



Lower Providence Township Comprehensive Plan

A PATH TO THE FUTURE



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Lower Providence Township Comprehensive Plan

Lower Providence Township
Montgomery County, Pennsylvania

Prepared by:



Montgomery County Planning Commission

Lower Providence Township
Comprehensive Plan

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Introduction

Chapter 1 – Lower Providence Township Comprehensive Plan

Comprehensive Planning Essentials

Lower Providence 2040 serves as a long-range plan for the township and establishes community goals for public facilities, natural resources, vital infrastructure, land use, transportation, and community development. This chapter summarizes the process by which the plan was written, the plan's relation to the comprehensive plans of the county and neighboring municipalities, and presents the vision statement and themes that outline the plan's primary goals.

This plan recommends a number of policies and programs to advance the goals that Lower Providence is working towards. The chapters which cover each topic area provide background information and list the community goals associated with the topic area. For each topic area there is a list of recommendations and the community goals they support. The final chapter of this plan addresses the implementation of the plan and prioritizing its recommended actions. Though all communities face constraints and limitations of time and resources, by identifying shared goals and weighing their importance, Lower Providence can

work towards the realization of the community's vision for the future.

Vision Statement

Lower Providence Township is a thriving suburban community with a rich history, responsive public services, diverse employment opportunities, and easy access to the Greater Philadelphia region. Lower Providence's excellent schools, parks, and trails are a source of pride for township residents.

In 2040, Lower Providence aspires to be a vibrant, connected, and inclusive community that prioritizes the preservation of its historic and natural



resources, sustains and grows its businesses, and develops as a healthy and resilient township.

Themes

The three themes of this plan present different facets of the community vision and elaborate on it, describing aspects of the vision in greater detail and indicating how they relate.

Thriving Community

Lower Providence will foster a thriving and diverse community of local businesses. Historic village centers, commercial corridors, and business parks will function as walkable, attractive destinations. They will function both as places of employment and as hubs of commercial activity, with options for dining, shopping, entertainment, and services. By enhancing the unique character of the community's different village areas and commercial centers, the shared identity that unites them - Lower Providence Township - will be strengthened. The township will provide residents with responsive and effective public services and exemplify good governance with honesty and transparency.

Connecting Places



The township will have a strong sense of community, built upon the physical and social connections

linking its neighborhoods and residents. Safe walking and biking routes will allow residents to move between neighborhoods; visit parks and public facilities; and access schools, workplaces, and daily services without the need to drive. New members of the community will feel welcome in Lower Providence and residents from all walks of life will be empowered to participate in public life. Lower Providence will have a variety of housing options to meet the changing needs of a diverse, growing, aging population.

Natural Resilience



The natural resources and ecosystems of Lower Providence will be preserved for the enjoyment and benefit of future generations. Public facilities and open spaces will be models of the stewardship that the township encourages all property owners to practice. Parks and recreation facilities will offer dynamic and inclusive programming for residents from all walks of life. Trails, parks, and open spaces will offer residents throughout the township opportunities to enjoy the township's variety of natural landscapes. Roads and other infrastructure systems in the community will be protected from the growing risks presented by extreme weather events, and adapted to operate more sustainably.

Creating Lower Providence 2040



The process of writing a new comprehensive plan for Lower Providence Township began in early 2020 when Lower Providence Township contracted the Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) to update the municipality’s comprehensive plan. During the spring and summer of 2020, the township’s Board of Supervisors established a steering committee for the comprehensive plan. The 13 volunteers that were appointed as members of this committee included elected officials, staff members, and residents of the township.

Beginning in August of 2020, MCPC staff and the steering committee met for monthly meetings using the Zoom virtual meeting service. Throughout the autumn of 2020 and into the winter, the steering committee met to review background research. Following the period of background research and information gathering, a public workshop was held on Zoom in March of 2021 and an online survey was distributed. The workshop and survey were conducted to expand the public’s awareness of the planning effort and to invite their participation. During the virtual workshop basic information about the township and the plan’s main topics was presented, but the main purpose of the event

(and that of the accompanying web survey) was the identification of the community’s issues. Workshop attendees and survey respondents were prompted to share from their experiences and identify aspects of the township that they valued and others that they would like to see improved. These responses, and all other public input gathered throughout the planning process has helped to shape the plan.

After the workshop, the process of drafting chapters of the comprehensive plan began. This period continued through the next year, as the steering committee met to develop and evaluate recommendations and review drafts of plan chapters. During that time, additional activities related to the plan were organized. In May of 2021 the township held a design challenge titled “Reimagine Ridge Pike.” The call for entries asked participants to describe and depict how sites along the eastern end of the township’s Ridge Pike corridor might be redeveloped, reused, or otherwise reinvigorated. This event was organized in partnership with Methacton High School and many students participated as a project for art classes. Attendees were invited to comment on planning issues and participate in a prioritization activity. This input, along with the dozens of design entries further enhanced the plan’s outreach.

In May of 2022, an open house was held to present the recommendations of comprehensive plan, exhibit maps and designs made for the plan, and give attendees a chance to meet with members of the steering committee and MCPC staff. This event was hosted by the Lower Providence Fire Department in Eagleville. As was done for the public workshop, an online survey was made to extend the outreach effort after the open house event.

Relationship to Other Plans

County Plans

The current comprehensive plan for Montgomery County, *Montco 2040: A Shared Vision*, was adopted in 2015. This plan provides an overall land use and growth management framework for the county and provides guidance on multi-municipal and regional issues such as trails, flooding, and roadway improvements. *Montco2040* is structured around the implementation of three primary themes: Connected Communities, Sustainable Places, and Vibrant Economies. These themes express the plan's main goals and help to organize its recommendations. Connected Communities addresses the physical and social connections that tie the county together. Sustainable Places seeks to support and enhance the health of the county's people, communities, and natural environment. Vibrant Economy strives to promote economic growth through transportation, land use, and other policies. Lower Providence's comprehensive plan echoes these goals in its own vision and themes.

The future land use plan in *Montco 2040* covers all of the county's constituent municipalities, including Lower Providence, and delineates a set of future land use categories. The future land use map and the areas that it describes are broadly similar to the pattern of land uses that currently exist in the county. The resemblance between the present and future land use patterns underscores the county comprehensive plan's key goals of conserving rural areas and natural environments, and encouraging development to take place in areas that are already served by public infrastructure and well connected to the wider region. In Pennsylvania, municipal comprehensive plans are required to have future land use plans that generally align with those of their county's comprehensive plan. This requirement helps to ensure that the future land use plans of neighboring municipalities are compatible with one another.

Another very important county plan is Hazard Mitigation Plan, adopted in 2017. An update of this plan is now underway. This plan is a comprehensive study of the many natural and human-made hazards that threaten the county, and strategies for addressing the risks they present. The county is required to update the hazard mitigation plan every five years, and its constituent municipalities must also adopt the county's hazard mitigation plan to be eligible for certain disaster relief programs.

Neighboring Municipalities

Lower Providence is very strongly linked with its neighbor to the east, West Norriton Township. The boundary between the two townships runs along the centerline of Trooper Road, and is Lower Providence's longest land boundary. The two townships share several major transportation links and commercial corridors. West Norriton adopted its latest comprehensive plan in 2010. This brief document summarized the township's statistics and outlined the township's planning priorities. It recommends developing the township-owned Jeffersonville Golf Club as "a social/civic center of the community" and depicts it as a site for trail connections between Ridge Pike, Egypt and Trooper Roads. West Norriton's goals of revitalizing their portion of the West Main Street/Ridge Pike corridor and encouraging investment in the Valley Forge Business Center are closely aligned with the goals of Lower Providence Township. To advance their goal of revitalizing the West Main Street corridor, the township adopted the West Norriton Main Street Vision Plan in 2019. This plan studied the differing physical conditions and mixes of land use present along the corridor and proposed a number of improvements to beautify and improve the safety of the corridor.

To the northeast, Lower Providence is bordered by Worcester Township. Together, the two townships comprise the Methacton School District.

Worcester adopted its most recent comprehensive plan in 2008, though a new comprehensive plan was recently completed and is nearing adoption. Worcester Township has retained far more of its undeveloped and agricultural land than its neighboring municipalities have, and the township strives to maintain its relatively rural character through preservation and development regulations. Lower Providence and Worcester share the historic thoroughfare of Germantown Pike, and there is a gradual transition from Lower Providence's higher level of development to Worcester's more rural scenery that occurs across this corridor, and which future plans strive to maintain.

Upper Merion Township lies to the south of Lower Providence, on the opposite side of the Schuylkill River. Although the two townships have no direct physical links, there is much that they share. Upper Merion is a major employment center and contains the heart of Valley Forge National Historic Park and the eastern end of the US 422 freeway. The township adopted its most recent comprehensive plan, *Upper Merion Township: Vision 2020*, in 2005. In 2019, the township drafted an as-of-yet unadopted comprehensive plan update. The goals of the *Vision 2020* plan are generally compatible with those of Lower Providence Township.

Skippack Township borders Lower Providence to the north. Evansburg State Park extends upstream through Skippack from Lower Providence. Skippack last updated its comprehensive plan in 2012. The associated future land use plan for Skippack closely matches the adjacent land uses in Lower Providence, as the bordering areas of each township are predominately low-density residential and open space.

To the northwest, across Perkiomen Creek, Lower Providence borders the borough of Collegeville. At the present, Collegeville and Lower Providence are connected only by the historic Perkiomen Bridge, though long-range plans have studied options for

constructing a second bridge downstream of the original. Collegeville is a member of the Central Perkiomen Valley Regional Planning Commission (CPVRPC). The latest update of the CPVRPC comprehensive plan was adopted in 2014. This regional comprehensive plan identifies Collegeville as a "Borough Conservation Area" where future development is encouraged, but should respect the historic character of the borough. In Lower Providence, the areas at the Perkiomen Bridge and along the corridors that extend from it are expected to experience some growth and development over time. Accommodations and controls for this eventuality are outlined both in the *Ridge Pike West Corridor Study* (2018) and in this comprehensive plan.

Upper Providence Township lies on the west side of Perkiomen Creek. The two Providences share several road and trail connections. Upper Providence's comprehensive plan was last updated in 2010, though a new update is underway. Related to the comprehensive plan update, Upper Providence drafted an Active Transportation Plan. No new connections with Lower Providence are recommended in the draft Active Transportation Plan, though the 2017 *Upper Providence Township Park, Open Space, and Trail Master Plan* proposed a creek crossing at Yerkes, identifying it as a low priority trail. Upper Providence's land use plan does not propose any changes for its areas nearest to Lower Providence. The areas in each township adjacent to their boundary in Perkiomen Creek are primarily open space and conservation-focused.

To the south east across the Schuylkill River, Lower Providence Township borders one municipality in Chester County: Schuylkill Township. The two townships are connected by Pawlings Road which crosses the river on a bridge that lacks sidewalks or other dedicated walkway. Schuylkill Township is a member of the Phoenixville Regional Planning Committee. The latest update to the Phoenixville

Regional Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2021. The regional comprehensive plan proposes new pedestrian facilities along Pawlings Road, extending toward Lower Providence and also designates the road as an intermediate bicycle route. The plan's future land use map identify the areas adjoining Lower Providence as Industrial, Medium-Density Residential, Mixed Use, and Rural though these land uses are all buffered from Lower Providence by the Schuylkill River and its extensively wooded banks. Lower Providence's side of the river is mainly open space and low-density residential development.

Other Lower Providence Plans

In 2021, Lower Providence adopted its new Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan. The plan extensively inventoried and studied the township's natural features, existing land use, historic and cultural resources, public schools, transportation network, stormwater management, and of course the parks and open space facilities within the township. This document provides extensive coverage of its core subject and thorough study of many related topics as well. The parks, recreation, and open space plan will be considered a component of this comprehensive plan, and is incorporated both by reference and through the reproduction of certain essential elements, like the plans recommendations. The parks, recreation, and open space plan proposes a number of open spaces for preservation, improvements for township parks, projects to extend the network of sidewalks and trails, and more.

This new comprehensive plan for the township builds upon Lower Providence's previous one, which was adopted in 2002. Although Lower Providence has grown and changed in a number of ways over the past 20 years, there are a few noteworthy elements that Lower Providence 2040 inherits from the 2002 plan, among which are the

general structure of the land use plan, the goals for historic preservation, the goal of developing a thriving and walkable 'Main Street' area, and recommendations for extending the township's network of sidewalks and trails.

Township Profile

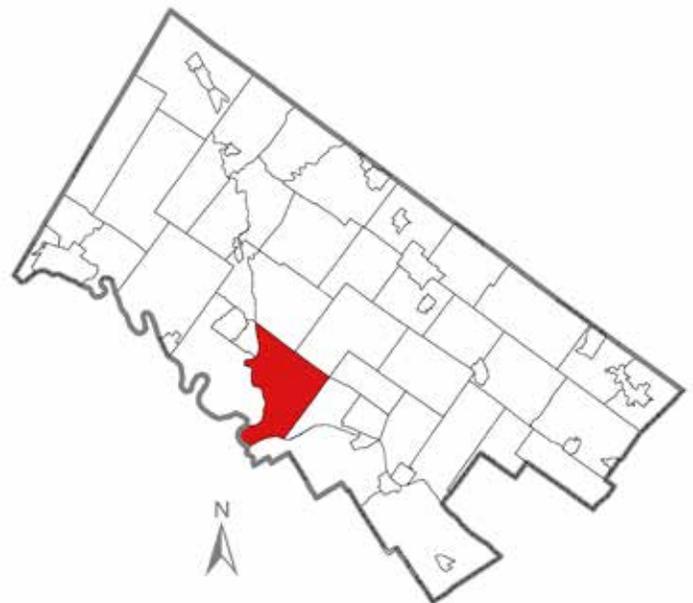
Chapter 2 - Lower Providence Township Comprehensive Plan

Introduction

Lower Providence is a township of the second class in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. Its boundaries enclose an area of 15 square miles at the confluence of Perkiomen Creek and the Schuylkill River. The township is located mid-way along Montgomery County's stretch of the Schuylkill Valley, roughly 19 miles northwest of Center City Philadelphia. It is bordered by West Norriton, Skippack, Worcester, Upper Merion, and Upper Providence Townships and the Borough of Collegeville in Montgomery County, as well as Schuylkill Township in Chester County. Lower Providence also meets the boundaries of Perkiomen Township and East Norriton Township at four-corners points located at the township's northernmost and easternmost extremities, respectively.

History

Prior to the establishment of the Pennsylvania colony, the land of the Delaware River watershed was part of Lenapehoking, the homeland of the Lenape tribe. The Unami, a subgroup of the Lenape, lived along the Schuylkill River and its



Lower Providence is located southeast of Montgomery County's geographic center.

tributaries, the area of present day Lower Providence Township. Many of the places and natural features of this region still bear the names given to them by the Lenape, including Perkiomen Creek, Skippack Creek, and Methacton Ridge. Before

European colonization of the area, the Lenni Lenape traveled and traded on these waterways created paths across the region's hilly terrain. One the most significant of these trade routes was the Perkiomen Path. This ancient route lives on as present day Ridge Pike.

The land area that Lower Providence now occupies was a part of the original grant to William Penn. Penn reserved for himself a large tract of land on the east side of the Schuylkill River centered on the lower stretch of Perkiomen Creek, naming it the "Manor of Gilberts" in honor of his mother's family. This tract covered the area now made up of the two Providences as well as Worcester, Skippack, and Perkiomen Township. Over a period of years, Penn relinquished some of these holdings. In 1699, he conveyed 5,000 acres—essentially the western half of the present Lower Providence Township—to the Pennsylvania Land Company. Also prior to 1700 he sold the area of the far northwest corner of the present Lower Providence Township to Jacob Tellner. Tracts in both of these areas were sold over the following several decades, with most of the area being settled prior to the 1760s. The first settlers were largely British Anglicans, although there were also some German and Dutch settlers.

In 1725, the settlers drafted a petition to form a township, but their request received no action. They tried again a few years later, and on March 2, 1729 the Township of Providence was founded. It included the present Upper Providence and Lower Providence Townships and the Boroughs of Collegeville and Trappe. Providence Township was split into Upper Providence and Lower Providence Townships in 1805. The Perkiomen Creek, which forms the border between the two, presented a barrier for communication between the two sections. Germantown Pike, Ridge Pike, and Egypt Road reached Lower Providence in the early eighteenth century and were among the

first roads built, connecting the area's farmers to markets in Norristown and Philadelphia. However, it was not until the completion of the Perkiomen Bridge in 1799 that a permanent crossing spanned the creek.

During the early nineteenth century, the township prospered as a farming community with five villages. One of the earliest villages to develop was Evansburg, originally known as Hustletown. Its first settlers were Anglicans who founded St. James Episcopal Church in 1700. The village was eventually renamed after the Reverend Evan Evans, the first rector of the church. By 1800, the village was known throughout the region as a manufacturing center for Kentucky Long Rifles. This rifle was developed on Pennsylvania's eighteenth century frontier, and Evansburg was the home of one of its most noted creators, Owen Evans. On December 1797, he received a contract from Governor Mifflin to make 1,200 rifles for the state militia. It was one of the largest contracts ever awarded an individual gunsmith. Many of his rifles were used in the War of 1812. His house still stands on Germantown Pike.

Eventually, other villages developed in the township. Mills sprang up along Perkiomen Creek, creating the villages of Yerkes and Arcola. By the mid-nineteenth century, Eagleville, Providence Square, Audubon, and Trooper had begun to be settled. Both Eagleville and Providence Square were established around factories used for the manufacture of carriages. Trooper, which developed around an inn that was identified by a sign of a mounted trooper, prospered during the Civil War when a sawmill was converted to a woolen and cotton mill. However, most of its residential development did not occur until the early twentieth century. Audubon, originally settled after copper was found there in the early 1800s, prospered after a post office was established there in 1828. Originally called Saylor's Corner, it was known

for many years as Shannonville, after a local family of that name. Eventually it was renamed Audubon, after its most famous resident, John James Audubon.

By the mid-1800s, the economic picture of Lower Providence shifted from agriculture to mining. Lead mines had operated prior to 1800, but it was not until copper mines became prominent that the mining industry flourished in the township. By 1810, the population of the township was 904 people. The population grew to 1,146 in 1820. By 1850, there were 1,961 people. The chief stimulation of township growth during this period, aside from the copper industry, was the township's geographic location, at the confluence of the Perkiomen Creek and the Schuylkill River. The latter served as a route to the western part of Pennsylvania. This gave the township a water transportation network as well as waterpower. The Schuylkill Canal, constructed along the course of the Schuylkill River in the early eighteenth century, greatly expanded commerce in the region. The canal's role as a thoroughfare for coal and other bulky cargo supplied the growing industries of Philadelphia and Schuylkill valley, but was soon supplanted by railroads. Along with the Skippack Creek, these water bodies served and still serve the township in guiding growth. Today, however, the prime consideration is water supply and recreation, not transportation.

The construction of railroads during the nineteenth century drove further growth and industrial development of the region. Although three railways were constructed in the Schuylkill and Perkiomen Valleys, Lower Providence's steep and often rocky terrain excluded rail service from much of the township. Only the Schuylkill Branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad passed through Lower Providence. The railroad reached the township in 1884, however, the rail line traveled through only a small portion of the southern end of the

township. The Betzwood Station in West Norriton served this portion of Lower Providence. This railroad's former right-of-way is now the path of the Schuylkill River Trail.

The trolley was the next mode of transportation to serve Lower Providence. Trolley service reached Lower Providence in 1896, with the construction of a line from Norristown on Ridge Pike. When it first opened, the trolley line extended as far as the Skippack Creek, where a park was established to entice the curious to ride to the end of the line. The line was extended to Collegetown, and connections eventually were made to Pottstown. Later, another line was extended north from the village of Trooper along Trooper Road to the villages of Fairview, Skippack, Lederach, Harleysville, and Souderton Borough, but it was not successful and was short lived. All operations of electrified rail transit ceased in Lower Providence in 1933. As the trolley lines on Ridge Pike and elsewhere closed, they were replaced with bus service. Motor buses maintained regular schedules to Norristown and Conshohocken while other lines traveled to Reading from Philadelphia.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the automobile emerged as a transportation mode and began to affect many communities. In the Great Depression era, as many as 2,000 trucks crossed Lower Providence daily with coal for Philadelphia and other points in the Delaware Valley. With the growing popularity of the automobile, workers were able to live in Lower Providence and commute to plants and offices in the Norristown-Bridgeport area. There was no modern industry within the township until 1929 when an airplane engine company, known as Lee Motor Company, was established at Germantown Pike and Cross Keys Road. A very modern plant and airplane hangar were erected. The company sold the plant in the early 1930s during the Great Depression. In its place, the company now called Superior Tube was

incorporated in 1934, and has continued to operate at that location, influencing the development of Lower Providence.

