for treatment; however the township is actively working on a Wastewater Improvement Project to redirect all sewage flows that currently go to the Towamencin sewage treatment plant, to the Upper Gwynedd wastewater treatment plan. It is anticipated that this project will be completed in 2021.

Each wastewater treatment plant, as well as the conveyance system to and from that plant, is monitored by DEP and is allocated a certain sewage treatment capacity. This capacity is measured in terms of a number of EDUs (equivalent dwelling units). Each sewer authority allocates sewage flow based on an Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan. According to the 2015 Sewage Treatment Facilities Status Report, the Upper Gwynedd Wastewater Treatment Plant currently has excess treatment capacity.[15]

14 Montgomery County Health Department.

15 Montgomery County Planning Commission. "Sewage Treatment Facilities in Montgomery County, PA: 2015 Status Report." https://www.montcopa.org/DocumentCenter/View/4343/2015-Sewage-Treatment-Facilities-Update

Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements

The Upper Gwynedd Wastewater Treatment Plant has multiple enhanced treatment procedures that have expanded the plant's treatment capacity and efficiency. For example, the BioMag system enhances the plant's clarification process and a UV light treatment provides additional disinfection.

Sustainable Building Design

There are several different sets of criteria and certification programs for sustainable building design and development. For example, LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) criteria, established by the US Green Building Council, focuses on reduction and efficiency of energy and water use within the building. Evaluating how LEED principles can apply to any construction project can be beneficial, even without formal certification.

Energy

Residents and businesses in Upper Gwynedd Township can choose to purchase electricity from a number of different companies. In addition, residents and businesses can elect to purchase renewable energy. However, the electric transmission system that carries the electricity is owned and maintained by PECO. The Limerick Nuclear Power Station produces 40% of the electricity used in the region. Gas supplies are obtained from interstate gas transmission companies.

Buildings are a major source of energy use for heating, cooling, lighting, and ventilation. Designing and constructing buildings and building renovations with green building practices in mind can help reduce a building's energy use.

Finding ways to increase the use of renewable energy (e.g., solar, wind, geothermal) is one way to help reduce the environmental impact of generating, transmitting, and using energy.

Common Renewable Energy Types

Example of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels installed on a single-family residential home.

Example of small-scale vertical axis wind turbines installed in the parking lot of the Montgomery County Community College campus in Pottstown Borough.

Example of an underground geothermal energy system being installed on a church property in Bryn Athyn Borough.

Renewable Energy Ordinances

Renewable energy ordinance frameworks have been prepared by DVRPC's Alternative Energy Ordinance Working Group that can be used as a resource for the township as they evaluate ordinance language relating to the construction and operation of small renewable energy installations consistent with state laws while promoting sound community development.[16]

It is also important to keep in mind that the Montgomery County Public Health Code (Chapter 17: Individual Water Supply, Irrigation Well, and Geothermal Well System Regulations) contains regulations relevant to geothermal well installation and operation.[17]

16 DVRPC Renewable Energy Ordinance Frameworks: http://www.dvrpc.org/EnergyClimate/AEOWG/

17 Montgomery County Health Department, Geothermal Well Regulations: http://www.montcopa.org/533/Individual-Water-Supply-Well-Permitting

Renewable energy refers to energy that can be harnessed from natural processes which help reduce reliance on fossil fuels and nuclear power for the township's energy needs.

Interest in constructing facilities to generate renewable energy on individual properties, such as solar panels and geothermal wells, may increase as the cost of energy rises, or in response to concerns regarding the environmental impact of non-renewable forms of energy. Each municipality should have clear regulations to encourage and accommodate the appropriate and safe installation of renewable energy infrastructure.

Vehicle Emissions

According to DVRPC, a quarter of the Greater Philadelphia region's greenhouse gas emissions come from on-road transportation.[18] In addition to lifestyle changes that reduce vehicle miles traveled

18 Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. "Ready to Roll? Overview of Challenges and Opportunities for Alternative Fuel Vehicles in the Delaware Valley." https://www.dvrpc.org/Reports/10055A.pdf

and fuel efficiency changes, electric vehicles are another way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation.

Battery-operated electric vehicles are increasingly becoming a popular vehicle choice due to lower maintenance and fuel costs and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. Individuals with electric vehicles can charge their vehicle's battery by plugging it into the electric grid. Although most individuals with electric vehicles install chargers at their homes, also being able to charge your vehicle at your place of employment or while you are running errands is helpful.

Providing dedicated parking spaces for electric cars and electric vehicle charging stations can encourage electric vehicle ownership by making recharging more convenient.

In response to this trend, many municipalities are encouraging the installation of charging stations with dedicated parking spaces for electric vehicle charging. For example, Upper Gwynedd Township recently approved the installation of an electric vehicle charging station at the Wawa at the intersection of Welsh Road and Route 202.

Montgomery County Hazard Mitigation Plan

The Stafford Act, (P.L. 106-390, the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000) requires state and local governments to develop and adopt a mitigation plan as a condition for receiving certain federal disaster grants and loans. The 2017 Montgomery County, Pennsylvania Hazard Mitigation Plan provides the county (and each of the municipalities in the county) with a strategy for mitigation of natural, human and technological disasters.

For more information, visit: https://www.montcopa.org/DocumentCenter/View/19172/2017-Hazard-Mitigation-Plan

Table 17: Residential and Commercial Recyclables Collected Annually

	2018	2017	CHANGE
Residential Recyclables Collected (Tons)	*2,534*	*2,299*	*+10.2%*
Commercial Recyclables Collected (Tons)	*5,986*	*2,116*	*+182.9%*
Combined Recyclables Collected (Tons)	*8,520*	*4,415*	*+93.0%*
Upper Gwynedd Township Estimated Recycling Rate*	*43%*	*29%*	*+14.0%*
County-wide Recycling Rate	*37%*	*37%*	*0%*

* The township's estimated recycling rate is calculated using an estimate of trash collected in the township based on the county's total trash collected and the township's population.

Waste Reduction

Trash and Recycling

Within the township, individual residents contract with a company to pick-up their trash and recycling. The Pennsylvania Municipal Waste Planning, Recycling and Waste Reduction Act of 1988 established requirements for comprehensive municipal waste management, including encouraging recycling, conservation, and waste reduction.

The total amount of residential and commercial recyclables collected in 2017 and 2018 is shown in Table 17 above. The township's estimated total recycling rate, or that percentage of the total solid waste generated in the township (by weight) that is recycled or composted, increased by 14% between 2017 and 2018.

Yard Debris and Composting

The township offers seasonal collections of certain types of yard waste, including Christmas trees. Chapter 160 of the township code authorizes the curbside collection of leaf waste by contract waste collectors at least once during the spring and at least once during the fall. Any yard waste collected is composted and diverted from the landfill, and is therefore considered recycling and contributes to the township's overall recycling rate.

In general, food waste accounts for up to 40% of solid waste by weight. By encouraging households and institutions to compost their kitchen scraps, the

total weight of solid waste generated can be greatly reduced. Reducing the amount of food waste in a community's trash can also reduce the unpleasant odors associated with trash collection and improve the township's overall recycling rates.

Many of the township's residential lots are large enough to accommodate on-site composting of food waste and smaller yard debris, such as leaves. Offering educational programs and low-cost compost bins to residents could help increase the practice of residential composting.

The township offers a Christmas tree recycling drop-off program each year.

Photo credit: Liz McNaney

Recycling Grant Programs

The Act 101 Recycling Performance Grant Program[1] provides grants to municipalities that offer recycling programs. Grant amounts are based on the weight of approved recyclable materials collected annually, as well as the municipality's population. Both residential and commercial recyclables can count towards the municipality's grant amount. Therefore, detailed and accurate reporting of recyclables collected by all haulers that operate within the township is important.

The Pennsylvania DEP also offers Recycling Program Development and Implementation Grants[2] that reimburse counties and municipalities 90% of eligible recycling program development and implementation expenses, such as educational programs, curbside recycling bins, and leaf waste processing programs.

1 Pennsylvania DEP, "Recycling Performance Grants." http://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/Land/Waste/Recycling/Municipal-Resources/FinancialAssistance/Pages/Recycling-Performance-Grants.aspx

2 Pennsylvania DEP, "902 Recycling Grant Application Guidelines." https://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/Land/Waste/Recycling/Municipal-Resources/FinancialAssistance/Pages/902-Recycling-Grant-Application-Guidelines.aspx

Residential Composting Guidelines

The Montgomery County Planning Commission publication "Suburban Homestead: A Primer on Best Practices and Management" provides guidance and resources for residential agriculture practices, including backyard composting.

For more information, visit: https://www.montcopa.org/DocumentCenter/View/21788/Suburban-Homestead_web

Recommendations

Recommendation 20

Encourage community involvement to advance sustainability in all areas of the township's government.

Implementation Strategies

a. Establish an Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) to advise the Board of Commissioners on issues related to environmental conservation. *The EAC could provide valuable input on the evaluation and implementation of other recommendations contained in this chapter.*

Recommendation 21

Preserve and enhance the township's natural resources, including streams, floodplains, riparian corridors, and wooded areas.

Implementation Strategies

a. Complete a natural resource inventory, either prior to or as part of a township-wide parks, recreation, and open space plan. *See the Parks and Open Space chapter for more information on the parks, recreation, and open space plan recommendation.*

b. Perform an audit of the township's zoning, subdivision and land development, and stormwater management ordinances to identify ordinance amendments which could encourage more sustainable development practices. For example, tree preservation and replacement standards in the township's subdivision and land development ordinance could be strengthened.

c. Plant additional trees on township-owned properties, such as within parks and along streams. For example, vegetation and trees along streambanks can help reduce erosion and siltation.

d. Encourage the planting of additional trees along street frontages and on private property.

e. Adopt a township-wide riparian corridor conservation overlay ordinance to create and enhance greenways along the township's streams and water bodies.

f. Maintain an updated floodplain ordinance to comply with any changes in federal floodplain regulations and/or mapping.

g. Continue to partner closely with the Wissahickon Trails on the Green Ribbon Trail and other conservation efforts related to the Wissahickon Creek.

h. Implement the "Wissahickon Creek Water Quality Improvement Plan" (once completed).

i. Implement the township's "Combined TMDL and Pollution Reduction Plan"

Recommendation 22

Encourage stormwater best management practices and water recycling as part of the township's MS4 permit requirements.

Implementation Strategies

a. Implement green stormwater management projects (e.g., rain gardens, riparian buffers) on township-owned properties, such as parks.

b. Continue to work with outside partners, such as the North Penn School District, to install green stormwater management projects on non-township-owned properties.

c. Provide for the ongoing inspection and maintenance of stormwater management facilities on both public and private lands through ordinance amendments and/or community education.

d. Educate homeowners on ways they can naturally control stormwater runoff on their individual properties. Strategies such as rain gardens and downspout planters can be incorporated into landscape design projects. Replacing asphalt driveways with porous paving can also help control stormwater runoff.

e. Adopt green parking standards to encourage additional landscaping and naturalized stormwater management techniques within new parking lots.

f. Participate in a free or discounted rain barrel program, such as through an advance group sales program.

Recommendation 23

Encourage the increased use of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies.

Implementation Strategies

a. Adopt a renewable energy ordinance to ensure the proper installation and use of renewable energy facilities.

b. Create standards for electric car charging stations. Consider requiring installation of charging stations with certain types or scales of development.

c. Provide information to residents and commercial property owners regarding renewable energy and energy reduction opportunities.

d. Consider incorporating incentives and standards for sustainable building and site design into the zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances.

e. Complete a municipal energy management study to identify opportunities to improve energy efficiency within municipal operations, such as renewable energy production.

Recommendation 24

Continue to provide for the long-term maintenance and planning of integral infrastructure systems.

Implementation Strategies

a. Continue to maintain an up-to-date sewage facilities plan (Act 537 Plan) that reflects any zoning and/or land use changes that could impact the projected sewage treatment demand within the township.

b. Continue to work to implement the Montgomery County Hazard Mitigation Plan, as updated, to help protect infrastructure, property, people, and natural resources.

Recommendation 25

Increase the township's recycling rate and reduce the township's overall production of solid waste.

Implementation Strategies

a. Continue to pursue funding opportunities through the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to advance the township's recycling and waste reduction efforts.

b. Continue to partner with Montgomery County to encourage residents to participate in household hazardous waste and other special collection events that are offered annually across the Southeastern Pennsylvania area.

c. Periodically evaluate Chapter 160 (Solid Waste Management), and update as need to encourage increased recycling and decreased solid waste production, especially on non-residential properties.

d. Participate in a free or discounted compost bin program, such as through an advance group sales program.

e. Periodically evaluate the effectiveness of a municipally-run waste collection program.

f. Continue to provide a Christmas tree recycling drop-off collection program.

West Point Park in West Point Village

Parks & Open Space

Summary of Recommendations

- *Enhance the township's parks, recreation opportunities, open space, and natural resources.*
- *Expand and improve upon the township's regional trail network.*
- *Pursue opportunities to preserve the township's remaining open space areas.*

Photo Credit: Erica Antoine

Background

Upper Gwynedd Township has a strong network of existing park resources that accommodates a variety of recreational needs, from passive recreation such as open space to active recreation such as playgrounds and tennis courts. In addition to township-owned parks and open spaces, township residents also benefit from hundreds of acres of private open space and permanently-preserved conservation lands that contribute to the township's unique character.

Garfield Park Playground

Parks & Recreation Department

Upper Gwynedd's Parks and Recreation Department seeks to provide recreation, leisure, and cultural activities to residents of all ages and backgrounds. This is accomplished through the department's many special events, festivals, concerts, movies, and programming. Programs include: a basketball and soccer league; preschool, school-age, and adult fitness programs; art and sports classes; and bus trips. The Parks and Recreation Department looks to the future by planning for new trails and programs, while maintaining the township's existing parks and recreation amenities for residents' use and enjoyment.

With the help of a nine-member Parks & Recreation Committee, the Recreation Director and Program Coordinator are evolving to the changing needs in the community in order to enrich the quality of life for all residents. For example, the Parks & Recreation Committee has explored the possibility of constructing a new community center in the past.

Past Park Plans

Upper Gwynedd Township completed an Open Space Plan in 1995 with the intent of identifying existing parks and open space, recommending new acquisitions of conservation easements, and new facilities.

Opportunities discussed in the plan included linking existing trails and open space, adding new recreational facilities, and enhancing the use of

Study for a New Recreation Center

In 2016, the township formed a committee to work with T&M Associates to complete the "Upper Gwynedd Area Community Center Needs Assessment & Feasibility Study." The township's current community building was built in 1980 on the Parkside Place Park property and consists of a single, multi-purpose room. Although initial studies were done to evaluate options for expanding the existing building, environmental constraints associated with the existing building's location caused the committee to evaluate another location within the Parkside Place Park property.

A public survey with 745 responses was conducted to identify township area residents' interest in a new community center, and what activities they would be most likely to participate in. Respondents indicated that they were most interested in: adult activities/classes, court sports (e.g., basketball, volleyball), and classroom/meeting/party rental space.

The study estimated that three meeting rooms and two flexible space gymnasiums could be accommodated in an approximately 23,000 square foot building, at a cost of approximately $10.7 million. The study also provided insights into the potential for increased revenue due to facility rentals, as well as funding options such as grants.

Subsequently, the township authorized engaging an architectural firm to do a conceptual design of a community center and perform construction and operational cost analyses. The design required 37,500 square feet of space to accommodate all of the desired features that were identified in the earlier study. The approach proved too costly at the time; however, reconsideration of a new community center at a future date remains of interest.

existing open space. Several recommendations of the 1995 plan have been implemented including:

- Hiring a full time Director of Parks and Recreation
- Coordinating with the Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association (now Wissahickon Trails) to acquire easements for the Green Ribbon Trail
- Expanding and upgrading several playgrounds in township parks
- Establishing a park and recreation fee to be paid by developers of residential land developments
- Constructing the Leathers Park-Sci Playground and a concession building at the Nor-Gwyn Pool in Parkside Place Park

The township completed an Open Space Preservation Plan Update in 2005 with the goal of understanding both future development patterns and open space preservation to ensure that the township's open space and recreational facilities will meet the present and future needs of Upper Gwynedd residents.

Existing Parks, Recreation Facilities, and Open Spaces

A total of over 990 acres of land (or 19.1% of the township's land area) is protected open space (see Table 18 below). Map 26 on the following page shows the location of these lands within the township. Of this land area, public park and open space land makes up 270.5 acres.

Table 18: Protected Open Space

TYPE	ACREAGE	USE
Township Parkland	121.0	Active Open Space
Township Open Space	149.5	Passive Open Space
Private Open Space	177.5	Active and Passive Open Space
Whites Road Park (Lansdale Borough)	33.3	Active Open Space
Gwynedd Preserve	210.4	Nature Preserve, Trails
Wissahickon Trails Lands	58.1	Nature Preserve, Trails
Preserved Farmland	244.4	Preserved Farmland
TOTAL	994.2	

Township Parks

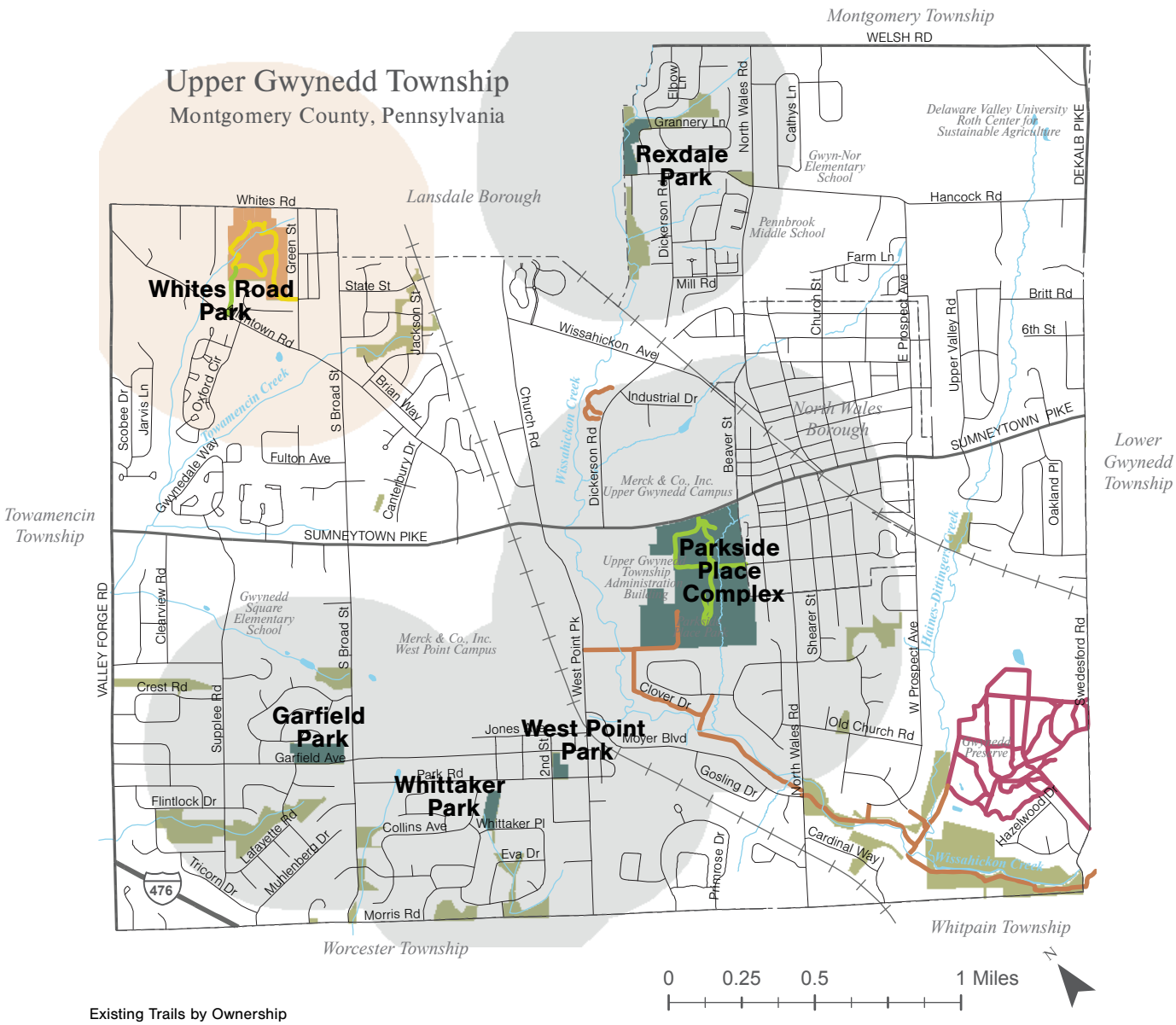
The township's five main parks total 121 acres and range in scale from large community parks to smaller neighborhood-based parks. Community parks, such as Parkside Place Park, have a larger service area than neighborhood-scale parks because they can accommodate a greater number of visitors and diversity of activities. Characteristics of the township's five parks with recreational amenities are summarized in Table 19 on page 131.

Township Open Spaces

The township also has nearly 150 acres of passive open space, or township-owned open space that does not currently have any recreational amenities or trails. Many of these township-owned passive open spaces are located within walkable neighborhoods and are maintained as grassy areas. Several residents commented during the comprehensive plan public engagement process on the opportunity to add amenities to some of these open spaces and/or to use these spaces to provide additional pedestrian linkages between neighborhoods. Other community members suggested that these open spaces could be used as areas for additional tree plantings.

An example of unimproved township open space at the corner of Ivy Lane and Grannery Lane.

Map 26: Existing Public Parks, Trails, and Open Space



0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

N

Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission

Existing Trails by Ownership

- Lansdale Borough
- Natural Lands
- Upper Gwynedd Township
- Wissahickon Trails

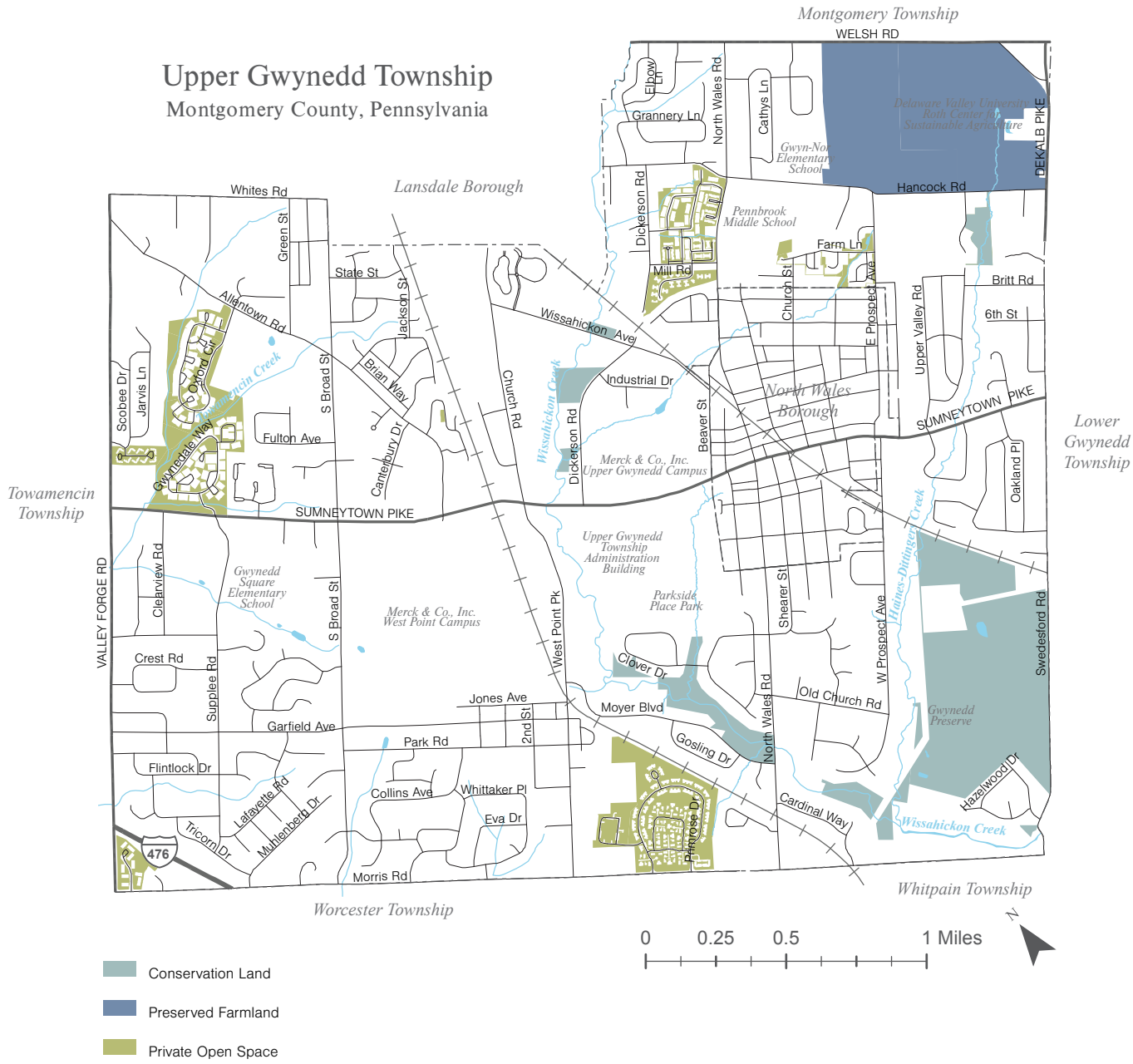
Existing Public Parks and Open Space

- Lansdale Park
- One Half Mile Buffer
- Township Park
- One Half Mile Buffer
- Township Open Space

Table 19: Existing Upper Gwynedd Township Parks

PARK NAME	PARK SIZE	PARK TYPE	PARK AMENITIES	PHOTO
Garfield Park	7.6 acres	Neighborhood	Playground (5-12 years old), multi-use field, parking lot (24 spaces), picnic tables	
Parkside Place Park	102.5 acres	Community	Pavilion, 5 tennis courts, 2 basketball courts, 4 pickleball courts, Leathers Park-Sci Playground ("Castle Park"), community building, Nor-Gwyn pool complex with concession building, gazebo, amphitheater, bike and walking trails, exercise course, picnic tables	
Rexdale Park	9.2 acres	Neighborhood	Playground (5-12 years old), open field, picnic tables	
West Point Park	2.1 acres	Neighborhood	Playground (2-5 years old and 5-12 years old), basketball court, picnic area, baseball field, designated on-street parking	
Whittaker Park	3.6 acres	Neighborhood	Playground, open field with full-size soccer goal	

Map 27: Non-Township Open Space and Conservation Lands



Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission

Non-Township Parks and Open Spaces

Table 18 also summarizes the acreage of non-township owned open space located within the township, including the Borough of Lansdale's Whites Road Park, the Gwynedd Preserve owned by Natural Lands, and land along the Wissahickon Creek owned by Wissahickon Trails (see Map 27 on the previous page). In addition, two farms in the northeast corner of the township account for another 244 acres of permanently preserved lands.

In addition to the township's parks and open space areas, there are several other recreational facilities available to township residents:

Gwynedd Preserve: The Gwynedd Preserve, which consists of 279 acres of open meadows and field habitats in the southeastern corner of the township, is owned and managed by Natural Lands, a non-profit conservation organization. There are several miles of unpaved trails ranging from easy to moderate difficultly that extend across Swedesford Road into Lower Gwynedd Township. There is a Preserve Center on the property with meeting space and restrooms.

Nor-Gwyn Pool: The Nor-Gwyn Pool, which was built in 1976 by the North Wales Lions Club, is located in Parkside Place Park off of Sumneytown Pike. The facility consists of a large swimming pool and a toddler's pool. The approximately four-acre site also has a covered picnic area and locker rooms. The pool is operated by the Nor-Gwyn Pool Commission, whose commissioners include residents of both Upper Gwynedd Township and North Wales Borough. Although there is no residency requirement to become a member, an annual registration fee is required.

Whites Road Park: Whites Road Park is a 33.3-acre Lansdale Borough park that is located in Upper Gwynedd. The park includes a basketball court, natural amphitheater, band shell, open space, picnic areas, swimming pool, four tennis courts, and a 0.6-mile walking trail. The playground area is under construction with an anticipated completion date in early 2021. Once complete, the playground will include two, age-appropriate play structures for children 2-4 years old and 5-12 years old. A streambank restoration project was completed in 2020. Future improvements being considered are the addition of a comfort station and a picnic pavilion.

The Roth Farm is now home to Delaware Valley University's Roth Center for Sustainable Agriculture.

The Gwynedd Preserve is home to a reemerging ecosystem of flora including warm season grasses and native wildflowers that also make the Gwynedd Preserve an important bird habitat.

The main pool at the Nor-Gwyn Pool complex is an L-shaped, Olympic-size pool with ten, 50-meter long lanes.

Whites Road Park has access from the township from the intersection of Green Street and Rosemont Avenue. An additional trail connection from Allentown Road was installed in 2019 as part of a residential subdivision.

North Penn School District Properties

Public school properties in and near the township also provide recreational amenities convenient to township residents.

- *Pennbrook Middle School* is located at North Wales Road and Hancock Road and is home to several sports fields including: two baseball fields, two softball fields, two T-Ball fields, three Little League/softball fields, and three soccer fields. The Nor-Gwyn Baseball & Softball Association uses a portion of the middle school property, as well as a portion of adjacent PECO land along Hancock Road, for their facilities.
- *Gwyn-Nor Elementary School* is located on Hancock Road across from the Pennbrook Middle School and contains a soccer field and a playground.
- *Gwynedd Square Elementary School* is located across Supplee Road from Corpus Christi Church School. The grounds contain a regulation Little League/softball field, a soccer field, and a playground.
- *North Wales Elementary School* is located in North Wales Borough but within walking distance of some neighborhoods on the eastern side of the township. The school's facilities include a large playground, basketball courts, a baseball diamond, and a soccer field.

Dodsworth Run Preserve: The Dodsworth Run Preserve is located on 9.4-acres of land on Dickerson Road that was donated by Merck & Co., Inc. in 2016. The preserve consists of a 0.43-mile nature trail through meadow and wetland habitats. An observation deck allows visitors to learn about and watch for migrating birds.

Corpus Christi Church School: The Corpus Christi School is located in the western part of the township off of Sumneytown Pike. There are two Little League/softball fields, one running track, and baseball diamonds.

The Nor-Gwyn Baseball & Softball Association ball fields are located off of Hancock Road.
Photo Credit: Jim Rittenhouse

The Dodsworth Run Preserve on Dickerson Road provides peaceful walking trails and wildlife viewing points

Parks & Open Space Land Dedication and Fee-In-Lieu

The township's subdivision and land development ordinance (section 168-34.B.) provides for a parks and open space land dedication and/or fee-in-lieu option for new land developments that create housing for two or more families.

"(4) Open space, play lots and neighborhood and community parks. In proposed subdivisions and land developments which are intended to provide housing for two or more families, the Commissioners may require the developer to either:

a. Dedicate land for park and open space use and to expend $200 per dwelling unit for recreation improvements to the park and open space land; or

b. Pay the township $400 per dwelling unit in lieu of park and open space land dedication.

(5) The expenditure of $200 or $400 per dwelling unit shall remain in effect throughout the 1986 calendar year. For each succeeding year, the expenditure shall be increased 10% per year."

Existing Trail Network

Several previous township plans emphasized an interest in partnering with Montgomery County and adjacent municipalities to create additional local and regional trail connections. In particular, additional connections from residential areas to existing trails at Parkside Place, the Gwynedd Preserve, and the Green Ribbon Trail are desired.

In addition, there are two regional trails, the Liberty Bell Trail and the Power Line Trail, that are planned to go through the township as part of the planned Circuit Trails network. Community feedback received through the community survey and first public open house demonstrated strong community support for the continued development of the planned trail network through the township to connect neighborhoods to one another and to destinations such as Parkside Place Park.

The general locations of these proposed trails are shown in Map 28 on the following page. Due to the numerous trails that are planned to interact within the township, an integrated wayfinding and trail signage system may be beneficial.

Circuit Trails Network

Circuit Trails is the name for the Greater Philadelphia regional network of 800 miles of multi-purpose trails. Circuit Trails are typically off-road, paved multi-purpose trails (i.e., are open to both bicyclists and walkers) that are at least 10 feet wide and connected to other trails in the network. Within Upper Gwynedd, the planned Liberty Bell Trail and Power Line Trail are both part of the Circuit Trails network.

For more information, visit: https://circuittrails.org/

"People who live near trails are 50 percent more likely to get enough physical activity to help them stay healthy. People who live in walkable neighborhoods are twice as likely to get enough physical activity as people who don't."[1]

1 National Recreation and Park Association. "Active Transportation and Public Health." https://www.nrpa.org/our-work/three-pillars/health-wellness/parksandhealth/fact-sheets/active-transportation-public-health/

Green Ribbon Trail

The Green Ribbon Trail, largely owned and maintained by Wissahickon Trails (formerly the Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association), currently connects Parkside Place Park in Upper Gwynedd to Stenton Avenue in Whitemarsh Township, generally along the path of the Wissahickon Creek.

The trail is currently 12.6 miles long and connects a variety of parks and natural areas. When the planned eastern portion of the Cross-County Trail is completed in Whitemarsh and Springfield townships, the Green Ribbon Trail will be connected to both the Schuylkill River Trail and the Forbidden Drive Trail in Philadelphia's Fairmount Park System.

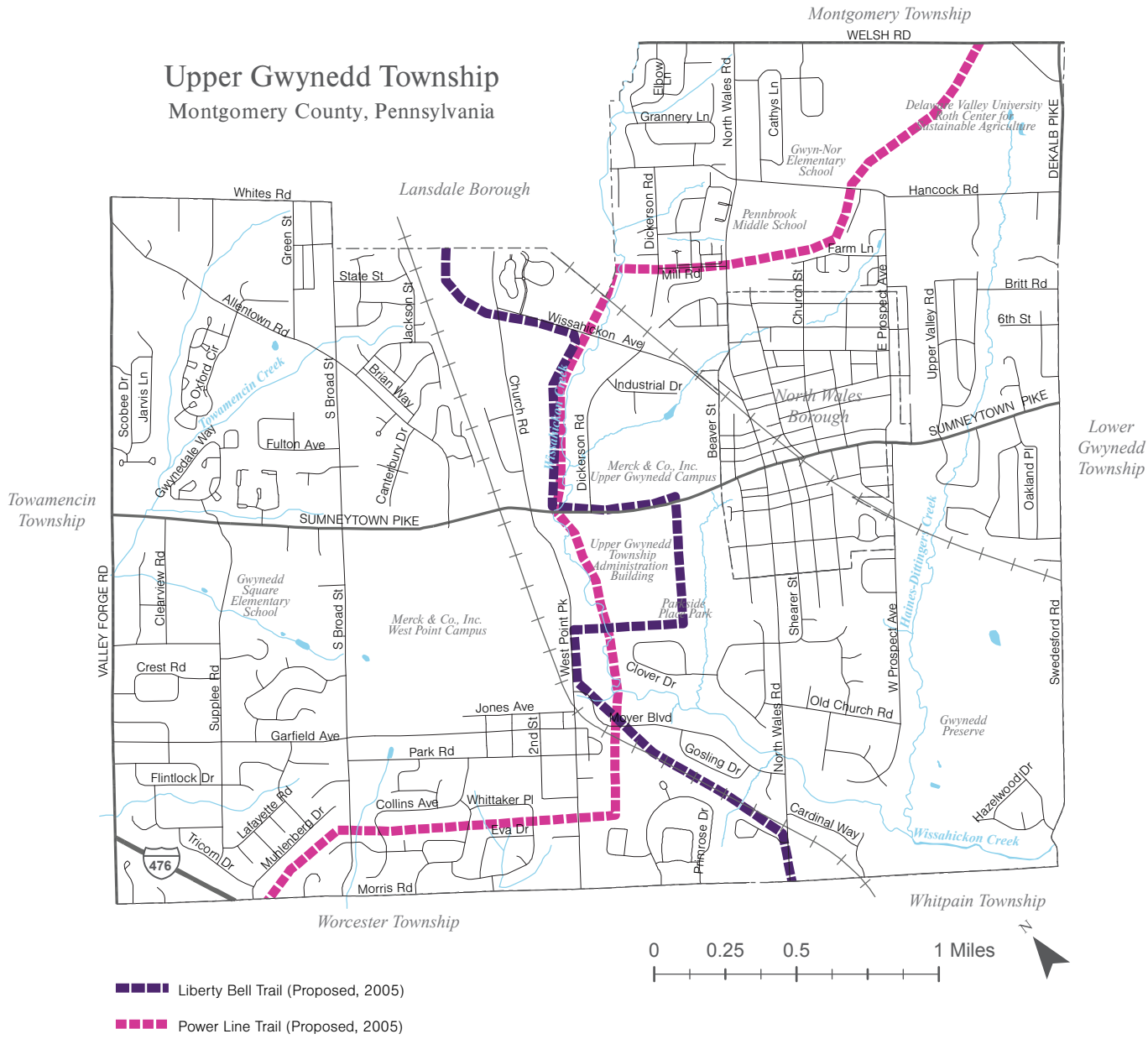
A significant amount of riparian corridor in the township is located within preserved lands owned by either the township or Wissahickon Trails. Buffers of woodlands and open space along streams help to prevent streambank erosion and protect water quality and important wildlife habitat.

Liberty Bell Trail

The Liberty Bell Trail is a planned multi-modal paved trail project to connect Norristown to Quakertown along 25 miles of the former Liberty Bell Trolley Line. Several small segments of the trail through Lansdale Borough and Hatfield Borough have already been constructed. In 2005, the Waetzman Planning Group prepared an initial feasibility study of the Liberty Bell Trail corridor.

Upper Gwynedd Township recently partnered with Hatfield Township on a joint grant application to conduct a feasibility study update for the Liberty Bell Trail in partnership with the Pennsylvania Environmental Council. The updated feasibility study will look at how the trail alignment could improve connections to local parks, trails, and schools.

Map 28: Proposed Trail Network



Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission

Power Line Trail

The Power Line Trail, a priority project in the township's 2005 Open Space Plan, is a planned trail through a section of the PECO power line corridor through the North Penn area of Montgomery County. The section of the Power Line Trail through Upper Gwynedd would connect to an existing section of the trail through Horsham Township via the completed Route 202 Parkway Trail.

The township recently received a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) to complete a feasibility study for the six miles of the Power Line Trail that is planned to pass through Upper Gwynedd, from the southwest border with Worcester Township, to the Delaware Valley College agricultural properties at Welsh Road and Route 202 in the northeast corner of the township.

The planned Power Line Trail through Upper Gwynedd could eventually connect to the 202 Parkway Trail in adjacent Montgomery Township.

A paved extension of the Green Ribbon Trail connects West Point Pike to the southern entrance to Parkside Place Park.

Recommendations

Recommendation 26

Enhance the township's parks, recreation opportunities, open space, and natural resources.

Implementation Strategies

a. Complete a township-wide parks, recreation, and open space master plan to identify new recreational facilities needs and other amenities to enhance park access and use for all township residents.

A township-wide parks, recreation, and open space master plan will evaluate and prioritize potential improvements at individual parks and undeveloped township open spaces throughout the township through broad public input. Potential improvements and amenities to be evaluated include playing field and playground improvements, stormwater management facilities, picnic pavilions, and walking trails. The plan could potentially build upon previous studies related to the construction of a new community center building. In addition, the parks, recreation, and open space master plan will include information to aid the township in prioritizing potential open space acquisition opportunities, including a natural resource inventory.

b. Prioritize installation of sidewalks and on-road bike facilities to improve access to existing parks and open spaces.

c. Periodically evaluate the community's desires and need for additional amenities within undeveloped township open spaces, such as walking trails to improve pedestrian access between the township's parks and residential neighborhoods.

d. Periodically evaluate the parks and open space land dedication and fee-in-lieu options in the township's subdivision and land development ordinance, including evaluating adding a requirement for non-residential development.

e. Pursue grant funding to increase tree cover and shade in existing parks.

Recommendation 27

Expand and improve upon the township's regional trail network.

Implementation Strategies

a. Enhance access to and awareness of current trails through trailhead amenities, wayfinding signage, sidewalk connections, and additional trail openings.

b. Consider creating additional walking paths within parks or currently undeveloped township open space, including opportunities for greenway paths, interpretative signage, etc.

c. Continue to work with Montgomery County and adjacent municipalities to complete trail feasibility studies for the Power Line Trail and Liberty Bell Trail to determine the best trail alignment for each trail through Upper Gwynedd Township.

d. Continue to work with Montgomery County and adjacent municipalities to identify and pursue funding sources to construct the Power Line Trail and Liberty Bell Trail through Upper Gwynedd Township.

e. Consider creating an official map showing the township's planned locations of future trail connections so that future development and redevelopment projects along the trail routes can incorporate the trail right-of-way and interconnections, where applicable.

Recommendation 28

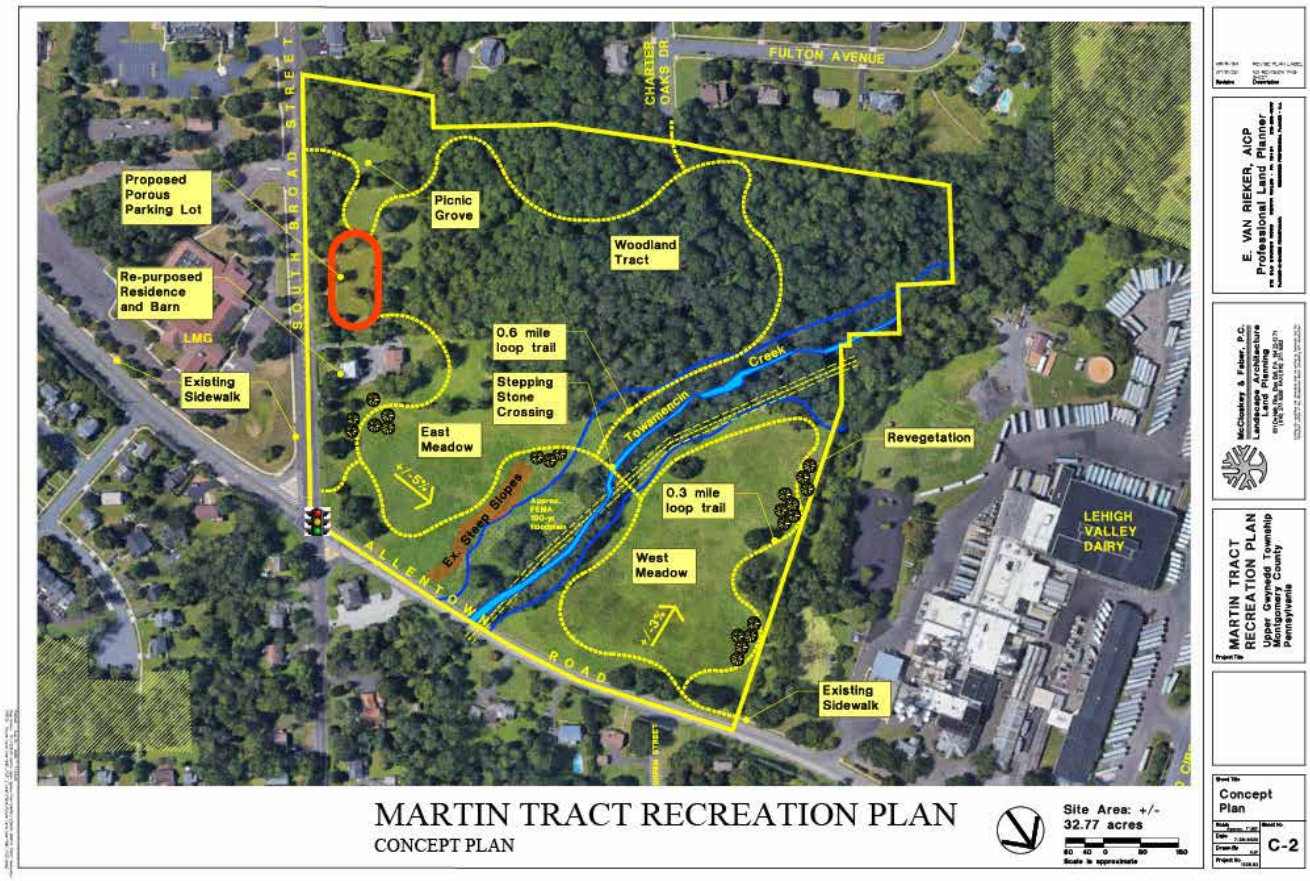
Pursue opportunities to preserve the township's remaining open space areas.

Implementation Strategies

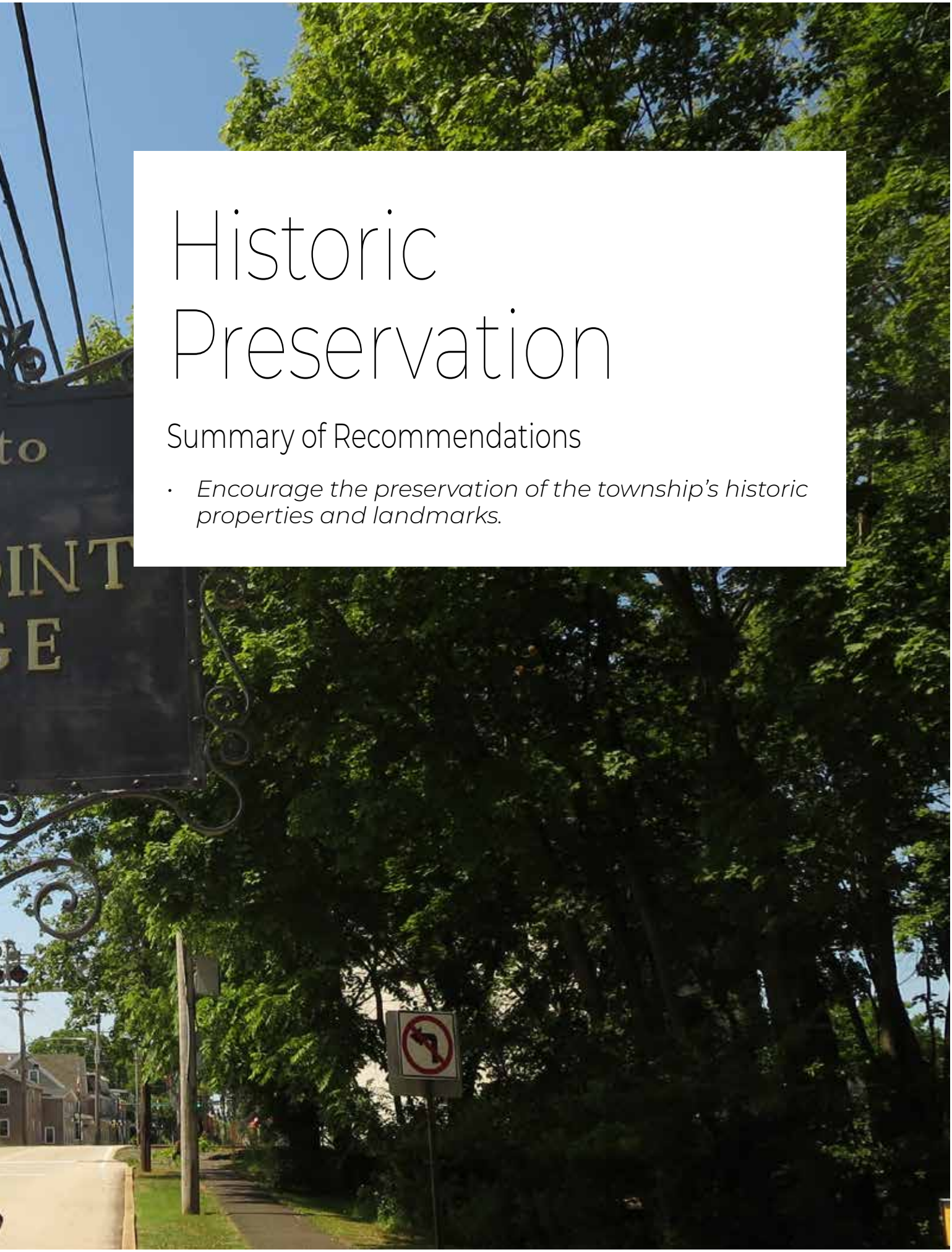
a. Explore opportunities for strategic open space acquisition and development, including Act 319 properties, historic properties, greenway corridors, and potential trail right-of-way.

Martin Tract Conceptual Plan

In 2020, the township prepared a conceptual plan for how 32.8 acres of undeveloped land at the intersection of Allentown Road and South Broad Street could be transformed into a township park. The initial concept plan for the site (below) provides for several walking trail routes through the meadow and woodland habitats on the site, as well as a picnic grove and porous parking lot. The existing residence and barn on the site could potentially be repurposed as part of the project as well.



Gateway signage to the West Point Village along West Point Pike



Historic Preservation

Summary of Recommendations

- *Encourage the preservation of the township's historic properties and landmarks.*

Benefits of Historic Preservation

Historic preservation efforts can have many benefits for the local community. Focusing on preserving and promoting a community's history and culture allows residents to reconnect with their past, revive community spirit and pride in place, and encourage local participation in revitalization efforts. Historic areas that have been preserved help to maintain a community's authenticity, restore the local tax base, create jobs, stimulate private investment, and promote growth in a way that uses existing resources and infrastructure efficiently.[1]

A vibrant historic district can also become a tourism destination. In fact, heritage tourism is the second biggest industry in Pennsylvania and historic towns and districts are the most popular tourism sites.[2] Studies have shown that historic designation can increase the average property value by 5 to 20%.[3]

A historic resource can be a building, structure, site, object, or district that is of a certain age (usually 50 years or older) or is associated with a certain theme; and retains enough integrity to convey its significance. There are several state and federal programs that provide for various levels of designation and protection of historic resources.

1 Pennsylvania Historic Preservation Office, Cultural Resource Essentials, 2013.

2 Heritage Tourism in Pennsylvania, June 1999.

3 "Historic Preservation and Residential Property Values: An Analysis of Texas Cities," Leichenko, Coulson, and Listokin, Urban Studies, 2001.

Existing Historic Resources

Map 29 on the following page shows the township's properties that are either listed or deemed eligible to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places (National Register). Map 29 also shows the location of historic farmhouses and the area of a previous historic survey of the West Point Village.

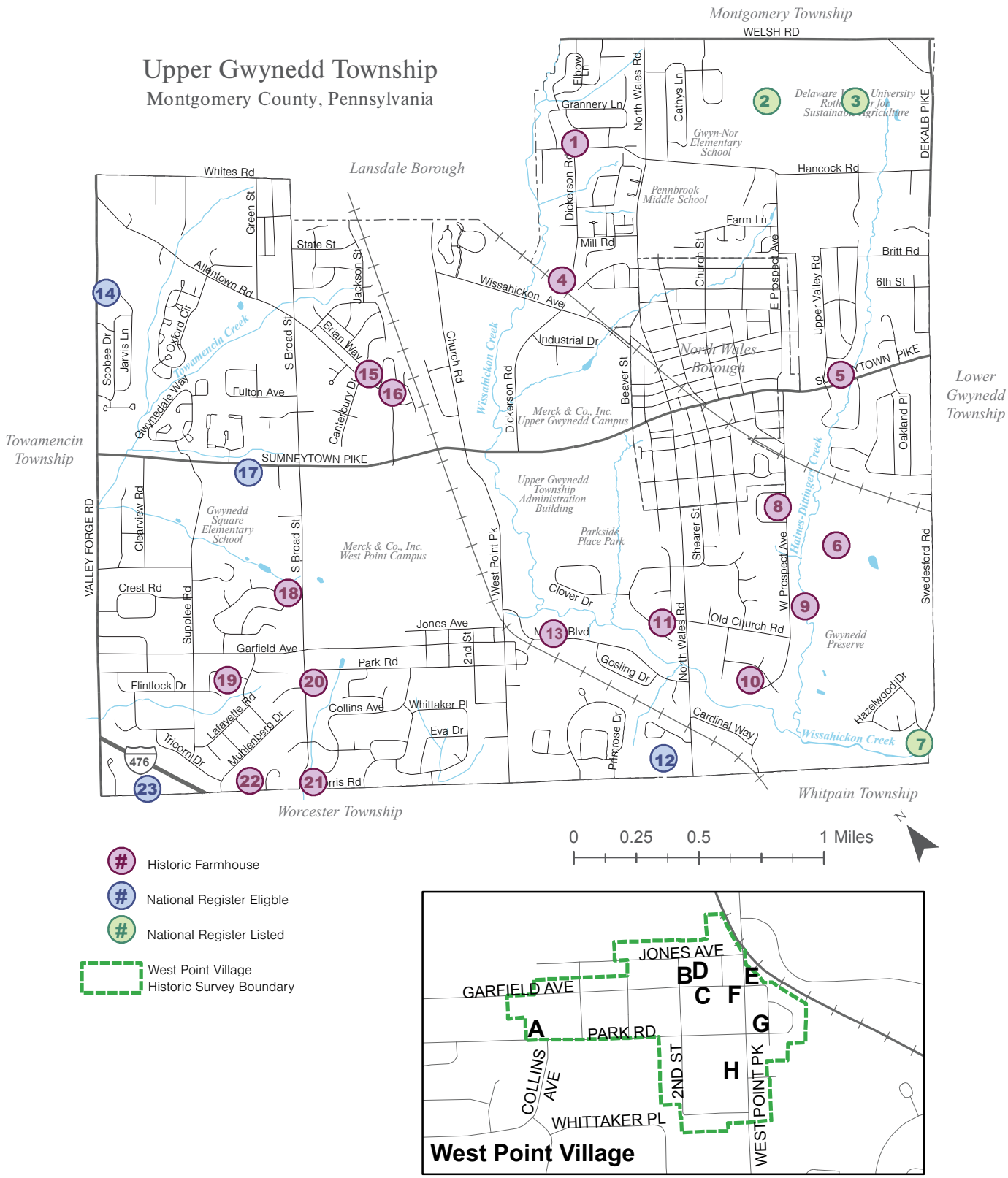
National Register Listed & Eligible Properties

There are three properties within the township that are currently listed on the National Register. The Knipe-Moore Rupp Farm and Knipe-Johnson Farm & Isaac Kulp Farm (now known locally as the Rupp and Roth Farms, respectively) in the northeast quadrant of the township are both listed on the National Register of Historic Places and are permanently preserved under an agricultural conservation easement through the Montgomery County Farmland Preservation Program.

In addition, the historic Keefe-Mumbower Mill (which dates back to the early 1800s) was acquired by Wissahickon Trails (formerly the Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association) in 1987 as part of

The Keefe-Mumbower Mill, now more commonly known as the Evans-Mumbower Mill, remains an excellent example of a 19th and early 20th-century gristmill.

Map 29: Historic Properties



Source: Upper Gwynedd Township, Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission]

Table 20: Historic Farmhouses

MAP ID	NAME	CONSTRUCTION DATE	NOTES
1	J. Bradfield Farm	1853	
2	Knipe-Moore Rupp Farm	1808	listed on the National Register
3	Knipe-Johnson Farm & Isaac Kulp Farm	1900	listed on the National Register
4	Charles Garner Farm	1800	
5	J.D. Carroll Farm	1756	
6	Lane's End Farm	1698	
7	Keefe-Mumbower Mill	1835	listed on the National Register
8	L. Marple Farm	unknown	
9	Isaac Custer Farm	1800	
10	William Singerly Farm	1874	
11	John Comly Farm	1900	
12	Bisson/Jarrett Farm	1800	eligible for listing on the National Register
13	E. H. Rousswick Farm	1842	
14	The Griffith-Snyder House	1707	eligible for listing on the National Register
15	Henry G. Hallman Farm	1850	
16	Frantz-Pruner Farm	1839	
17	Residence at 880 Sumneytown Pike	1900	eligible for listing on the National Register
18	The Shoem Farm	1820	
19	William Schultz Farm	unknown	
20	J. V. Brunner Farm	1850	
21	Levi Heebner Farm	1850	
22	The Buckheimer House	1840	
23	Kriebel Family House	1820	eligible for listing on the National Register

Source: Upper Gwynedd Township 2005 Open Space Preservation Plan Update; Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals; National Register of Historic Places

Table 21: West Point Village Historic Properties

MAP ID	NAME	CONSTRUCTION DATE
A	Queen Anne style residence at 711 Park Road	1880
B	West Point Fire House	1911
C	J. F. Fenstermacher House	1890
D	The Reformed Church	1890
E	West Point Post Office and Samuel Kriebel General Store	late 1870s
F	West Point/Grove Hotel	1874
G	Lesher W. Mattern House	1896
H	Prairie style residence at 1926 West Point Pike	1920

Source: National Register of Historic Places; Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals

their Green Ribbon Trail and has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 2008.[5]

There are also four properties in Upper Gwynedd that have been determined to be eligible to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, but are not officially listed.