In the twentieth century, the rapidly expanding housing market exerted a massive influence on the development of Lower Providence. In the first decades of the century, shortly before the cessation of trolley service, the area south of Ridge Pike in Trooper was plotted and developed with bungalows and American foursquare-style houses. Some infill development occurred in the other villages. A resort-oriented community was established near the confluence of the Schuylkill River and the Perkiomen Creek. However, construction virtually halted during the Great Depression, and a flood in July of 1935 caused the damage or complete loss of many summer homes along both the creek and the river.

After World War II, residential construction began to boom in the township. Following the national trend, formerly rural areas experienced a surge in population as people moved from urban centers to new suburban subdivisions. The completion of the Pennsylvania Turnpike in the early 1950s opened a new era for automobile drivers in the area. During the 1950s, the township's population tripled. The number of houses rose from 1,426 in 1950 to 2,955 in 1960. Along with this boom came related commercial uses. The township's first shopping center, Park Ridge, was developed in the early 1950s. By 1970, two more had been constructed—one in Eagleville and another in Audubon.

All of this development had a sobering effect on the township. The board of supervisors, formed in 1899 with three members and enlarged to five members in 1972, worked with the county planning commission to create the township's first zoning ordinance. After a reportedly contentious meeting at the old Trooper School, the zoning ordinance was adopted on May 3, 1955. Two years later, the

township planning commission was established with five members. The commission's first effort was to create a Limited Industrial Ordinance. It suggested the land bordered by Trooper, Egypt, Rittenhouse, and Audubon Roads as the area for this district. Today, much of this area contains one of the township's most successful developments, the Park Pointe business park, formerly named Valley Forge Corporate Center. Other manifestations of increased development were the establishment of the township's first fire station in 1945 in Eagleville, and the creation of a township police force in 1954. A second fire station was built in Audubon in 1958, only 13 years after the creation of the township's first.

Lower Providence saw continued growth during the 1960s and 1970s. The populations of Audubon and Eagleville increased rapidly as the township experienced its first developments of garden apartments and townhouses in these areas. While development slowed during the 1980s, owing largely to a public sewer moratorium at the Oaks Treatment Plant, this pause was only a temporary situation. When the moratorium was lifted in the late 1980s, development—primarily residential—resumed its rapid pace. This was especially prominent in the area between Audubon and Eagleville where, in a very short time, the rural landscape was transformed to one of cul-de-sacs and detached single-family dwellings. As before, access to transportation helped to drive development. The construction of the US Route 422 expressway through the south end of the township gave Lower Providence a direct connection to the region's highway network in 1985. Residential development continued at a steady rate through the turn of the millennium, but slowed considerably at the onset of the Great Recession in 2007. The rate of housing development gradually increased over the next decade, but remains below historic levels at the present.

Over its long history, Lower Providence Township has undergone periods of immense and rapid change. In just 50 years it grew from a rural landscape, dotted by farms and small villages, to a suburban patchwork of residential subdivisions, shopping centers, and business park development. In this sense, its story is not unique. It is one repeated throughout the country. However, it is a distinct place with a history older than Montgomery County itself. As Lower Providence navigates its fourth century and plans for its future, it will use the policies contained in this plan to balance the need for growth and economic viability, while retaining its history and sense of place.

Demographics

Population

After its founding, Lower Providence remained a rural mix of villages, farms, and woodlands for the next two centuries, slowly growing and changing.

Lower Providence experienced a period of rapid growth beginning in the 1940s with the arrival of suburban development. The growth of the township's population continues to the present day, though the rate of growth has slowed in recent years. In 2020, Lower Providence Township had a population of 25,625.

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) prepares population growth forecasts for the counties of the greater Philadelphia region and their constituent municipalities. In the latest forecast DVRPC predicts moderate growth for the township, projecting that Lower Providence's population will reach 27,942 in the year 2040.

At the present, Lower Providence is one of most populous municipalities in Montgomery County, and outsizes all of its neighboring municipalities except for Upper Merion Township. This situation may not last for long, however, as Upper Providence Township's population has grown at 2% annually,

Figure 2.1 – Lower Providence Population Growth and DVRPC Population Forecast (Decennial Census, DVRPC 2015-2050 Population Forecast)

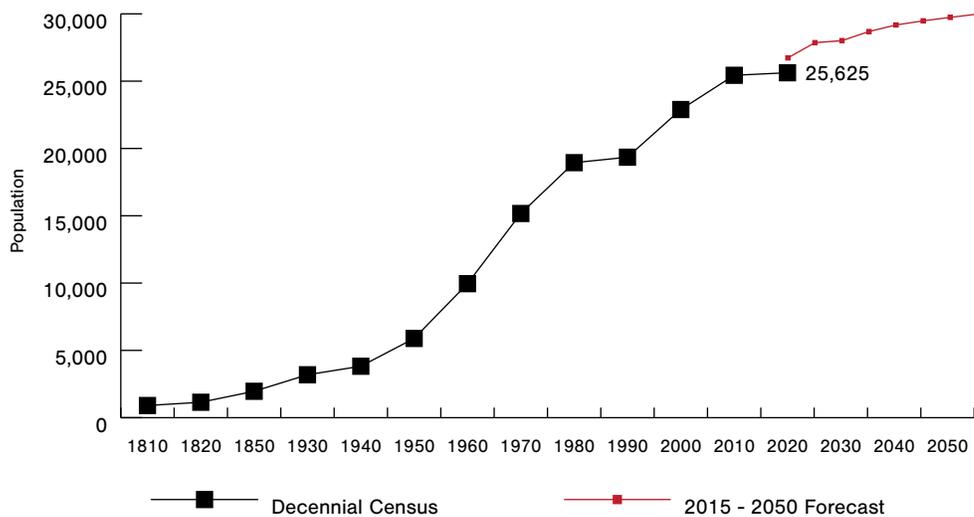


Figure 2.2 – County and Municipal Population and Density Comparison (Decennial Census)

2020 CENSUS	MONTGOMERY COUNTY	LOWER PROVIDENCE	UPPER MERION	UPPER PROVIDENCE	WEST NORRITON	WORCESTER
Total Population:	856,553	25,625	33,613	24,091	16,201	10,317
Area (square miles)	483.0	15.2	17.0	17.8	5.9	16.2
Population Density (people per square mile)	1,773.5	1,680.7	1,973.9	1,352.7	2,750.6	636.1

and will soon surpass Lower Providence if current trends continue.

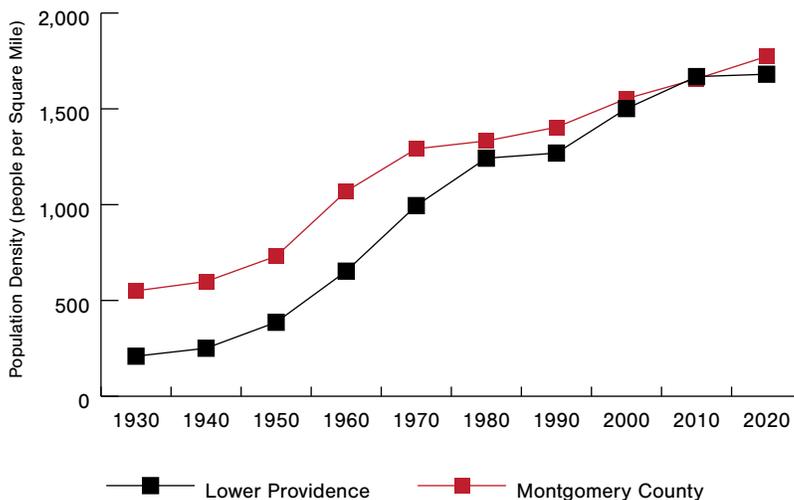
As Lower Providence has developed and grown over time, the township’s population density has increased accordingly. In 2020, Lower Providence had a population density that was slightly less than the density of the county overall. Over the past century, Lower Providence’s rapid development and population growth allowed it to catch up with, and briefly surpass the population density of Montgomery County in the 2010 Census. As

the wave of first-generation suburban greenfield development has subsided in the township and proceeded outward, Montgomery County’s growth continues while Lower Providence’s has slowed.

Age Characteristics

In 2020, the median age of Lower Providence residents was 42.2 years, while the county median age was 41.3 years. Both the county and the township are showing an upward trend in their median ages. Since the year 2000, Lower Providence’s median

Figure 2.3 – County and Lower Providence Population Density Comparison (Decennial Census)



age has increased by 5.7 years and Montgomery County’s has increased by 3.1 years.

The upward trend seen in median ages at the township and county level can be better understood when looking at two age groups within each population: people under the age of 18 and those aged 60 and over. In each population, the township and county, people under 18 years in age are shrinking as a share of their respective

populations, while people 60 years or over are growing. In 2020, 20.6% of Lower Providence’s population was under 18 years, while this age group made up 21.6% of the county’s population. That same year, people 60 years or over made up 23.1% of Lower Providence’s population and 24.7% of the county’s population.

Figure 2.4 - Median Age Comparison
(Decennial Census, ACS 5-Year Estimates)

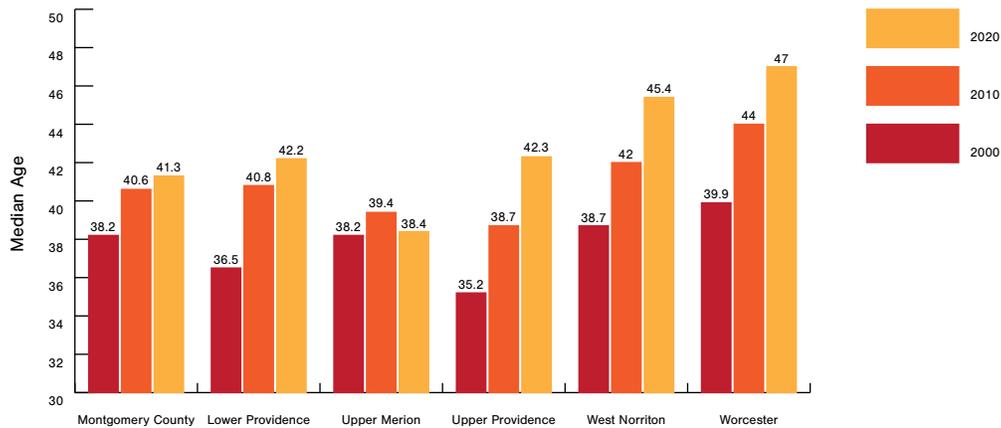
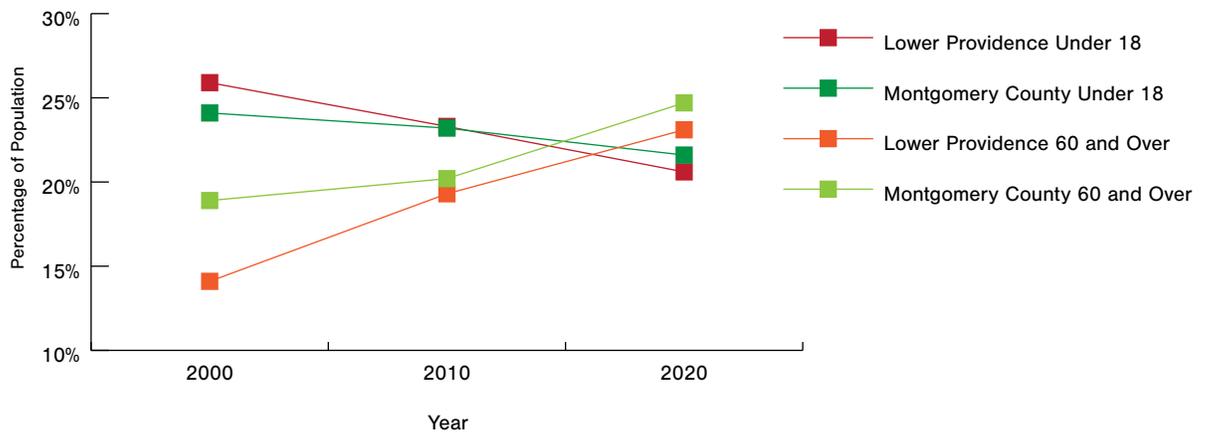


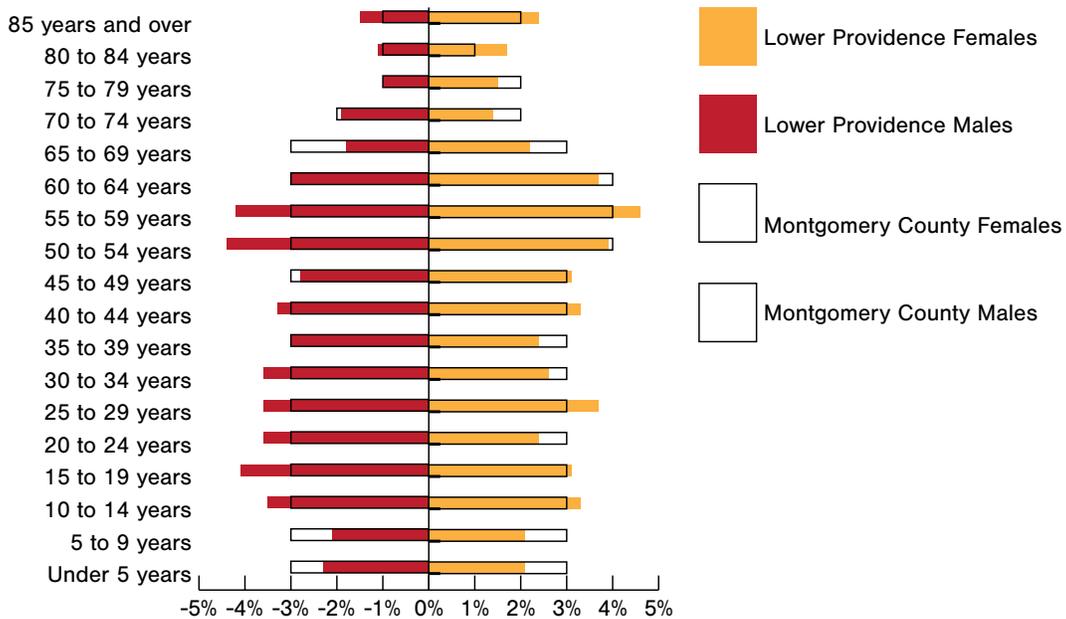
Figure 2.5 - Under 18 and Over 60 Age Groups Comparison
(Decennial Census, ACS 5-Year Estimates)



An age pyramid shows the current age distribution in a population by dividing the population by sex into 5-year cohorts, or age groups. The size of each bar represents how large a share of the total population it contains. In 2020, the population pyramids of Lower Providence and Montgomery County displayed a broad similarity in shape, though with a few noteworthy differences. Each population, the township and the county, had their largest age groups in the age range of 50 to 64 years. The county’s population pyramid has a more continuous profile, with younger age cohorts tapering generally downward in size from the peak in the middle age range. The township, in contrast with the county, has sizable groups over the age of 75 and in the teen and young adult age range. In Lower Providence’s age pyramid, the larger age groups are more prominent and its smaller middle cohorts are proportionally smaller than their counterparts at the county level.

In Lower Providence’s age pyramid, there are a couple of very distinctive features that set it apart. The township has a disproportionately large number of males across a wide range of adult age cohorts, though this is especially pronounced in the younger adult cohorts. Across the 15 to 74 year old age groups, there are over 1,000 more males than females. This disparity is primarily attributable to the presence of the Montgomery County Correctional Facility. The population of the correctional facility is counted among the township’s residents at the time of each census and American Community Survey. The 2020 Census recorded 1,236 people living in adult correctional facilities in Lower Providence Township. Lower Providence’s population also stands out from the county for having a relatively large population of older adults. This may be due, in part, to the presence of Shannondell, a large age-restricted residential development located in the township.

Figure 2.6 - Township and County Age Pyramid (ACS 5-Year Estimates)



Race and Ethnicity

The diverse and growing population of Montgomery County is closely matched by the composition of its larger municipalities, like Lower Providence and neighboring communities. The racial and ethnic diversity of Lower Providence’s population is generally similar to that of its neighbors, but more closely matches that of the county than any adjacent township.

In recent decades, the populations of Lower Providence Township and Montgomery County have gained in diversity. Minority race and ethnic

groups comprise an increasing share of the township and county population, following along the nationwide trend. In the 2000 Census, a majority of Lower Providence residents identified as White alone, with only 13.7% of the township identifying in a minority group. In 2020, the share of Lower Providence residents identifying in a minority group has grown to 25.4% of the township.

Immigration is a major source of Lower Providence’s growing diversity, with roughly 4,000 residents- over 15% of the township’s population- having been born outside of the United States.