Historic Farmhouses

The township also has many historic farmhouses remaining that were documented in the 2005 Open Space Preservation Plan Update. Although a small number of these historic farmhouses have been demolished since 2005, the locations of the remaining farmhouses are shown in Map 29 on page 143 and are listed in Table 20 on the previous page with numbering that corresponds to the labels in Map 29. The construction dates noted in Table 20 are based on information from either the Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals or historic survey information.[6] Table 20 also includes the three properties listed and the four properties determined to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

It is worth noting that more properties within the township, including some of these historic farmhouses, may be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places; however the process of surveying and nominating each property in order to determine its eligibility has not been completed.

West Point Village Historic Survey

In 2005, Upper Gwynedd Township worked with the Heritage Conservancy to evaluate the potential of creating a National Register Historic District within the West Point Village portion of the township. The Heritage Conservancy's recommendation was that the West Point district was eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places because it retains historic integrity as a historical center of commerce and industry within the township. West Point also includes many excellent examples of late-19th and early-20th

5 Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission. Cultural Resources Geographic Information System (CRGIS). https://gis.penndot.gov/crgis

6 Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission. Cultural Resources Geographic Information System (CRGIS). https://gis.penndot.gov/crgis

Historic buildings along West Point Pike evoke the village's historic scale and character.

Some property owners in the township already proudly display the year their historic home was built.

Photo Credit: John Tierney

What is the National Register?

"The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the Nation's historic places worthy of preservation. Authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archaeological resources."[4]

4 National Park Service. "What is the National Register of Historic Places?" https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/what-is-the-national-register.htm

Century architectural styles such as Second Empire, Gothic Revival, and Queen Anne.

The boundary of the area that was surveyed and recommended for listing as a historic district is shown in Map 29 on page 143. The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) evaluated the district's proposed nomination and determined that "while there are individual buildings and sections that retain integrity, as a whole it did not appear that the village would be suitable as a National Register district."[7]

Although dozens of properties were surveyed as part of this evaluation, only eight properties appeared to have the potential for individual listing to the National Register of Historic Properties. These properties are shown in Map 29 on page 143 and are listed in Table 21 on page 144 with numbering that corresponds to the labels in Map 29. The construction dates noted in Table 21 are based on information from either the Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals or the historic survey information.[8]

The village area has continued to evolve since the 2005 historic resource survey. An updated historic resource survey, in partnership with PHMC, and continued exploration of techniques to encourage preservation of the village's most distinctive properties, and historic scale and overall character, other than listing on the National Register, may be worth considering. *See the Focus Areas Chapter – West Point Village for additional recommendations for the West Point area of the township.*

Historic Preservation Tools

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places (National Register), which was established in 1966, is the nation's official list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects deemed worthy of preservation. A property listed in the National Register, or located within a National Register Historic District, may qualify for tax incentives derived from the total value of expenses incurred preserving the property

The Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission (PHMC) serves as Pennsylvania's State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and evaluates properties to determine whether they are eligible for listing on the National Register. PHMC also maintains an online inventory and interactive map of historic sites and surveys on their Cultural Resources GIS website: *https://gis.penndot.gov/crgis.*

7 West Point Village Historic District Nomination Resource File. https://gis.penndot.gov/CRGISAttachments/SiteResource/H141777_128537_D.pdf

8 Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission. Cultural Resources Geographic Information System (CRGIS). https://gis.penndot.gov/crgis

The Lesher W. Mattern House was constructed in 1896 on West Point Pike. It is now a tea house and a vibrant part of West Point Village.

Photo Credit: Erica Antoine

Local Historic Districts

The Pennsylvania Local Historic District Act (Act 167 of 1961) authorizes municipalities to create historic districts within their geographic boundaries; provides for the appointment of Boards of Historical Architectural Review; and empowers municipal governing bodies to protect the distinctive historical character and regulate the construction, alteration, restoration, and demolition of buildings within a historic district.

The local historic district approach is best applied in communities where there is a significant concentration of historic resources. This technique encourages the preservation of the unique architectural elements within a historic district while also recognizing the neighborhood-scale context of the community's historic development, such as the street pattern or mixture of building types. The historic district in adjacent North Wales Borough is an example of a local historic district.

Zoning Incentives and Design Guidelines

The Municipalities Planning Code also includes language that allows individual municipalities to utilize their zoning ordinances to protect and enhance historic properties. For example, the township could create an overlay district that applies to historic properties and create incentives for the continued preservation of those historic resources. Zoning incentives could include new uses (e.g., bed and breakfast, accessory dwelling unit) and adaptive reuse options. The zoning approach is a good option if the historic resources the township wishes to preserve are scattered rather than concentrated.

Design guidelines are another helpful tool to provide guidance and recommendations to owners of historic buildings. Understanding more about the architectural styles common in the community, and the additional considerations for maintenance of historic properties, can help empower property owners to maintain their properties in a historically-sensitive manner.

Recognition and Education Programs

Many communities offer recognition and education programs to encourage preservation and maintenance of historic properties, either in conjunction with a historic district or not.

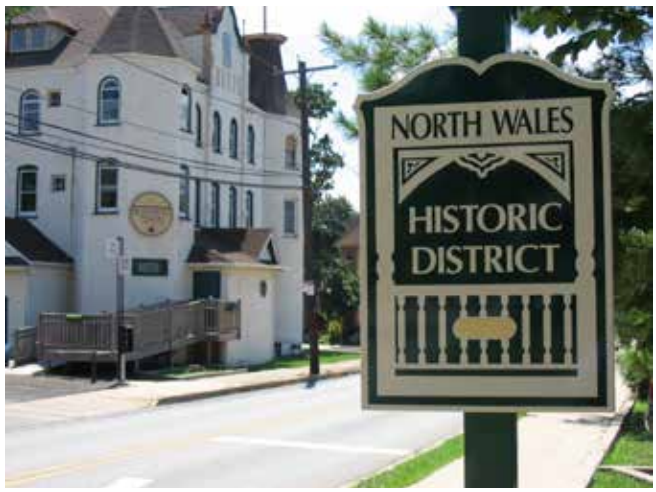
For example, North Wales Borough's Historic Commission has a program where homeowners who have researched their home's year of construction are eligible to participate in the Heritage Plaque Program and proudly display the year their home was built on a distinctive sign.

Historic Preservation Funding Opportunities

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) offers funding through the Keystone Historic Preservation Project Grants program. Eligible projects include historic site and architectural surveys, National Register nominations for historic districts, and planning assistance projects (such as design guidelines).

For more information, visit: http://www.phmc.pa.gov

Zoning standards can encourage the adaptive reuse of historic institutional properties such as this former public school on South Broad Street that was converted into a day care center.



Adjacent North Wales Borough's Historic Commission runs a Heritage Plaque Program for owners of historic homes.

Recommendations

Recommendation 29

Encourage the preservation of the township's historic properties and landmarks.

Implementation Strategies

a. Conduct an updated historic resource survey of the West Point Village area.

b. Provide education, in the form of in-person trainings and/or user-friendly design manual resources, to property owners as resources to increase awareness of preservation and maintenance techniques.

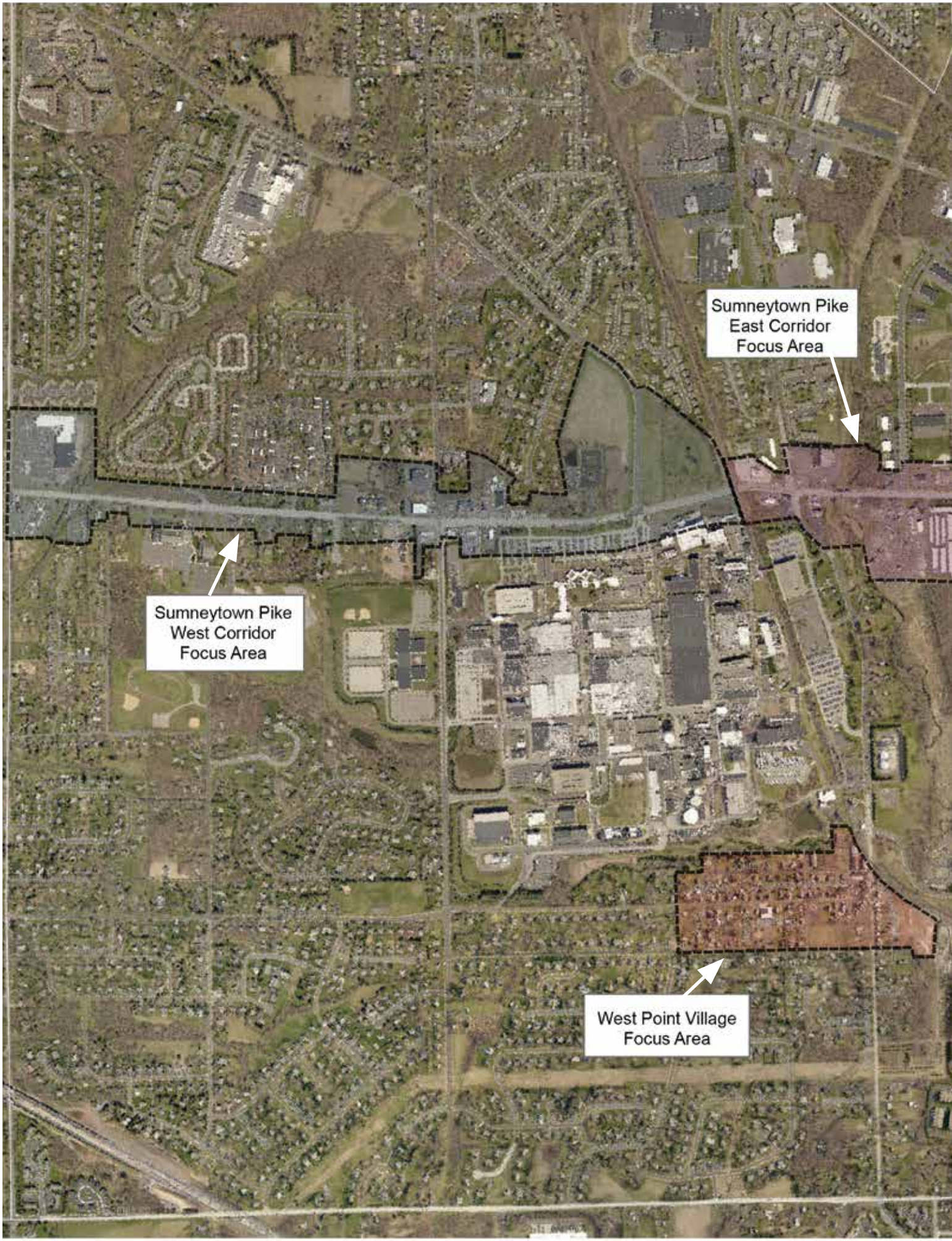
c. Implement a recognition program to provide formal acknowledgment of property owners who have taken steps to preserve the historic character of their properties.

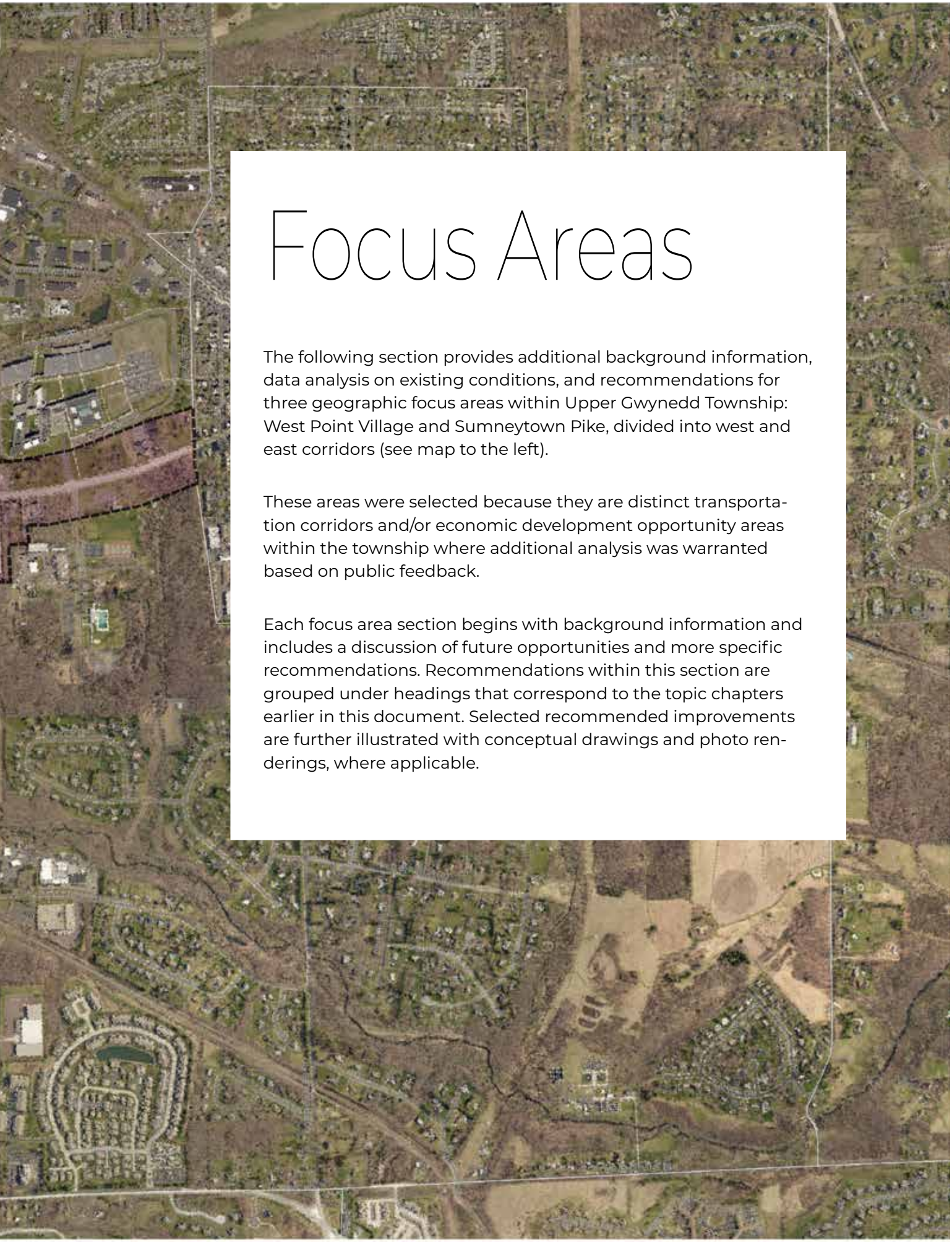
d. Create zoning standards that provide for and encourage the preservation of historic properties and their potential adaptive reuse for other compatible uses.

e. Update the zoning standards for the Village Preservation Residential and Village Commercial zoning districts to include additional standards that encourage the maintenance of the village's historic buildings and the overall historic scale and character of the district.

f. Support the creation of programming, such as walking tours and brochures, which promote the history of the West Point Village area.

Photo Credit: Erica Antoine


Sumneytown Pike
East Corridor
Focus Area
Sumneytown Pike
West Corridor
Focus Area
West Point Village
Focus Area



Focus Areas

The following section provides additional background information, data analysis on existing conditions, and recommendations for three geographic focus areas within Upper Gwynedd Township: West Point Village and Sumneytown Pike, divided into west and east corridors (see map to the left).

These areas were selected because they are distinct transportation corridors and/or economic development opportunity areas within the township where additional analysis was warranted based on public feedback.

Each focus area section begins with background information and includes a discussion of future opportunities and more specific recommendations. Recommendations within this section are grouped under headings that correspond to the topic chapters earlier in this document. Selected recommended improvements are further illustrated with conceptual drawings and photo renderings, where applicable.

West Point Village Focus Area

West Point Village, at the crossroads of West Point Pike and Garfield Avenue in the southwest quadrant of the township, was originally known as "Lukens" or "Lukens Station" and dates back to the mid-1800s. For over a century, West Point was the home of Zieber's Park (later named West Point Park) which was an early attraction along the Montgomery Traction Trolley line that ran along Garfield Avenue between 1902 and 1912. The village is still home to residences, a small grouping of commercial properties, a church, a township park, and the Upper Gwynedd Fire Department.

For over 100 years, West Point Village was home to a popular amusement park.

Existing Conditions & Observations

Recent Developments

There were two residential land developments within the village area between 2003 and 2019. The largest development created 22 new twin homes on Cottage Avenue on the east side of the village. In addition, a three-unit residential development was constructed on Jones Avenue. In terms of non-residential development, there was one office conversion completed along West Point Pike during this time period.

Natural & Cultural Resources

There are no water bodies or floodplains within the West Point Village focus area. The topography of West Point Village is relatively flat.

There are many potentially historic structures within the village. For example, fifteen homes that were built before 1900 are still standing today. In the early 2000's, a local committee was formed to develop a Preservation and Improvement Plan for West Point Village with four main goals: to preserve the village's historic character; to beautify the village's main streets; to control traffic; and to improve property values in general.

One project the committee explored was the creation of a historic district. The township worked with the Heritage Conservancy to survey and nominate the village area as a National Register historic district; however, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) indicated at the time that the village area did not constitute a significant enough concentration of intact resources to warrant listing as a National Register historic district.

See the Historic Preservation chapter for other approaches and tools that could be explored to achieve the desired result of incentivizing preservation of the village's historic structures.

Parks & Open Space

West Point Park is a 2.1-acre township park located at Park Road and Second Street. The park incorporates a playground, basketball court, picnic grove, and open grass field with a baseball backstop. Another township park, Whittaker Park, is located less than a 1/2-mile from the village center offering additional amenities such as another playground and another open grass field. However, there are no sidewalks around West Point Park or connecting the village center to Whittaker Park.

In addition, the Green Ribbon Trail and Parkside Place Park are accessible via a pathway off of West Point Pike, approximately 0.3-miles north of the village center. However, sidewalks gaps (including across the railroad tracks just north of the village center) exist along the east side of West Point Pike between the village center and the trail connection.

Transportation

Vehicular Traffic

West Point Pike through the village is a county-owned, two-lane road with a speed limit of 25 mph. West Point Pike is classified as a minor arterial which interconnects with principal arterials (such as Sumneytown Pike) and provides access to local residential roads. The roadway experiences traffic volumes of nearly 8,000 vehicles per day.[1]

West Point Village Parking Survey

A questionnaire regarding the availability of parking and its impact on businesses within the West Point Village was prepared by the Upper Gwynedd Township Planning Commission in 2017. A total of 17 responses to the questionnaire were received. Although 65% of respondents indicated that they "have sufficient parking to meet [their] current business needs," 53% of respondents indicated that "additional parking in the West Point area [would] be beneficial."

Public Transit

SEPTA's Route 94 bus route runs along West Point Pike with stops on either side of the intersection of West Point Pike and Garfield Avenue. The 94 route provides access to Lansdale and Norristown.

Pedestrian Access and Circulation

Sidewalks are located sporadically within the village area. Currently, sidewalks are concentrated along West Point Pike (on both sides between Jones Avenue and Garfield Avenue and on the east side only between Garfield Avenue and Park Road). Sidewalks are also located along the north side of Garfield Avenue between West Point Pike and Second Street, and around recent developments.

Streetscape improvements, including pedestrian-scale lighting, stamped concrete crosswalks, and sidewalks were installed utilizing $300,000 in funding through a federal appropriations earmark received in 2006. Although the project wasn't fully completed until 2016, the streetscape design was unveiled in 2008 after the township worked with a committee of residents to complete the design.

NEW DEVELOPMENT

A recent residential development of a former industrial site off of Cottage Avenue includes 22 new twin homes and improvements including sidewalks and stormwater management.

PREVIOUS CONDITIONS

Photo Credit: Liz McNaney

West Point Park is a 2.1-acre township park located in West Point Village.

1 Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. "Traffic Counts" http://www.dvrpc.org/webmaps/TrafficCounts/

Since then, the township has continued to try to secure funding to extend the sidewalks up West Point Pike to connect village residents to amenities and resources such as the Parkside Place Park.

Public Engagement Feedback

- "West Point Pike needs sidewalks near the railroads."
- "The township should consider purchasing the church at West Point Pike and Park Road, and developing it for a cultural center, or other use."
- "Many people use SEPTA Bus Route [94] – add bus stop signs on West Point Pike."
- "West Point Alley/Heebner Street from 2nd to 4th potential open space/rehab opportunity."
- "Add sidewalk along Moyer Blvd to connect neighborhoods into West Point Village."

Existing Land Use & Zoning

The current land use within the West Point Village focus area is a diverse range of retail, office, institutional, recreational, and residential. Table 22 below shows the total assessment value and local tax revenues from all of the properties within the focus area.

Land within the West Point Village focus area is primarily zoned Village Preservation Residential (VPR) and Village Commercial (VC). The VPR and VC zoning districts were created in 1982 as a reflection of the township's desire to preserve the village's unique scale and character.

The West Point Village focus area also includes the Cottage Avenue development on the east side of the village that was rezoned from Commercial to R3 Residential to accommodate a recent residential development.

Table 22 Economic Characteristics of Parcels within the West Point Village Focus Area

Total Number of Parcels	132 parcels
Total Land Area	39 acres
Total Assessed Value	$18,531,710
Total Municipal Tax Revenue	$35,125
Total School Tax Revenue	$449,064
Total Commercial Square Footage	87,950 sq. ft.

Source: Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals

Future Opportunities

Figure 16 on pages 156-157 shows both existing conditions and recommendations for the West Point Village focus area.

Overall Development Vision & Future Land Use

West Point Village is a unique area of the township that warrants special consideration in terms of land use and development regulations, streetscape design, parks and open space, and programming. Overall, there is a desire within the community to preserve the scale and character of the residential area of the village, while enhancing and supporting the mixed use commercial area of the village.

The proposed future land use distribution within the village is shown in Map 30 on the following page. See the Land Use Chapter for full descriptions of the future land use categories.

Zoning Provisions and Design Standards

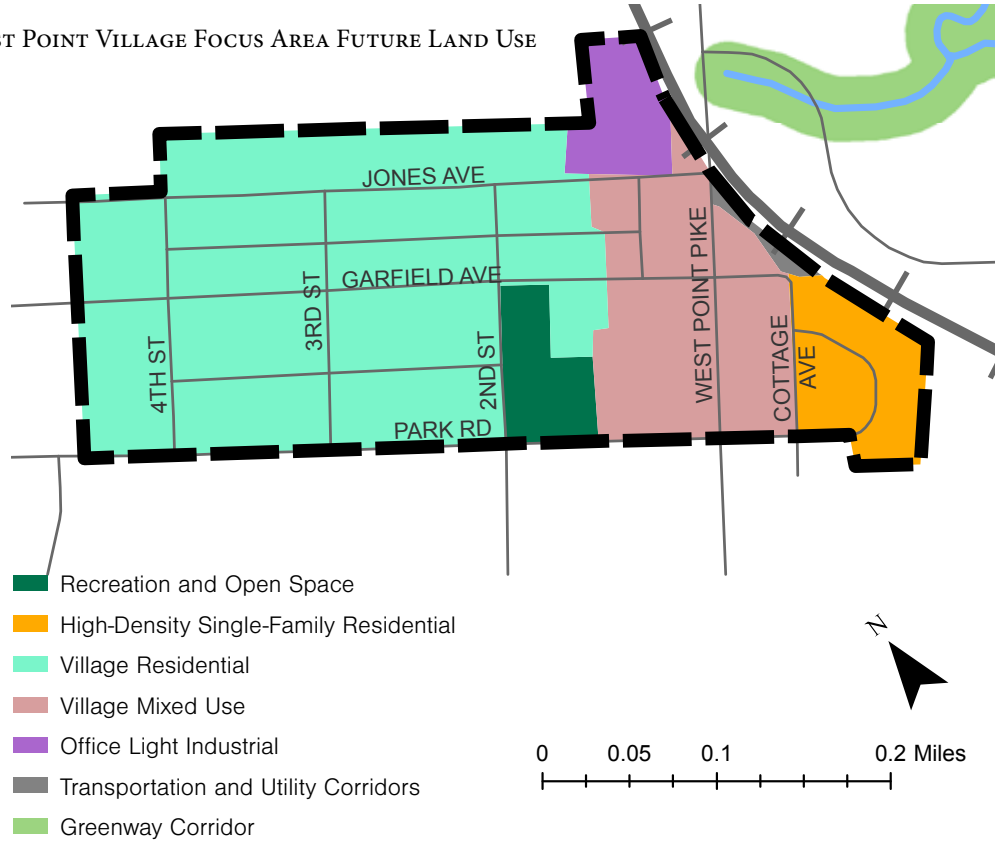
The Village Commercial (VC) and Village Preservation Residential (VPR) zoning districts currently provide for a wide range of land uses, consistent with the existing mixed use character of the village. In addition, the VPR district encourages the preservation of existing historic homes in the village through a provision that allows the conversion of the home into multiple units by special exception.

Additional design standards and historic preservation incentives could enhance the village zoning. Design standards should reflect a desire for improved pedestrian amenities and streetscape design. A streetscape plan and design manual, building upon the recent streetscape improvements, could help create a continuous and attractive street frontage within the village commercial area.

Traffic Calming

The enhanced crosswalks and distinctive streetscape recently installed along West Point Pike through the village have helped to slow traffic down. Additional recommendations from the township police department include flashing stop signs and in-road illumination of crosswalks to further calm traffic speeds and improve visibility of pedestrian crossing points.

Map 30: West Point Village Focus Area Future Land Use



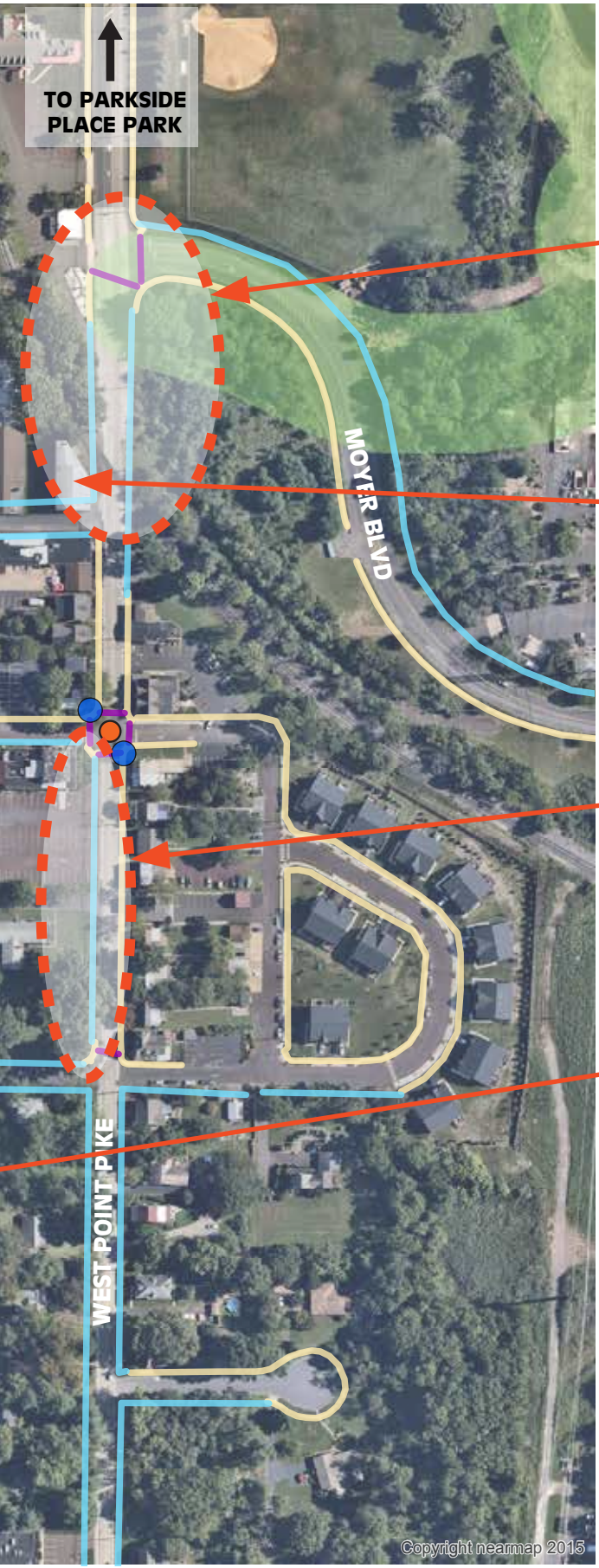
Streetscape improvements have been installed on several blocks of West Point Pike to improve both pedestrian safety and the visual character of the village.