Figure 2.7 - Municipal and County Racial Diversity Comparison (Decennial Census)

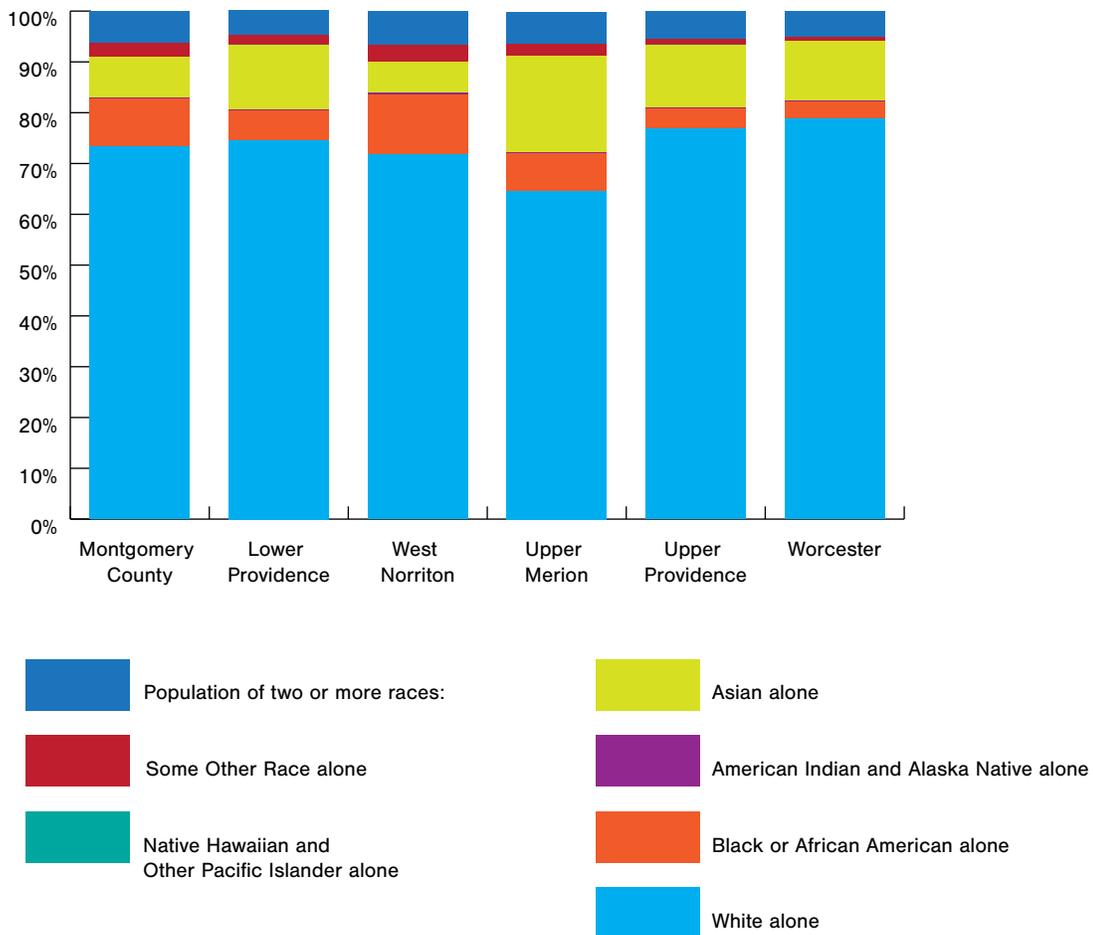
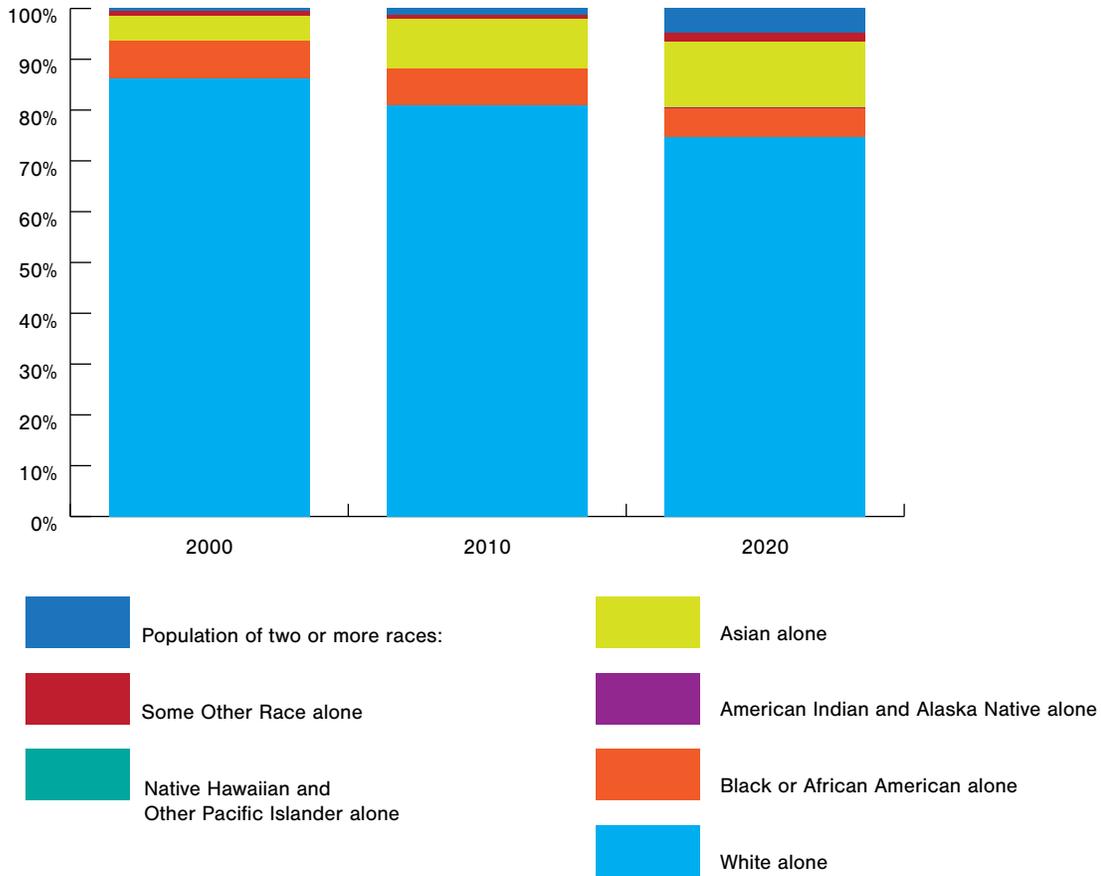


Figure 2.8 - Lower Providence Racial Diversity (Decennial Census)



In Lower Providence and throughout the region, people of Hispanic or Latino ethnicities are becoming a larger part of the community. From 2000 to 2020, number of people in Lower Providence identifying as Hispanic or Latino grew from 2.1% to 4.6% of the township’s population. Over that same period, the Hispanic or Latino population of Montgomery County grew from 2.0% to 6.4%.

Existing Land Use

Lower Providence is a large and growing community and its landscape is filled with homes, businesses, parks, and a variety of other land uses.



The age-restricted development, Shannondell, is the single largest multifamily residential development in the township.

The many activities that take place on different properties throughout the township can be grouped with similar types land uses and labeled together as a land use category.

At the present, residential land uses make up the largest land use category in the township. The vast majority of the residential land in the township consists of the t the present, residential land uses make up the largest land use category in the township. The vast majority of the residential land in the township consists of the **Single Family Detached** land use- the typical suburban housing development type. The second-largest residential

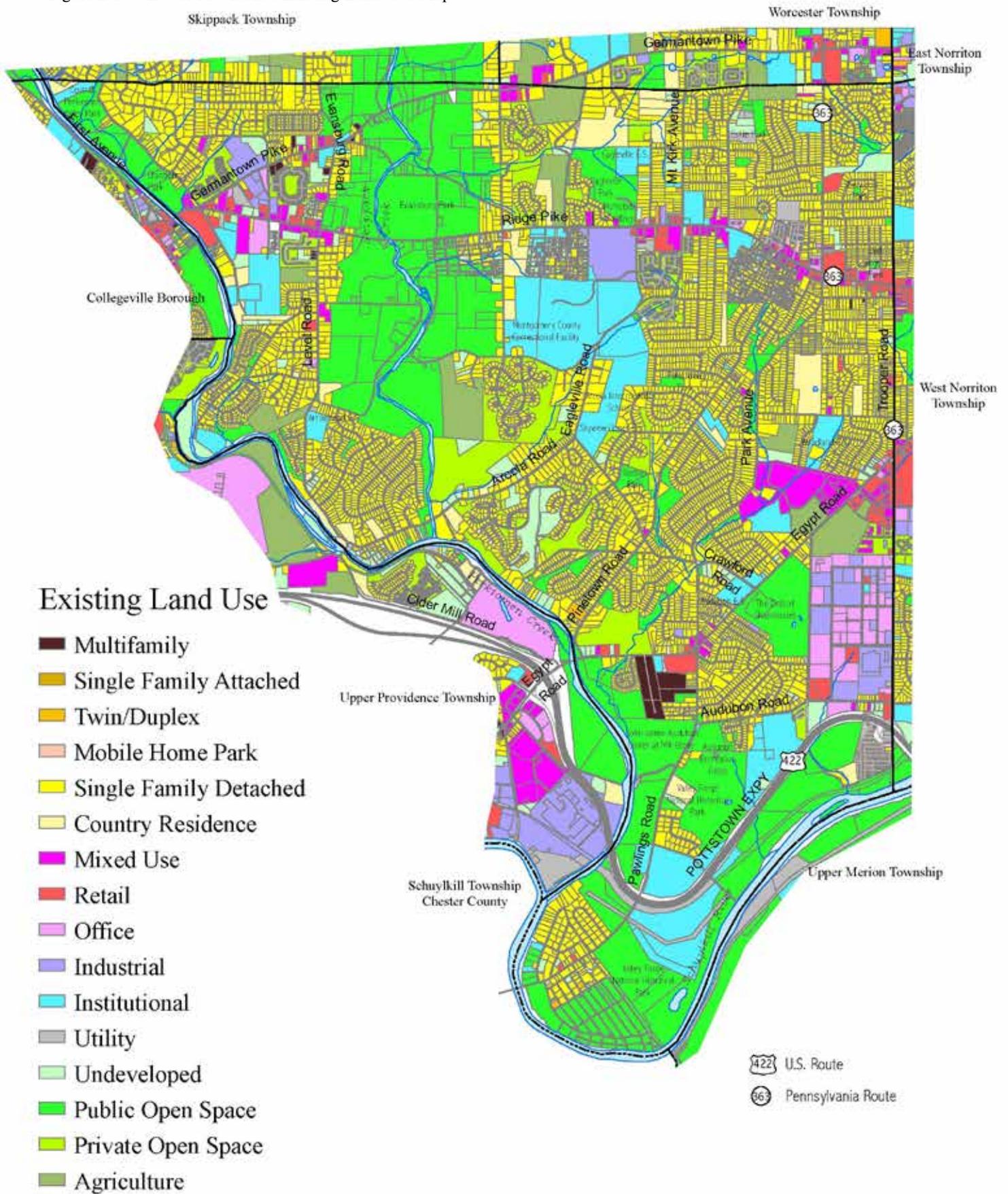
land use, **Country Residence** consists of single-family detached housing on lots of 5 acres or more. All other residential land uses amount to less than 2% of the township’s area. The **Multifamily** (i.e. apartments or condominiums), and **Mobile Home Park** land uses are each found almost exclusively in a small number of distinct clusters throughout the township. **Single Family Attached** (i.e. townhouses) housing also occurs in large, discrete developments but they are more numerous and widely spread in Lower Providence. The smallest residential land use, **Twin or Duplex**, is found only in small and isolated instances that are scattered throughout older areas of development.

Figure 2.9 – Lower Providence Existing Land Use Table (Montgomery County Planning Commission)

CATEGORY	LAND USE	ACRES	PERCENTAGE
Residential – 43.4% 3,857.9 acres	Single Family Detached	3,491.7	39.3%
	Country Residence	241.2	2.71%
	Multifamily	53.0	0.60%
	Mobile Home Park	36.9	0.41%
	Single Family Attached	35.2	0.40%
	Twin or Duplex	22.7	0.26%
Open Space – 31.3% 2,777.9 acres	Public Open Space	2,305.3	25.94%
	Private Open Space	472.7	5.32%
Commercial and Industrial – 8.3% 739.2 acres	Mixed Use	218.8	2.46%
	Industrial	199.3	2.24%
	Retail	165.9	1.87%
	Office	155.1	1.75%
	Institutional	774.2	8.71%
	Undeveloped	379.8	4.27%
	Agriculture	260.9	2.94%
	Utilities	72.8	0.82%
	TOTAL	8,885.4	

TOWNSHIP PROFILE

Figure 2.10 - Lower Providence Existing Land Use Map



After residential land uses, the second-largest category is open space. This category comprises all permanently-preserved open space, whether it is publicly- or privately-owned. The many public parks in Lower Providence- including those owned by the township, county, state, and federal government- are all counted as **Public Open Space** and contribute to its ranking as the second-largest land use in the township, after Single Family Detached housing. The main source of **Private Open Space** is the land development process. As a result, this land use is commonly found in association with residential subdivisions.

The land uses grouped into the commercial and industrial category are the epicenter of Lower Providence's economic activity. The largest example of this category is the Park Pointe business park, located west of Trooper Road, in the southeast corner of the township. This grouping of land uses accounts for much of the private-sector employment in Lower Providence. Despite their economic

significance, the commercial and industrial land uses in the township only amount to slightly over one square mile. The largest land use in this category, **Mixed Use**, includes properties where an assortment of other land uses are together in close combination on a single lot, and oftentimes within a single building. Many Mixed Use properties include a residential element in combination with office, retail, or some other commercial use. **Industrial** land use has a long history in Lower Providence and, though it occupies a relatively small area, the township's factories and other industrial operations are major employers and landmarks in the community. **Retail** and **Office** land uses make up the remainder of the township's commercial area. These two land uses are common along Lower Providence's major arterial roads, and include the many stores, restaurants, and professional offices that fill these activity centers.

The label of **Institutional** land use is applied to a range of properties occupied by a variety of public



The Audubon Square shopping center and neighboring Park Pointe Business Park make up the largest cluster of commercial and industrial land in Lower Providence.



Many institutional properties like Lower Providence Presbyterian Church (left) and the Montgomery County Emergency Operations Center (right) are prominent features of the township.

and private entities. Government facilities, schools, and religious institutions are among the more common instances of this land use. A significant portion of the township remains in Institutional use, but this share has been decreasing over time. The Montgomery County Emergency Operations campus accounts for a large portion of Lower Providence’s Institutional land, and adjoins two others: Eagleville Hospital, and the combined Arcola Intermediate-Skyview Elementary school campus.

A century ago, nearly all of Lower Providence could have been labeled as either **Agriculture** (e.g. farms, timber stands) or **Undeveloped** (i.e. properties with no other active use). In the present day, these two land uses have a combined area of just one square mile. Although a sizeable amount of the land formerly in those uses has since been preserved as open space, Lower Providence’s rapid suburbanization in the mid- to late-twentieth century consumed the larger share of the pastures, cropland, orchards, and woodlands that used to cover the township. This mode of development—building on previously undeveloped or agricultural land—is known as “greenfield development”. The few properties that remain in Lower Providence as Agriculture or Undeveloped land face increasing pressure as opportunities for both greenfield development and open space preservation dwindle.

The last portion of the township is classified as **Utilities**, the land use that is home to the installations that keep Lower Providence’s systems of water, sewer, electrical, and communications infrastructure operating. Altogether, the properties hosting these pieces of vital infrastructure amount to less than one percent of the township’s area. It should be noted, however, that this land use does not include the area within the rights-of-way of Lower Providence’s road network, where large portions of these infrastructure networks are located.

All the properties in the township are classified into one land use or another and have a combined area of 13.9 square miles. Public rights-of-way, waterways, and other unparceled areas are not included in the accounting of existing land uses. These unparceled areas comprise the roughly 1.3 square miles that is within the township’s boundaries but not included in any parcel.

Community: Services and Facilities

Chapter 3 - Lower Providence Township Comprehensive Plan

Over the course of more than three centuries, several different villages sprouted and grew in Lower Providence, slowly connecting with one another to give the township its current form. This chapter identifies some of the distinct places that make up the township, and the organizations and services that support and unite the community.

Community Identity

The physical character of a place combined with its people, history, organizations, and culture, create

the community and identity of that place. In the centuries since its founding, Lower Providence has grown from a collection of separate villages into a modern suburban township. The township has public parks and trails, a plethora of active community organizations, and popular community events that bring residents and visitors together. Still, the names of the villages, the institutions and buildings from their earlier eras endure, helping to provide each village with its own sense of place. As a result, the names of Eagleville, Audubon, and Evansburg are well-known to many people and



Coordinated signage using the township’s name and logo mark entrances to the business park and welcome travelers at the east end of Ridge Pike.

more readily identified and located than Lower Providence Township as a whole.

It is a goal of this plan to build the township's common sense of identity. The current situation, in which certain places within the township have stronger name recognition than the township itself, is an opportunity for Lower Providence to enhance its community identity. By embracing and cultivating the uniqueness of its different communities, the township can become more flexible and adaptable. Nurturing the distinct attributes and strengths of each community would allow them to specialize, enabling Lower Providence to offer a greater variety of experiences and opportunities to attract residents and businesses.

This approach can be enhanced through signage that both identifies Lower Providence's distinct activity centers and ties them to the township's shared identity using Lower Providence's existing system of signage designs. The shared commu-

nity identity of Lower Providence can be further supported through public events or activities and celebrations of the township's rich history. As residents begin to associate themselves with the unique character of their neighborhood and the shared culture of the township, they may develop an increased sense of community. Lower Providence should work to ensure that an increasingly diverse population can be a strong community through welcoming, community-building activities, such as community days.

Historical Resources

Lower Providence retains many significant historic properties from its centuries-long history. In recognition of their value to the community, many historic properties or districts with concentrations of historic properties have been listed, or deemed eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places. Receiving a National



The Audubon Sunday School is one of the resources in the township that is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Historic Listing does not preserve a property or prohibit its demolition unless the project involving demolition includes funding from state or federal sources. Several properties in Lower Providence that were previously evaluated and either listed or noted as being eligible for listing have since been demolished or destroyed. There may be other properties with historic value that have not been evaluated for listing or preservation. A survey of historic resources would be needed to fully assess the number and condition of historic resources within the township.

Identifying and documenting key historic resources is the first step to preservation. Of the many historic resources have been identified in Lower Providence, some are well-documented and have listings on the National Register of Historic Places or are recognized as National Historic Landmarks. Historic resources that are not on the National Register of Historic Places may be just as significant as those that are listed. In order to be listed on the National Register, a person or group must take the resource through the nomination process including researching and documenting the history and making a case for its importance. See the Historic Resources Inventory appendix for more details.

The State Historic Preservation Office, known in Pennsylvania as the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC), has a program to support local governments in historic preservation efforts. This Certified Local Government (CLG) program opens up additional grant funding and technical assistance for governments who qualify. To become a Certified Local Government, Lower Providence would need to enhance certain historic preservation policies in its ordinances to demonstrate their commitment to historic preservation. Current ordinances provide some accommodations for preserving and reusing historic structures in

certain areas of the township, particularly its villages. A historic preservation overlay created through the township's zoning ordinance can create incentives for preserving historic resources throughout Lower Providence. For example, owners of resources on a local historic inventory might be permitted to have some of the following uses in zoning districts where they otherwise would not be permitted: accessory dwelling unit, bed & breakfast business, mix of uses, multi-family use, or home office. In addition, a zoning overlay can anticipate possible future concerns, such as the potential closing of churches, by allowing conversion of historic religious or fraternal buildings to residential or other uses by right. A zoning overlay for historic resources could also include provisions to reduce parking requirements on lots with a designated historic building or require historically accurate renovations or improvements to a building within the overlay.

Evansburg Historic District

This historic district was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1972 and includes over 50 listed properties. This district is centered on the historic Skippack Bridge and encompasses the village of Evansburg. Located just beyond this district, the Perkiomen Bridge is listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NHRP). The township's EVC Evansburg Village Commercial zoning district helps to protect the historic character of this area.

Mill Grove

Located on the grounds of Montgomery County's John James Audubon Center, this property was the first home of the famous naturalist after he arrived in the United States in 1803. This estate was built in the 1760s and is recognized as a National Historic Landmark (NHL) and listed

on the National Register of Historic Places. This historic homestead is accessible to the public and is a popular stop for birdwatching on the Audubon Loop Trail.

Valley Forge NHP

Valley Forge National Historic Park occupies a large area in the south end of the township. While the majority of this park and its historic sites are located across the Schuylkill River in Upper Merion Township, the land and buildings preserved in Lower Providence played a significant role during the Continental Army's winter encampment from 1777 to 1778. The main feature in this portion of the park is Pawling Farm. Much of the area is accessible to the public, and features several miles of trails.

Community Organizations and Services

This section provides an overview of public and private institutions that operate in the township and provide services to Lower Providence residents. Other organizations, located outside of the township, may provide Lower Providence residents with vital services that are not available in the township or are easier to access in neighboring communities. An example of this would be residents making use of senior centers or community centers in Norristown or other nearby municipalities.

Lower Providence is well served by youth sports organizations, scout troops, and other programs for children. These types of organizations do a lot to foster social connections among the township's children and families, and contribute to the social cohesion of the township. The addition of programming targeted towards households who do not participate in the popular, prominent youth programs would help foster connections

between more community members. As the township continues to grow and evolve, other organizations and programs are needed to serve the growing variety of households. Other programming or public spaces may be needed to accommodate the needs of seniors, households without children, single-person households, and other growing groups.

Religious and Cultural Institutions

Lower Providence Township is home to many institutions with significant religious, social, and cultural roles for their communities. The following list notes where institutions host programs that serve the public. Many such programs that are located outside of the township receive support from, or operate in partnership with, institutions on this list and may serve Lower Providence residents. Religious institutions may offer opportunities for partnership with township leaders for communication and service delivery.

Lower Providence does not have a dedicated community center or senior center, though the library hosts some of these types of services and activities, and others can be found at facilities in nearby municipalities and through private organizations in the township. The senior and youth populations of Lower Providence may benefit from targeted services and programming.

There are no senior centers in Lower Providence that provide general services to the senior population. The Montgomery County Office of Aging and Adult Services (MCAAS) supports 12 senior centers around the county. The nearest one to Lower Providence is located in Norristown – about a 15 minute drive, or 25 minute bus trip from the township's municipal campus.

MCAAS works to improve generally the quality of life for older and disabled adults in Montgomery County, including conducting surveys and formu-

NAME	ADDRESS	NOTES
Calvary Chapel of Norristown	601 N Park Ave	Operates a food pantry
Cornerstone Fellowship	1170 Rittenhouse Rd	
Eastern PA Conference of the United Methodist Church	980 Madison Ave	
Evansburg United Methodist Church	3871 Germantown Pike	
Gan Israel County Day Camp	4102 Township Line Rd	
Iqra Institute	2550 Eisenhower Ave	
Lower Providence Baptist Church	3430 Ridge Pike	
Lower Providence Presbyterian Church	3050 Ridge Pike	
Saint Andrew's Lutheran Church	2725 Egypt Rd	
Saint James' Episcopal Church	3768 Germantown Pike	Operates Outreach House food pantry and charity
Thomas Paine Unitarian Universalist Fellowship	3424 Ridge Pike	
Valley View Community Church	778 Sunnyside Ave	
Vedagita Center Inc., Sri Shiva Vishnu Temple	3801 Ridge Pike	
Victory Church	2650 Audubon Road	

lating plans to improve the life of seniors. Through public outreach to seniors, the main concerns they identified among the older population were transportation access, support and assistance for aging in place, affordable housing, and access to information on available services. MCAAS's goals in their five-year plan are to promote existing services, improve access to services, enhance the quality of services, and empower the workforce (assistance and support for seniors who want to be employed). Their research can inform Lower Providence and support seniors with the things they most need.¹

Although some services are available in the area, there is a need to add programming and services for youth and seniors in the township. The addition of teen activities and social spaces,

and an increase in assistance and activities for seniors would benefit Lower Providence residents. Partnerships with the school district, the library, senior housing providers, and other entities may allow for these additional services.

The SAGA Community Center in Hatboro aims to serve LGBTQ+ people in Montgomery and Bucks Counties with events and a "Queer Library."² Events include movies and activities, support groups, and open mic nights. This community resource serves a much wider geographic area than just the Borough of Hatboro, but is located rather far from Lower Providence and township residents may find it difficult or inconvenient to access these services. The LGBT Equality Alliance is closer to the township, located in the borough of Phoenixville, but it is focused on providing

¹ <https://www.montcopa.org/148/Senior-Services>

² <https://www.sagahatboro.com/>

services in Chester County³. There may be need for additional outreach to ascertain the need or demand for local services and programming in Lower Providence among LGBTQ+ residents of the township.

Food Access

Access to food and nutrition is a fundamental need of all community members and a vital component of a community's quality of life. Residents of Lower Providence have many local supermarkets and grocery stores to choose from. The township is home to four supermarkets and Apka Bazar Indian grocery store, with many other supermarkets and food stores located nearby in surrounding communities. Food stores in Lower Providence and surrounding areas are concentrated along major arterials, namely Egypt Road and Ridge Pike. Public transit access to grocery stores is good, though many residential areas of the township do not have easy access to transit.

Lower Providence is served by two food pantries: Daily Bread Community Food Pantry and Outreach House of St. James' Episcopal Church. Both of these food pantries are located in or near Evansburg, in the northwest corner of the township. Residents who need these services may find this location inconvenient to access compared to food pantries located in more developed areas or on transit lines in neighboring communities.

The Senior Adult Activities Center of Montgomery County (SAAC), in Norristown, offers Meals on Wheels deliveries to qualifying residents of Lower Providence. Residents who are at least 60 years old and are homebound qualify for this service.

SAAC, located on the west side of Norristown, also offers classes, events, and other services for seniors at their facility and online.

Community Health and Safety

The physical environment can impact public health in many ways. The built environment can affect air and water quality, opportunities for physical activity and active transportation, social isolation and loneliness, and mental health. For example, decades of transportation planning that has prioritized vehicular movement has created challenges for many communities related to walkability, air quality, and community character. Infrastructure and land use can support or hinder healthy and more environmentally friendly behaviors.

Anything that can make people's default decisions healthy will have positive impacts for residents. The easiest way to influence behavior in a healthy direction is to make doing healthy things easier. For example, working to make a community easy, safe, convenient, and pleasant to walk through can encourage people to choose walking instead of driving.

People, places, events, and stories contribute to the identity of a community, and create opportunities for residents to interact with each other. Social isolation is a risk factor for suicide, depression, opioid misuse, and other conditions. Social isolation is a particular risk for the elderly due to the increased potential for limited mobility, but can be a problem for anyone. Adding public spaces to the built environment and increasing programming and events can help combat the increase in social isolation in our society.

When people feel a sense of belonging and connection to each other, they have better mental health outcomes. Community events help foster

³ <https://lgbteachesco.org/>

a sense of community and encourage people to identify with their community. Community events can bridge gaps between different populations of residents and may attract visitors who support local businesses. Marketing, branding, and communication will help strengthen the positive image of Lower Providence as a place both among residents and visitors.

Preserving and enhancing Lower Providence’s public spaces such as pocket parks and plazas will improve the sense of pride residents have in their community and increase opportunities for casual social interactions. Public projects like murals, streetscape amenities, and park improvements contribute to a positive sense of place and social opportunities.

While it is not a pronounced concern in Lower Providence, misuse of opioids is an ongoing, widespread issue. In Montgomery County as a whole, 34 percent of deaths of people ages 15 – 44 were from opioid overdoses. Nationwide, the leading cause of death for people under 50 is a drug overdose.⁴ There are many causes of drug addiction and overdose, and solutions are not simple. Responding to the crisis at the local level is challenging, but improving community connections and the social safety net and reducing social isolation may help.⁵

Access to Health Care Services

Access to health care improves health outcomes for residents. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, about 99 percent of Lower Providence residents have health insurance coverage. This is

FIGURE 3.1 RATES OF HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE
(SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS, AMERICAN COMMUNITIES SURVEY, 2019
5-YEAR ESTIMATES)

GEOGRAPHY	PERCENT OF RESIDENTS WITH ANY HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE
Lower Providence	99.0
Lower Merion	98.0
Upper Providence	98.0
West Norriton	94.5
Worcester	100.0
Montgomery County	98.1

an excellent rate and similar to the comparison municipalities. Many types of health care providers have offices within the township, including primary care doctors for adults and children, many types of specialists, including dental and orthodontics providers, physical therapists, and chiropractors. Lower Providence does not have a full-service hospital within its borders. Township residents needing emergency care or other hospital services are primarily served by Einstein Medical Center Montgomery in East Norriton Township and Phoenixville Hospital in Phoenixville Borough (Chester County). Access to such facilities can be considered both as an issue of transportation planning and land use planning. With high rates of health insurance coverage and convenient access to multiple providers, Lower Providence residents generally have good healthcare opportunities.

Montgomery County is rich with health-related programs and resources. The Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) offers a wide variety of programs and referrals.

4 Katz, J. (2017, October 26). "You Draw It: Just How Bad is the Drug Overdose Epidemic?" New York Times, <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/04/14/upshot/drug-overdose-epidemic-you-draw-it.html>

5 Katz, J. (2018, February 4). "How a Police Chief, a Governor and a Sociologist Would Spend \$100 Billion to Solve the Opioid Crisis." New York Times <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/02/14/upshot/opioid-crisis-solutions.html>, and Peele, S. (2017, March 16). "The Solution to the Opioid Crisis." Psychology Today <https://www.psychologytoday.com/intl/blog/addiction-in-society/201703/the-solution-the-opioid-crisis>.

HHS itself hosts many programs for families, including Nurse-Family Partnership, Maternal and Child Health Home Visiting Program, Cribs for Kids Program, Infant CPR Training Program, and Safe Sleep Presentations. They also maintain a lengthy document with many other programs that can assist children and families with a wide variety of services. Resources and connections are also available for seniors, veterans, people with disabilities, and teens. They can refer anyone who is having trouble meeting basic needs to resources for housing and food assistance through their Navicates program.

Another local service provider is The Lincoln Center for Family and Youth, located in the Park Pointe business park. The Lincoln Center describes itself as “a nonprofit, human services, community-based organization that provides alternative education, coaching, and counseling services to individuals and families in the Greater Philadelphia Area.”⁶ The organization operates an alternative education facility and provides its other services from its site in Lower Providence.

Emergency Services

Lower Providence has excellent emergency services located in the township. Dedicated emergency responders arrive quickly from nearby police, fire, and ambulance stations. Some emergency services are provided directly by township government employees (police service), and some are provided by quasi-governmental and non-profit organizations (fire and ambulance service). All of these services are covered in this section.

All emergency calls (911) in Lower Providence are routed through the countywide emergency call center, and then directed to the appropriate local emergency service provider. Montgomery County also provides a text to 9-1-1 service within the

county. In addition, County residents can provide information to emergency service providers before an emergency incident occurs using the Smart911 service. If an emergency call is received from a number that has a Smart911 profile, that information is displayed to providers who respond to the call. The county emergency services website provides a list of all active incidents at any given time.

Ready MontCo, a countywide notification system, is available to residents of the township for emergency notifications via text, email, and telephone. Lower Providence emergency management is able to access Ready MontCo to send notifications to anyone who signed up for the township’s emergency notifications.

The COVID-19 pandemic has recently added a new set of funding and operational challenges to emergency services. In response, Pennsylvania’s Fire Company and Emergency Service Grant Program has been augmented to provide fire companies and EMS with additional funding support.⁷

Police

The Lower Providence Police Department operates from the township’s municipal building in Eagleville. The department is a professional law enforcement organization consisting of 32 police officers, one accreditation manager, and one civilian dispatcher. The department operates in two units: the Patrol Division and the Detective Division.

The Patrol Division is the larger of the two units and is responsible for primary police services provided to the township. Specialized units within the Patrol Division include the Traffic Unit which conducts activities related to traffic enforcement and traffic safety, and the Bicycle Patrol Unit. The Detective Division investigates criminal offenses that occur within the township.

⁶ <https://thelincolncenter.com/>

⁷ Details about the Fire Company and Emergency Medical Service Grant Program can be found at <https://www.osfc.pa.gov/GrantsandLoans/Volunteer%20Fire%20Company%20And%20Ambulance%20Grants/Pages/default.aspx>

The police department operates several outreach and crime prevention programs to educate the public, improve communications, and promote public safety.

Fire

Lower Providence Fire Department (LPFD) is a volunteer fire company that has served Lower Providence Township since 1945. The fire department has mutual aid agreements with those in neighboring Montgomery County municipalities and in Norristown, Trappe, and Limerick Township. Fire departments in mutual aid agreements provide each other with service during emergencies. The LPFD has two firehouses in the township. One is located in the township's northern end on Ridge Pike at the intersection of East Mount Kirk Avenue. The other, in Audubon, is shared with Lower Providence EMS and located on Lark Lane.

Recruitment of volunteers has declined over time, and the force is aging. The equipment and duties of fire departments have increased in complexity. Training has become much more demanding; currently 199 hours of training is required to become a basic firefighter. The truck has to have a minimum of four qualified firefighters in order to go out on a call. All of these factors have presented difficulties to Pennsylvania's volunteer fire departments, leading to a decline in their number.

The LPFD receives funding from the township government, and conducts fundraising activities including the annual Firemen's Fair- a popular community event held at the department's firehouse on Ridge Pike, in Eagleville. Other support is available through state grant programs.



The larger of Lower Providence's two fire stations is located in Eagleville, at the intersection of Ridge Pike and East Mount Kirk Avenue.

EMS

The township is served by Lower Providence Emergency Medical Service, Medic 322. Lower Providence EMS is a non-profit organization and operates four ambulances from two stations. This organization also provides services in Worcester and Upper Providence townships. The main station of Lower Providence EMS is located at the township's municipal campus. The service's substation is located at 24 Lark Lane and is shared with Lower Providence Fire Department.

Public Facilities

The township has facilities within its boundaries that are owned and operated by every level of government ranging from the township up to the United States government. These properties and the facilities located on them provide services to township residents, are places of employment, and constitute a significant fraction of the township's land. Many of these facilities serve primarily recreational functions. The numerous recreation facilities in Lower Providence are the subject of the township's Parks and Open Space plan update and are studied and planned for in that document.

Township Facilities

Lower Providence is incorporated as a second-class township. The township's governing body is a Board of Supervisors. The board consists of five supervisors who are elected to serve six-year terms. The board appoints all advisory and regulatory boards, including the Business Development Committee, Environmental Advisory Council, Finance Committee, Parks and Recreation Board, Planning Commission, Sewer Authority, Vacancy Board, and Zoning Hearing Board. Everyday operations of the township are run by a Township Manager, Chief of Police, and their staffs. Most of the township's administrative staff and other departments operate out of the Lower Providence Municipal Building.

Opportunities to improve the efficiency of government services may be realized by cooperating with other municipalities and entities. Joint planning efforts, especially in areas such as stormwater management and transportation, can yield more effective results than planning alone. Partnerships and connections outside of the township can bring services to the residents that might not be feasible otherwise. Regional planning or regional coordination may have benefits in terms of land use and services. Lower Providence already collaborates



Lower Providence's government, administration, and police department are housed together in the Township Building (left) beside the Lower Providence Community Library (right) in the municipal campus in Eagleville.

with other communities in the Skippack Creek watershed on stormwater management planning.

One of the busiest divisions of the township is the Community Development Department. This department is responsible for the review of subdivision and land development, zoning, and building plans, issuance of permits, and the inspection of all commercial and residential construction activity. Many code enforcement, stormwater related, and floodplain administration issues are also administered by this department.

Among the township's departments, few have a more public-facing role than the Parks and Recreation Department. The programs, parks, and open spaces maintained by this department were studied in detail in the recent Parks and Open Space Plan.

The municipal building also serves as the township's police station and makes up the township's Eagleville Municipal Campus with the nearby Lower Providence Community Library and Lower Providence EMS station. The municipal campus is centrally located on Ridge Pike, but the facilities are set away from the road, embedded in Eagleville Park on Parklane Drive.

Public works is another major department. The township's Public Works Department and is responsible for maintaining approximately 92 miles of Township Roadways. The department is also responsible for repairing storm sewer inlets, maintenance of all traffic lights within the township, replacing old or damaged road signs, and trimming tree branches and bushes along township roads. The township's public works facility is located at the entrance to Eskie Park, on Church Road.

Communication is key to ensuring transparency and reassuring residents that government is active and responsive. Lower Providence Township has a website, Facebook page, and a quarterly newsletter

which they use to keep residents, property owners, and business owners informed of township's news and events. As media and communication technology evolves and transform people's habits, public and private organization alike should evaluate the effectiveness of their communications strategies. The COVID-19 pandemic has spurred municipalities to test new tools and gain experience with virtual meetings. Going forward, municipalities may find new ways to reach their citizens while satisfying their legal obligations regarding public notice and communication.

Library

The township is served by Lower Providence Community Library, located in Eagleville on the municipal campus. The library offers residents multiple programs serving adults, teens, and children. The services provided by the Lower Providence Community Library go beyond the collection of digital and physical media resources to include yoga and wellness instruction, community activities, and more.

Lower Providence Community Library is a member of the Montgomery County Library & Information Network Consortium (MCLINC), a non-profit organization that facilitates cooperation and resource sharing between 16 member communities in the county.

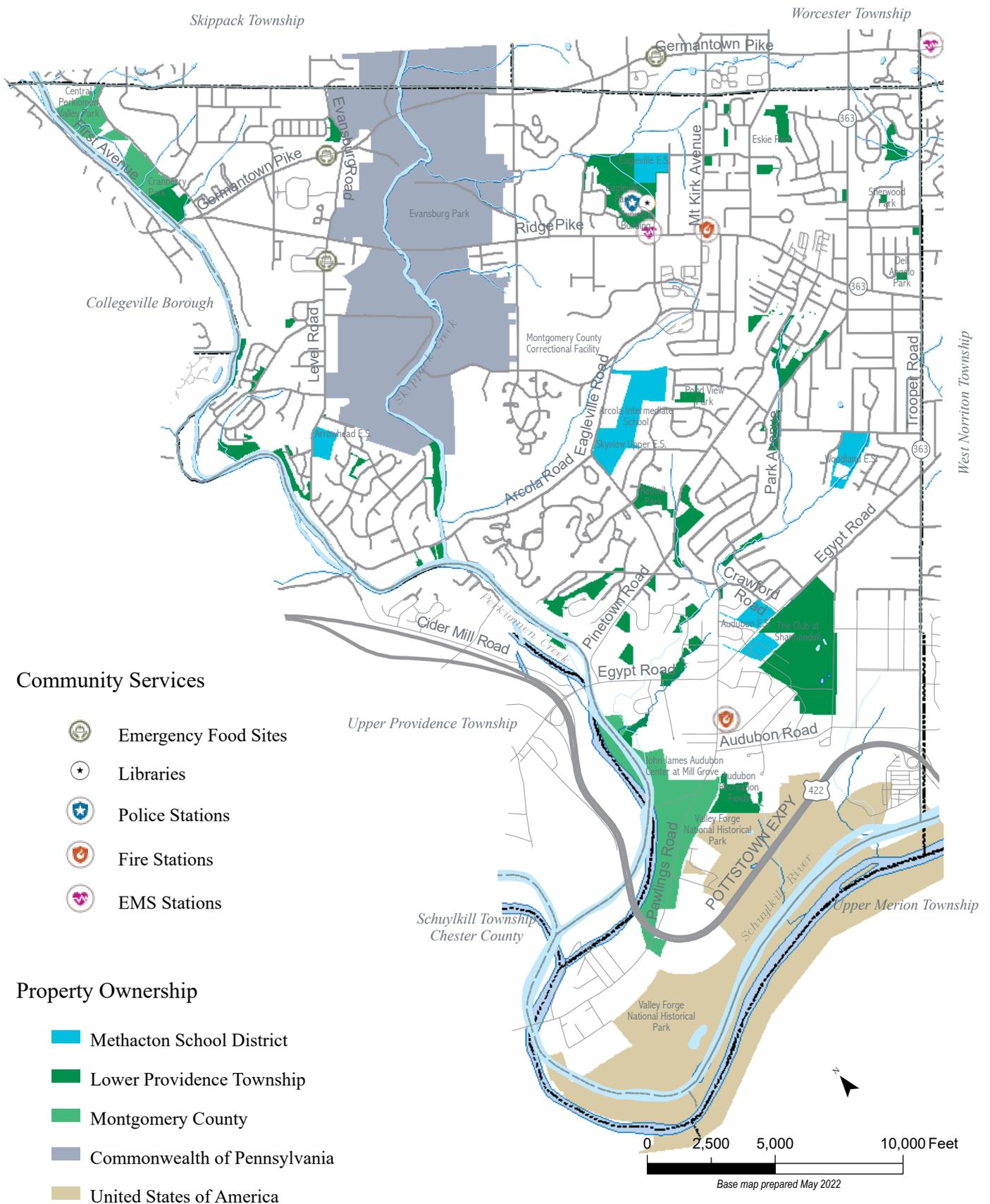
The library is a key part of the community, and a resource valued highly by residents. The library should be supported and accessed as a partner for the township government in community outreach and events.

Schools

Lower Providence and Worcester Townships make up the Methacton School District. The school district has seven facilities, five of which

COMMUNITY SERVICES

FIGURE 3.2 – PUBLIC FACILITIES AND COMMUNITY SERVICES MAP



are located in Lower Providence. Of these five sites, four are currently in operation. Audubon Elementary was closed in 2018 and the site is currently not in use. A new school building is now being constructed on the grounds of Arrowhead Elementary to replace the site's current building. Total kindergarten through 12th grade enrollment in the Methacton School District is approximately 4,800 students. An additional 147 students have chosen to enroll in North MontCo Tech Career Center and 66 students attend charter schools. The district employs about 700 people.

Per Pennsylvania's Future Ready School Index, 18 percent of students are eligible for special education services, and 3.2 percent are English Language Learners. 15 percent of students are considered economically disadvantaged. <https://futurereadypa.org/>

Arcola Intermediate and Skyview Upper Elementary share one campus. The two schools are attached buildings located in the middle of the township on Eagleville Road. This site hosts all of the district's grades 5 through 8 students.

Arrowhead Elementary is located in the west end of the township on Level Road. This school provides Kindergarten and grades 1 through 4 for students from the northwest portion of the township.

Eagleville Elementary is located in the east end of the township, adjacent to Eagleville Park and the municipal campus. This facility hosts kindergarten and grades 1 through 4 for students living in

eastern Lower Providence and the southern edge of Worcester Township.

Woodland Elementary is located on Woodland Avenue, in southeastern Lower Providence. This school provides kindergarten and grades 1 through 4 for students living in the southern end of the township, including the Audubon area.