Recent renovations have brought new tenants to the building historically known as the Samuel Kriebel General Store at the intersection of West Point Pike and Garfield Avenue.

The only traffic signal within the village is located at West Point Pike and Garfield Avenue.

Distinctive residential architecture can be found throughout the village.

Figure 16: Existing Conditions and Recommendations



Improve northern gateway and pedestrian connections to commercial uses to the north with sidewalks and streetscape enhancements (see Recommendations WPV3, WPV9)

Work with the property owners at the northern gateway to explore landscaping improvements and redevelopment opportunities (see Recommendations WPV5, WPV6)

Extend sidewalk network and expand upon the established streetscape within the village (see Recommendations WPV3, WPV9)

Improve pedestrian access to West Point Park and implement additional improvements to the park as identified based on the future township-wide parks and open space master plan (see Recommendations WPV11, WPV12)

Existing Sidewalk

Existing Marked Crosswalk

Recommended New Sidewalk

Existing SEPTA Bus Stop

Existing Traffic Signal

0 125 250 500 Feet

N

Pedestrian Circulation Improvements

Improving pedestrian amenities across the at-grade freight rail crossing of West Point Pike south of Moyer Boulevard would improve pedestrian access between the village area and other established commercial uses to the north. Furthermore, filling this sidewalk gap would improve pedestrian connectivity between the village and a connection to the Green Ribbon Trail further up West Point Pike.

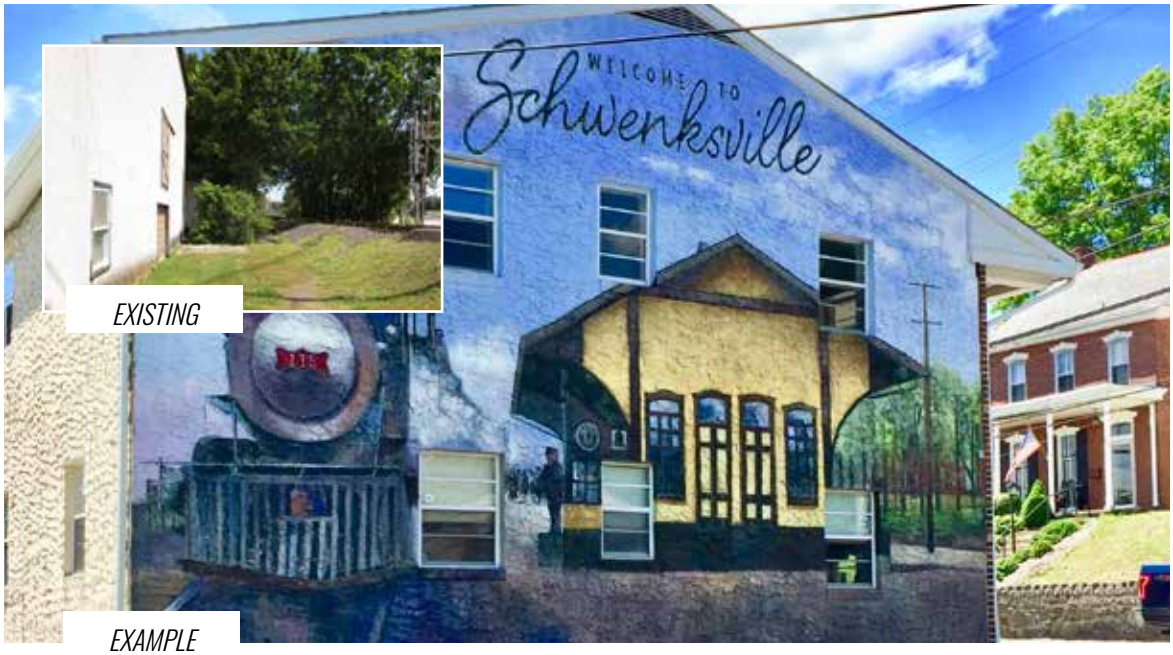
Northern Gateway Improvements

The gateway to the village along West Point Pike from the north could be improved to be more welcoming and distinctive. A combination of pedestrian sidewalks across the railroad tracks, an extension of the established streetscape improvements, and signage could create a visual gateway to distinguish the village area as a special place as drivers pass through.

The site on the west side of West Point Pike, just south of the railroad tracks, could help create a visual gateway into the village with the addition of amenities such as landscaping and benches. A mural (such as the example on the following page) could be installed on the side of this building to honor the village's history. In addition, this building could potentially be repurposed as a residential and/or active commercial space that could contribute to the mixed-use village and extend pedestrian activity further up West Point Pike.

West Point Village Streetscape Enhancements

The streetscape along several blocks of West Point Pike through the village was improved by the addition of distinctive pavement material along the sidewalks, enhanced crosswalks at the intersection of West Point Pike and Garfield Avenue, and decorative pedestrian-scale lighting. Building upon and extending the established streetscape design could create a stronger sense of place and make the village area more walkable (see example below).



Recommendations

See the Land Use Chapter for full descriptions of the different types of future land use within the West Point Village focus area.

Economic Development

Recommendation WPV1

Update the zoning standards for the Village Preservation Residential (VPR) and Village Commercial (VC) zoning districts to include additional standards that encourage the maintenance of the village's historic buildings and the overall historic scale and character of the district.

Recommendation WPV2

Establish design guidelines for the village area, including guidelines that encourage new developments and renovation projects to be sensitive to the historic character and scale of the village area.

Recommendation WPV3

Continue to pursue funding opportunities and work with property owners to expand upon established streetscape enhancements that help improve walkability and create a sense of place for the village.

Recommendation WPV4

Continue to work with property and business owners on the availability of parking to support the mixed-use areas of the village. For example, striping and signage could be used to more clearly delineate available on-street parking and time limits and parking restrictions could be used to maintain parking availability for residents of the village.

Recommendation WPV5

Work with the property owner on the western side of the northern gateway to the village to install a green parklet with amenities such as benches, landscaping, and a mural (see example above). Explore adaptive reuse opportunities for the building on the western side of the gateway, such as residential and/or active commercial uses.

Recommendation WPV6

Work with the property owners at the northern gateway to the village to construct sidewalks, extend the streetscape improvements, and install distinctive signage or banners.

Recommendation WPV7

Coordinate with property owners of large properties where adaptive reuse or redevelopment is a possibility.

Recommendation WPV8

Continue to partner with the Upper Gwynedd Township Fire Department to explore facility expansion or construction opportunities. If the fire department moves out of the village area, partner closely with the fire department on the potential

adaptive reuse or redevelopment of their properties within the village area.

Transportation

Recommendation WPV9

Continue to pursue funding opportunities and work with property owners to expand the sidewalk network within and connecting to the village area, including pedestrian access across the railroad crossing on West Point Pike just north of the village.

Recommendation WPV10

Work with the Upper Gwynedd Police Department to install additional traffic calming enhancements along West Point Pike and side streets where speeding has been identified as an issue.

Parks & Open Space

Recommendation WPV11

Install sidewalks as shown in Map 16 on page 91 to improve pedestrian access between the village area, West Point Park, and Whittaker Park.

Recommendation WPV12

Implement improvements to West Point Park based on the findings and recommendations of the township-wide parks and open space master plan.

Sumneytown Pike Corridor Introduction

To reflect the differing land use patterns and planning opportunities along Sumneytown Pike, the corridor west of North Wales Borough was divided into "west" and "east" for this focus area discussion (see image above). The Stony Creek Railroad bridge, just east of Allentown Road, is used as the dividing point. Sumneytown Pike east of North Wales Borough has a very different character and was not included as part of this corridor study because it is anticipated to remain in its current state in terms of land use.

Sumneytown Pike through Upper Gwynedd Township generally follows the path of an early Indian trail and was home to several early taverns. Industrial development picked up along Sumneytown Pike after World War II, including the SKF Bearing Company which was later purchased by the Sharp & Dohme Company of Philadelphia (and is now Merck & Co, Inc.'s West Point campus in the Sumneytown Pike West Corridor Focus Area). The former Leeds & Northrup plant site on the north side of Sumneytown Pike near North Wales Borough (in the Sumneytown Pike East Corridor Focus Area) is now Merck & Co., Inc.'s Upper Gwynedd campus.

Several residential developments, such as the Willowyck apartments and the Gwynedale townhouse development, were constructed along the western stretch of the Sumneytown Pike corridor in the 1970s and 1980s. Commercial development at the intersection of Sumneytown Pike and Valley Forge Road also took place during this time period and several churches along the western stretch of the corridor were constructed in the 1960s. The township's central administrative and recreation destination, Parkside Place Park, is located along the eastern stretch of the corridor and was dedicated in 1969.

Sumneytown Pike West Corridor Focus Area

Existing Conditions & Observations

Recent Developments

There were several residential and commercial developments constructed along the western portion of Sumneytown Pike between 2003 and 2019. The Samantha Court subdivision on the south side of Sumneytown Pike near South Broad Street consists of four single-family detached homes and 19 townhouses on a new cul-de-sac. In addition, a Dunkin' Donuts, a gas station, and a two-story office building were constructed. Several new buildings and building expansions were also proposed on Merck & Co., Inc.'s West Point campus on the south side of Sumneytown Pike during this time period.

Natural Resources

The Sumneytown Pike West corridor crosses over the Towamencin Creek and its associated floodplain near the intersection of Clearview Road. A tributary of the Towamencin Creek is located roughly parallel to Sumneytown Pike, along the north side of the road, extending almost to South Broad Street. The topography of the Sumneytown Pike corridor is relatively flat.

Parks & Open Space

There are no township parks located along the western portion of the Sumneytown Pike corridor focus area. A small area of township open space, which was created as part of a road realignment project, is located at the intersection of Supplee Road and Sumneytown Pike. Several of the larger residential developments in this area have their own dedicated recreation space for their residents.

Transportation

Vehicular Traffic

This stretch of Sumneytown Pike has a speed limit of 35 mph. The road has a cross-section of five-lanes between Supplee Road and the Stony Creek railroad overpass. West of Supplee Road, Sumneytown Pike narrows to three lanes. Sumneytown Pike is classified as a principal arterial which provides vehicular access to minor arterials (such as Allentown Road) and collectors (such as South Broad Street south of Sumneytown Pike). The roadway experiences traffic volumes of more than 18,000 vehicles per day.[2] Sumneytown Pike is county-owned west of South Broad Street and township-owned east of South Broad Street.

Pedestrian Access and Circulation

Sidewalks are located sporadically along Sumneytown Pike. Areas where sidewalks are missing include along the frontage of the North Penn Marketplace, on both sides of the road where it crosses over Towamencin Creek, on the south side of Sumneytown Pike between the Towamencin Creek and Supplee Road, and along the frontage of the office property on the northwest corner of Sumneytown Pike and South Broad Street.

Although there is no sidewalk on the north side of Sumneytown Pike east of Allentown Road to the Stony Creek railroad overpass, there is no shoulder to accommodate a sidewalk on the north side of Sumneytown Pike under the railroad overpass.

2 Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. "Traffic Counts" http://www.dvrpc.org/webmaps/TrafficCounts/

The North Penn Marketplace shopping center at the intersection of Valley Forge Road and Sumneytown Pike opened in 1983.

Sidewalks along the full frontage of the North Penn Marketplace property could also improve pedestrian access to other walking destinations.

Existing Land Use & Zoning

The current land use along the western portion of the Sumneytown Pike corridor is a diverse range of retail, office, institutional, and residential. Table 23 below shows the total assessment value and local tax revenues from all of the properties along the study area corridor.

Land along the western portion of the Sumneytown Pike corridor is currently zoned a variety of zoning districts. The majority of the southern side of the corridor is zoned R-2 Residential or Limited Industrial with Commercially-zoned properties at the Valley Forge Road and South Broad Street intersections. The north side of the corridor is zoned a range of zoning districts including Shopping Center at Valley Forge Road, Townhouse Residential, Garden Apartment Residential, and R-2 Residential.

Public Engagement Feedback

- "We live right off of Sumneytown, and I dislike that my kids have to walk home from school on such a busy road. The cars drive so fast on this road, also. Weis and Wawa are right down the street from us, but there is no safe way to walk to them from our house."
- "My concern is how Upper Gwynedd has so much space and yet it is dangerous to walk around. Especially the people who try to walk to the high school, or the shopping center where Weis is [...]"
- "We would like to see something done with the property where the existing WAWA is on Sumneytown and Valley Forge Rds. The whole shopping center is empty and looks terrible. The parking lot is a disaster."
- "[...] would love to see a bus line up and down Sumneytown pike to connect neighborhoods to the rail line."
- "Broad/Sumneytown pedestrian crossing is dangerous"
- "Add sidewalk or trail on Sumneytown Pike near Supplee Road"

Table 23: Economic Characteristics of Parcels within the Sumneytown Pike West Corridor Focus Area

	WITH MERCK & CO., INC.'S WEST POINT CAMPUS	WITHOUT MERCK & CO., INC.'S WEST POINT CAMPUS
Total Number of Parcels	54 parcels	53 parcels
Total Land Area	495 acres	180 acres
Total Assessed Value	$466,671,590	$67,520,770
Total Municipal Tax Revenue	$929,889	$115,222
Total School Tax Revenue	$11,889,289	$1,473,169
Total Commercial Square Footage	8,634,683 sq. ft.	911,461 sq. ft.

Source: Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals

A pharmacy, a gas station, and other commercial amenities are located at the intersection of Sumneytown Pike and South Broad Street.

The Gwynedd Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center is located on Sumneytown Pike across from Merck & Co., Inc.'s West Point campus. Photo Credit: Gil Silverman

Future Opportunities

Figure 17 on pages 166-167 shows both existing conditions and recommendations for the Sumneytown Pike West Corridor focus area.

Overall Development Vision & Future Land Use

There is a desire within the community to make this important corridor through the township attractive, walkable, and safe for all users. Due to missing sidewalk connections and the speed and volume of vehicular traffic, many residents feel disconnected from amenities such as the nearby shopping centers and schools.

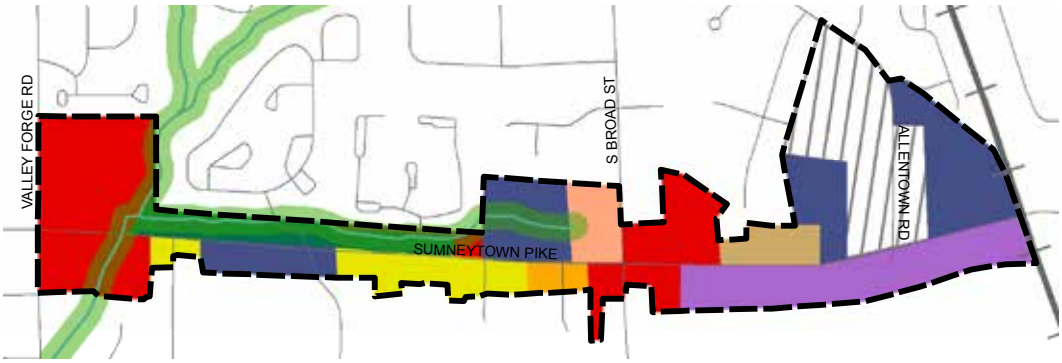
Map 31 below shows the proposed future land use for the Sumneytown West Pike Corridor. See the Land Use Chapter for full descriptions of the future land use categories.

Zoning Provisions and Design Standards

Updated zoning provisions and design standards can be utilized to encourage redevelopment as a way of achieving some of the desired improvements along the western portion of the Sumneytown Pike corridor. In particular, the Sumney Forge Square shopping center is largely vacant and underutilized. Having design standards in-place prior to any future proposed development ensures that potential developers are aware of the township's expectations for new development in that location, including permitted land uses, building heights, streetscaping, and pedestrian connections.

View into Sumney Forge Shopping Center looking south from the North Penn Marketplace shopping center.

Map 31: Sumneytown Pike West Corridor Focus Area Future Land Use

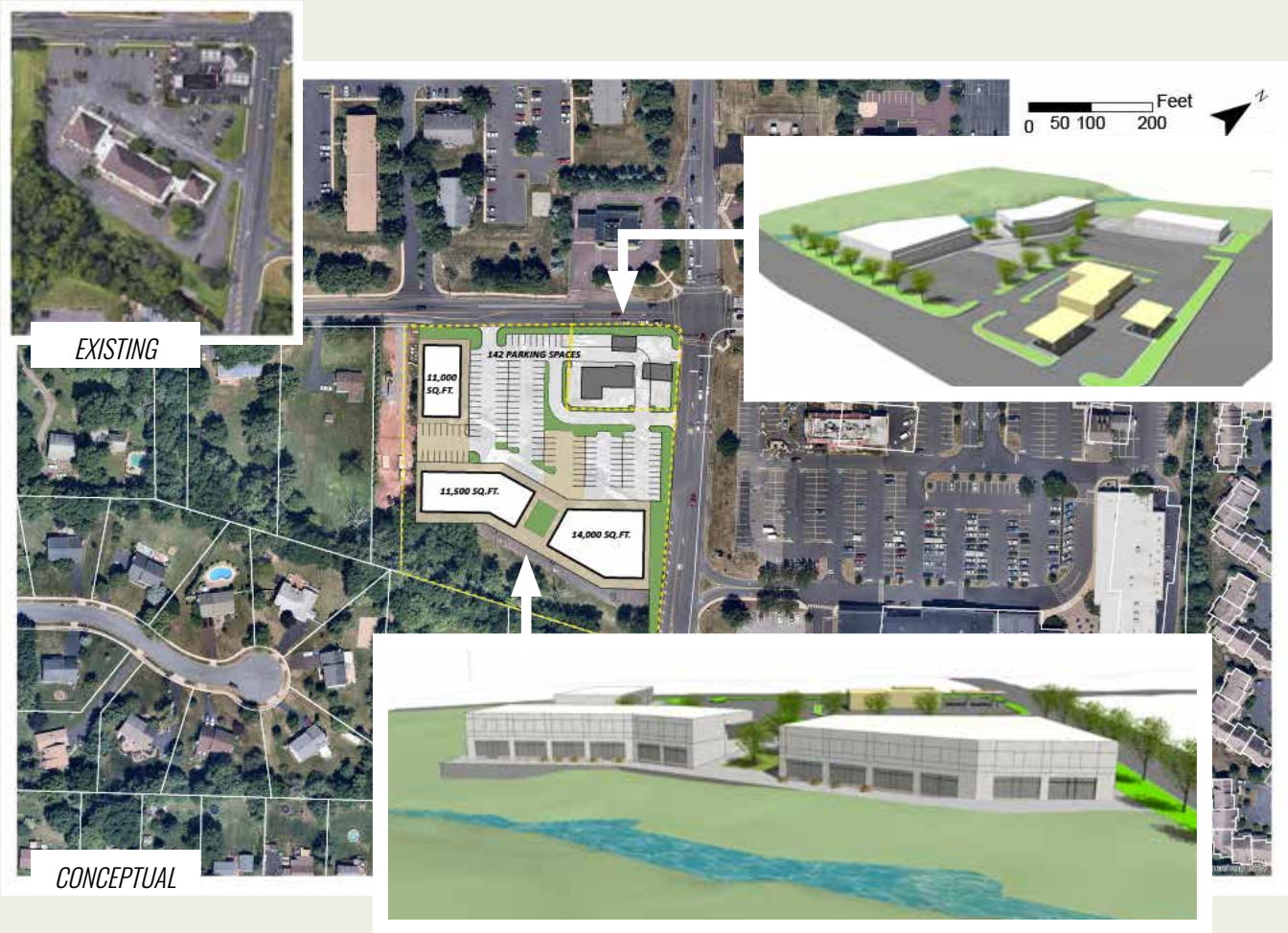


- Greenway Corridor
- Recreation and Open Space
- Institutional
- Medium-Density Single-Family Residential
- High-Density Single-Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Residential/Office
- General Commercial
- General Office
- Office Light Industrial
- Future Land Use to be Determined through Master Plan Process

N

0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles

Sumney Forge Square Shopping Center Conceptual Redevelopment



The Sumney Forge Square Shopping Center on the southeast corner of Valley Forge Road and Sumneytown Pike was an innovative design when it was constructed in 1974; however, the center is now largely underutilized and could be reimagined as a modern shopping center with outdoor dining overlooking the creek, improved vehicular and pedestrian circulation, enhanced landscaping, and flexible plaza spaces that could be used for community events. In this conceptual redevelopment scenario (see above), the existing gas station on the separate corner parcel remains, but with reduced curb cuts onto Valley Forge Road and Sumneytown Pike.

As one township resident wrote in the 2019 community survey, the thoughtful redevelopment of this corner could be a valuable opportunity to create "quaint shops or green open space. If that was revitalized it would bring so much more growth and beauty to the community."

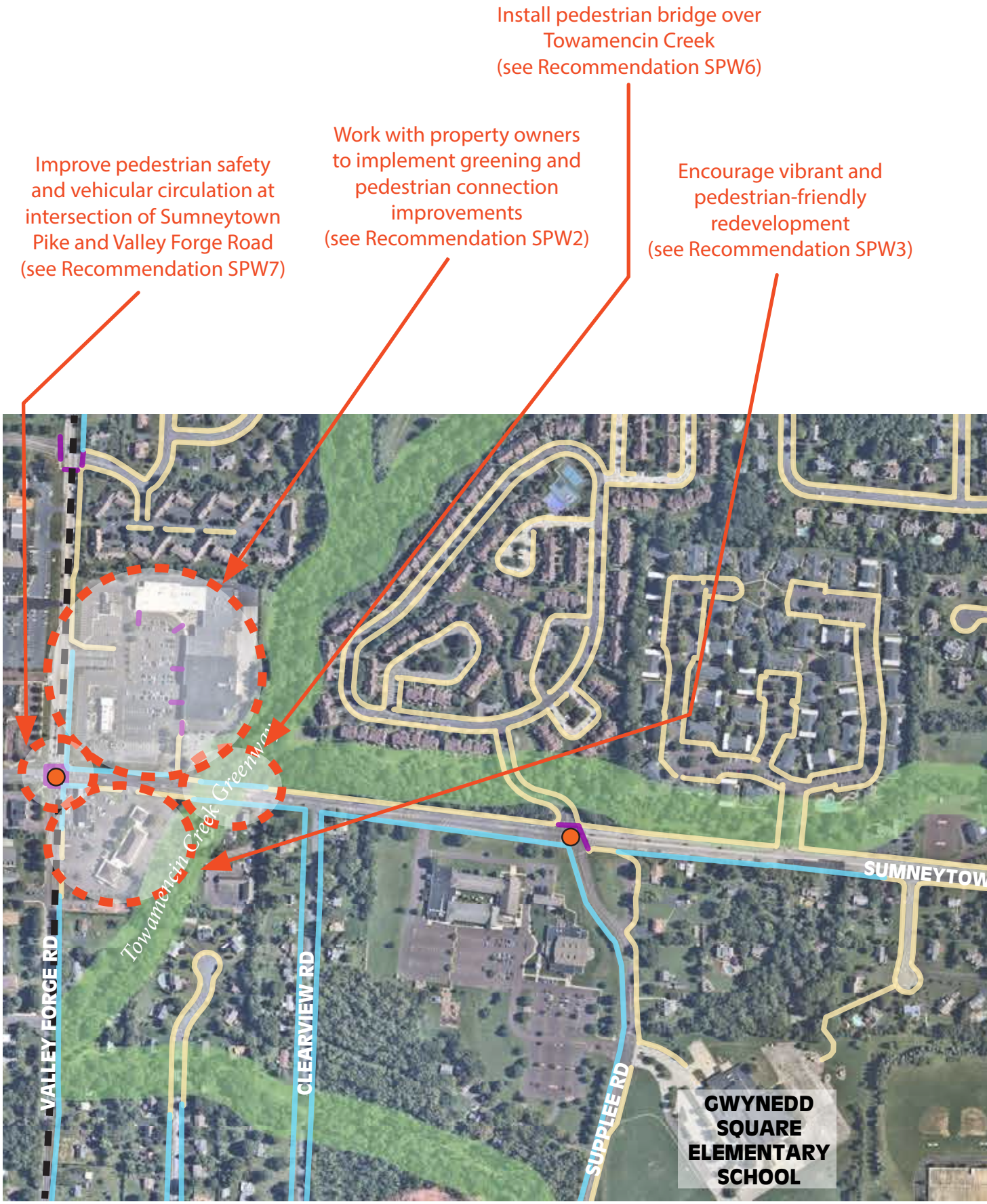
A central plaza space with eye-catching landscaping could be created between the two rear commercial areas.

Different pavement materials can be used to delineate spaces within the development, including portions of the parking lot, that could be converted into event space for farmers markets and "Food Truck Fridays."

The site's unique topography and location along the Towamencin Creek presents an opportunity to create distinctive outdoor dining, perhaps elevated, along the creek.

Façade articulation and quality building materials would create visual interest within the development.