Lower Providence may find opportunities for collaboration with the school district on classes for parents, community events, and youth services and programs and shared use of township and school district facilities.

The Montgomery County Intermediate Unit operates The Anderson School in the Park Pointe at Lower Providence Business Park. This facility serves students in grades 7 through 12 from across Montgomery County, providing needed academic, emotional, social, and therapeutic support. Many private schools are located throughout the area, offering alternative education options. The recently-established private elementary school Red Bridge Montessori House is one such example, and the only one located in the township.

Multiple private daycares and preschools are located in Lower Providence and serve the youngest school students in the township. The school district will begin offering full-day kindergarten in the 2022-2023 school year.

Lower Providence residents must leave the township for postsecondary education. The University of

FIGURE 3.3 – LOWER PROVIDENCE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SCHOOL	ENROLLMENT	GRADES	LOCATION
Arcola Intermediate/Skyview Upper Elementary	1,540	5-8	4001 Eagleville Road, Eagleville, PA 19403
Arrowhead Elementary	406	K-4	232 Level Road, Collegeville, PA 19426
Audubon Elementary	0	Inactive	2765 Egypt Road, Eagleville, PA 19403
Eagleville Elementary	388	K-4	125 Summit Avenue, Eagleville, PA 19403
Woodland Elementary	442	K-4	2700 Woodland Avenue, Eagleville, PA 19403

Pennsylvania and Drexel University are located only 20 miles from Lower Providence, in Philadelphia. Many other colleges and universities are located within that distance. The nearest institutions of higher education are Ursinus College; Montgomery County Community College; Delaware County Community College, Phoenixville Center; University of Valley Forge; and Cabrini University.

County Facilities

Montgomery County has a significant presence in Lower Providence. The county's facilities are concentrated in two areas within the township. The Montgomery County Correctional Facility and the county's Emergency Operations Center are located on a site located between South Grange Avenue and Eagleville Road. This campus is a major employment center in the township and provides Lower Providence and other communities in the county with emergency preparedness, management, and recovery services. The Correctional Facility is the only county-level facility housing inmates in Montgomery County.

Montgomery County's John James Audubon Center is located on Pawlings Road in the southern end of the township. This facility is a major site for public recreation and natural conservation. The center is home to several historic structures and a recently opened museum.

Lower Providence is home to one of Montgomery County's 30 magisterial district courts. An elected Magisterial District Judge presides over each of the individual district courts. The district courts have jurisdiction over criminal preliminary arraignments and preliminary hearings; summary criminal offenses; traffic offenses; municipal code violations; suits between landlords and tenants; and civil claims where damages do not exceed \$12,000. The local district court office is located in the northwest end of the township at 133 Level

Road. This court serves a district that includes all of Lower Providence and a portion of Upper Providence Township and the boroughs of Trappe and Collegeville.

Post Office

Lower Providence is divided between three zip codes: 19403 in the east, 19426 in the northwest, and 19460 in the southwest. The United States Postal Service operates two offices in the township. One is located in the north of the township in Eagleville Plaza, the other is located in Audubon Village Shopping Center on Egypt Road.

Goals and Recommendations

This plan envisions a township that cultivates the unique character of its communities and builds upon the identities of its places and people to foster new connections between them. The township will celebrate the unique histories of its various village centers and encourage the preservation and reuse of historic buildings. Lower Providence residents will continue to enjoy a high quality of governance and public services that respond to meet the diverse and changing needs of the community. New residents will feel welcome in Lower Providence and residents from all walks of life will be empowered to participate in public life.

1	Establish and support a strong community identity and sense of place through events, programming, and public spaces that encourage social interaction.
1a	Encourage community building and neighborhood identity through neighborhood activities such as block parties and welcoming committees for new neighbors.
1b	Create and expand pleasant public spaces that foster gathering and social interaction in the township’s activity centers and neighborhoods (e.g. plazas, parklets, dog parks, community gardens, spray parks).
1c	Support the expansion of programs and activities for groups that are not currently offered (e.g. non-sport youth activities, adult sports).
2	Develop distinctive signage to identify sites in the township and link them to the shared identity of Lower Providence.
2a	Place gateway or landmark signage on major roadways to mark Lower Providence’s activity centers.
2b	Install wayfinding signage to identify township facilities (e.g. parks, trails, township buildings) and assist in navigation within and around them.
3	Identify and protect significant cultural and historical resources.
3a	Work with property owners to assess resources for conservation and preservation.
3b	Become a “Certified Local Government” for access to grants and technical assistance for historic preservation.
3c	Adopt a historic preservation overlay to address the preservation of historic resources throughout the township.
4	Create a long-range strategic capital plan for township facilities and township-supported services.
4a	Conduct an annual review of comprehensive plan implementation progress among township staff, boards, and other implementation partners.
4b	Ensure that township parks remain in good condition and evolve to meet the needs of the community. Include recommendations for park improvements from the PROS plan in capital planning.
4c	Plan with the fire company and EMS to ensure they have sufficient staffing, funding, and facilities to provide excellent emergency services for the township.
4d	Plan for future facility needs of the township administration and police department and identify funding opportunities for improvements to the municipal campus.
4e	Support the Lower Providence Community Library and its programming. Evaluate and plan for the future needs of the library.
4f	Coordinate with Methacton School District regarding shared facilities and the potential for township use of Audubon Elementary property.
4g	If the opportunity to acquire or build a community center arises, create a use plan for the facility identifying how the space will be used and by whom. Consider encouraging uses that generate revenue to help fund the center.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

5	Provide information to residents to find supportive services and be active participants in the community.
5a	Provide easily accessible information on the township's website, through police encounters, and at the township building on programs and services including Montgomery County's Navicate program, local food pantries, and PA's Drug and Alcohol Referral Tool (DART).
5b	Pursue partnerships and opportunities to address public health and safety issues such as domestic violence, childhood obesity, drug use, and impaired driving.
5c	Maintain a list of volunteer opportunities and promote it on township platforms.
5d	Create a community calendar to share events and resources of local organizations (e.g. library, youth sports leagues, scout groups, non-profits).
5e	Build relationships with organizations providing programs for township residents and promote their events and activities.
6	Support the township's diverse cultural and institutional facilities as important community amenities that provide social, spiritual, and educational opportunities.
6a	Coordinate with local organizations that provide services to township residents to understand the needs of the organizations and their clientele, and to identify opportunities to improve residents' access to information and services.
6b	Enhance the township's communication and outreach to engage with religious and cultural organizations through regular newsletter communications and regular check-ins.
7	Assess and improve the availability and accessibility of township services and facilities to all residents, accommodating the full diversity of ages, abilities, income levels, national origin, languages, races, ethnicities, etc.
7a	Improve the reach and timeliness of information distribution to township residents and businesses.
7b	Evolve communication methods with effective, new technology and communication platforms.
7c	Expand the township's ability to communicate with and provide services to residents in their primary language.
7d	Explore ways of establishing communications with renting households to ensure they receive important safety updates and township information.
7e	Support aging-in-place through programs and services for seniors.
8	Continue and improve coordination and cooperation with neighboring and similar municipalities for efficiency of services and inspiration for government management.
8a	Partner with surrounding municipalities in planning efforts. Work towards establishing a regional commission for regular communication and coordination among neighboring municipalities.

Economic Development

Chapter 4 - Lower Providence Township Comprehensive Plan Economic Development

Lower Providence is home to a thriving and diverse business community. Though not the largest employment center in the county, the thousands of people who work in the township make it a significant part of the region's economy. This chapter reviews the education, income, and employment of township residents, then studies the commercial areas, businesses, and workforce in Lower Providence to understand the issues that connect them and help to ensure that Lower Providence grows as a great place to live and work.

Resident Workforce

The income and employment of residents of Lower Providence are a crucial part of the township's overall economic health. Township residents make up the core customer base of many local businesses and provide the township's largest single source of municipal revenue. The township's continued economic success relies on Lower Providence continuing to be both a home and workplace for the region's growing workforce.

Income

Median income figures help to identify what is typical in a community and provides a point of comparison with neighboring municipalities and larger geographies like the county. Median household income in Lower Providence is 7% higher than in Montgomery County as a whole, and comparable to that of Upper Merion. The neighboring townships of Upper Providence and Worcester have significantly higher median household incomes (averaging 31% more than Lower Providence).

The data for median earnings for full-time, year-round workers resembles that of median household income. In this measure, Lower Providence reports a figure 19% greater than West Norriton and 7% greater than in the county overall, but lower than the median earnings in other neighboring townships.

While Lower Providence's Median Household Income and Median Earnings for workers figures are higher than the county, the per capita income is lower than the county, possibly due to larger household sizes with more children than the county as a whole.

FIGURE 4.1 – INCOME AND EARNINGS COMPARISON TABLE (2019 ACS 5-YEAR ESTIMATES)

	MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME	MEDIAN EARNINGS FOR FULL-TIME, YEAR-ROUND WORKERS	PER CAPITA INCOME
Montgomery County	\$91,546	\$65,351	\$49,822
Lower Providence	\$97,670	\$70,245	\$42,536
Upper Merion	\$95,921	\$72,325	\$53,877
Upper Providence	\$131,453	\$77,402	\$58,718
Worcester	\$128,417	\$101,860	\$65,860
West Norriton	\$75,342	\$58,918	\$44,089

Having information about the income and earnings of Lower Providence residents is a matter of great importance to the township. At a fundamental level, the income and earnings of Lower Providence residents determine the township’s capacity to operate and fund its facilities and provide its services. Over half of the township’s general fund revenue is supplied by the earned income tax. For this reason, the township’s revenue grows with the size of the township’s workforce, and with their income level. Income and earnings also influence how the township’s spending. Households of different income levels have different needs for public services, and it is critical to ascertain what services are needed and where when planning for the future of township facilities and services.

Poverty

The rate of poverty reported in Lower Providence is low, reported at 4.1% in 2019. This is lower than the poverty rate of the county overall, though slightly higher than neighboring Upper Merion, Upper Providence, and Worcester townships. In 2019, the national poverty rate was 10.5%, down from 11.8% in 2018. The reported poverty rate in Lower Providence corresponds to an estimate of 986 township residents living at or below the poverty line.

FIGURE 4.2 – POPULATION IN POVERTY COMPARISON TABLE (2019 ACS 5-YEAR ESTIMATES)

	MONTGOMERY COUNTY	LOWER PROVIDENCE	UPPER MERION	UPPER PROVIDENCE	WORCESTER	WEST NORRITON
Population for whom poverty status is determined	6.0%	4.1%	3.8%	3.7%	3.7%	8.1%

Education

Education and training is a major element of economic development, having a large influence on people’s potential incomes the composition of the local workforce. Montgomery County has

high levels of educational attainment, with nearly half of residents 25 or older possessing at least a bachelor’s degree. Lower Providence’s education levels are very similar to those of the county overall.

FIGURE 4.3 – LOWER PROVIDENCE EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (2019 ACS 5-YEAR ESTIMATES)

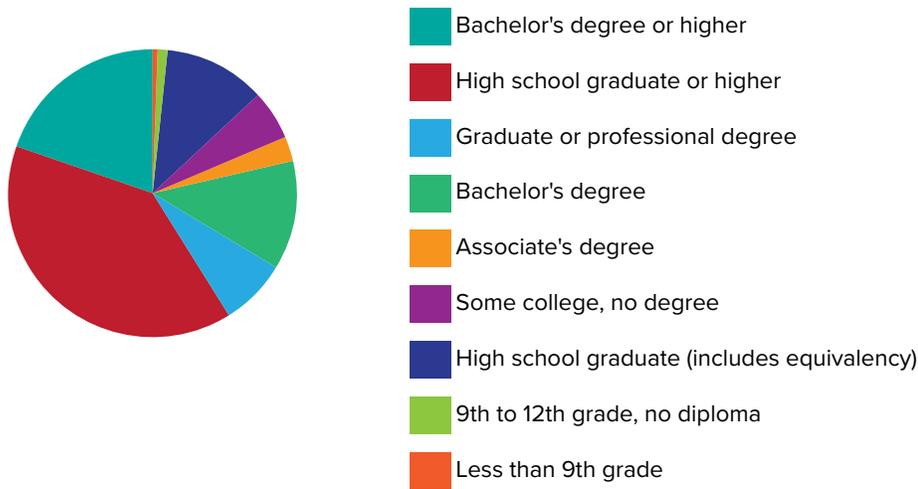


FIGURE 4.4 – EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT COMPARISON TABLE (2019 ACS 5-YEAR ESTIMATES)

SUB CATEGORY	AGE BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT: POPULATION 25 YEARS AND OVER								
	LESS THAN 9TH GRADE	9TH TO 12TH GRADE, NO DIPLOMA	HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE (INCLUDES EQUIVALENCY)	SOME COLLEGE, NO DEGREE	ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE	BACHELOR'S DEGREE	GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL DEGREE	HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE OR HIGHER	BACHELOR'S DEGREE OR HIGHER
Montgomery County	1.9%	3.7%	23.6%	14.4%	7.2%	27.9%	21.4%	94.4%	49.3%
Lower Providence	1.5%	2.8%	27.8%	13.7%	6.7%	29.8%	17.7%	95.7%	47.5%
Upper Merion	1.2%	3.2%	17.4%	12.5%	5.5%	35.4%	24.8%	95.6%	60.2%
Upper Providence	0.7%	2.2%	19.1%	12.9%	7.4%	32.8%	24.9%	97.1%	57.7%
Worcester	2.5%	3.1%	19.5%	14.0%	4.0%	32.9%	23.9%	94.4%	56.8%
West Norriton	3.6%	4.5%	25.4%	15.6%	7.9%	26.6%	16.5%	91.9%	43.1%

Employment

In 2019, Lower Providence had 12,569 residents aged 16 or over who were employed, giving the township a 58.8% labor force participation, a bit lower than the county (68.1%). This may be due in part to the incarcerated population and the large senior population. In contrast to Lower Providence’s atypically low labor force participation rate, the township’s unemployment rate in 2019 was only slightly higher than the county overall, and broadly comparable to neighboring municipalities. Unlike the labor force participation rate, Institutionalized populations do not factor into a jurisdiction’s unemployment rate.

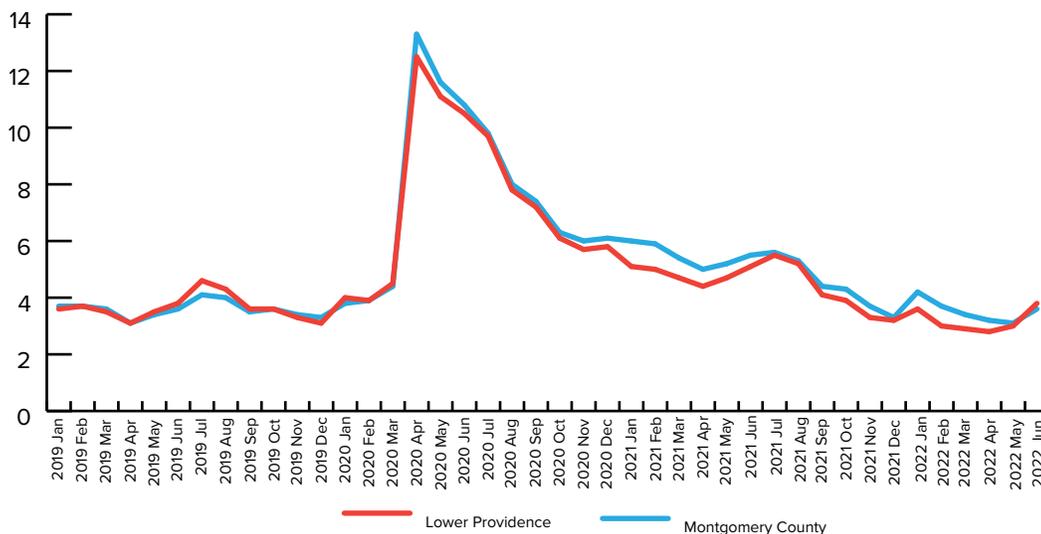
Unemployment

The unemployment effects from the COVID-19 pandemic are easily seen in municipalities where data is available. Lower Providence, Upper Merion, and Norristown are populous enough for the US Bureau of Labor Statistics to provide recent unemployment figures. In these three municipalities and Montgomery County, unemployment rates increased sharply in early 2020 and have declined since, approaching 2019 unemployment rates. In Lower Providence, unemployment peaked at 12.8% in April. Although the effects of the pandemic may reverberate for years to come, unemployment rates appear to be decreasing

FIGURE 4.5 – UNEMPLOYMENT RATE COMPARISON TABLE (2019 ACS 5-YEAR ESTIMATES)

	MONTGOMERY COUNTY	LOWER PROVIDENCE	UPPER MERION	UPPER PROVIDENCE	WORCESTER	WEST NORRITON
Unemployment rate (%) age 16 and over	3.5%	4.5%	3.8%	3.0%	5.0%	4.5%

FIGURE 4.6 – MONTHLY UNEMPLOYMENT COVID PANDEMIC IMPACT (BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS LOCAL AREA UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS)



in Lower Providence and the broader region as the regional economy recovers from the public health crisis.

The largest employment sectors for township residents are Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services (16%); Health Care & Social Assistance (14%); Retail Trade (10%); and Finance and Insurance (9%). (U.S. Census, On the Map, 2018)

Business and Employment in Lower Providence

Lower Providence is a significant employment center within Montgomery County and the greater Philadelphia region. Although strong employment centers in other municipalities in the Schuylkill River Valley draw many large employers, Lower Providence also benefits from the same access to transportation networks and a diverse, growing workforce that drives economic activity throughout the area. Lower Providence prides itself on being a good place to do business. The township’s Business Development Committee takes an active role in communicating with and supporting the local business community.

Major Employers

In 2018, the US Census Bureau reported a total of 11,637 jobs in Lower Providence Township. Current records provided by Lower Providence Township’s tax collector identify the following as the largest employers in the township: (see table below).

The ten largest employers in Lower Providence account for 4,128 jobs, or 35.5% of jobs in the township. These major employers are clustered in a few locations within the township. Park Pointe at Lower Providence is the most concentrated employment center in the township. The business park is home to several of the township’s largest employers and many smaller businesses, too. Park Pointe, along with the nearby Shannondell retirement community and Audubon Square shopping center make up Lower Providence’s portion of a larger employment center that extends across Trooper Road into West Norriton Township. In the Eagleville area of the township, Montgomery County’s correctional facility and Emergency Operations Center the adjacent Eagleville Hospital and Streamlight Inc. make up another employment center south of Ridge Pike.

FIGURE 4.7 – LOWER PROVIDENCE TOP TEN EMPLOYERS(BERKHEIMER ASSOCIATES, 2019)

RANK	EMPLOYER	EMPLOYEES	LOCATION
1	PJM Interconnection LLC	702	Park Pointe
2	Montgomery County	613	Eagleville
3	Optum 360 Services Inc.	562	Park Pointe
4	Methacton School District	368*	multiple locations, *includes facilities in Worcester Twp.
5	Eagleville Hospital	344	Eagleville
6	Meadows Management Inc.	325	Shannondell
7	Streamlight Inc.	319	Eagleville
8 (tie)	Dell Retirement Services Inc.	316	Shannondell
8 (tie)	MRO Corporation	316	Park Pointe
10	Giant Food Stores LLC	263	Audubon Square Shopping Center



The Giant supermarket (left) on Egypt Road and the Montgomery County Correctional Facility (right) in Eagleville are some of largest employment sites in Lower Providence Township.

Local government taxes and regulations can influence what businesses locate in a municipality and can affect their profit. Business taxes vary greatly in each municipality in Montgomery County. Lower Providence Township's annual revenue regularly surpasses \$10 million, though only a small fraction of this revenue is collected through taxes and fees on businesses. The township's amusement tax and business licensing fees together account for approximately \$60,000 in revenue in a typical year. The employment and income of township residents is a far more significant revenue source for the municipal budget, with roughly half of its revenue coming from the earned income tax (EIT) collected from taxpayers living or working in the township. The township's local service tax, collected from all people who are employed in the township, accounts for another 5.4% of the township's revenue. From this brief overview of revenue sources, it is evident that maintaining Lower Providence's dual roles as a home for members of the region's workforce and an employment destination is key to providing the township with a reliable source of revenue.

Employment Forecasts

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) prepares employment forecasts of the number of people expected to be employed in municipalities across the greater Philadelphia region in the coming years. Based on the 2020 forecasts, Lower Providence is expected to see an increase of 639 jobs (or a 5.3% job growth) by 2040. However, Lower Providence's forecasted job growth rate is much lower than that forecasted for neighboring townships Upper Merion (12.5% job growth) and Upper Providence (14.4% job growth), and what is forecasted for Montgomery County as a whole (18.2%) for the same time period.

Business Sectors

The largest employment sectors located within the township are Health Care & Social Assistance (20.5%); Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services (12.8%); Manufacturing (10.1%); and Retail Trade (9.0%)¹. These four sectors account for 52.4% of all jobs in Lower Providence. These sectors are similarly well-represented in neighboring

¹ U.S. Census, On the Map, 2018

Upper Merion, West Norriton, and Upper Providence Townships. In one sector, Utilities, Lower Providence stands apart from these neighbors. This sector accounts for 8% of jobs in Lower Providence, a far larger proportion than is seen in the other municipalities. PJM Interconnection, the largest employer in the township, accounts for many of these jobs in the utility sector. Though it makes up far smaller share of employment, the clustering of thrift stores in Lower Providence is a noteworthy element in the township’s retail sector.

The township’s diverse array of professional employment helps to provide local businesses with a robust customer base in addition to township residents. Industries that are growing and thriving in the broader region present an opportunity for Lower Providence to target its business development to maintain a strong employment base and bolster businesses serving the local population. Recent growth in the region’s medical and pharmaceutical industries, in particular, gives one example of the opportunities available for the township to activate commercial spaces throughout the township and add to Lower Providence’s supply of well-paying jobs.

The Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation sector employs less than two percent of total employees in the township. This employment sector, or any others that the community may be interested in expanding, can be supported and encouraged by the

township through promotion of local development opportunities. Throughout the comprehensive plan’s outreach effort, residents have continually expressed interest in having a greater number and variety of options for live entertainment, arts, recreation for all ages, and dining. The desire to see growth in this sector was often tied with interest in revitalizing the Eagleville-Trooper area in the Ridge Pike corridor, and could be a strong component in future economic development efforts.

Lower Providence has a similar number of jobs within the township as it does employed residents (working anywhere) - around 10,000. Some nearby municipalities have far more jobs than employed residents, or even residents at all. Upper Merion Township contains 155 jobs for every 100 residents vs. 39 jobs per 100 residents in Lower Providence. This is evidence that Upper Merion is not a good comparison for jobs and employment-related metrics.

Commercial Land Use

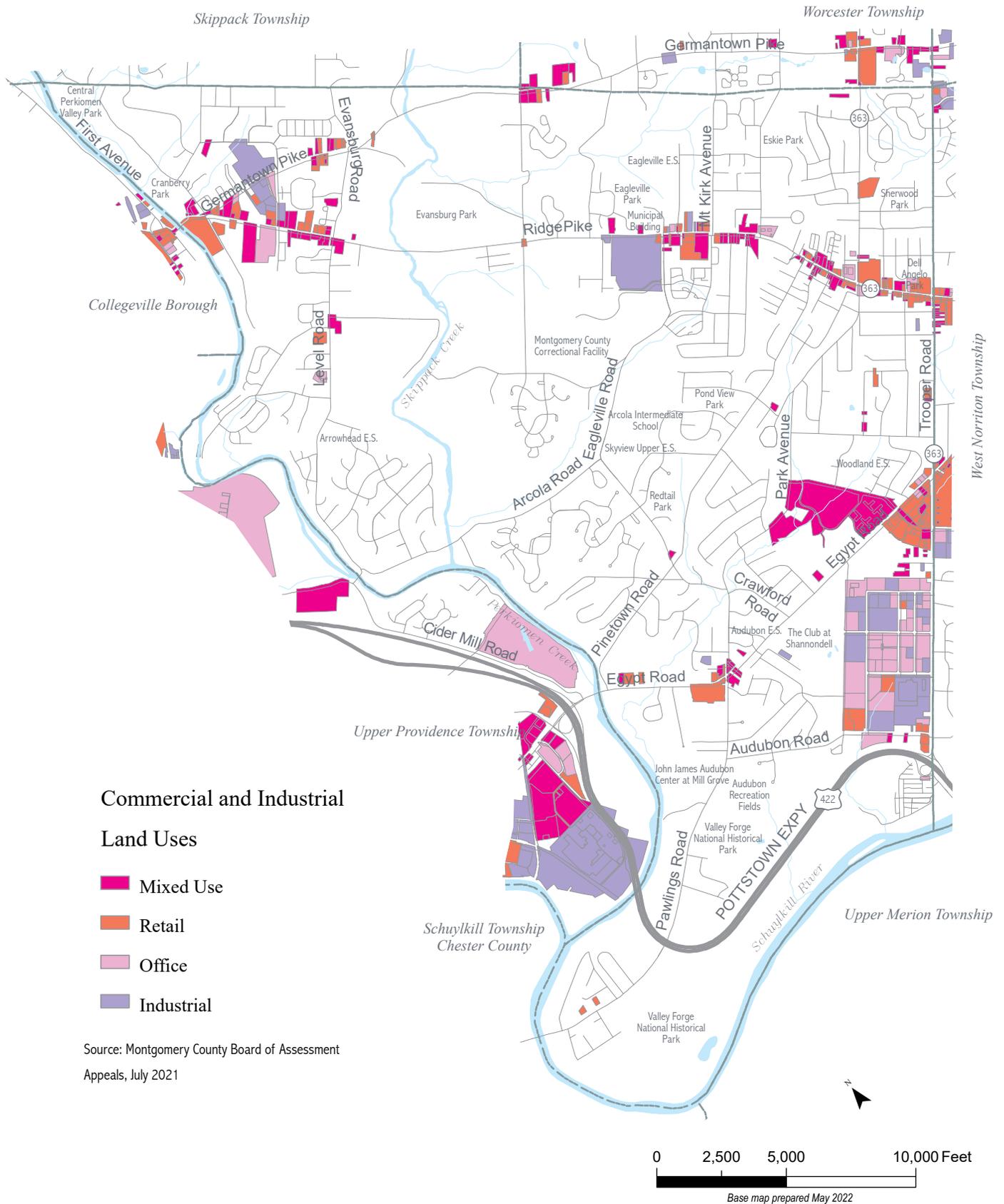
Within the township, commercial and industrial land uses occupy 739 acres, or 7.5% of the township’s land area. These land uses are the main sites of employment and economic activity in Lower Providence. Much of the township’s retail and office uses line major corridors like Ridge Pike, Egypt Road, and Germantown Pike, however the largest single concentration is located in Park

FIGURE 4.8 – EMPLOYMENT PROFILE COMPARISON TABLE(ESRI, 2021)

	LOWER PROVIDENCE	WEST NORRITON	UPPER PROVIDENCE	UPPER MERION
Total Businesses	797	550	698	2,381
Total Employees	10,130	7,196	15,321	49,373
Total Residents	26,145	16,136	24,674	31,883
Employee/Resident Ratio (per 100 population)	39	45	62	155

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

FIGURE 4.9 – COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL LAND USES MAP



Pointe Business Park. This business park hosts much of the township's office space, though master plans for the area have imagined a more varied range of land uses. Presently, it is home to the township's largest employer, PJM Interconnection.

Just as Park Pointe provides a cluster of office and industrial uses that is often attractive to other similar uses, a cluster of customer-oriented commercial uses can attract people to shop and dine at multiple establishments. Many businesses recognize the advantages of locating in a corridor with other successful shops. Further developing and promoting the clusters of retail and restaurant businesses in the township will help those businesses thrive.

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a special taxation tool that provides a dedicated source of funding for business district maintenance, improvements, and special programs. The assessment can be done in a number of ways. It can be a percentage of assessed value, a dollar amount per linear foot of frontage or per square foot of space, or another calculation method. The use of funds from the BID can be used in a variety of ways, including extra street cleaning services, tree trimming, façade improvement, marketing and promotion, special events, hanging baskets, decorations, and more.

If a BID is considered for some areas of Lower Providence, first steps would include a feasibility study and conversations with business owners. Creating a BID is most successful when the property owners are consulted and invested in the process from the beginning. The property owners who have to pay the assessment should have a role in deciding what services they most need and are willing to fund with the BID assessment.

Commercial Character

Public outreach for the development of this plan indicated that many residents wish that Lower Providence had a walkable and attractive business area. A pedestrian-friendly and inviting business district that is designed for lingering and strolling will support the viability of a retail district. When an area is attractive and welcoming to pedestrians, they will stay longer, walk farther, and spend more money at local businesses. Strategies that can increase pedestrian activity include improvements to pedestrian infrastructure such as sidewalks and crosswalks; streetscape improvements such as lighting, landscaping, and benches; events and activities; public space such as plazas, courtyards, and pocket parks; and land use changes that result in multiple businesses being located within a short walk of each other or in additional residents or office workers proximal to commercial uses.

Streetscaping

Streetscaping generally refers to programs that improve the streetscape conditions, or the physical appearance 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



Sidewalks are an essential feature of streetscapes in commercial areas, but good design is crucial to creating a safe and walkable setting. Although sidewalks are present, this driveway crossing could be improved for pedestrians.

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.

In all customer-oriented commercial district (retail, restaurant, services), certain types of Streetscape elements are appropriate. Any and all of these elements would be beneficial in commercial areas, though certain elements should be prioritized for installation in all business districts, where others may be more selectively applied to areas that are designed to be walkable and pedestrian oriented.

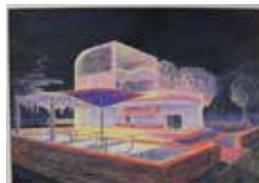
FIGURE 4.10 – COMMERCIAL DISTRICT STREETSCLAPING TABLE

STREETScape ELEMENT	COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS	NOTES
Lighting	All	Appropriate lighting is necessary for safety and comfort in all types of commercial districts. In walkable districts, pedestrian-oriented lighting should be prioritized.
Sidewalks	Some	Pedestrian pathways throughout parking lots and in front of store fronts should be present in every commercial district. Full sidewalks are beneficial, especially when employees and shoppers utilize public transportation to access businesses.
Public space	Some	Pedestrian oriented commercial districts will benefit most from public plazas because shoppers can stop and enjoy outdoor space along their way between stores.
Landscaping	Some	Pedestrian oriented commercial districts will benefit most from landscaping because an attractive streetscape invites shoppers to continue their walk throughout the district. However, landscaping can also provide stormwater management benefits, reduce the urban heat island effect, and make all commercial districts look more pleasant.
Street Furniture	All	All commercial districts should be provided with trash and recycling receptacles and bus shelters if there is bus service. Benches are highly recommended for all districts to serve the elderly and others who may need to rest. Bike racks and picnic tables are recommended where appropriate.
Decorative elements and art	Some	Banding on sidewalks, decorative crosswalks, banners or flags, and public art add to the character and uniqueness of a business district and contribute significantly to the sense of place. Any walkable commercial district should have some of these elements.

Adaptive Reuse

As buildings age and the needs of the community and the building’s occupants evolve, their uses often change. While many buildings can find new uses without needing significant renovations, others may not be well-suited to the needs of prospective tenants and remain vacant for extended periods of time. Vacant buildings or commercial spaces can provide opportunities for temporary uses such as pop-up shops, craft fairs, and other

special events that reactivate unused facilities and give small vendors a foothold in the community. To more permanently overcome vacancy and its negative effects, buildings may need additional options for redesign and repurposing to find a productive use. Adaptive reuse is the creative process of repurposing buildings while maintaining many of their original architectural features. Transforming a building through adaptive reuse secures its physical structure, extends its usefulness, and preserves its heritage for the public benefit.



Several entrants in the Reimagine Ridge Pike design challenge depicted adaptive reuse scenarios for a former auto repair garage on Ridge Pike.

Redevelopment

If certain distinct areas of the township have a concentration of vacant properties for a long period of time or appear blighted, targeted strategies for those areas or properties should be pursued. Using state revitalization tools may encourage reinvestment in struggling areas. The Montgomery County Redevelopment Authority (RDA) can assist municipalities with redevelopment efforts and stimulating economic revitalization. The RDA's services and programs help communities to remediate brownfields, redevelop vacant properties, create economic incentives programs, and produce affordable housing.

Focus Areas

In Lower Providence Township, commercial land uses and major employers are clustered in several locations. These business activity areas often also feature community facilities and private institutions and are the home of much of the township's community life. This plan identifies five of these clusters as throughout the township: Trooper, Eagleville, Audubon Square-Park Pointe, and the villages of Audubon and Evansburg, but the primary focus area is the Eastern Ridge Pike Corridor which includes Trooper and Eagleville. This plan offers recommendations and planning strategies tailored to the unique history, character, and commercial development of this corridor (See chapter 9: Future Land Use)

Trends in Commercial Land Use and Development

Mixed-Use Town Center

In recent decades, a trend towards designing shopping centers around "main streets" or "village squares" has been observed. In general, by

emulating 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. Newer town center developments often include residential uses with a mix of housing types developed adjacent to the shopping center or even incorporated into it as commercial-residential mixed-use buildings. The inclusion of residential uses in such developments creates new housing opportunities while offering a walkable business area for residents and a nearby customer base for businesses.

Small-Scale Production

The rise of industrial and manufacturing techniques powered by new technologies has led to the emergence of new types of high-tech industrial and manufacturing activities that can be accommodated in smaller spaces, even in shared industrial buildings or retrofitted facilities.

- △ Industrial Design and Innovation - the "maker movement" is invigorated by a young, technology-savvy, creative class. Examples of growing technology-based manufacturing industries include robotics, rapid prototyping, 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.
- △ Producer Retailers - Many small-scale producers of specialty foods or artisan products look to sell their product direct to consumers. Operating alongside other retailers or restaurants, these businesses also produce some products on-site. Common examples like ice cream stores, candy makers, and bakeries are being joined by coffee roasters, soap makers,

and others. Small-scale alcohol production businesses like craft breweries, wineries, and craft distilleries often incorporate tasting rooms that attract visitors and add vibrancy to commercial areas.

Flexible Commercial & Office Spaces

Technological advances in recent years have created increased opportunities for working from home or working remotely. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, businesses have tested new styles of work and new ways of connecting their employees. The growth of hybrid workplaces, where employees work on-site and remotely at different times, may reduce the need for office space. As employers continue to adapt and evaluate their needs for office space, flexible office spaces may enable new and established businesses opportunities to grow and change.

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.

Business Incubators

Similar to co-working sites, business incubators provide office space and communal amenities; however, incubators often specialize in a certain sector and offer dedicated facilities to aid start-ups. Tech incubators may 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.

E-Commerce

There is a trend towards the decline of retail shops in favor of e-commerce. While some traditional retail and specialty retail are holding their own, new types of businesses are coming into former retail locations as some retail moves to e-commerce instead. Businesses such as personal services, small medical offices, specialty entertainment (axe throwing, escape rooms), are increasingly found in areas that might previously have been retail. Ensuring that zoning ordinances are periodically updated to allow new types of uses will help reduce vacancy rates in Lower Providence's commercial buildings.

The meteoric rise of e-commerce has increased demand for warehousing and shipping facilities, and spurred the development of new models for distribution facilities. This increase in e-commerce activity is helping to bring new uses to some industrial areas and defunct malls and shopping centers, but this business comes with considerable traffic impacts (see chapter 6: Transportation) and may not be appropriate in all locations.



As e-commerce continues to grow, traditional business areas are adapting to accommodate new uses and the public's changing preferences.

Goals and Recommendations

The community identity of Lower Providence will grow stronger through improvements and redevelopment in key commercial areas. Sustainable practices and thoughtful design will ensure that new

development improves and concentrates business areas as livable, walkable places to shop, dine, and work. The township will encourage development that bolsters municipal finances.

9	Help local businesses successfully develop and thrive.
9a	Connect business and commercial property owners to resources and programs provided by government agencies such as the Montgomery County Commerce Department.
9b	Connect residents seeking employment with County Workforce Development services.
9c	Encourage township residents to support local businesses through special events and promotions that support local businesses (e.g. restaurant week, shop local days, food truck festival, community showcases).
9d	Consider creating a Business Improvement District (BID) for increased marketing and services in some business areas.
10	Create opportunities for new commercial uses and support a mix of compatible retail, office, and industrial land uses.
10a	Update commercial zoning standards to address new and emerging commercial uses such as technology-based manufacturing industries, artisan industries, co-working offices, e-commerce fulfillment centers, and small-scale production-retailers.
10b	Encourage the development of high-quality, walkable mixed-use areas by updating zoning ordinances to allow retail, restaurants, entertainment, office, and housing uses together and in close proximity in activity centers.
10c	Encourage and support a mix of land uses and businesses that bolsters the township's revenue (i.e. additional employment and income).
11	Enhance Lower Providence's commercial areas to create vibrant and attractive corridors, shopping centers, employment areas, and village centers.
11a	Establish regular, open communications with business owners in the township's commercial activity centers (e.g. Ridge Pike, Park Pointe, etc.) regarding the planning and coordination of local improvements.
11b	Encourage redevelopment of vacant or disused sites in the business areas of Lower Providence through ordinance updates, incentives, and partnerships with the County Redevelopment Authority.
11c	Create design standards for façades, streetscaping and greening, to encourage pedestrian activity in new development and redevelopment in activity centers.
11d	Create new pocket parks, plazas, and gathering spaces in activity centers. Green spaces should incorporate outdoor seating where space allows.
11e	Evaluate Park Pointe design standards (from Park Pointe at Lower Providence Land Use and Design Manual) for applicability in Lower Providence's other commercial areas.

12	Coordinate with adjacent municipalities to discuss appropriate land uses and development types for shared commercial corridors and business areas.
12a	Create consistent streetscape standards for shared corridors such as Germantown and, Ridge Pikes, Egypt Road, and Park Avenue.
13	Ensure new commercial development and redevelopment in business areas incorporates amenities and facilities that encourage walkability and multimodal transportation access.
13a	Require new commercial development and redevelopment projects, including shopping centers, to integrate transit facilities, green space, and pedestrian connections within the site and to adjacent uses.
13b	Allow mixed-use development on sites served by transit with access to arterial roadways. Create design standards for internal pedestrian connections, shared parking, and central green spaces (see mixed-use development in chapter 5: Housing and Neighborhoods).
13c	Incentivize or require shared driveway access as part of new commercial developments and redevelopments (see access management in chapter 6: Transportation).
13d	Work with property owners to explore opportunities to share parking facilities and incentivize the installation of shared parking in business areas.
13e	Identify and prioritize projects to provide ADA-compliant accessibility, or better, within and around activity areas.

<https://www.lowerprovidence.org/sites/g/files/vyhlf4626/ff/uploads/parkpointeatlowerprovidencedesignstandardsmanual-revision2012-01.pdf>

Housing and Neighborhoods

Chapter 5 – Lower Providence Township Comprehensive Plan

Lower Providence is a community composed of many distinct neighborhoods. As the building blocks of the township, the conditions of these neighborhoods and the housing within them determine the wellbeing of Lower Providence as a whole. This plan envisions Lower Providence’s neighborhoods as places that accommodate the diverse, changing needs of township residents and are welcoming to new residents. This primarily entails maintaining or enhancing the quality of the township’s existing housing stock. Meeting the needs of the population’s full demographic, financial, and generational diversity will mean

allowing for a variety of different forms of housing in the township. When new development occurs, use of sustainable practices and design will help to conserve natural resources and enhance its surroundings.

Background

For much of the township’s history, Lower Providence was sparsely-populated and rural in character. Small villages dotted an agrarian landscape of farms, orchards, and wooded valleys up through the end of the 19th century. The arrival of indus-



The Fatlands Mansion, Lower Providence, has undergone many changes but its oldest portions date to the township’s earliest history.

trial development began a transformation of the region’s economy, bringing with it new types of employment and means of transportation. This powered a century of explosive residential growth and rapid, accelerating change. The homes and neighborhoods of the township reflect the different eras that produced them and the stages of Lower Providence’s evolution into the thriving community it is today.