Figure 17: Existing Conditions and Recommendations



Complete a master plan to assess the land use and development options for three undeveloped parcels on Allentown Road north of Sumneytown Pike (see Recommendation SPW1)

Complete sidewalk network along Sumneytown Pike and enhance pedestrian crossings at all signalized intersections (see Recommendations SPW8 & SPW9)

Municipal Boundary

Existing Sidewalk

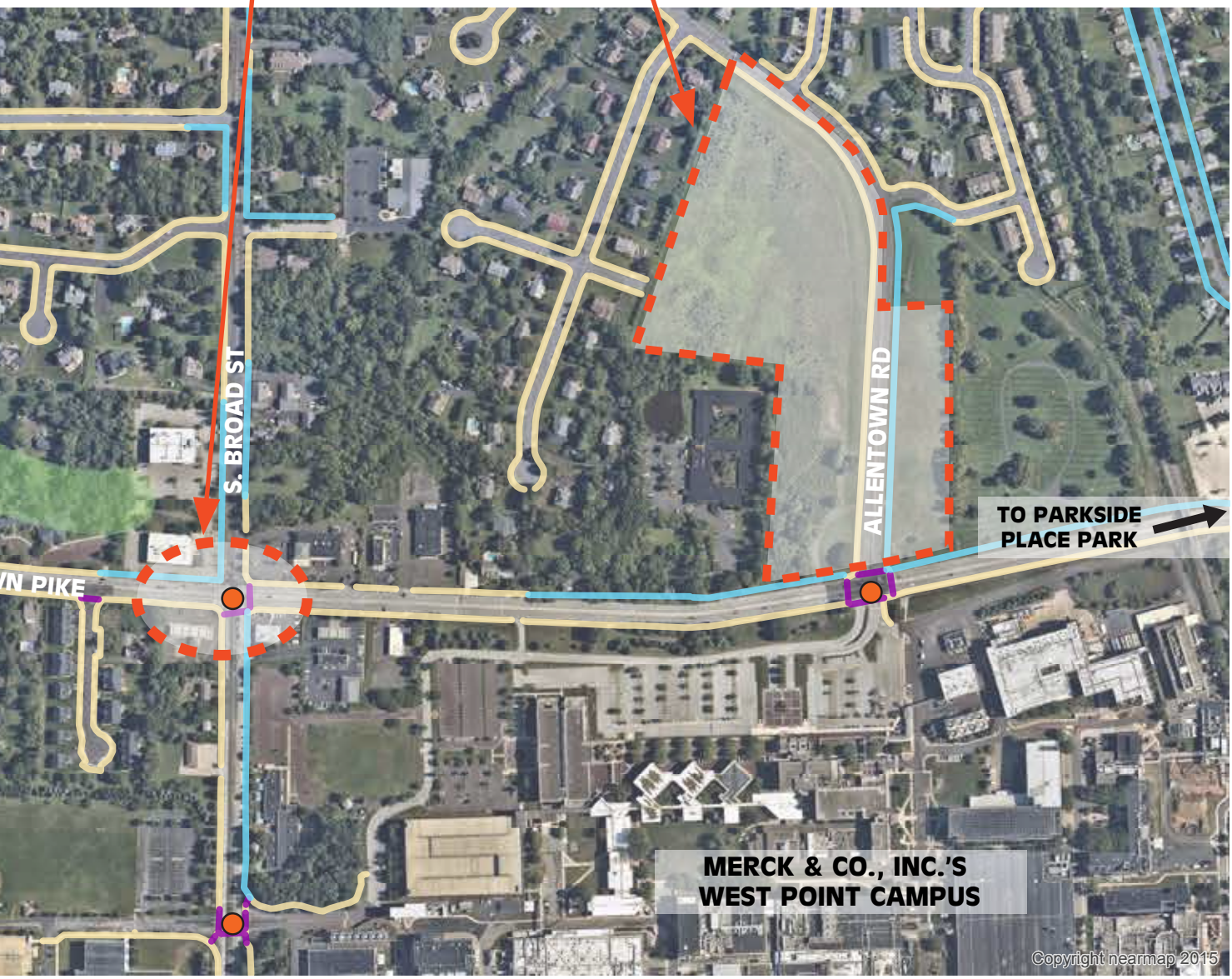
Existing Marked Crosswalk

Recommended New Sidewalk

Existing Traffic Signal

0 250 500 1,000 Feet

N



Sidewalk Connections

Sidewalks should be provided along the full length of Sumneytown Pike and on both sides of the road to connect all of the residential neighborhoods to walking destinations such as schools, churches, shopping centers, and North Wales Borough. All new development and redevelopment should be required to install sidewalks along their frontage. In addition, new development and redevelopment located at a signalized intersection should evaluate pedestrian crossing improvements and the installation of ADA curb ramps, as part of their development project.

The lack of continuous sidewalks along Sumneytown Pike can make walking to destinations such as the Weis grocery store and North Penn High School more challenging.

Pedestrian Bridge over Towamencin Creek

A key sidewalk gap was identified by multiple survey respondents along the north side of Sumneytown Pike where it crosses over Towamencin Creek. The current bridge over Towamencin Creek is not wide enough to accommodate a sidewalk and it is not anticipated that the bridge will be replaced in the short-term.

This stretch of Sumneytown Pike is county-owned and this important pedestrian connection will be studied as part of the *Montco Pikes* corridor study, which is expected to be completed in 2021. However, in the meantime, the township could also explore grant funding opportunities to construct a separate pedestrian bridge along Sumneytown Pike, similar to the pedestrian bridge constructed over Wissahickon Creek.

Undeveloped Land on Allentown Road

There are three undeveloped parcels located along Allentown Road near Sumneytown Pike, that taken together, represent one of the largest concentrations of developable land left within the township. Through the comprehensive planning process it was determined that a targeted master plan for these three parcels was the best way to determine the most appropriate future land use for this area. *See Recommendation SPW1 for more information.*

Recommendations

See the Land Use Chapter for the desired location of different types of future land use within the Sumneytown Pike West Corridor focus area.

Economic Development

Recommendation SPW1

Complete a master plan to assess the land use and development options for the three undeveloped parcels on Allentown Road north of Sumneytown Pike (those parcels shown with gray hatching in the Future Land Use Map on page 25 and Map31 on page 164) to determine the preferred future land use for these parcels, and make zoning amendments as needed.

The master planning process for this area of undeveloped land will incorporate extensive public engagement and will result in a conceptual site plan for all three parcels. Potential land uses to be evaluated could include: open space, institutional, and residential. In particular, the potential impacts and relationship of any new development to the surrounding existing land uses and neighborhoods will be evaluated carefully. Other considerations may include: new road locations that interconnect with the established network of streets, additional pedestrian connections, and green space locations.

Recommendation SPW2

Work with the property owners of the North Penn Marketplace Shopping Center to implement greening and pedestrian connection improvements.

Recommendation SPW3

Adopt zoning and subdivision and land development ordinance amendments to encourage the vibrant and pedestrian-friendly redevelopment of underutilized commercial properties, such as the Sumney Forge Square Shopping Center. *See the callout box on page 165 for a conceptual redesign of this site.*

View of undeveloped land along Allentown Road.

Recommendation SPW4

Rezone residentially-zoned properties along Sumneytown Pike to encourage conversion to low-impact office uses as a transition between single-family homes and Sumneytown Pike.

Transportation

Recommendation SPW5

Work with Montgomery County to implement improvements recommended in the *Montco Pikes* study, once completed.

Recommendation SPW6

Pursue funding opportunities to install a pedestrian bridge over the Towamencin Creek on the north side of Sumneytown Pike to improve safe pedestrian access between residential neighborhoods along Sumneytown Pike and destinations such as the North Penn Marketplace Shopping Center and North Penn High School.

Recommendation SPW7

Work with Towamencin Township, Montgomery County, and PennDOT to improve pedestrian safety and vehicular circulation at the intersection of Sumneytown Pike and Valley Forge Road.

Recommendation SPW8

Complete the sidewalk network along Sumneytown Pike, prioritizing those sidewalks identified in Map 16 on page 91.

Recommendation SPW9

Implement enhanced pedestrian crossings at all signalized intersections.

Sumneytown Pike East Corridor Focus Area

Existing Conditions & Observations

Recent Developments

There were a number of commercial and institutional developments along the eastern portion of Sumneytown Pike between 2003 and 2019. On the north side of Sumneytown Pike, six townhouses were constructed behind the former Parkside Place Diner property, a gas station with retail buildings was approved on the former Giant grocery store site, and Merck & Co., Inc.'s Upper Gwynedd campus was expanded. On the south side of Sumneytown Pike, a new veterinary hospital, a self-storage facility, and an expansion of the township's Administration Building were all constructed during this time period.

Natural Resources

The Sumneytown Pike East corridor crosses over the Wissahickon Creek and its associated floodplain near the intersection of Dickerson Road. The topography of the Sumneytown Pike corridor is relatively flat.

Parks & Open Space

Parkside Place Park, located on the south side of Sumneytown Pike, is the township's largest park. The park is a popular destination as the home of the Upper Gwynedd Township Administration Building, the Park-Sci playground (also known as "Castle Park"), and the Nor-Gwyn Pool; in addition to sports courts, walking trails, pavilions, and an amphitheater.

Parkside Place Park also draws visitors as a trailhead for the Green Ribbon Trail that extends south from the park. Potential alignments for additional future regional trails (the Liberty Bell Trail and the Power Line Trail) would run through Parkside Place Park and cross Sumneytown Pike in order to continue north.

An approved commercial development is under construction on the former Giant grocery store site at the intersection of Church Road and Sumneytown Pike. Photo Credit: Cory Lippert

Parkside Place Park is known as the home of the Park-Sci playground (also known as "Castle Park") and the Nor-Gwyn Pool.

A PECO transmission line corridor crosses Sumneytown Pike near the Wissahickon Creek.

Transportation

Vehicular Traffic

This stretch of Sumneytown Pike is township-owned and has a speed limit of 35 mph. The road has a five-lane cross section for much of its length but narrows to three lanes, including a left-turn only lane onto Beaver Street before narrowing again to two lanes, with on-street parking on the north side, as it enters North Wales Borough. Sumneytown Pike is classified as a principal arterial which provides vehicular access to minor arterials (such as Church Road/West Point Pike). The roadway experiences traffic volumes of more than 18,000 vehicles per day.[3]

Public Transit

One SEPTA bus route (Route 94) runs along Church Road and West Point Pike with stops near three of the four corners of the intersection of Sumneytown Pike, Church Road, and West Point Pike. The 94 bus route provides access to Lansdale and Norristown.

Pedestrian Access and Circulation

Sidewalks are located along the full-length of the north side of the eastern portion of the Sumneytown Pike corridor, except for a few parcels between Church Road and the Stony Creek railroad bridge. In addition, there are no sidewalks located on the south side of Sumneytown Pike from West Point Pike to Parkside Place Park.

3 Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. "Traffic Counts" http://www.dvrpc.org/webmaps/TrafficCounts/

Sumneytown Pike through the township experiences traffic volumes of more than 18,000 vehicles per day.

Existing Land Use & Zoning

Table 24 below shows the total assessment value and local tax revenues from all of the properties along the study area corridor. The current land use along the eastern portion of the Sumneytown Pike corridor is all non-residential. Commercial (retail and restaurant) uses are located at the intersection of Sumneytown Pike, Church Road, and West Point Pike.

Several smaller offices, child care centers, and a large self-storage facility are located east of the PECO transmission line corridor. Parkside Place Park and Merck & Co., Inc.'s Upper Gwynedd campus are prominent land uses closer to the border with North Wales Borough. Land along the eastern portion of the Sumneytown Pike corridor is zoned Commercial, Business, Business Professional, or Institutional.

Table 24: Economic Characteristics of Parcels within the Sumneytown Pike East Corridor Focus Area

	WITH MERCK & CO., INC.'S UPPER GWYNEDD CAMPUS	WITHOUT MERCK & CO., INC.'S UPPER GWYNEDD CAMPUS
Total Number of Parcels	25 parcels	24 parcels
Total Land Area	135 acres	43 acres
Total Assessed Value	$123,933,170	$15,129,000
Total Municipal Tax Revenue	$249,688	$27,619
Total School Tax Revenue	$3,192,444	$353,123
Total Commercial Square Footage	1,891,052 sq. ft.	146,688 sq. ft.

Source: Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals

Note: Parkside Place Park is not included in this calculation

Future Opportunities

Figure 18 on pages 174-175 shows both existing conditions and recommendations for the Sumneytown Pike Corridor East focus area.

Overall Development Vision & Future Land Use

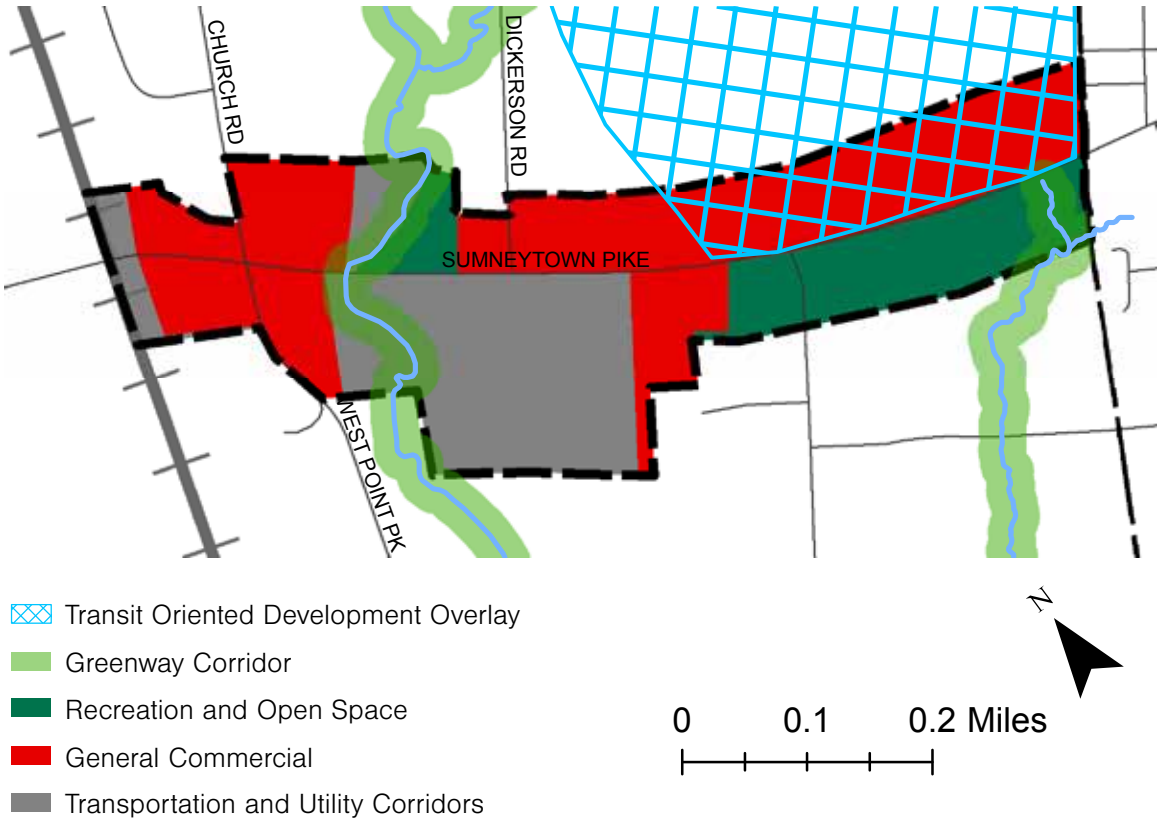
As a continuation of the Sumneytown Pike Corridor West focus area, it is also the vision for this section of the corridor to be attractive, walkable, and safe for all users. Merck & Co., Inc.'s Upper Gwynedd campus is a recognizable landmark and major employment site within the township and Parkside Place Park is a destination for the region; however, the intersection of Sumneytown Pike, Church Road, and West Point Pike is also an important and high-profile commercial "node" that warrants additional study.

Map 32 below illustrates the proposed future land use for the Sumneytown Pike Corridor East focus area. See the Land Use chapter for full descriptions of each future land use category.

Public Engagement Feedback

- "Would like to see something done to the intersection of Sumneytown Pike & Church Road."
- "Sumneytown and Church not appealing – vacant buildings and lots of concrete"
- "Walkability issues at Church/West Point and Sumneytown"
- "Develop a village point at Sumneytown Pike/Church Road/West Point Pike"

Map 32: Sumneytown Pike East Corridor Focus Area Future Land Use



Zoning Provisions and Design Standards

The most potential for future commercial development is located at the intersection of Sumneytown Pike, Church Road, and West Point Pike. Zoning and design standards focused on appropriate building placement, streetscaping, and pedestrian connections could help ensure any new development at this intersection contributes to a distinctive commercial "node."

Although the northwest corner has an approved land development on it, the other corners may have additional development potential and having zoning and design standards in place prior to future development proposals would be beneficial.

Sidewalk Connections

Sidewalks should be provided along the full length of Sumneytown Pike and on both sides of the road to connect all of the residential neighborhoods to walking destinations such as schools, churches, shopping centers, and North Wales Borough. All new development and redevelopment should be required to install sidewalks along their frontage.

In addition, new development and redevelopment located at a signalized intersection should evaluate pedestrian crossing improvements and the installation of ADA curb ramps, as part of their development project.

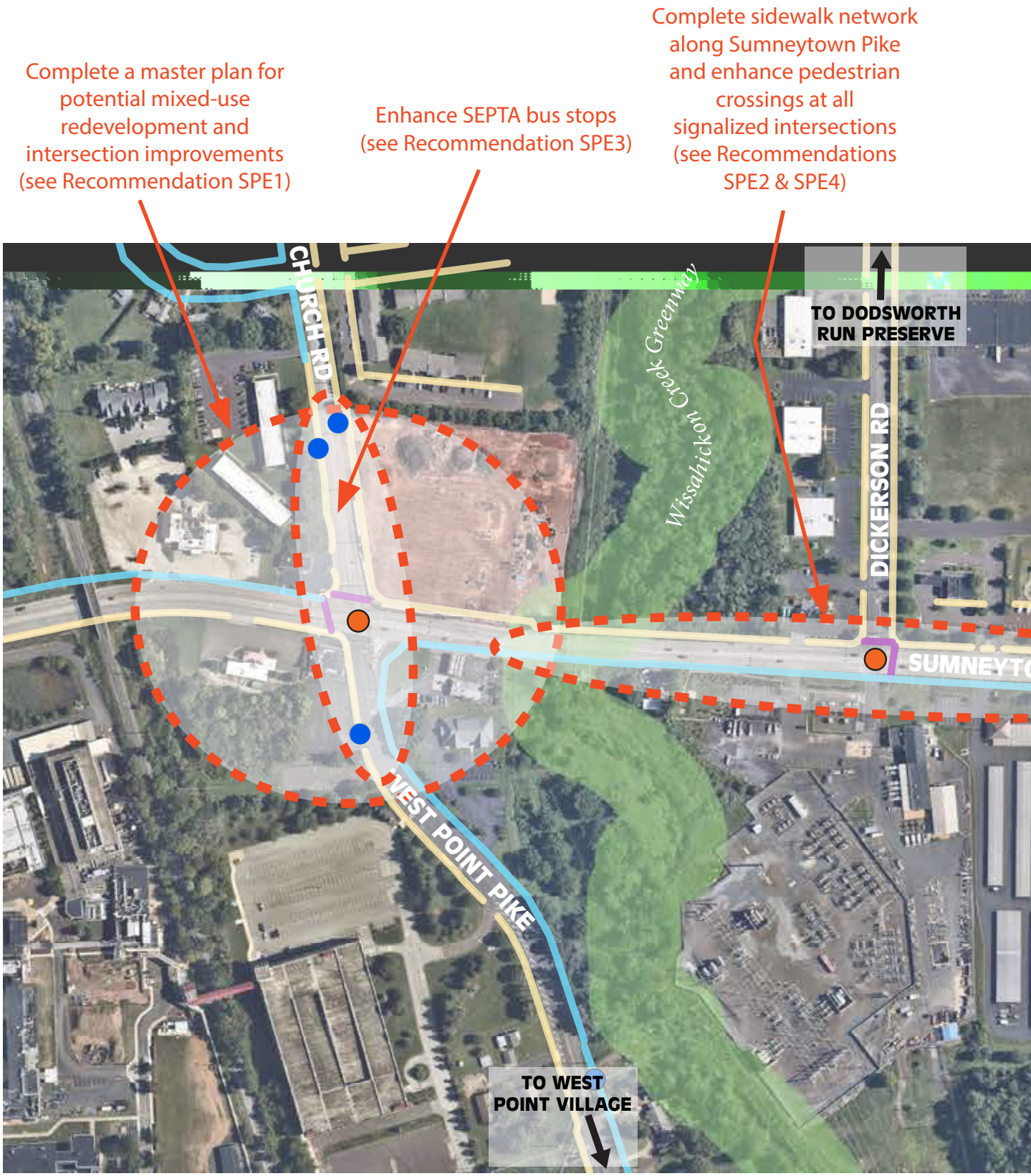
Parks and Trail Connections

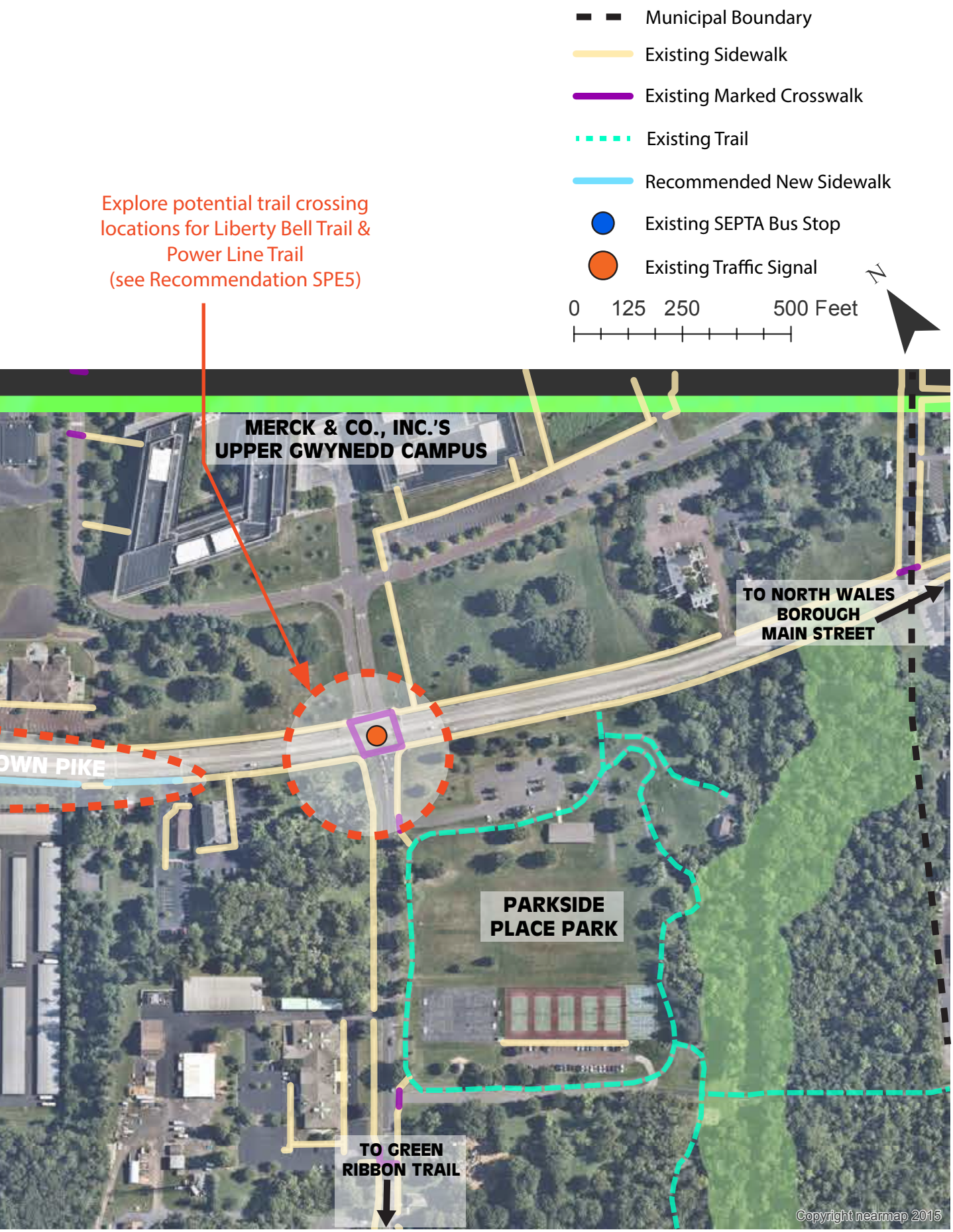
Several planned park and trail improvements are planned for Parkside Place Park that will therefore have an impact on Sumneytown Pike. The township's Parks & Recreation Board has evaluated the opportunity to create a township community center, potentially at Parkside Place Park. This opportunity could be further explored as part of a township-wide parks and open space master plan *(see the Parks & Open Space chapter for more information).*

In addition, several planned trails and trail connections including the Liberty Bell Trail, the Power Line Trail, and the Center Street connection to North Wales Borough would all improve connectivity and access to Parkside Place Park. The anticipated alignment of both the Liberty Bell Trail and Power Line Trail would require crossing Sumneytown Pike to continue north. The existing signalized intersection of Sumneytown Pike and Parkside Place is one possible location for such a trail crossing.

Existing sidewalk on the north side of Sumneytown Pike near Parkside Place Park could play a role in creating a trail connection extending north towards Lansdale.

Figure 18: Existing Conditions and Recommendations



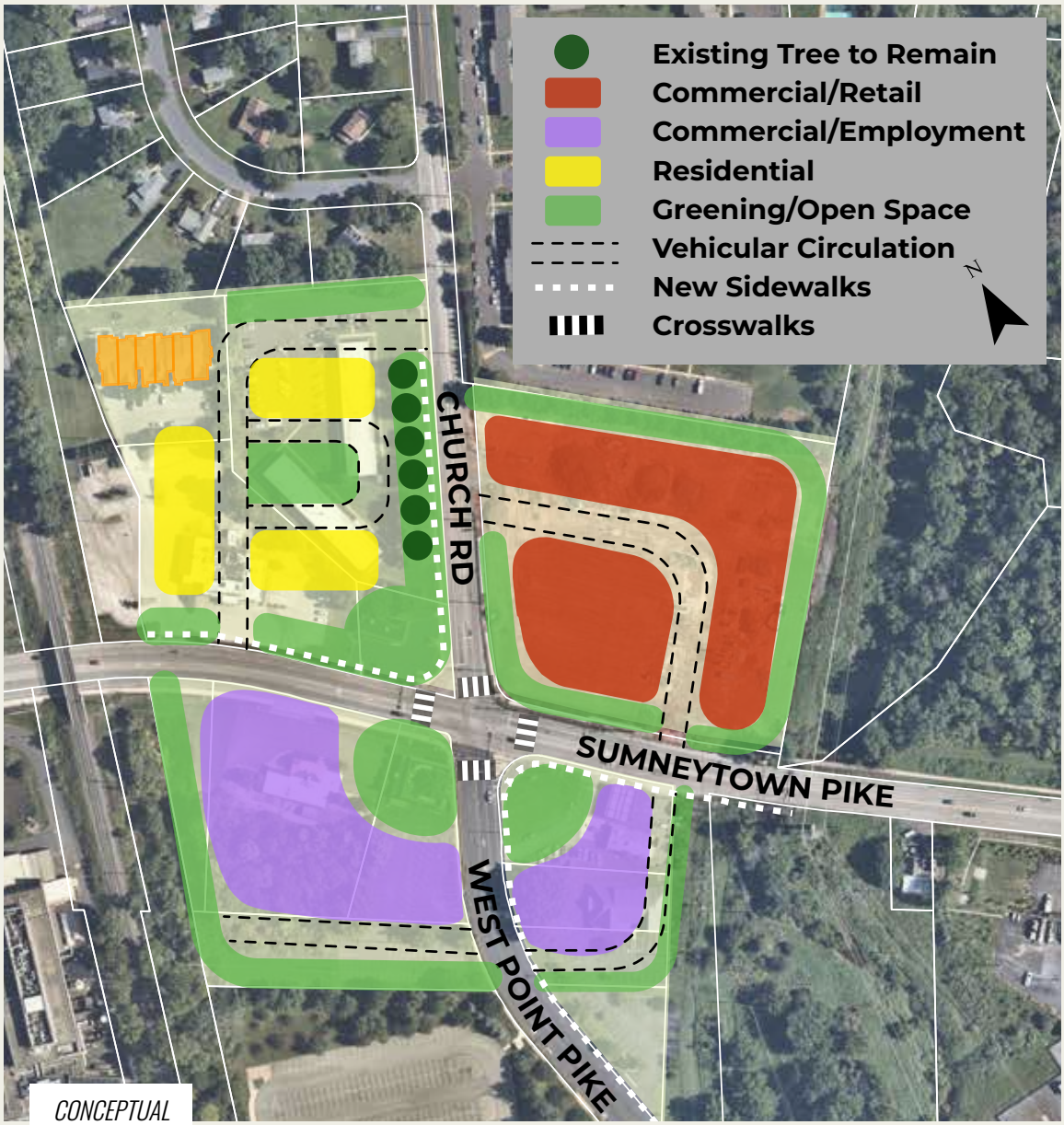

Municipal Boundary
Existing Sidewalk
Existing Marked Crosswalk
Existing Trail
Recommended New Sidewalk
Existing SEPTA Bus Stop
Existing Traffic Signal
0 125 250 500 Feet
N
Explore potential trail crossing locations for Liberty Bell Trail & Power Line Trail (see Recommendation SPE5)
MERCK & CO., INC.'S UPPER GWYNEDD CAMPUS
TO NORTH WALES BOROUGH MAIN STREET
OWN PIKE
PARKSIDE PLACE PARK
TO GREEN RIBBON TRAIL
Copyright nearmap 2015

Sumneytown Pike, Church Road, and West Point Pike Conceptual Enhancements

The intersection of Sumneytown Pike, Church Road, and West Point Pike is geographically the center of the community; however, current commercial vacancies and inconsistent pedestrian infrastructure make it feel less cohesive as a part of the community. The construction of an approved commercial development for a gas station and two, single-story commercial buildings will improve the landscaping and sidewalk infrastructure of the former grocery store site on the northeast corner of the intersection.

The schematic plan below illustrates how a mixture of land uses (including both residential and non-residential uses), as well as greening and circulation enhancements, could help integrate the four corners of the intersection together. Streetscape and circulation improvements could be achieved through redevelopment by encouraging the consolidation of driveways and creating a network of sidewalks and pedestrian walkways. In particular, special attention should be paid to the location and design of any new vehicular driveways on the south side of Sumneytown Pike, west of the intersection, where sight distance constraints are present. As additional redevelopment occurs in the future, developments should incorporate wide sidewalks, enhanced crosswalks, and attractive landscaping. The addition of signage or banners identifying the area as Upper Gwynedd Township could also contribute to a renewed sense of place.

Overall, a master plan process could identify the desired land uses and development scale at this intersection, as well as design and circulation improvements. *See Recommendation SPE1 for more information.*



Recommendations

See the Land Use Chapter for full descriptions of different types of future land use within the Sumneytown Pike Corridor East focus area.

Economic Development

Recommendation SPE1

Complete a master plan for the potential future redevelopment of the intersection of Sumneytown Pike, Church Road, and West Point Pike, and make zoning amendments as needed.

A master plan for the intersection of Sumneytown Pike, Church Road, and West Point Pike will identify zoning amendments that will help ensure future development contributes to an overall vision for this important intersection as a mixed-use, walkable "node" within the township. The master plan will also evaluate additional improvements to vehicular circulation and streetscape design.

Transportation

Recommendation SPE2

Implement enhanced pedestrian crossings at all signalized intersections.

Recommendation SPE3

Work with property owners and SEPTA to enhance the SEPTA bus stops near the intersection of Sumneytown Pike, Church Road, and West Point Pike.

Recommendation SPE4

Complete the sidewalk network along Sumneytown Pike, prioritizing those sidewalks identified in Map 16 on page 91.

Parks & Open Space

Recommendation SPE5

Continue to work with adjacent municipalities, Montgomery County, and other partners on the development and expansion of the regional trail network, including a potential trail crossing on Sumneytown Pike near Parkside Place Park for the Liberty Bell Trail and the Power Line Trail.

WELCOME TO
UPPER GWYNEDD
TOWNSHIP
FOUNDED 1891
WATCH
CHILDRE

Implementation

The tables on the following pages summarize the recommendations and strategies detailed in the plan. Additional information is included in the tables related to the type of implementation strategy, deliverables, potential funding sources, and potential partners.

Priority of individual strategies is indicated by a number of stars. Strategies with three stars are higher priority strategies and/or strategies that could be completed within the first few years of implementation. Strategies with one or two stars are important implementation strategies that may be dependent on the results of additional planning and/or require external coordination.

The following abbreviations are used in the implementation tables:

Potential Funding Sources
ARLE: Automated Red Light Enforcement (PennDOT)
C2P2: Community Conservation Partnership Program (DCNR)
CMAQ: Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (DVRPC)
GTRP: Greenways, Trails, and Recreation Program (DCED)
MMTF: Multi-Modal Transportation Fund (PennDOT and DCED)
Montco2040: Montco2040 Implementation Grant Program (Montgomery County)
PHMC: Keystone Historic Preservation Planning Grant Program (PHMC)
RTP: Regional Trails Program (DVRPC/William Penn Foundation)
SRTS: Safe Routes to School (DVRPC)
TA Set-Aside: Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program (DVRPC)
TCDI: Transportation and Community Development Initiative (DVRPC)

Potential Partners
DCNR: Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
DEP: Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
DVRPC: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
EAC: Upper Gwynedd Township Environmental Advisory Commission
NPSD: North Penn School District
NWAL: North Wales Area Library
PennDOT: Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
PHMC: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission
PRB: Upper Gwynedd Township Parks & Recreation Board
SEPTA: Southeastern Pennsylvania Transit Authority
UGFD: Upper Gwynedd Township Fire Department
UGPD: Upper Gwynedd Township Police Department

Number	Recommendations & Strategies
HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS	
1	Encourage the conservation of existing housing units and maintain the overall scale and character of the township's established residential neighborhoods.
1a	Modify the existing residential zoning standards to ensure any new infill development is compatible with each neighborhood's existing character and scale.
1b	Update the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance to ensure the design of residential neighborhoods and subdivisions encourages walkability and street interconnections.
1c	Enhance the walkability and pedestrian connections within existing neighborhoods.
1d	Rezone large residential properties shown as low-density single-family residential on the Future Land Use Plan to a residential zoning district with a one acre per unit maximum density.
2	Provide sufficient housing opportunities to meet the housing needs of the forecasted population growth over the next 20 years based on population forecasts from DVRPC while continuing to provide for a variety of housing types and densities.
2a	Consider expanding the existing transit-oriented development (TOD) overlay to include all areas within one-half mile of the Pennbrook and North Wales train stations. Evaluate allowing higher-density residential land uses within the TOD overlay, where appropriate.
2b	Draft ordinance language to permit the addition of accessory dwelling units to existing single-family detached homes, where appropriate.
2c	Work with Montgomery County and adjacent municipalities to explore opportunities to address housing affordability within the region.

Implementation Strategy Type								Priority (★★★ being the highest priority)	Deliverable or Current Status (if applicable)	Potential Funding Sources & Partners
Regulatory Control										
Zoning Ordinance	Subdiv. & Land Dev.	Other Ordinance	Capital Investment	Additional Planning	External Coordination	Private Development	Education & Outreach			
●								★★★	--	Partners: Planning Commission
	●							★★★	--	Partners: Planning Commission
			●				●	★★	--	Partners: Montgomery County, PennDOT
●								★★		Partners: Planning Commission
●				●	●			★★★	--	Partners: Planning Commission, Adjacent Municipalities, SEPTA
●								★★★		Partners: Planning Commission
					●			★★	--	Partners: Montgomery County, Adjacent Municipalities

Number	Recommendations & Strategies
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	
3	Maintain and enhance Upper Gwynedd's established diverse economic base, including commercial corridors, shopping centers, and employment areas.
3a	Update the zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances to encourage physical improvements and redevelopment of existing business and industrial areas that are vacant or underutilized.
3b	Require site greening and building design standards as part of new development and redevelopment projects. Green spaces within commercial developments should incorporate amenities such as benches or other outdoor seating, bike parking, and shade, where space allows.
3c	Coordinate with adjacent municipalities where commercial corridors or commercial nodes (such as the intersection of Sumneytown Pike and Valley Forge Road) are shared across multiple jurisdictions to discuss appropriate land uses and development intensities of each commercial area and explore the creation of consistent streetscape standards for each shared commercial corridor or node, including wayfinding signage and new sidewalk connections, where applicable.
3d	Work with property owners to explore opportunities to consolidate existing driveway access points along arterial roadways. Create zoning standards to incentivize or require shared driveway and parking access as part of new commercial developments and redevelopments.
3e	Connect current and potential business and property owners to resources and programs provided by the Montgomery County Commerce Department.
4	Continue to build partnerships and support major employers within the township.
4a	Continue regular coordination meetings with representatives from Merck & Co., Inc. to proactively plan for campus improvements and identify other opportunities for collaboration and partnership.
4b	Explore opportunities to partner with businesses within the township to improve the sidewalk infrastructure and streetscape around their properties.
4c	Promote business development and networking opportunities offered by the Chamber of Commerce for Greater Montgomery County.
4d	Explore the potential creation of a tech incubator to support entrepreneurial business development and research with support from local employers.
5	Ensure new commercial development and redevelopment incorporates amenities and facilities that encourage walkability and other forms of multi-modal transportation.
5a	Require new commercial development and redevelopment projects to incorporate transit facilities (where applicable), green space, bicycle amenities, and pedestrian connections through updated design standards in the zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances.
5b	Incorporate additional site design standards into the township's commercial zoning districts, including enhanced landscaping and streetscaping requirements.
5c	Consider creating an official map showing the township's planned locations of future trail connections so that future development and redevelopment projects along the trail routes can incorporate the trail right-of-way and interconnections, where applicable.

Implementation Strategy Type										
Regulatory Control										
Zoning Ordinance	Subdiv. & Land Dev.	Other Ordinance	Capital Investment	Additional Planning	External Coordination	Private Development	Education & Outreach	**Priority (★★★ being the highest priority)**	**Deliverable or Current Status (if applicable)**	**Potential Funding Sources & Partners**
●	●					●		★★★	--	Partners: Planning Commission
●	●					●		★★	--	Partners: Planning Commission
●	●			●	●			★★	Commercial corridor plan(s)	Partners: Planning Commission, Montgomery County, PennDOT, Adjacent Municipalities
●	●					●	●	★	--	Partners: Planning Commission
							●	★★★	--	Partners: Planning Commission
					●			★★★	--	--
						●		★★	--	Funding: Montco2040
							●	★★	--	Partners: Chamber of Commerce for Greater Montgomery County
						●		★	--	Partners: Major Employers, Montgomery County
●	●							★★	--	Partners: Planning Commission
●	●							★★	--	Partners: Planning Commission
		●		●				★★	Official map	Partners: PRB, Planning Commission, Wissahickon Trails, Adjacent Municipalities

Number	Recommendations & Strategies
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	
6	Incentivize economic revitalization and redevelopment of vacant and underutilized commercial properties.
6a	Update the commercial zoning standards to reflect new commercial uses such as technology-based manufacturing, artisan industrial, co-working offices, and small-scale alcohol production.
6b	Consider working with property owners or developers of vacant or underutilized commercial properties to create a LERTA district to encourage redevelopment and revitalization of properties where unique conditions make redevelopment more challenging..
7	Encourage transit-oriented development near SEPTA regional rail stations.
7a	Work with Lansdale Borough to explore expanding the existing transit-oriented development zoning overlay district to encourage continued transit-oriented development in proximity to the Pennbrook SEPTA regional rail station.
7b	Work with North Wales Borough to explore creating a joint transit-oriented development zoning district to encourage transit-oriented development in proximity to the North Wales SEPTA regional rail station.

Implementation Strategy Type										
Regulatory Control										
Zoning Ordinance	Subdiv. & Land Dev.	Other Ordinance	Capital Investment	Additional Planning	External Coordination	Private Development	Education & Outreach	**Priority (★★★ being the highest priority)**	**Deliverable or Current Status (if applicable)**	**Potential Funding Sources & Partners**
●								★★	--	Partners: Planning Commission
				●	●			★	LERTA district	Partners: Montgomery County; NPSD
●				●	●	●		★★	--	Partners: Planning Commission; Lansdale Borough; SEPTA
●				●	●	●		★★	--	Partners: Planning Commission; North Wales Borough; SEPTA

Number	Recommendations & Strategies
COMMUNITY SERVICES & INSTITUTIONS	
8	Continue to provide high-quality and efficient community services to township residents.
8a	Continue to plan for necessary improvements and upgrades to township facilities, including continued partnership with the Upper Gwynedd Township Fire Department to explore facility expansion or construction opportunities.
8b	Periodically assess township communication strategies to ensure residents of all ages, abilities, and ethnicities are aware of essential community services and facilities.
8c	Continue to partner with North Wales Borough and pursue multi-municipal cooperation opportunities, as applicable. Upper Gwynedd Township and North Wales Borough currently partner on trail planning, the Nor-Gwyn Pool, and the North Wales Area Library; however, additional opportunities for multi-municipal cooperation may be mutually-beneficial in the future.
9	Support the township's diverse cultural and institutional facilities as important community amenities that provide essential social, spiritual, and educational opportunities.
9a	Continue to support the North Wales Area Library and cross-promote library programming such as the attraction pass program.
9b	Continue to partner with the North Penn School District on long-term facilities planning as well as shorter-term improvements such as sidewalk connections (Safe Routes to School), trail development, and stormwater management.
10	Improve access to healthy food options for township residents.
10a	Increase neighborhood-based access to food retail sites by encouraging small-scale specialty food stores.
10b	Evaluate current ordinance language to ensure that community gardens and farmers markets are permitted and encouraged in appropriate locations.
10c	Promote existing food resources such as the Lansdale Farmer's Market and local food banks.
11	Work to address factors that influence outdoor air quality and can contribute to asthma rates in a region.
11a	Implement measures to reduce the amount of truck traffic that passes through the township to limit vehicular air pollution. In particular, periodically reevaluate signal timing on major corridors, such as Sumneytown Pike, to minimize truck idling.
11b	Coordinate with industrial property owners and other partners such as the Montgomery County Health Department to monitor the air and water quality impacts of industrial land uses within the township. Take actions as necessary to address any issues identified.
12	Improve health outcomes for the community as a whole by encouraging overall healthy and active lifestyles.
12a	Encourage new fitness-oriented businesses and businesses that are walking destinations through ordinance updates and community programming (e.g., pop-up yoga, fun run) that highlights fitness.
12b	Pursue partnerships and opportunities to address public health and safety issues such as childhood obesity, drug use, and drunk driving.

Implementation Strategy Type								Priority (★★★ being the highest priority)	Deliverable or Current Status (if applicable)	Potential Funding Sources & Partners
Regulatory Control										
Zoning Ordinance	Subdiv. & Land Dev.	Other Ordinance	Capital Investment	Additional Planning	External Coordination	Private Development	Education & Outreach			
			●	●				★★★	Capital Improvements Program	Partners: Public Works Department, UGPD, UGFD
							●	★★★	--	--
					●			★★★	--	Partners: North Wales Borough
							●	★★★	--	Partners: NWAL
				●	●			★★★	--	Partners: NPSD
●								★	--	Partners: Planning Commission
●								★	--	Partners: Planning Commission
							●	★★	--	--
				●	●			★★	--	Partners: Montgomery County, PennDOT
●								★	--	Partners: Montgomery County Health Department
●							●	★	--	Partners: Planning Commission
							●	★	--	Partner: NPSD, UGPD, Montgomery County Health Department

Number	Recommendations & Strategies
TRANSPORTATION	
VEHICULAR TRANSPORTATION	
13	Improve traffic flow and safety in the township.
13a	Perform two road safety audits per year, prioritizing intersections for study based on crash data, community input, and guidance from the Upper Gwynedd Township Police Department.
13b	Work with property owners to explore opportunities to consolidate existing driveway access points on major arterial roadways and incentivize or require shared driveway and parking access as part of new commercial developments and redevelopments.
13c	Amend the township's zoning and/or subdivision and land development ordinances to minimize the creation of new vehicular access points directly onto arterial roadways through requiring or encouraging shared driveways and other standards such as minimum spacing between driveways.
13d	Explore using dynamic enforcement technology to encourage traffic calming along major arterial roadways.
13e	Work with PennDOT and the township's traffic engineer to periodically evaluate the effectiveness of traffic signal timing along major arterial roadways to encourage drivers to travel at the posted speed limit while minimizing major delays.
13f	Install additional signage and pavement markings to encourage drivers to obey traffic laws.
13g	Continue to target speed enforcement and traffic safety improvements around school and park properties.
13h	Work with Montgomery County to implement recommendations from the Montco Pikes corridor study (once completed) for the county-owned sections of Sumneytown Pike.
13i	Partner with North Wales Borough to explore traffic flow improvements on Sumneytown Pike/Main Street through the borough. For example, installing dedicated left turn lanes and/or left turn signals at busy intersections could improve traffic flow along the corridor overall.
14	Ensure high-quality and consistent maintenance of all township-owned roads.
14a	Provide a mechanism that allows township staff, residents, and members of the public to report and track observed issues, such as potholes.
14b	Continue to coordinate with utility companies and others to ensure the roadway (including the pavement, street markings, official signage, curbing, sidewalks, and landscaping) is properly restored in a timely manner after utility work and other projects are completed.
14c	Continue to coordinate with PennDOT (through PennDOT Connects), and other appropriate agencies, regarding proposed and ongoing roadway and bridge projects and any proposed detours that could have impacts on local roads.
14d	Continue to ensure high-quality and consistent maintenance of all township-owned roads, including pavement markings.
15	Discourage heavy cut-through traffic in residential neighborhoods.
15a	Identify common cut-through traffic corridors and install physical traffic calming strategies such as corner bulb outs, roundabouts, or diverters, in addition to educational strategies such as signage and pavement markings that discourage speeding and cut-through traffic.

Implementation Strategy Type								Priority (★★★ being the highest priority)	Deliverable or Current Status (if applicable)	Potential Funding Sources & Partners
Regulatory Control										
Zoning Ordinance	Subdiv. & Land Dev.	Other Ordinance	Capital Investment	Additional Planning	External Coordination	Private Development	Education & Outreach			
				●				★★★	Road Safety Audits	Partners: PennDOT, Montgomery County, UGPD
●	●						●	★★	--	Partners: Planning Commission
●	●							★★	--	Partners: Planning Commission
					●			★	--	Partners: PennDOT, UGPD
					●			★	--	Partners: PennDOT, UGPD, Traffic Engineer
			●					★★	--	Funding: TA Set-Aside, SRTS, ARLE Partners: PennDOT, UGPD
			●				●	★★★	--	Funding: TA Set-Aside, SRTS Partners: PennDOT, UGPD
			●		●			★★★	--	Funding: TA Set-Aside, SRTS Partners: PennDOT, UGPD, Traffic Engineer
				●	●			★★	--	Funding: TA Set-Aside, SRTS Partners: PennDOT, UGPD
									--	
							●	★	--	--
					●			★★	--	Partners: Utility Companies
					●			★★★	--	Partners: PennDOT, Montgomery County, Traffic Engineer
			●					★★★	--	Funding: Liquid Fuels Fund
									--	--
			●				●	★★★	--	Funding: TA Set-Aside, SRTS, Montco2040 Partners: PennDOT, UGPD, Traffic Engineer

Number	Recommendations & Strategies
TRANSPORTATION	
WALKABILITY	
16	Enhance the safety and connectivity of the pedestrian network throughout the township.
16a	Install sidewalks along all public street frontages of all township-owned properties.
16b	Work with property owners to explore opportunities to consolidate existing driveway access points on major arterial roadways and incentivize or require shared driveway and parking access as part of new commercial developments and redevelopments.
16c	Continue to work with property owners and developers to create pedestrian paths to connect individual neighborhoods and residential subdivisions to schools, parks, and trails, where feasible.
16d	Coordinate with PennDOT (through the PennDOT Connects program) to install pedestrian infrastructure, including ADA curb ramps, on state-owned roads as repaving projects occur.
16e	Coordinate with the Montgomery County Roads and Bridges Department to install pedestrian infrastructure, including ADA curb ramps on county-owned roads as repaving projects occur.
16f	Coordinate with Montgomery County and adjacent municipalities to implement the general recommendations of the Walk Montco plan.
16g	Create and implement a township-wide plan to install ADA curb ramps at all intersections and crosswalks.
17	Ensure adequate pedestrian infrastructure exists to connect the township's residential areas to target walkability areas: train stations, schools, parks, libraries, and shopping centers.
17a	Maintain a township-wide map of the existing sidewalks and require sidewalk installation as part of all new land developments, targeting sidewalks shown in Map 16: Existing and Priority Sidewalk Network Map on page 91 due to proximity to, and ability to improve pedestrian access to, walking destinations such as schools, parks, commercial areas, libraries, and train stations.
17b	Work with the North Penn School District to pursue funding opportunities to install sidewalks, crosswalks, ADA ramps, and signage around schools through a Safe Routes to School program.
17c	Work with the North Penn School District to create and promote events that encourage walking, such as a Walk to School Day.
17d	Install signage at major intersections to remind drivers to yield to pedestrians. Install "no turn on red" signs where conflicts between vehicular traffic and pedestrians have been observed.
17e	Add push button pedestrian signals, count-downs, and continental-style crosswalks at all signalized intersections where sidewalks are located.
17f	Update the township's zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances to require wider sidewalks with grass buffers and streetscape landscaping along arterial and collector roads as redevelopment occurs.

Implementation Strategy Type								Priority (★★★ being the highest priority)	Deliverable or Current Status (if applicable)	Potential Funding Sources & Partners
Regulatory Control										
Zoning Ordinance	Subdiv. & Land Dev.	Other Ordinance	Capital Investment	Additional Planning	External Coordination	Private Development	Education & Outreach			
			●					★★★	--	Funding: PennDOT, Montco2040
●	●					●	●	★	--	Partners: Planning Commission
						●	●	★	--	Funding: SRTS, Montco2040 Partners: Wissahickon Trails, NPSD
					●			★★★	--	Partners: PennDOT, DVRPC, Montgomery County, Traffic Engineer
					●			★★★	--	Partners: Montgomery County, Traffic Engineer
			●	●	●			★★	--	Funding: Montco2040, MMTF, TA Set-aside Partners: Montgomery County
			●	●				★★★	Township-wide ADA Compliance Plan	Funding: MMTF, TA Set-Aside
				●		●		★★★	Sidewalk Map	Partners: Planning Commission
			●		●			★★★	--	Funding: SRTS, ARLE, TA Set-Aside, MMTF, Montco2040 Partners: NPSD
					●		●	★★	--	Partners: NPSD
			●					★	--	Funding: TA Set-Aside, MMTF, ARLE, Montco2040 Partners: Montgomery County, PennDOT
			●					★★★	--	Funding: TA Set-Aside, MMTF, ARLE, Montco2040 Partners: Montgomery County, PennDOT
●	●							★★	--	Partners: Planning Commission

Number	Recommendations & Strategies
TRANSPORTATION	
BIKEABILITY	
18	Create additional opportunities for residents to safely bicycle from their homes to parks, trails, and other destinations within the township.
18a	Install bicycle infrastructure, such as bike lanes and sharrows, on township-owned roads where low-volume neighborhood streets could be used to improve bicycle access to amenities such as parks and trails.
18b	Continue to coordinate with Montgomery County and adjacent municipalities to expand and connect existing trails within the township, including the Liberty Bell Trail and Power Line Trail.
18c	Coordinate with PennDOT (through the PennDOT Connects program) to install bicycle infrastructure on roads as repaving projects occur.
18d	Increase trailhead amenities and parking to encourage biking on trails.
18e	Coordinate with Montgomery County and adjacent municipalities to implement the general recommendations of the Bike Montco plan.
18f	Evaluate the placement and effectiveness of new bike amenities such as bike parking on township-owned properties.
18g	Amend the township's zoning and/or subdivision and land development ordinances to require bike amenities such as bike parking as part of all new multi-family and commercial developments and redevelopments.
18h	Work with major employers to increase awareness and use of the trail connections within the township for their employees' commuting and recreation.
18i	Consider creating an official map showing the township's planned locations of future trail connections so that future development and redevelopment projects along the trail routes can incorporate the trail right-of-way and interconnections, where applicable.
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION	
19	Encourage the use of public transportation.
19a	Work with Lansdale Borough to explore expanding the existing transit-oriented development zoning overlay district to encourage continued transit-oriented development in proximity to the Pennbrook SEPTA regional rail station.
19b	Work with North Wales Borough to explore creating a joint transit-oriented development zoning district to encourage transit-oriented development in proximity to the North Wales SEPTA regional rail station.
19c	Coordinate with SEPTA staff to periodically evaluate bus routes and bus stop locations based on feedback from community members and the Upper Gwynedd Township Police Department regarding the safety and usability of existing bus stop locations.
19d	Explore installing bus shelters where ridership levels warrant. Explore branding or advertising opportunities to fund the installation and maintenance of new bus shelters.

Implementation Strategy Type								Priority (★★★ being the highest priority)	Deliverable or Current Status (if applicable)	Potential Funding Sources & Partners
Regulatory Control										
Zoning Ordinance	Subdiv. & Land Dev.	Other Ordinance	Capital Investment	Additional Planning	External Coordination	Private Development	Education & Outreach			
			●					★★	--	Funding: TA Set-Aside, PennDOT, Montco2040
			●	●	●			★★★	Multi-municipal trail feasibility study grants received 2020	Funding: C2P2, TCDI, RTP, GTRP, Montco2040
					●			★★★	--	Partners: Montgomery County, Adjacent Municipalities
			●		●		●	★★★	--	Partners: PennDOT, DVRPC, Montgomery County, Traffic Engineer
			●		●			★★	--	Funding: Montco2040, C2P2
			●	●				★★	--	Partners: PRB
●	●							★★	--	Funding: Montco2040
							●	★	--	Partners: Montgomery County
		●		●				★★★	Official map	Partners: Public Works Department, PRB Wissahickon Trails, Adjacent Municipalities
				●	●			★★★	Original TOD Overlay zoning ordinance adopted 2003	Funding: TCDI Partners: Lansdale, SEPTA, Planning Commission
				●	●			★★★	--	Funding: TCDI Partners: North Wales, SEPTA, Planning Commission
				●	●			★	--	Partners: SEPTA, UGPD
				●	●			★	--	Partners: SEPTA

Number	Recommendations & Strategies
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	
20	Encourage community involvement to advance sustainability in all areas of the township's government.
20a	Establish an Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) to advise the Board of Commissioners on issues related to environmental conservation.
21	Preserve and enhance the township's natural resources, including streams, floodplains, riparian corridors, and wooded areas.
21a	Complete a natural resource inventory, either prior to or as part of a township-wide parks, recreation, and open space plan.
21b	Perform an audit of the township's zoning, subdivision and land development, and stormwater management ordinances to identify ordinance amendments which could encourage more sustainable development practices.
21c	Plant additional trees on township-owned properties, such as within parks and along streams.
21d	Encourage the planting of additional trees along street frontages and on private property.
21e	Adopt a township-wide riparian corridor conservation overlay ordinance to create and enhance greenways along the township's streams and water bodies.
21f	Maintain an updated floodplain ordinance to comply with any changes in federal floodplain regulations and/or mapping.
21g	Continue to partner closely with the Wissahickon Trails on the Green Ribbon Trail and other conservation efforts related to the Wissahickon Creek.
21h	Implement the "Wissahickon Creek Water Quality Improvement Plan" (once completed).
21i	Implement the township's "Combined TMDL and Pollution Reduction Plan."
22	Encourage stormwater best management practices and water recycling as part of the township's MS4 permit requirements.
22a	Implement green stormwater management projects (e.g., rain gardens, riparian buffers) on township-owned properties, such as parks.
22b	Continue to work with outside partners, such as the North Penn School District, to install green stormwater management projects on non-township-owned properties.
22c	Provide for the ongoing inspection and maintenance of stormwater management facilities on both public and private lands through ordinance amendments and/or community education.
22d	Educate homeowners on ways they can naturally control stormwater runoff on their individual properties. Strategies such as rain gardens and downspout planters can be incorporated into landscape design projects. Replacing asphalt driveways with porous paving can also help control stormwater runoff.