Current Conditions

Housing Supply

Lower Providence’s homes and neighborhoods are a physical record of the community’s unique cultural and historical development. In 2019, the Census Bureau reported that the township had a total housing supply of 9,469 dwelling units, 9,103 of which were occupied (96%). Lower Providence’s housing supply is a mix of several distinct housing types. In the township, single-family detached houses are the most common housing type and account for nearly two-thirds of the township’s total housing supply. Single-family detached houses occupy just over 95 percent of the

land that is currently in residential use in Lower Providence. Townhouses account for another 7 percent of the township’s housing supply. The twin/duplex category accounts for just 1.4 percent of the township’s supply of housing units and less than 1 percent of its residential land. Together, these housing types are 74.6 percent of Lower Providence households.

Apartments and other forms of multifamily housing account for nearly a quarter of all housing units in the township and house a similar fraction of the township’s households, but occupy only 2.5 percent of residential land. Mobile home parks make up the remainder of Lower Providence’s housing stock and residential land.

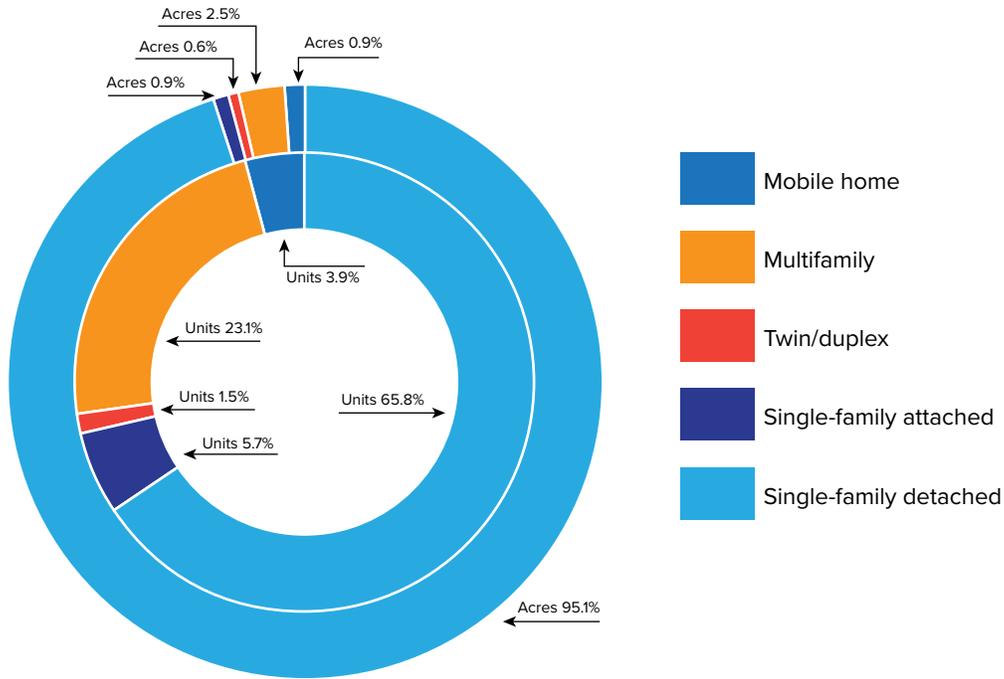
FIGURE 5.1 – HOUSING STOCK IN LOWER PROVIDENCE

HOUSING TYPES	RESIDENTIAL UNITS		RESIDENTIAL ACRES*		AVERAGE UNITS PER ACRE*
Single-family detached	6,074	64.1%	3,727.3	95.1%	1.6
Townhouses	666	7.0%	34.1	0.9%	19.5
Twin/duplex	135	1.4%	22.8	0.6%	5.9
Multifamily	2,201	23.2%	98	2.5%	22.5
Mobile home	375	4.0%	36.9	0.9%	10.2
Total	9,469		3,919.1		2.4

Sources: 2019 ACS 5-year Estimate, MCPC

**Acreage amounts do not include private open space areas associated with residential developments, nor residential mixed-use developments. The Shannondell retirement community is included in the table above.*

FIGURE 5.2 – HOUSING STOCK IN LOWER PROVIDENCE BY UNITS AND AREA



In the figure above, the portion of residential land that is occupied by different housing types (outer ring) is compared to the percentage of the township's total supply of housing units (inner ring) made up of each housing type.

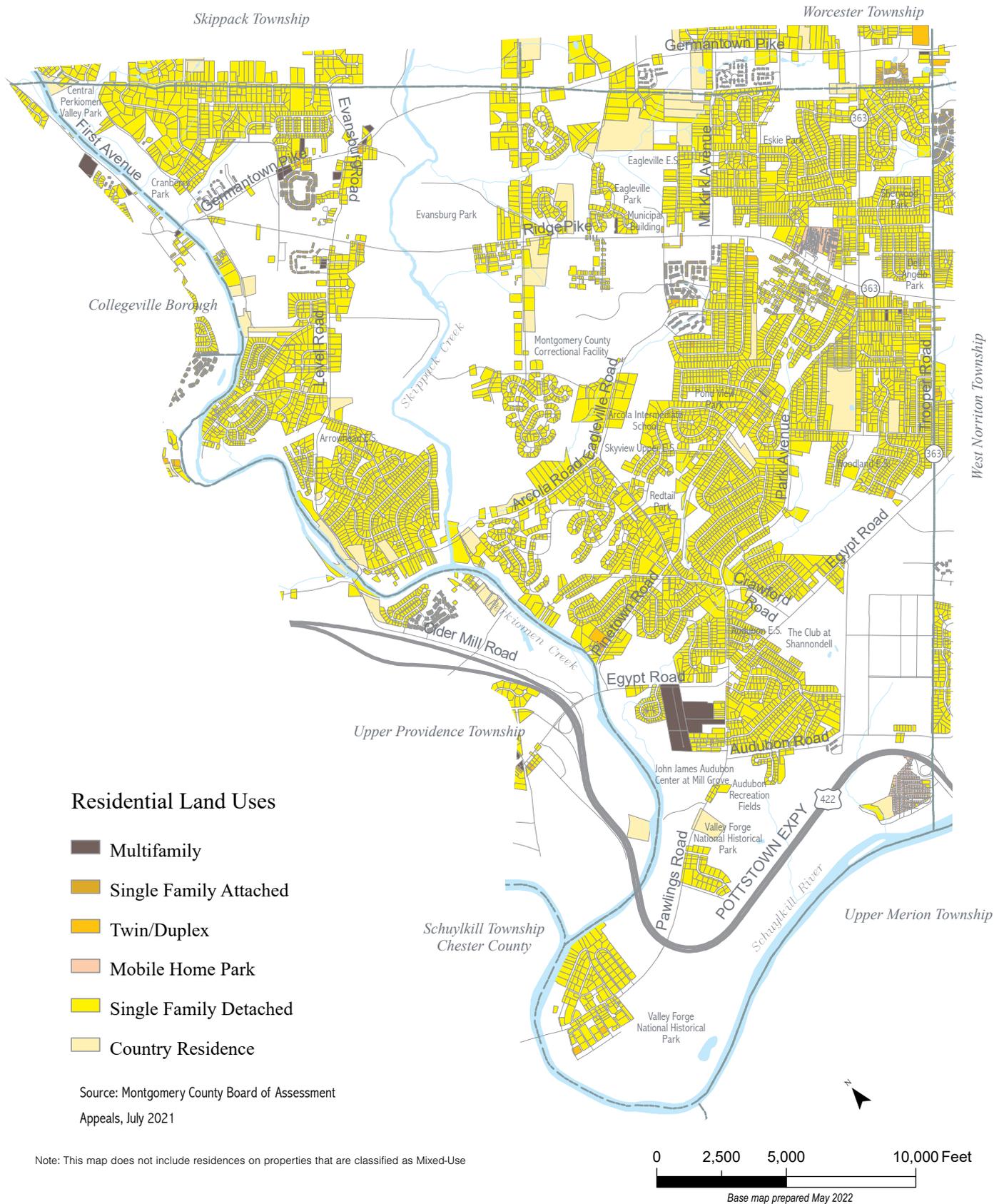
In the map of residential land uses (following page) the variety and distribution of housing types in neighborhoods throughout the township are apparent. Among the groupings of single-family detached houses, the concentrations of other types stand out: single-family attached developments near Evansburg and Eagleville, mobile home parks by the Route 422 exit and on Ridge Pike, and multifamily housing in Audubon.

Tenure and Occupancy

According to the Census Bureau, 78.8 percent of Lower Providence households lived in owner-occupied housing in 2019, while the other 21.2 percent lived in rented housing. The ratio of owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing tenure in Lower Providence is very close to that of Montgomery County overall. Over time, this ratio has been decreasing as the share of renting

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

FIGURE 5.3 – RESIDENTIAL LAND USES IN LOWER PROVIDENCE



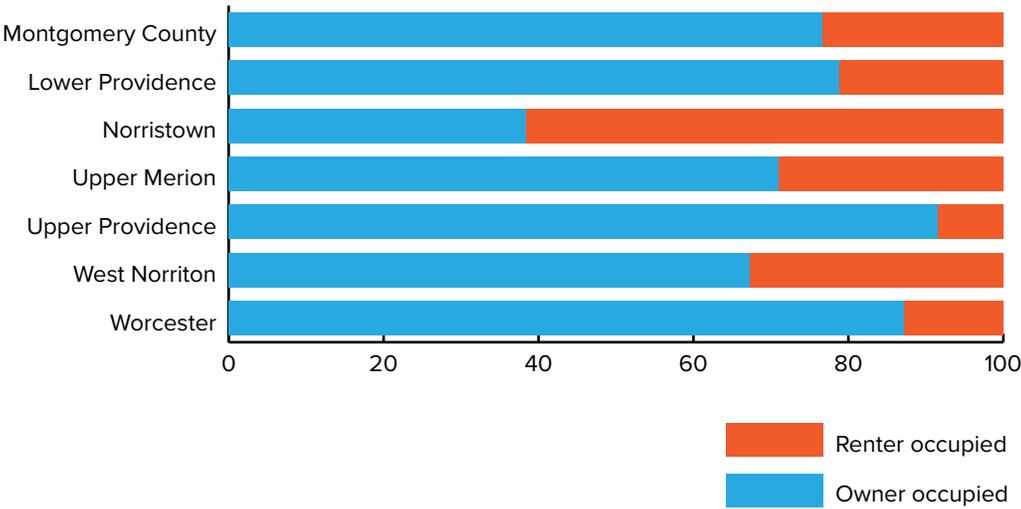
households has grown in the township. Since 2010, the share of Lower Providence households that rent their homes has grown by five percentage points. Much of this trend is attributable to the development of rental housing, including small-

scale mixed-use buildings in the township. Going forward, Lower Providence will track this trend and consider the particular needs of renters when conducting outreach and providing services.



Single-family detached homes like the one pictured above make up the largest share of the township’s housing stock.

FIGURE 5.4 – HOUSING TENURE COMPARISON
(2019 ACS 5-YEAR ESTIMATES)



Value, Costs, and Affordability

In 2019, the Census Bureau reported a median home value of \$338,500 in the township. In that same year the median sale price of homes in Lower Providence reached \$347,000. In these measures, Lower Providence exceeds the county as a whole. In 2020, the median sale price of homes in Lower Providence rose to \$381,000— an increase of 9.8 percent in one year.

While increases in sales prices and home values benefit many homeowners, housing costs are still a challenge for many households. The Census Bureau describes households as “cost-burdened” when 30 percent of the household’s income, or more, is spent on housing costs.¹ In 2018, over a quarter of Lower Providence households were cost-burdened. The number of cost-burdened owner-occupied households (14.9 percent of all households) was larger than the number of cost-burdened renter households (10.7 percent of all households).

¹ <https://www.census.gov/housing/census/publications/who-can-afford.pdf>

Because owner-occupied households are more abundant than renting households in Lower Providence, Cost-burdening is comparatively less common among home-owning households than those that rent.

Over 40 percent of renting households in the township qualify as cost-burdened, while only 20 percent of homeowner households meet the same cost-burdened criteria. The prevalence of cost-burdening in Lower Providence has decreased over the last decade, though most of this change is due to decreases in cost burdening among homeowner households, while the prevalence of cost-burdened renter households in the township has held steady near 10 percent.

About 25 percent of greenhouse gas emissions attributable to Lower Providence Township come from residential buildings (DVRPC, 2018). To reduce both costs and emissions, the township should provide information to households educating homeowners about energy efficiency and renewable energy improvements that would benefit them.

FIGURE 5.5 – HOME SALE PRICE AND MEDIAN HOME VALUE COMPARISON (2019 ACS 5-YEAR ESTIMATES)

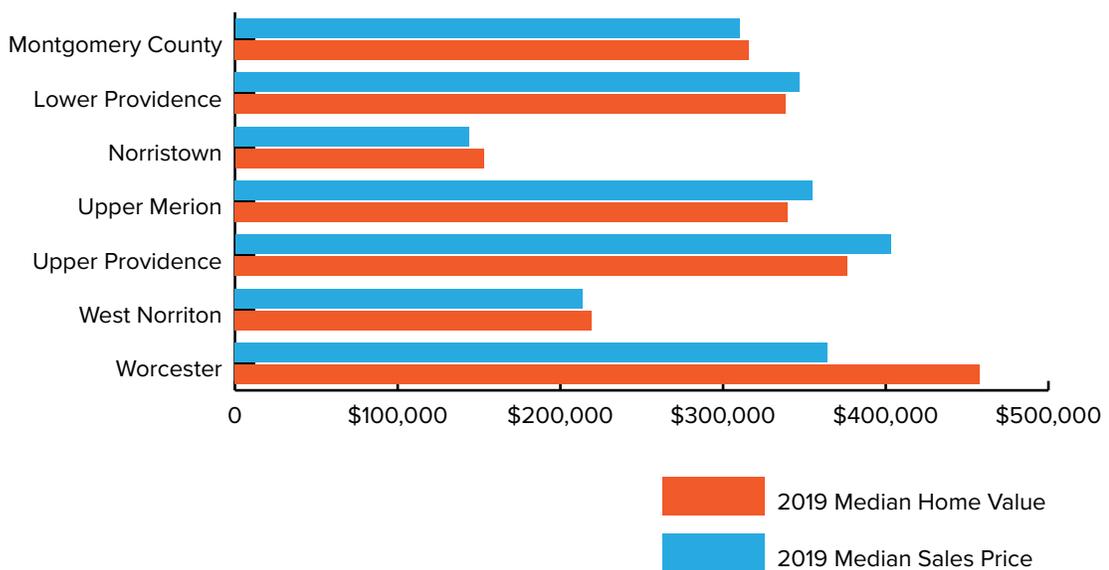


FIGURE 5.6 – COST BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS COMPARISON
(2019 ACS 5-YEAR ESTIMATES)

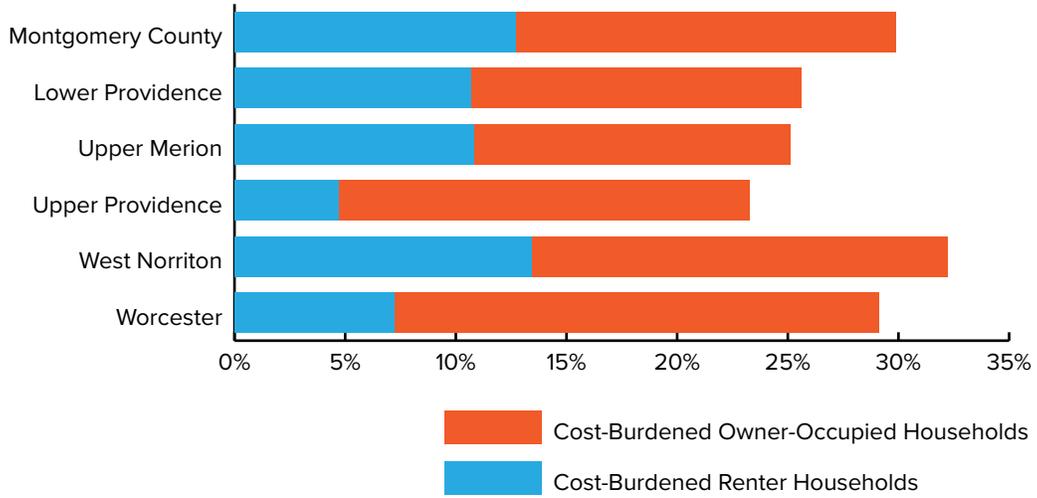
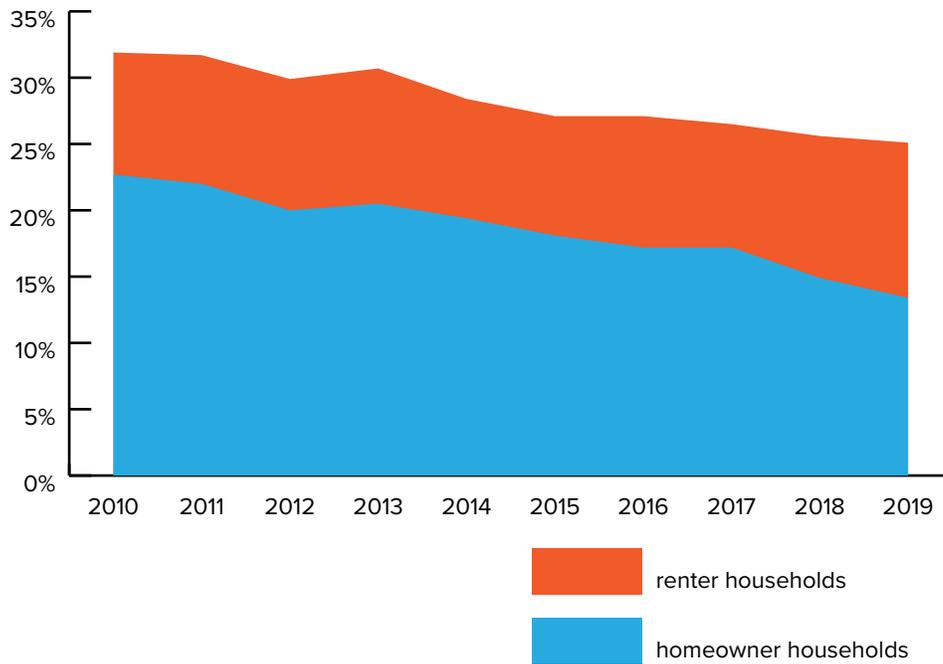


FIGURE 5.7 – COST-BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS TREND
(2019 ACS 5-YEAR ESTIMATES)



Development Trends

While the oldest homes that remain in the township date to nearly 300 years ago, the majority of the township's housing was built more recently. Over one-third of all housing units in Lower Providence were constructed since 1990. In 2020, the median age of housing in the township is approximately 46 years.

The homes that remain from earlier centuries of Lower Providence's history may be recognized as having cultural or historic significance and worthy of preservation. One way of making preservation easier is to allow conversion of historic properties to other uses, thus offering the option of adaptive reuse instead of demolition. Across the county, this is commonly seen both in the reuse of institutional properties as multifamily residential, and in the reuse of large residential buildings as institutional or commercial.