Implementation Strategy Type								Priority (★★★ being the highest priority)	Deliverable or Current Status (if applicable)	Potential Funding Sources & Partners
Regulatory Control										
Zoning Ordinance	Subdiv. & Land Dev.	Other Ordinance	Capital Investment	Additional Planning	External Coordination	Private Development	Education & Outreach			
		●						★★★	EAC established in 2020	--
								★★	--	Funding: DCNR Partners: EAC
				●				★★	Sustainability Audit	Partners: EAC, Planning Commission
			●					★★★	--	Funding: TreeVitalize Partners: EAC
								★★		
		●						★★	--	Partners: EAC, Planning Commission
		●						★★	Last Update: 2016	Partners: EAC, Planning Commission
					●			★★★	--	Partners: Wissahickon Trails
			●					★★★	--	Partners: Montgomery County, Wissahickon Trails, Adjacent Municipalities
			●					★★★	--	--
			●					★★★	--	Funding: Montco2040 Partners: EAC
			●		●			★★	--	Montco2040, Growing Greener Partners: NPSD
							●	★★	--	--
			●					★★	--	Partners: EAC

Number	Recommendations & Strategies
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY	
22e	Adopt green parking standards to encourage additional landscaping and naturalized stormwater management techniques within new parking lots.
22f	Participate in a free or discounted rain barrel program, such as through an advance group sales program.
23	Encourage the increased use of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies.
23a	Adopt a renewable energy ordinance to ensure the proper installation and use of renewable energy facilities.
23b	Create standards for electric car charging stations. Consider requiring installation of charging stations with certain types or scales of development.
23c	Provide information to residents and commercial property owners regarding renewable energy and energy reduction opportunities.
23d	Consider incorporating incentives and standards for sustainable building and site design into the zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances.
23e	Complete a municipal energy management study to identify opportunities to improve energy efficiency within municipal operations, such as renewable energy production.
24	Continue to provide for the long-term maintenance and planning of integral infrastructure systems.
24a	Continue to maintain an up-to-date sewage facilities plan (Act 537 Plan) that reflects any zoning and/or land use changes that could impact the projected sewage treatment demand within the township.
24b	Continue to work to implement the Montgomery County Hazard Mitigation Plan, as updated, to help protect infrastructure, property, people, and natural resources.
25	Increase the township's recycling rate and reduce the township's overall production of solid waste.
25a	Continue to pursue funding opportunities through the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to advance the township's recycling and waste reduction efforts.
25b	Continue to partner with Montgomery County to encourage residents to participate in household hazardous waste and other special collection events that are offered annually across the Southeastern Pennsylvania area.
25c	Periodically evaluate Chapter 160 (Solid Waste Management), and update as need to encourage increased recycling and decreased solid waste production, especially on non-residential properties.
25d	Participate in a free or discounted compost bin program, such as through an advance group sales program.
25e	Periodically evaluate the effectiveness of a municipally-run waste collection program.
25f	Continue to provide a Christmas tree recycling drop-off collection program.

Implementation Strategy Type								Priority (★★★ being the highest priority)	Deliverable or Current Status (if applicable)	Potential Funding Sources & Partners
Regulatory Control										
Zoning Ordinance	Subdiv. & Land Dev.	Other Ordinance	Capital Investment	Additional Planning	External Coordination	Private Development	Education & Outreach			
●	●							★★★	--	Partners: EAC, Planning Commission
							●	★	--	Partners: EAC
		●						★★★	--	Partners: EAC, Planning Commission
		●						★★★	--	Partners: EAC, Planning Commission
							●	★★★	--	Partners: EAC
●	●							★★	--	Partners: EAC, Planning Commission
				●				★★	Municipal Energy Management Study	Partners: Montgomery County, EAC
				●				★★★	Act 537 Plan	--
				●				★★	--	Partners: EAC, Montgomery County
				●				★★★	--	Funding: DEP Partners: DEP, EAC
							●	★★★	--	Partners: EAC, Montgomery County
		●						★★	--	Partners: EAC
							●	★★	--	Partners: EAC
				●				★	--	Partners: EAC
							●	★★	--	Partners: EAC

Number	Recommendations & Strategies
PARKS & OPEN SPACE	
26	Enhance the township's parks, recreation opportunities, open space, and natural resources.
26a	Complete a township-wide parks, recreation, and open space master plan to identify new recreational facilities needs and other amenities to enhance park access and use for all township residents.
26b	Prioritize installation of sidewalks and on-road bike facilities to improve access to existing parks and open spaces.
26c	Periodically evaluate the community's desires and need for additional amenities within undeveloped township open spaces, such as walking trails to improve pedestrian access between the township's parks and residential neighborhoods.
26d	Periodically evaluate the parks and open space land dedication and fee-in-lieu options in the township's subdivision and land development ordinance, including evaluating adding a requirement for non-residential development.
26e	Pursue grant funding to increase tree cover and shade in existing parks.
27	Expand and improve upon the township's regional trail network.
27a	Enhance access to and awareness of current trails through trailhead amenities, wayfinding signage, sidewalk connections, and additional trail openings.
27b	Consider creating additional walking paths within parks or currently undeveloped township open space, including opportunities for greenway paths, interpretative signage, etc.
27c	Continue to work with Montgomery County and adjacent municipalities to complete trail feasibility studies for the Power Line Trail and Liberty Bell Trail to determine the best trail alignment for each trail through Upper Gwynedd Township.
27d	Continue to work with Montgomery County and adjacent municipalities to identify and pursue funding sources to construct the Power Line Trail and Liberty Bell Trail through Upper Gwynedd Township.
27e	Consider creating an official map showing the township's planned locations of future trail connections so that future development and redevelopment projects along the trail routes can incorporate the trail right-of-way and interconnections, where applicable.
28	Pursue opportunities to preserve the township's remaining open space areas.
28a	Explore opportunities for strategic open space acquisition and development, including Act 319 properties, historic properties, greenway corridors, and potential trail right-of-way.

Implementation Strategy Type										
Regulatory Control										
Zoning Ordinance	Subdiv. & Land Dev.	Other Ordinance	Capital Investment	Additional Planning	External Coordination	Private Development	Education & Outreach	**Priority (★★★ being the highest priority)**	**Deliverable or Current Status (if applicable)**	**Potential Funding Sources & Partners**
				●				★★★	Township-wide parks and open space master plan	Funding: C2P2 Partners: PRB
			●					★★★	--	Funding: Montco2040, MMTF, TA Set-Aside
			●	●			●	★	--	Funding: C2P2, Montco2040 Partners: Montgomery County, PRB
	●							★★	--	Partners: PRB
			●					★★	--	Funding: PECO Green Region, TreeVitalize Partners: PRB, EAC
			●	●			●	★★★	Trail wayfinding signage plan	Funding: C2P2, Montco2040, PECO Green Region Partners: Wissahickon Trails, PRB
			●	●				★★★	--	Funding: C2P2, Montco2040, PECO Green Region Partners: PRB
				●				★★	Multi-municipal trail feasibility study grants received 2020	Funding: C2P2, TCDI, RTP Partners: Montgomery County, Adjacent Municipalities, PRB
			●					★★	--	Funding: C2P2, RTP Partners: Montgomery County, DCNR, PRB
		●		●				★★	Official map	Partners: PRB, Planning Commission, Wissahickon Trails, Adjacent Municipalities
			●	●				★★★	--	Funding: C2P2 Partners: PRB

Number	Recommendations & Strategies
HISTORIC PRESERVATION	
29	Encourage the preservation of the township's historic properties and landmarks.
29a	Conduct an updated historic resource survey of the West Point Village area.
29b	Provide education, in the form of in-person trainings and/or user-friendly design manual resources, to property owners as resources to increase awareness of preservation and maintenance techniques.
29c	Implement a recognition program to provide formal acknowledgment of property owners who have taken steps to preserve the historic character of their properties.
29d	Create zoning standards that provide for and encourage the preservation of historic properties and their potential adaptive reuse for other compatible uses.
29e	Update the zoning standards for the Village Preservation Residential and Village Commercial zoning districts to include additional standards that encourage the maintenance of the village's historic buildings and the overall historic scale and character of the district.
29f	Support the creation of programming, such as walking tours and brochures, which promote the history of the West Point Village area.

Implementation Strategy Type								Priority (★★★ being the highest priority)	Deliverable or Current Status (if applicable)	Potential Funding Sources & Partners
Regulatory Control										
Zoning Ordinance	Subdiv. & Land Dev.	Other Ordinance	Capital Investment	Additional Planning	External Coordination	Private Development	Education & Outreach			
				●				★	Historic Resource Survey	Funding: PHMC Partners: PHMC
				●			●	★★	Historic Property Design Manual	Funding: PHMC Partners: PHMC
							●	★★★	--	--
●								★★	--	Partners: Planning Commission
●								★★★	--	Partners: Planning Commission
							●	★★	--	--

Number	Recommendations
WEST POINT VILLAGE FOCUS AREA	*See pages 152-160 for background and full recommendations*
WPV1	Update the zoning standards for the Village Preservation Residential (VPR) and Village Commercial (VC) zoning districts to include additional standards that encourage the maintenance of the village's historic buildings and the overall historic scale and character of the district.
WPV2	Establish design guidelines for the village area, including guidelines that encourage new developments and renovation projects to be sensitive to the historic character and scale of the village area.
WPV3	Continue to pursue funding opportunities and work with property owners to expand upon established streetscape enhancements that help improve walkability and create a sense of place for the village.
WPV4	Continue to work with property and business owners on the availability of parking to support the mixed-use areas of the village.
WPV5	Work with the property owner on the western side of the northern gateway to the village to install a green parklet with amenities such as benches, landscaping, and a mural. Explore adaptive reuse opportunities for the building on the western side of the gateway, such as residential and/or active commercial uses.
WPV6	Work with the property owners at the northern gateway to the village to construct sidewalks, extend the streetscape improvements, and install distinctive signage or banners.
WPV7	Coordinate with property owners of large properties where adaptive reuse or redevelopment is a possibility.
WPV8	Continue to partner with the Upper Gwynedd Township Fire Department to explore facility expansion or construction opportunities. If the fire department moves out of the village area, partner closely with the fire department on the potential adaptive reuse or redevelopment of their properties within the village area.
WPV9	Continue to pursue funding opportunities and work with property owners to expand the sidewalk network within and connecting to the village area, including pedestrian access across the railroad crossing on West Point Pike just north of the village.
WPV10	Work with the Upper Gwynedd Police Department to install additional traffic calming enhancements along West Point Pike and side streets where speeding has been identified as an issue.
WPV11	Install sidewalks as shown in Map 16 on page 91 to improve pedestrian access between the village area, West Point Park, and Whittaker Park.
WPV12	Implement improvements to West Point Park based on the findings and recommendations of the township-wide parks and open space master plan.

Implementation Strategy Type				Priority (★★★ being the highest priority)	Also Related to Recommendations:			Potential Funding Sources & Partners
Regulatory Control	Capital Investment	External Coordination	Private Development		Economic Development	Transportation	Parks & Open Space	
●			●	★★	3			Partners: Planning Commission
●			●	★★★	3			Funding: PHMC Partners: Planning Commission, PHMC
	●	●	●	★★★	3,5			Funding: Montco2040, MMF Partners: Planning Commission
		●		★★★	3			Partners: Planning Commission
●	●		●	★	3,6			Funding: Montco2040 Partners: Planning Commission, Property Owners
	●			★★	3	16,17		Funding: Montco2040 Partners: Planning Commission, Property Owners
	●	●		★	3			--
	●	●		★★	3			Partners: UGFD
	●	●		★★★		16,17		Funding: TA Set-Aside, CMAQ, MMF
	●	●		★★		15,16,17		Partners: UGPD
	●			★★		16,17	26	Funding: Montco2040
	●			★★			26	Funding: C2P2 Partners: PRB

Number	Recommendations
SUMNEYTOWN PIKE WEST CORRIDOR FOCUS AREA	*See pages 162-169 for background and full recommendations*
SPW1	Complete a master plan to assess the land use and development options for the three undeveloped parcels on Allentown Road north of Sumneytown Pike (those parcels shown with gray hatching in the Future Land Use Map on page 25 and Map31 on page 164) to determine the preferred future land use for these parcels, and make zoning amendments as needed.
SPW2	Work with the property owners of the North Penn Marketplace Shopping Center to implement greening and pedestrian connection improvements.
SPW3	Adopt zoning and subdivision and land development ordinance amendments to encourage the vibrant and pedestrian-friendly redevelopment of underutilized commercial properties, such as the Sumney Forge Square Shopping Center.
SPW4	Rezone residentially-zoned properties along Sumneytown Pike to encourage conversion to low-impact office uses as a transition between single-family homes and Sumneytown Pike.
SPW5	Work with Montgomery County to implement improvements recommended in the *Montco Pikes* study, once completed.
SPW6	Pursue funding opportunities to install a pedestrian bridge over the Towamencin Creek on the north side of Sumneytown Pike to improve safe pedestrian access between residential neighborhoods along Sumneytown Pike and destinations such as the North Penn Marketplace Shopping Center and North Penn High School.
SPW7	Work with Towamencin Township, Montgomery County, and PennDOT to improve pedestrian safety and vehicular circulation at the intersection of Sumneytown Pike and Valley Forge Road.
SPW8	Complete the sidewalk network along Sumneytown Pike, prioritizing those sidewalks identified in Map 16 on page 91.
SPW9	Implement enhanced pedestrian crossings at all signalized intersections.
SUMNEYTOWN PIKE EAST CORRIDOR FOCUS AREA	*See pages 170-177 for background and full recommendations*
SPE1	Complete a master plan for the potential future redevelopment of the northwest, southwest, and southeast corners of the intersection of Sumneytown Pike, Church Road, and West Point Pike, and make zoning amendments as needed.
SPE2	Implement enhanced pedestrian crossings at signalized intersections.
SPE3	Work with property owners and SEPTA to enhance the SEPTA bus stops near the intersection of Sumneytown Pike, Church Road, and West Point Pike.
SPE4	Complete the sidewalk network along Sumneytown Pike, prioritizing those sidewalks identified in Map 16 on page 91.
SPE5	Continue to work with adjacent municipalities, Montgomery County, and other partners on the development and expansion of the regional trail network, including a potential trail crossing on Sumneytown Pike near Parkside Place Park for the Liberty Bell Trail and Power Line Trail.

Implementation Strategy Type				Priority (★★★ being the highest priority)	Also Related to Recommendations:			Potential Funding Sources & Partners
Regulatory Control	Capital Investment	External Coordination	Private Development		Economic Development	Transportation	Parks & Open Space	
●		●	●	★★★	3			Partners: Planning Commission
		●	●	★★	3,5			Funding: TA Set-Aside, CMAQ, MMF, Montco2040, SRTS Partners: Montgomery County
●		●	●	★★	3,5,6			Partners: Planning Commission
●			●	★★	3,6			Partners: Planning Commission
		●		★★		13,14,16, 17,18		Funding: TA Set-Aside, CMAQ, MMF, Montco2040, SRTS Partners: Montgomery County
	●	●		★★★		16,17		Funding: TA Set-Aside, CMAQ, MMF, Montco2040, SRTS Partners: Montgomery County
	●	●		★★		16,17		Funding: TA Set-Aside, CMAQ, MMF, Montco2040, SRTS Partners: Montgomery County, PennDOT, Towamencin Township
		●		★★★		16,17		Funding: TA Set-Aside, CMAQ, MMF, Montco2040, SRTS Partners: Montgomery County
	●			★★		16,17		Funding: Montco2040, TA Set-Aside, MMF, CMAQ
●			●	★★★	3,5			Partners: Planning Commission
	●			★★		16,17		Funding: Montco2040, TA Set-Aside, MMF, CMAQ
	●	●		★★★		19		Partners: SEPTA
		●	●	★★★		16,17		Funding: Montco2040, TA Set-Aside, MMF, CMAQ
	●	●		★★		18	27	Funding: Montco2040, C2P2, GTRP, RTP

Appendix A: Public Outreach Summary

Community Survey Findings

As part of the first phase of community outreach for the Upper Gwynedd 2040 Comprehensive Plan, a community survey was conducted online using the Survey Monkey website. The online survey was open from February 8, 2019 to October 15, 2019 and received a total of 397 responses.

An asterisk (*) next to the figure title or survey question indicates that only survey respondents that answered that they were Upper Gwynedd residents were asked that question.

Demographics

The majority of survey respondents were Upper Gwynedd Township residents (over 90% of respondents). Survey respondents were primarily 45 years old or older (see Figure 1 below).

Many of the survey questions were specific to Upper Gwynedd residents and only those survey respondents that indicated that they were Upper Gwynedd residents were asked these questions. The vast majority of township resident respondents are long-term residents of the township (see Figure 2 below) and own a single-family home (see Figures 3 and 4 to the right).

Figure 5 below shows the percentage of respondents that indicated that children, young adults, or older adults lived in their households. In addition, 8% of respondents indicated that someone with a long-term disability lived in their household.

Figure 1: Age of Survey Respondents

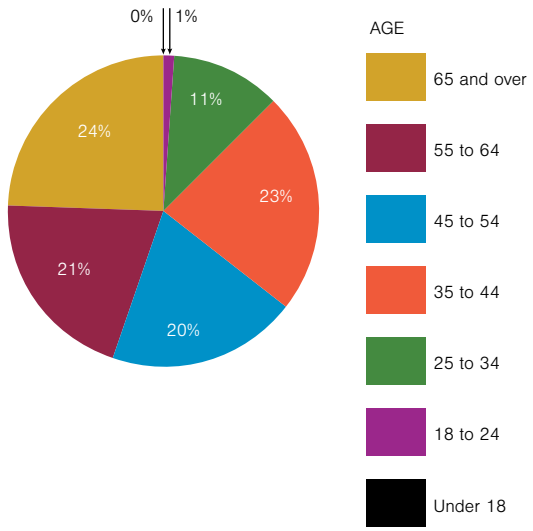


Figure 2: How Many Years Have You Lived in Upper Gwynedd?*

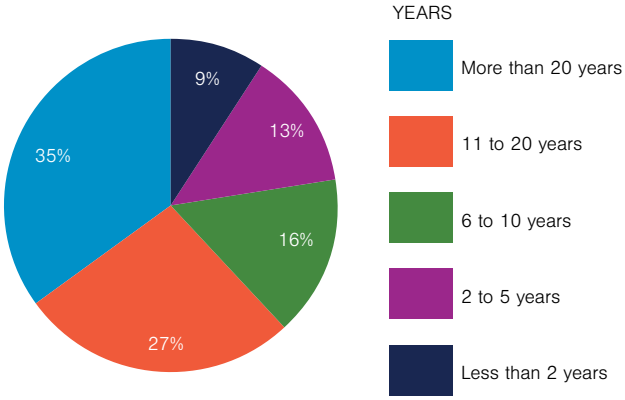


Figure 3: What Best Describes the Building You Live In?*

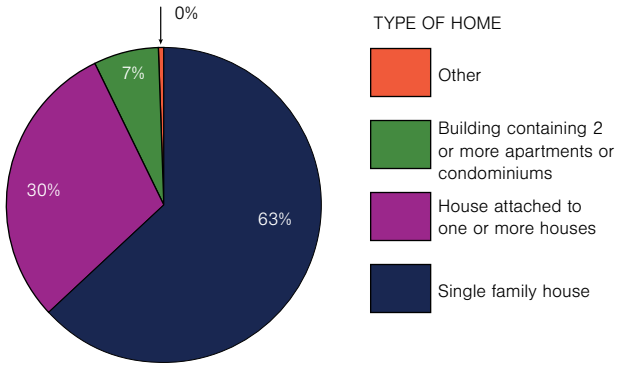


Figure 4: Do You Rent or Own Where You Live?*

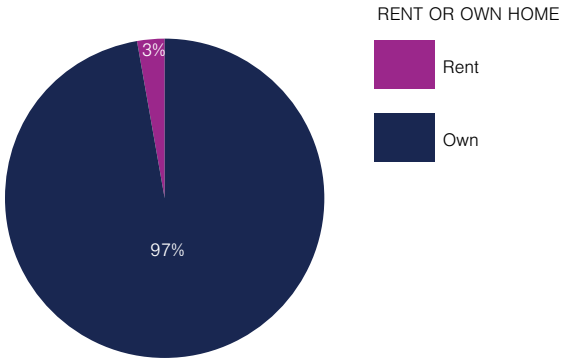
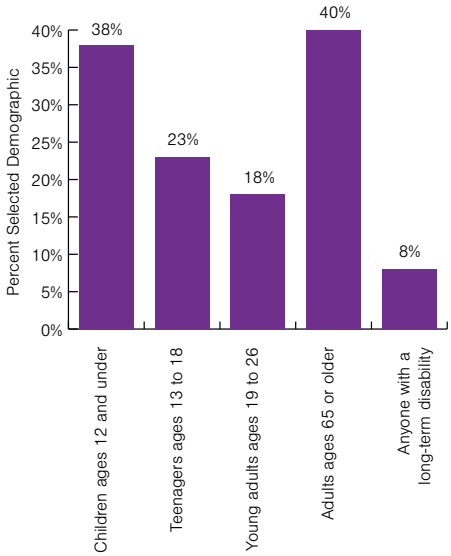


Figure 5: Do Any of the Following Live in Your Household? Select all that apply.*



Of the Upper Gwynedd residents that responded to the survey, 58% of them were employed outside of the township. However, 14% of township resident respondents indicated that they are employed within the township (see Figure 6 below).

Upper Gwynedd residents were asked what characteristics of the community influenced their decision to live in or relocate to the township. The top three responses were neighborhood character, desirable school district, and price of housing; however proximity to work and/or to family and relatives are also common reasons for people to live in Upper Gwynedd (see Figure 7 below).

Figure 6: Are You Employed Within Upper Gwynedd Township?

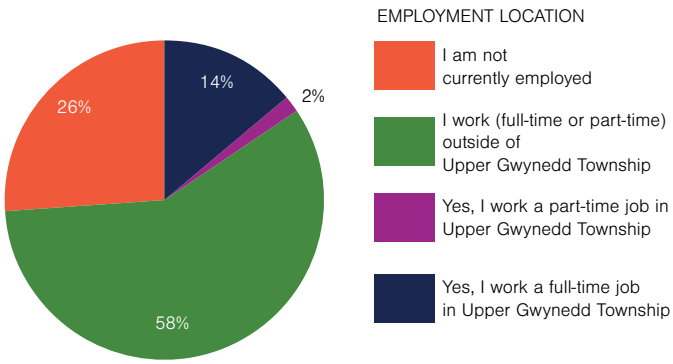
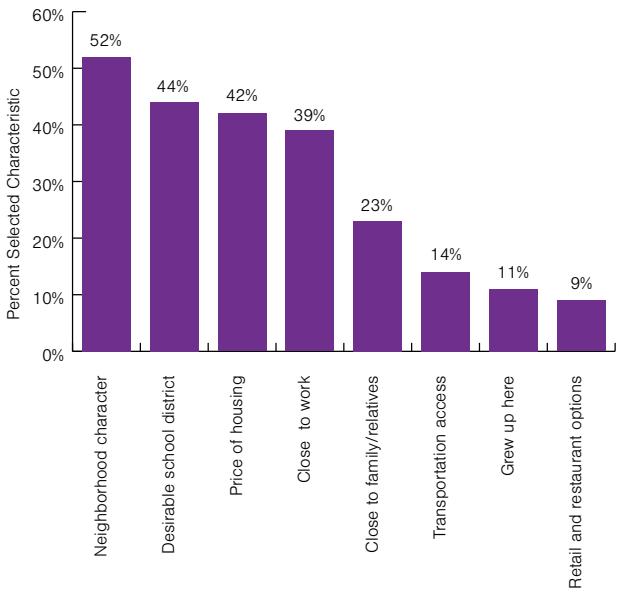
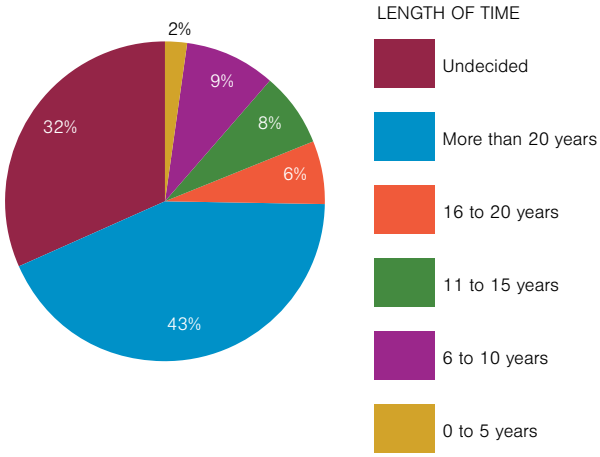


Figure 7: What Influenced Your Decision to Live in or Relocate to Upper Gwynedd Township?*



Upper Gwynedd residents were also asked how long they plan to stay living in the township. Although 43% of respondents indicated that they plan on living in the township for 20 or more years, another 32% of respondents indicated that they were undecided regarding how long they would remain living in the township (see Figure 8 below).

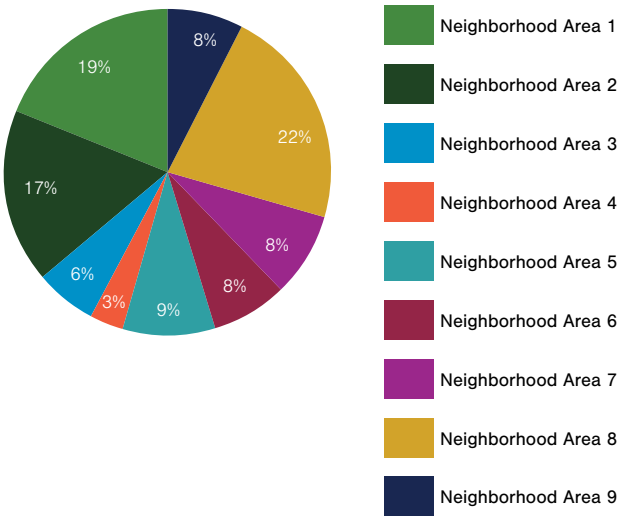
Figure 8: How Long Do You Plan on Living in Upper Gwynedd Township?*



Neighborhood Areas

To identify where within the township they lived, each respondent was asked to reference a neighborhood areas map that was created based on a combination of natural and manmade barriers, voting districts, land use, and zoning (see Map 1 on the following page). Figure 9 below shows the geographic distribution of survey respondents based on neighborhood area.

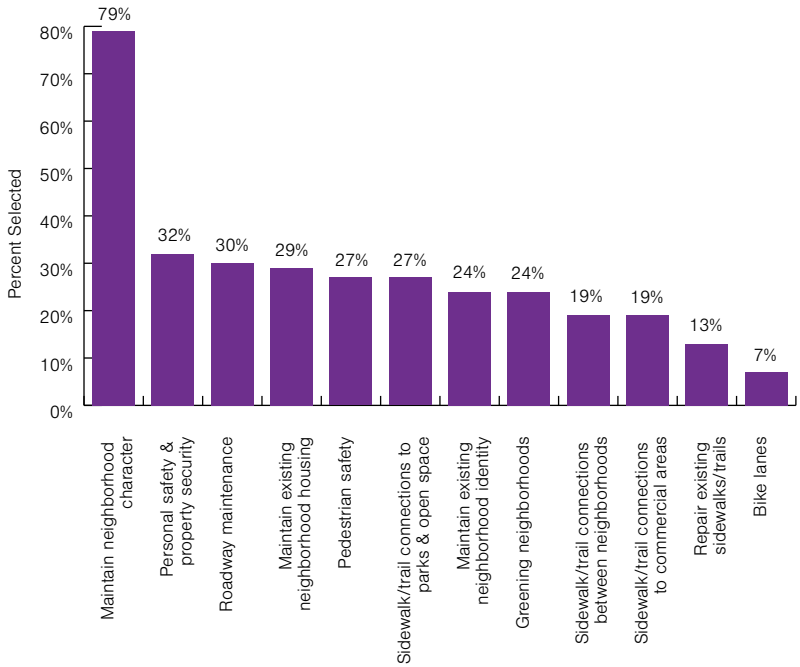
Figure 9: What Neighborhood Area Do You Live In?*



Survey respondents were then asked several questions related to their neighborhood. Respondents were asked what they see as the top three priorities for their neighborhood over the next 20 years. The township-wide responses are shown in Figure 10 below. Map 1 on the following page shows the top priorities for each neighborhood area, as well as additional feedback from the survey.

Respondents were also asked to rate the township in terms of several aspects of quality-of-life (see Table 1 on page 212). The survey responses generally show that people see Upper Gwynedd as a better place to raise children than as a place to retire.

Figure 10: What Do You See as Priorities for Your Neighborhood Over the Next 20 Years? Select Your Top Three Choices.*



Map 1: Neighborhood Areas & Selected Community Feedback

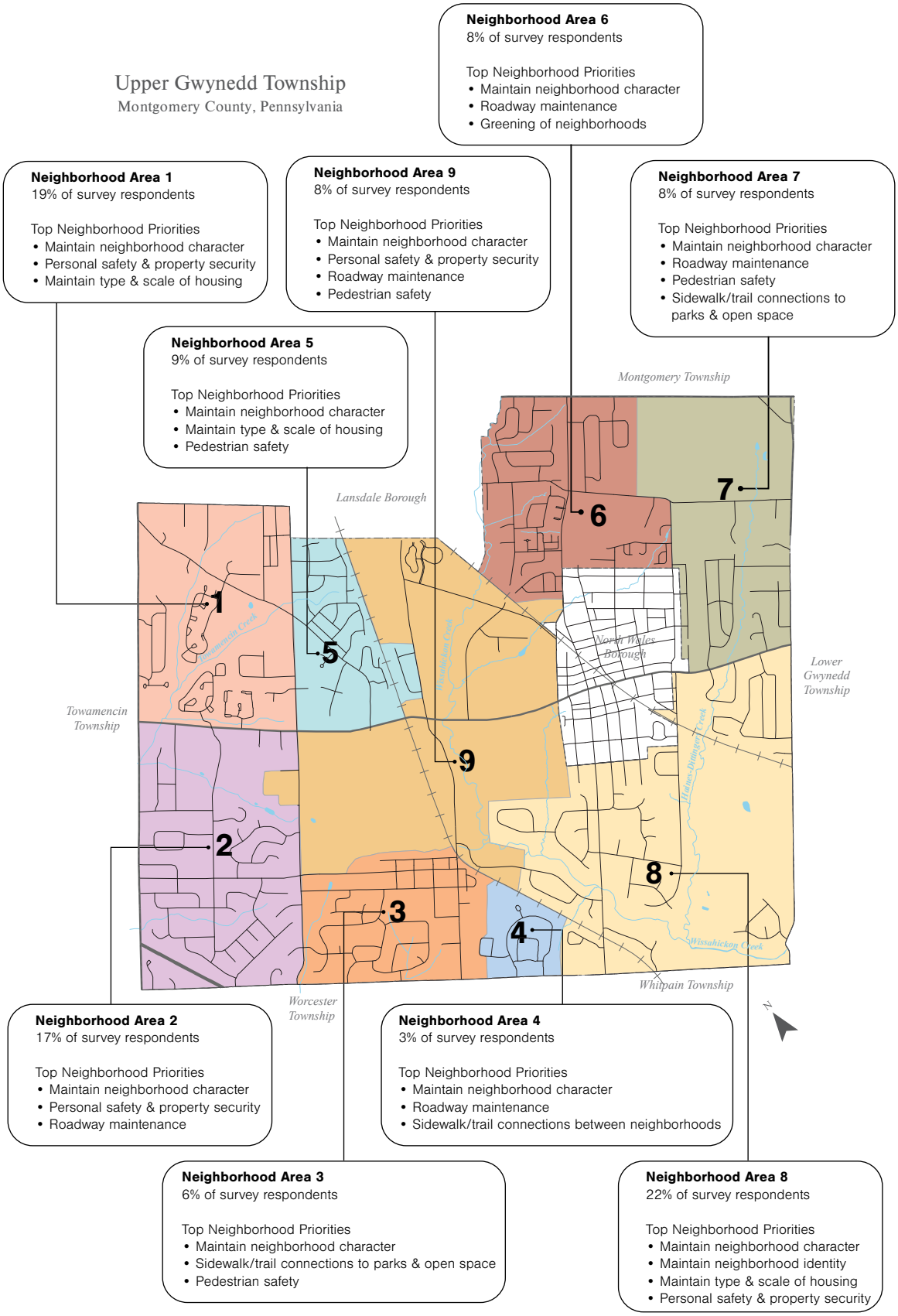


Table 1: Please Select the Response that Comes Closest to Your Opinion for Each of the Following Questions (Poor, Fair, Good, Excellent, No Opinion).*

	EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	NO OPINION
How do you rate Upper Gwynedd Township as a place to live?	*53%*	*44%*	*3%*	*0%*	*0%*
How do you rate your neighborhood as a place to live?	*62%*	*35%*	*2%*	*1%*	*0%*
How do you rate Upper Gwynedd Township as a place to raise children?	*54%*	*31%*	*1%*	*0%*	*13%*
How do you rate Upper Gwynedd Township as a place to retire?	*28%*	*40%*	*14%*	*4%*	*14%*

Transportation

When asked how they usually travel to work, most township resident survey respondents (78%) indicated that they drive alone. However, 5% of respondents either use public transportation, walk, bike, or carpool as their primary mode of transportation to work. In addition, another 9% of respondents indicated that they work from home (see Figure 11 to the right).

Approximately 40% of respondents indicated that their average commute to work was 15 minutes or less, demonstrating that Upper Gwynedd is centrally-located and accessible to many employment centers (see Figure 12 below).

Figure 11: What One Method of Transportation Do You Usually Use (for the Longest Portion of Your Commute) to Travel to Work?*

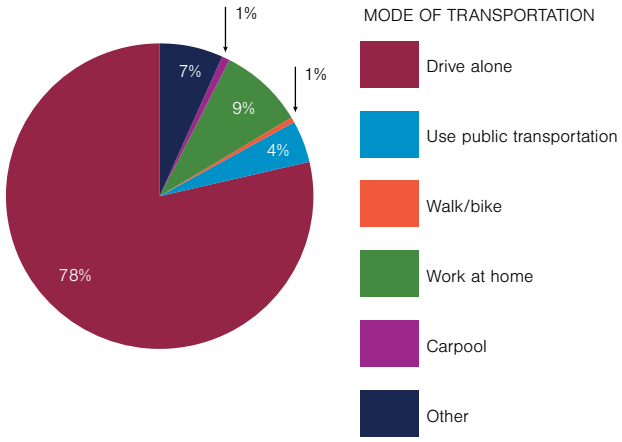
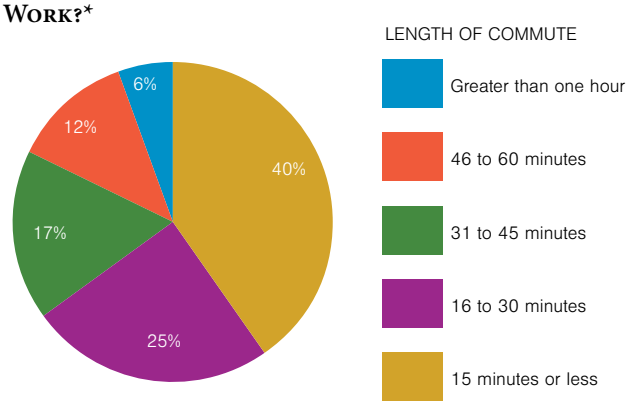


Figure 12: How long is Your Average Commute to Work?*



The Community

When asked what types of businesses they would like to see more of in the township, respondents overwhelming selected restaurants (see Figure 13 below). Grocery stores and retail shops also received a high number of votes.

Survey respondents who were township residents were asked to select their top three priorities for the township over the next 20 years. More than half of the respondents selected "Redevelopment of vacant properties and shopping centers" and "Preserve and maintain open space" (see Figure 14 below).

Lastly, survey respondents who were township residents were asked how they would describe Upper Gwynedd to someone not familiar with it. In other words, respondents were asked to select three characteristics that they felt make the township unique, or contribute most to its identity. The quality of schools in the township, access to the regional highway system, and the township's affordable and quality housing were the three most common selections (see Figure 15 below). However, quality of parks and open space and sense of community also received a high number of votes.

Figure 13: What Types of Businesses Would You Like to See in the Township? Select All That Apply.*

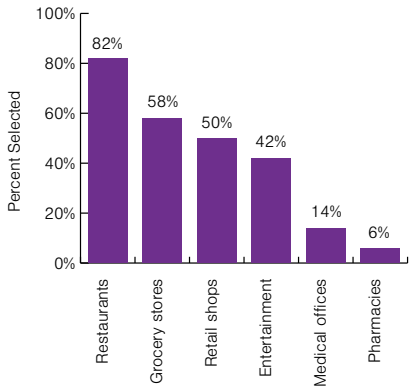


Figure 14: What Would You Like the Township to Focus on Over the Next 20 Years? Select Your Top Three Choices.

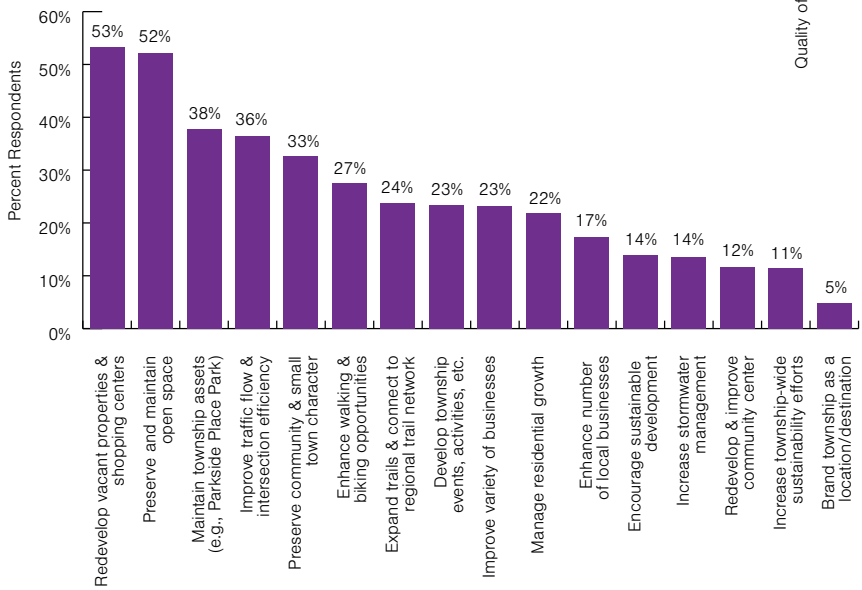
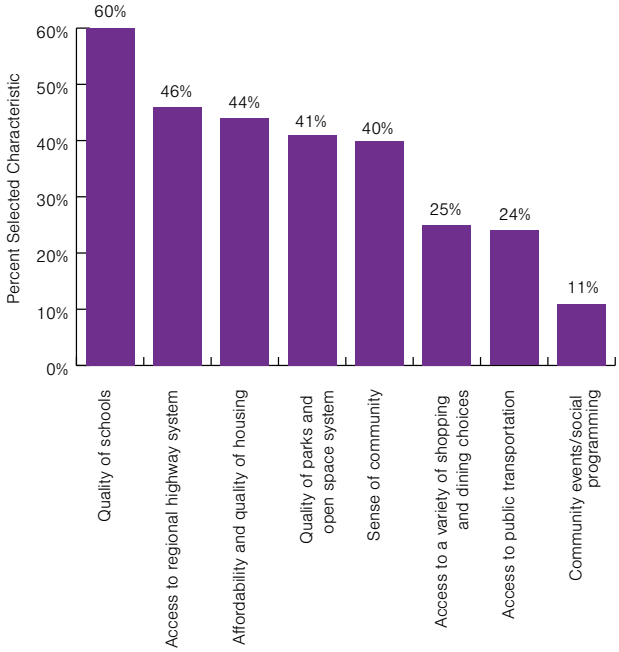


Figure 15: If You Were Describing Upper Gwynedd Township to Someone Not Familiar With It, What Are the Top Three Characteristics That You Would Say Make the Township Unique, or Contribute Most to its Identity? Select Your Top Three Choices.*



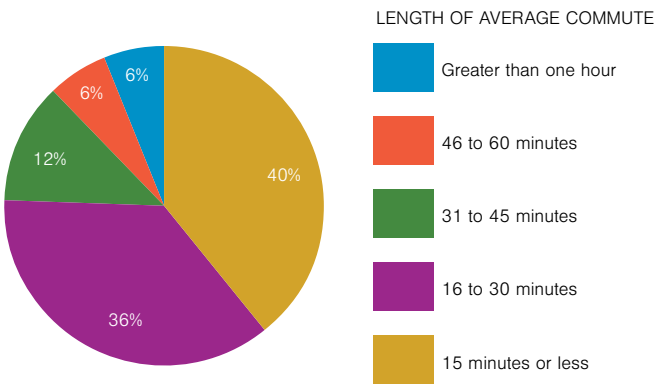
Non-Township Resident Questions

The 33 survey respondents who indicated that they were not Upper Gwynedd residents were asked a different set of questions than those who indicated that they were township residents. Non-resident survey respondents were asked what municipality they live in and the most common responses were Towamencin Township, Lansdale Borough, Montgomery Township, and Horsham Township.

The majority of non-township survey respondents are employed in the township (either full-time or part-time) and drive to work. The average length of each non-resident survey respondent's commute to work is shown in Figure 16 below.

Additional comments from non-resident survey respondents were primarily related to traffic on Sumneytown Pike or the need for improved pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. One respondent commented "I would like to bike to work but it is too dangerous." Another commenter said "Proper road diets of key corridors will be very beneficial to the community."

Figure 16: How Long is Your Average Commute to Work?



Community Open House #1 Results

A community open house was held on March 20, 2019 at the Upper Gwynedd Township building. Similar to the community survey, attendees were asked to identify which neighborhood area they live in and provide specific feedback on that neighborhood area. Additional posters were focused on transportation and walkability, and parks and open space. In addition, there was a PET (Preserve, Enhance, Transform) activity and a vision wall where attendees could provide more broad feedback.

Planning Area Map for Open House

Neighborhood Area Discussion Take-Aways

Neighborhood Areas 1 & 5

Transportation

- Sidewalks to improve walkability and safety
- Develop a better walkway from Gwynedale Road area to Weis Market area such as a footbridge across Towamencin Creek
- Cars run stop signs in and out of Gwynedale area, sometimes school kids are waiting for the bus

Parks, Open Space & Trails

- Connect Parkside Place Park to follow Liberty Bell and Stony Creek railroad ROW

- Connect trails to other trails in township
- Make sure to maintain a green space balance with development

Land Use & Economic Development

- More grocery stores
- Ensure that future development is not too dense

Other Comments

- Fire departments need to work together when purchasing equipment
- Standardized trash pick-up (township-provided, pick-up only on specific days, etc.)
- Noise issues from trees being cut down, mowing grass, early morning construction
- Improve communication from township (e.g., build sense of community, educate people about ordinances)
- Get rid of blight (residential and commercial code enforcement)
- Issue re: snow removal from Gwynedale Way
- The CSX train passes through early in the morning

Neighborhood Areas 2, 3 & 4

Transportation

- Lack of sidewalks on many streets in the township makes getting around difficult and dangerous
- Bike paths should be added to streets throughout the township
- Riding from the neighborhood becomes a real challenge during rush hour periods
- Certain streets such as Park Road and Garfield Ave have such bad traffic that it can be difficult to leave driveways
- Add painted pedestrian crosswalks and pedestrian operated traffic controls at busy intersections
- Some bus stops do not have signs
- SEPTA should provide bus service to the Pennbrook Station and North Wales
- During rush hour periods, there is heavy traffic on some roads such as Valley Forge Road and Sumneytown Pike
- Make the township's roads more attractive by adding trees and vegetation
- Walking and bike trails should be established in the PECO right-of-way and continued with connection to the Parkside Place complex
- There should be better walking access to the Weis market complex
- The timing of the traffic light coming from Garfield Avenue on to Broad Street seems to be very excessive

Parks, Open Space & Trails

- Parkside Place, Garfield, and Fischer's Parks are the most used parks
- Trees should be added to the open space between Powderhorn and Flintlock Drives
- No shade at Nor-Gwyn Pool – trees should be added
- A new recreation center is desperately needed
- Bathroom facilities should be added in parks

Other Comments

- The township should consider purchasing the church at West Point Pike and Park Road, and developing it for a cultural center, or other use
- Street curbs that are deteriorating should be addressed
- New trees require adequate follow-up watering until the roots are well-established
- The area at 3rd Street and Park Road floods, which can turn to ice
- During heavy storms, those living in low-lying areas or close to streams or creeks experience heavy water run-off and stagnant water accumulation
- Greening of stormwater basins, like rain gardens, is desirable
- 4th Street alley should be considered a road due to trash trucks utilizing road, etc.

Neighborhood Area 6 & 7

Transportation

- Paint lines on streets (Hancock and North Wales Rd)
- Ivy and Welsh is dangerous because there are no sidewalks

- Add marked pedestrian crossing at Hancock and Marlyns to connect neighborhood to school
- Not enough parking at the North Wales and Pennbrook train stations
- A sidewalk on Sumneytown Pike from Upper Valley to Royal Avenue is needed
- Install marked pedestrian crossings at Marlyns Lane and Hancock Street and on North Wales Road near the elementary and middle schools
- Speeding on Dickerson
- The right turn on red indicator at North Wales Road and Welsh Road is confusing
- Need sidewalk across North Wales Road and Ivy Lane

Parks, Open Space & Trails

- Love Rexdale Park
  - Park is popular with local children and parents
  - Should be improved and have new equipment
  - More shade trees are needed
  - Good place for nature trail with signs indicating points of interest
- Utilize open space/park at Grannery Lane and Ivy Lane
- Preserve park and open space along creek (Grannery, Ivy)
- Develop trails within ROW of power lines to connect to 202
- More hiking trails to connect to other trails and local places – use existing power line corridors

Other Comments

- Sumneytown and Church not appealing – vacant buildings and lots of concrete
- Erosion from Rupp Farm onto Hancock Road
- Stormwater issues
  - Flooding in neighborhood (Woodstream Drive, at intersections along Hancock Road) – negatively impacts traffic and pedestrian ramps
  - Not enough storm drains (add/repair)
  - Stormwater management basin maintenance

Neighborhood Area 8

Transportation

- Concerns about traffic issues with a new Wawa
- Add a three-way stop sign coming out of Gosling
- Add sidewalks along North Wales Road from Cardinal Way
- Biking and bike lanes
- Speed humps on development roads like Cardinal Way
- Glad there aren't sidewalks and curbs along Prospect Ave
- More speed enforcement (e.g., Moyer Blvd, Prospect Ave)

Parks, Open Space & Trails

- Green Ribbon Trail
  - Very muddy in areas
  - Dog leash and waste removal rules not followed consistently
  - Trail crossing at North Wales Road needs signage
- Railroad trail along Cardinal Way
- Need more pickleball courts
- Community building in the park
- More paved trails

Land Use & Economic Development

- Need more restaurants
- Small supermarket or grocery store
- Anxious about development along Prospect Ave
- Against Wawa and Royal Farms

Other Comments

- Spotted lanternfly issues – invasive
- Interested in having trees planted due to ash tree issue – good time to replenish
- Stormwater/drainage issues on Prospect Ave due to large homes and building on wetlands
- Planting more trees

- Cardinal Way – houses on a hill but sump pumps constantly running

Neighborhood Area 9

Transportation

- Walkability issues at Church/West Point and Sumneytown
- Cut-through traffic on Park Road and Garfield
  - Unsafe for students at bus stops
  - No sidewalks on one side of street
  - Children can't cross the street
- Traffic on Broad Street and Sumneytown Pike
- Need contiguous sidewalks, bike lanes, and trails

Other Comments

- More businesses should be added to ground the community
- Concerned about the school district
- Concerned about climate change
- Sustainable practices for businesses
- Love the North Wales Library
- CSX Train schedule – more frequent and noisy

Transportation and Walkability Discussion Take-Aways

- Add stop signs on Moyer Boulevard
- Need sidewalks on Sumneytown Pike
- Trail crossings
  - Add trail crossing on West Point near Merck
  - Green Ribbon Trail crossing of North Wales Road needs signs or signals
- Broad/Sumneytown pedestrian crossing is dangerous
- Broad/Garfield crosswalks missing
- Add sidewalk or trail on Sumneytown Pike near Supplee Road
- Many people use SEPTA Bus Route 96 – add bus stop signs on West Point Pike
- Need additional parking at SEPTA stations

Trails and Open Space Discussion Take-Aways

Trail Enhancements & Connections

- Liberty Bell Trail – connect Green Ribbon Trail through preserve at Merck and continue north to Willow Street Park
- Add parking for Green Ribbon Trail
- Create walking trail to appreciate wetlands at former Roth Farm
- No trail along Stony Creek Area rail line
- Use PECO ROW to connect Gwynedd Preserve to Del Val/202 Parkway
- Extend Power Line Trail through PECO corridor on Del Val
- Raised boardwalk – Green Ribbon Trail
- Lots of walkers within area along Pennbrook and adjacent field along school
- Need better overall community access and trails
- Connect Power Line to 202 and Green Ribbon Trail

New Opportunities

- West Point Alley/Heebner Street from 2nd to 4th potential open space/rehab opportunity
- Highlight open space in newsletter
- Want dog park – simple fenced in area for big dogs to run (PECO corridor?)
- Need to establish EAC
- Tree removal along creek? Plant more trees
- Large open space between Powderhorn Drive and Flintlock Drive – good space for families – opportunity to add amenities (e.g., picnic tables)
- Community resistance to dog park/any increased public access to undeveloped township open space between Bradford Lane and Beth Drive
- Undeveloped township open space on Maple Avenue is underutilized (litter and overgrown shrubs)

Pedestrian Connections

- Add marked pedestrian crossing to Pennbrook Middle School at Marlyns

- Explore connectivity from retirement community to North Wales and Middle School
- Path from Kristin Circle to Gwynedd Square Elementary School
- Missing sidewalk to get to Weis
  - Broad and Supplee behind properties
  - Walkway bridge on Sumneytown near Clearview
  - Connect to Towamencin Trail
- Sidewalk along Moyer Blvd to connect neighborhoods into West Point Village
- Connect North Wales up to school/only usable ball fields in township
  - Path from Sandy Lane to Gwyn-Nor Elementary is used by students
  - Old Merrybrook Community connection

Hancock Street Park (Lansdale)

- Like Hancock Park walkway and castle playground

Garfield Park

- Potential for enhancements
- Used for soccer and rugby
- Baseball field not maintained - doesn't seem to be used
- Consider connecting Garfield Park to undeveloped township open space along S. Broad Street and in the vicinity of Supplee Road and Flintlock Drive

Parkside Place Park

- Informal path from West Point Pike to Parkside Place Park – formalize? Signage?
- Nor-Gwyn pool – ADA accessible walk-in area dangerous

Rexdale Park

- Need shade, walking trail
- Sweetbriar Lane/Rexdale Park
- Better maintenance

West Point Park

- Is the ball field used?

Preserve, Enhance, Transform (PET) Exercise Take-Aways

Preserve

- Low taxes
- Leadership
- Parks and park system: Parkside Place Park, township complex, Nor-Gwyn Pool, and Gwynedd Preserve
- Good schools
- Good roads
- UCC Church Property Preserve
- Speed tables on Cathys/Marlyns
- West Point Heebner Alley improvement

Enhance

<u>Commercial Development</u>

- Supermarket in town
- Small shopping store in Genuardis shopping center
- More restaurants and markets

<u>Parks, Open Space & Trails</u>

- Install amenities in Parkside Place (small pavilions, water fountains)
- Power Line Trail continued from Horsham
- Walking trail system
- Wetland trail to connect Delaware Valley University farm to Hancock Road
- Trails to connect Parkside Place and Gwynedd Preserve with the shopping center and high school

<u>Pedestrian & Bike Connections</u>

- Safe crossing to Pennbrook Middle School
- Add sidewalk on Upper Valley Road and connect to borough
- Safe crossing at railroad in West Point for bicyclists and pedestrians
- Add sidewalks in West Point
- More space to bike and walk

<u>Other Comments</u>

- Space for residents to bring yard waste
- Re-paint road lines on Hancock Street leading to North Wales Road

- Improve access to and amenities at transit stations
- More affordable housing options
- Enhance natural environment

Transform

- Use education to transform attitudes regarding safety (or lack of criminal activity) associated with trails
- Need a town center (upscale outdoor mall) like KOP area and Collegeville
- Traffic and roads
- New community center with community meeting space
- Stormwater runoff – more drains and fix the pipes
- Develop a village point at Sumneytown Pike/ Church Road/West Point Pike
- Retention basin at Hancock and North Wales Road
- Sustainability
- Affordable housing options
- Residents more diverse in age, race, etc.
- Phoenixville, Chestnut Hill, Doylestown, Ambler – they all have a main streets with restaurants, clubs, bars, galleries, etc. An upscale place for young adults

Vision Wall Take-Aways

Several themes were identified from the vision wall feedback received:

Township Resources

Several vision statements pertained to overall township improvements (e.g., maintaining a small town feel, encouraging diversity, installing street pole banners on West Point Pike). Participants also envision the continuation of the reasonably low tax rates and the development of the Nor-Gwyn pool into an ADA-accessible "mini water park" that could bring in additional revenue.

Open Space, Trails, and Natural Features

Several people wrote "preserve open space" as their future vision for the township. In general, residents would like to see the development of a network of walking and bike paths to make the township more livable, including additional trails at Parkside Place Park. Participants also commented on a desire for a dog park, more places to bicycle safely, and improved stormwater management.

Economic Development and Housing

The vision wall resulted in several statements related to development in the township. Residents mentioned several times that they want to see more restaurants and more small shops in underutilized shopping centers and commercial areas along Sumneytown Pike.

In general, the community envisions new types of businesses such as breweries. The township should be attractive to small businesses and more of a destination. Residents do not want to see more gas stations, pharmacies, banks, or pizza restaurants. Residents want to see fewer new housing developments and more redevelopment and renovation of existing sites. However, several participants mentioned the need for more diversity of housing options and affordable housing.

Vision Statement Survey Results

Based on the results of the community survey and the first public open house, a long-term vision statement for the township was drafted. Feedback on the draft vision statement was collected from 133 persons through an online survey that was open from February 25 to May 18, 2020. Approximately 86% of survey respondents either strongly agreed or somewhat agreed with the themes and goals of the draft vision statement.

Community Open House #2 Results

A virtual public open house was held on Wednesday, February 17, 2021. After a presentation of an overview of the draft plan, participants had the option to attend virtual breakout room discussions covering the topic and focus area chapters of the draft plan.

Appendix B: Resolution

UPPER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

RESOLUTION # 29-2021

A RESOLUTION OF UPPER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP ADOPTING AND APPROVING THE UPPER GWYNEDD 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS, pursuant to Article III of the *Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code*, Act 247, municipalities are required, from time to time, to prepare, adopt, and update their comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, after careful consideration, the Upper Gwynedd Township Board of Commissioners, with the assistance of a citizen steering committee and the Montgomery County Planning Commission, has completed a comprehensive plan that will serve as a guide for future growth and development; and

WHEREAS, the comments received from the public at public hearings, and from the Montgomery County Planning Commission, adjacent municipalities, and the North Penn School District have been duly noted; and

WHEREAS, the Township's Planning Commission and the Township Board of Commissioners have reviewed and recommended the adoption of the comprehensive plan that addresses community objectives, existing and future land uses, infrastructure, the transportation network, environmental protection, and economic development; and

WHEREAS, the Upper Gwynedd 2040 Comprehensive Plan proposed for adoption is dated March of 2021 and incorporates various maps, charts, data, and text with respect to demographics, land uses, environmental characteristics, housing, transportation, public water and sewer infrastructure, open space, and community facilities as set forth therein; and

WHEREAS, the Upper Gwynedd 2040 Comprehensive Plan has been the subject of a duly advertised public hearing held by the Upper Gwynedd Township Board of Commissioners on August 17, 2021.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the undersigned do hereby adopt the Upper Gwynedd 2040 Comprehensive Plan, prepared by the Upper Gwynedd Township Board of Commissioners with the assistance of a citizen steering committee and the Montgomery County Planning Commission, as the official comprehensive plan of Upper Gwynedd Township.

RESOLVED AND ADOPTED this 17th day of August, 2021

Attest:

UPPER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

COMMISSIONERS OF UPPER GWYNEDD TOWNSHIP
MONTG. CO.
PA

Sandra Brookley Zadell, Township Manager

Liz K. McNaney, President

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