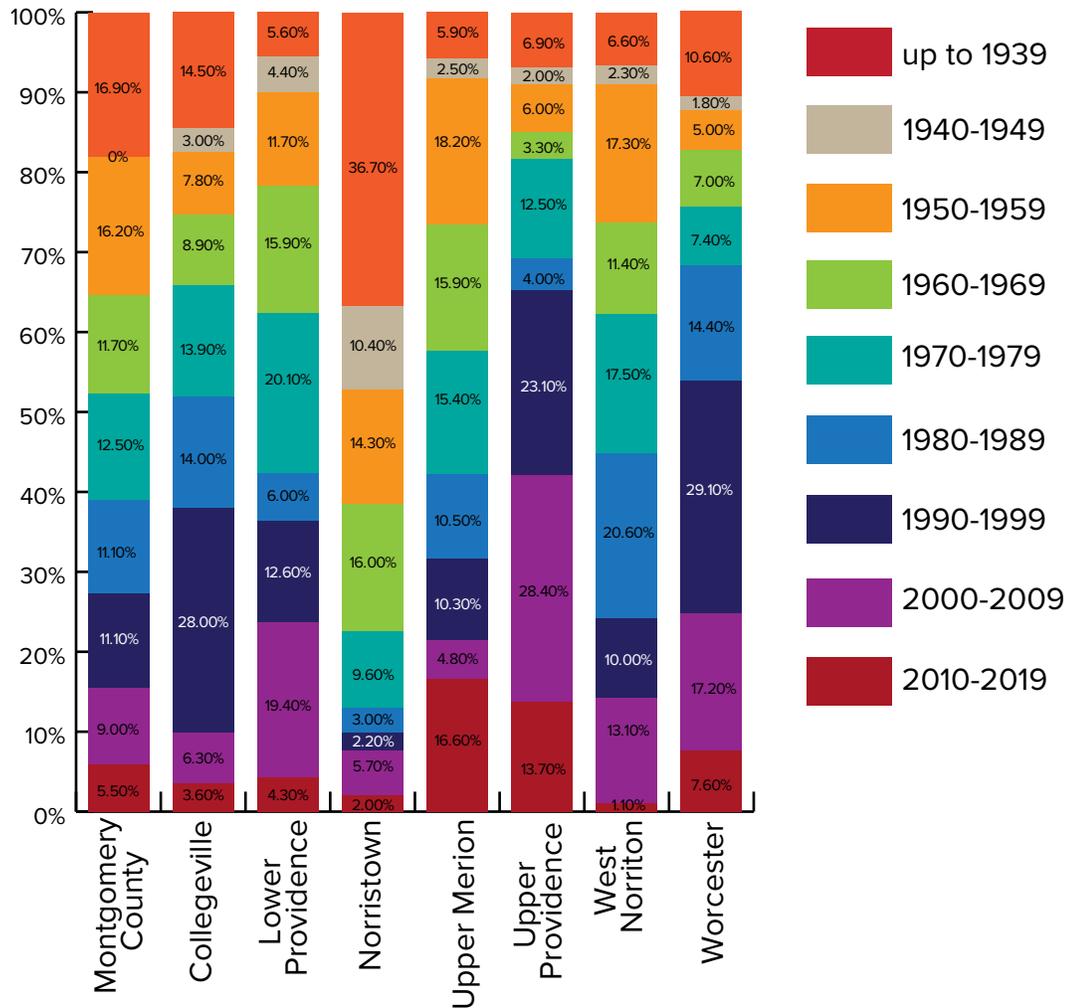
As any housing stock ages, maintenance issues become more likely and housing may no longer

match the needs of its occupants, requiring repairs, renovation, or even replacement. To assist homeowners the township should provide information and resources to homeowners in older buildings about repair and upkeep. If financial assistance is needed for maintenance, the township can direct homeowners to Montgomery County's Navicate program (<https://montcopa.org/1585/Community-Connections>), which helps connect residents with various programs that can assist them. This may be especially helpful for cost-burdened homeowners who wish to stay in their homes but struggle with the cost of upkeep. Additionally, older developments feature aging infrastructure that may be damaged or no longer be sufficient to meet current needs. Sidewalks, street designs, and stormwater infrastructure are commonly the source of issues related to older infrastructure, and may require repairs, retrofits, or other improvements to restore them to functioning and alleviate concerns such as inaccessibility and flooding.



Mill Grove, the former home of John James Audubon is one example of a preserved historic home that has been converted from residential use.

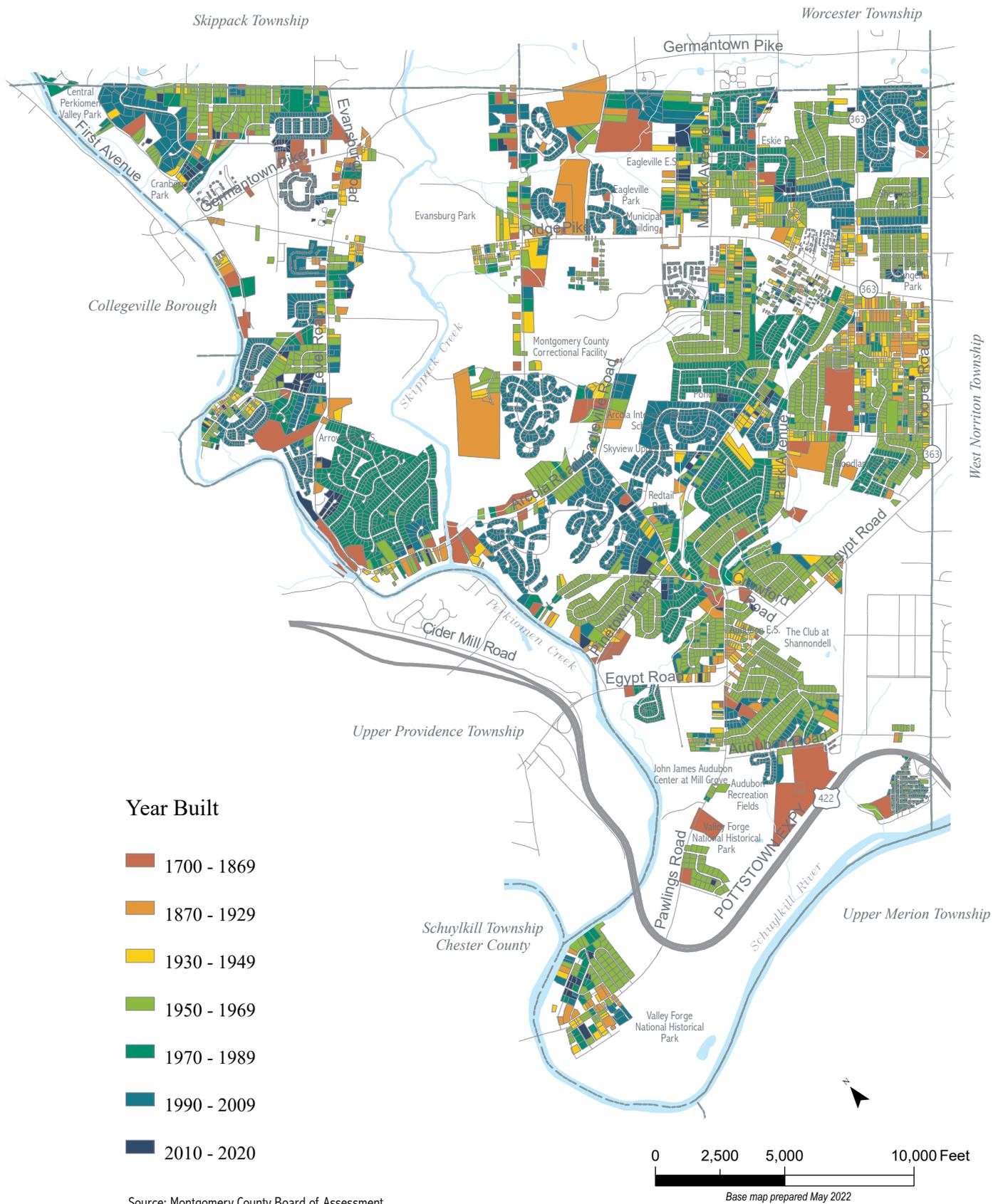
FIGURE 5.8 – HOUSING SUPPLY BY DECADE OF CONSTRUCTION COMPARISON
(DECENNIAL CENSUS, ACS 5-YEAR ESTIMATES)



In the map below, residential parcels are identified by the time period when the housing was constructed. This displays the location and timing of housing development throughout the township and highlights more recently constructed infill housing and redevelopment within older subdivisions.

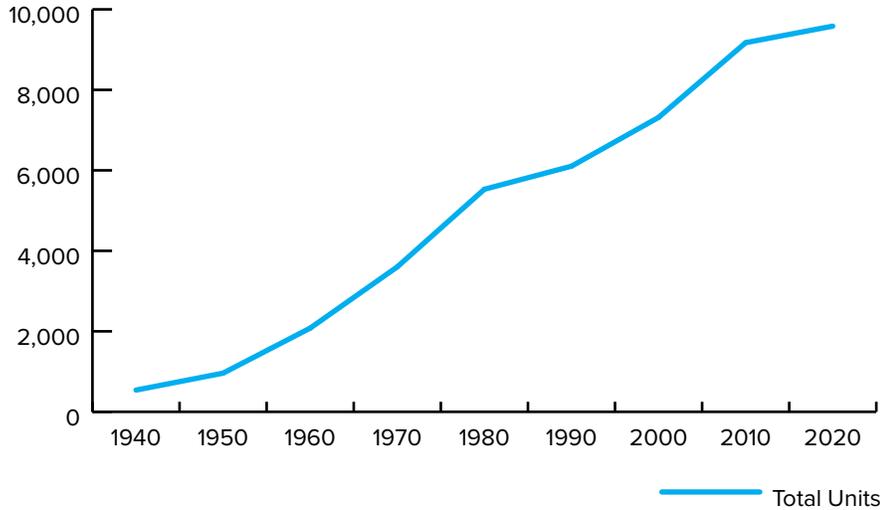
HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

FIGURE 5.9 – HOUSING DEVELOPMENT HISTORY



Source: Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, July 2021

FIGURE 5.10 – TOTAL HOUSING UNITS IN LOWER PROVIDENCE OVER TIME
(DECENNIAL CENSUS, ACS 5-YEAR ESTIMATES)



Over the past 80 years, housing development in Lower Providence has proceeded at a strikingly consistent pace. From 1940 to the present, the township’s housing supply grew by an average of 1,130 housing units per decade. While this remarkable pace of development was maintained for many decades, the undeveloped land has grown scarce in Lower Providence and the rate of housing development has slowed in the past decade.

Forecasted Housing Need

Population forecasts provided by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) estimate that Lower Providence’s population will increase by 1,292 individuals (or a 4.8 percent increase) by 2040. The table below estimates future 2040 housing demand for the township based on the forecasted 2040 population and

FIGURE 5.11 – HOUSING NEEDS FORECAST (DVRPC, 2019 ACS 5-YEAR ESTIMATES, DECENNIAL CENSUS)

FORECASTED HOUSING NEED	
2040 Projected Population (DVRPC)	27,942
2040 Projected Average Household Size (MCPC)	2.69
(Projected from 2000-2019 trend)	
2040 Projected Group Quarters Population	2,543
(2019 value: 9.1%)	
2040 Projected Household Population	25,399
(Projected population minus projected group quarters population)	
2040 Projected Number of Households	9,442
(Projected household population divided by projected average household size)	
Estimated Total Number of Housing Units Needed by 2040	9,822
(Projected number of households plus the number of projected vacant units. 2019 value: 3.9%)	
2020 Total Number of Housing Units	9,469
Estimated Number of Housing Units Remaining to be Built by 2040	353
(Total estimated number of housing units minus housing units built as of 2020)	

other demographic factors. Based on this analysis, it is estimated that 353 new housing units would need to be built by 2040 to accommodate the forecasted increase in the township’s population over the same time period. To meet this forecasted housing need, an average of 13 housing units per year would need to be constructed over the next 19 years. As a point of comparison, a total of 473 dwelling units were constructed during the ten-year period between 2010 and 2020.

The estimates from DVRPC necessitate a very small number of new dwelling units in the future compared to past housing development. If the trend line were to continue forward, the number of new dwelling units built between 2020 and 2040 would be 2,793 instead of DVRPC’s recommended 353. The numbers that DVRPC predicts will be needed are not necessarily indicative of what will actually be built, and neither is the trend line. The choices and actions of Lower Providence Township will impact what may be developed in the coming decades. At a minimum, Lower Providence should ensure 353 new dwelling units

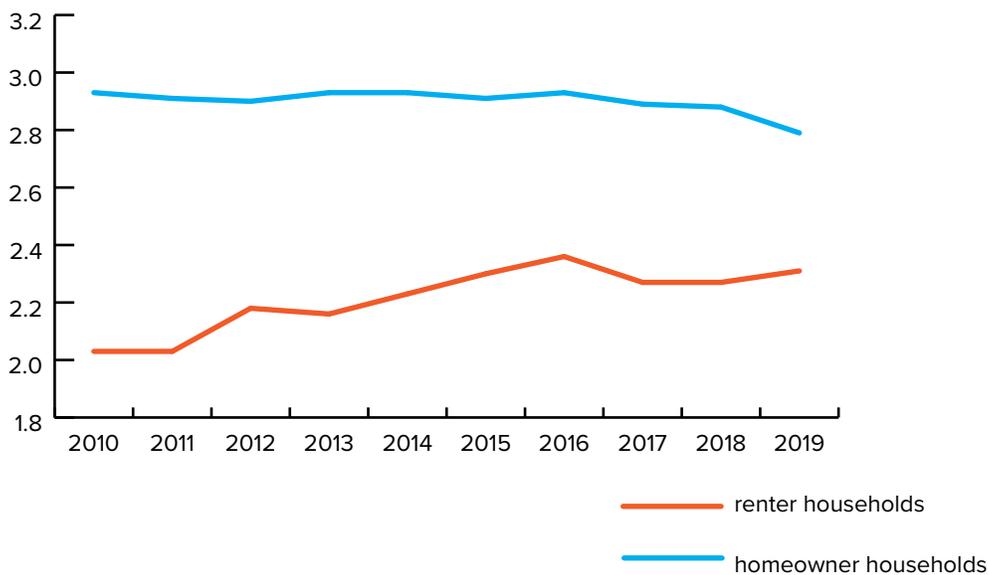
can be constructed by 2040. This number may soon be met by housing that is already proposed or approved (i.e. in the “development pipeline”)

Changing Households and Housing

By studying changes in the township’s households and housing that have occurred over the past decade, potential trends can be identified and evaluated. Understanding the shifting demographics of the township can help to plan for the community’s changing needs.

Changes in household size may signal a change in the need for alternative housing types with different amounts of living space. The overall average household size (2018) was 2.72 persons per dwelling unit. Since 2010, the average size of a homeowner household in Lower Providence Township has decreased slightly (-0.14 persons) while the average size of a renter household has grown substantially (+0.28 persons). As was noted before, the share of Lower Providence households that rent their homes grew during the same period. This corresponds with a dramatic increase in the

FIGURE 5.12 – AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE OVER TIME (DECENNIAL CENSUS, ACS 5-YEAR ESTIMATES)



quantity and prevalence of multifamily housing in the township. From 2010 to 2019, the Census Bureau reported multifamily housing in Lower Providence increasing from 1,616 units to 2,201 units (a 36 percent increase) with much of this growth coming from an expansion of the Shannondell retirement community. Over this same period, the township’s overall housing stock grew by 9.5 percent.

Aging-In Place

The comprehensive plan web survey conducted in 2021 found that 56% of respondents (n=119 responses) had lived in Lower Providence for more than 10 years. This example of long-term residency indicates how much residents value Lower Providence’s distinct neighborhoods, location, access to transportation options, commercial areas, and high-quality schools and community services. Home ownership and family connections in the township contribute to a strong sense of community pride and increase the likelihood that people will choose to stay in the community and invest in their properties as they advance through life’s stages. Over one-third of households in the

township have one or more persons who are 65 years old or greater, which is similar to Montgomery County overall. This observation combined with the fact that most homes have been lived in by the same individuals for many years, suggests that many people are choosing to age in-place in Lower Providence. While the Shannondell retirement community is often the focus of discussions about the township’s senior population, residents choosing to age in-place may prefer to remain in a familiar neighborhood, or live closer to family. Accessory dwelling units (ADU) are one housing option that can afford more flexibility to seniors and their families. Accessory dwelling units may be known by other names (e.g., “in-law suites”, “granny flats”, “secondary units”, or others) and come in a variety of configurations (e.g., within the primary residence, attached to the primary residence, or freestanding), but they all share the common feature of being dwelling units that are accessory to a primary residence.

Missing Middle Housing

One set of housing types that could help the township add to its variety of modestly-sized, and moderately priced housing options is Missing Middle housing.² The term “Missing Middle Housing” was coined and popularized by architecture firm Opticos Design in 2010. Since then, planners and policymakers in places across the United States have given renewed attention to the range of smaller dwelling types that are often lacking in a community, despite growing interest from seniors wishing to age in place, local workers of moderate income, and newly-formed households. This broad category includes some housing types, like duplexes and townhouses, that are already present in Lower Providence. Other types, like triplexes, quadruplexes, cottage courts, and live-



The Shannondell Retirement community now contains over 1,200 residential units.

² <https://missingmiddlehousing.com/>



Residential infill and redevelopment helps to renew Lower Providence’s housing stock, but newer single-family detached homes tend to be considerably larger than what was typical in earlier developments, leading to a loss of the smaller and generally less expensive homes that traditionally served as starter homes for new households and a downsizing option for older households.

work units are rarer or absent from the township. Housing types grouped under this label are often very similar in size and appearance to a typical single-family detached house. This physical and visual similarity can help to improve the compatibility of these housing units with existing residential development while offering residents a broader selection of housing size and affordability. By setting standards for the design and dimensions of these development types, the township can help to ensure they fit into the established fabric of the community.

Allowing Missing Middle housing types is one strategy by which the township can work to bolster its supply of homes that are smaller in size, retain its diversity of income levels and offer residents more options for making a home in Lower Providence. In Chapter 9: Future Land Use, locations in the township that may be better suited to accommodate these housing types are identified along the Ridge Pike corridor. These

areas, grouped under the Traditional Corridor Residential land use category, feature older, denser neighborhoods made up of smaller homes on smaller lots than are commonly seen in Lower Providence.

Goals and Recommendations

This plan envisions Lower Providence’s neighborhoods as places that accommodate the diverse, changing needs of township residents and are welcoming to new residents. This primarily entails maintaining or enhancing the quality of the township’s existing housing stock. Meeting the needs of the population’s full demographic, financial, and generational diversity will mean allowing for a variety of different forms of housing in the township. When new development occurs, use of sustainable practices and design will help to conserve natural resources and enhance its surroundings.

14	Encourage the preservation and reuse of historically or culturally significant buildings.
14a	Update zoning to allow for the adaptive reuse of historically or culturally significant institutional buildings as multi-family residential use.
14b	Update zoning to create provisions that would limit or delay the demolition of historic or culturally significant structures.
15	Conduct periodic reviews of building, zoning, and property maintenance codes and update them as needed.
15a	When enforcing codes, refer eligible residents to home repair assistance programs (e.g. Montgomery County Navicate, Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation Program).
15b	Ensure information about code enforcement policies and procedures are clear to all residents and accessible to non- or limited-English speaking households. Place information in township newsletter semiannually.
16	Provide opportunities to create housing in a range of sizes and prices to meet the changing needs of township residents.
16a	Update zoning to accommodate multifamily and residential mixed-use development in the township's activity centers (see Future Land Use).
16b	Create standards for mixed-use development to ensure it functions well in both its residential and commercial uses, is compatible with adjacent development, and is supportive of walking to community destinations and businesses.
16c	Create standards for Missing Middle housing types such as 2-, 3-, or 4- unit multiplex buildings to allow them in Traditional Corridor Residential areas ensure they are compatible with existing housing.
16d	Revise standards for Accessory Dwelling Units to allow use of ADUs as rental units, and create more opportunities for this small home and aging-in-place option.
17	Periodically review and update zoning and development standards for residential development.
17a	Assess and address innovations in residential construction, changes in household demographics, and to encourage walkability and pedestrian-oriented design.

Transportation

Chapter 6 - Lower Providence Township Comprehensive Plan

Throughout the history of Lower Providence Township, each new mode of transportation has helped to define its era and shape the growth and development of the region. Lower Providence's location at the confluence of the Schuylkill River and the Perkiomen Creek has long made it an important crossroads since the township's earliest history. From Lenape paths to trails, canals to railroads, trolleys to expressways, Lower Providence's transportation network has kept it connected and powered its growth.

History

Before European colonization of the area, the Lenni Lenape traveled and traded on local waterways and paths. The most significant of these was the Perkiomen Path. This ancient route lives on as present day Ridge Pike. Germantown Pike, Ridge Pike, and Egypt Road reached Lower Providence in the early 18th century and were among the first roads built, connecting the area's farmers to markets in Norristown and Philadelphia.



Schuylkill River and Schuylkill River Trail from Valley Forge National Historic Park

TRANSPORTATION

The Schuylkill Canal, constructed along the course of the Schuylkill River in the early 18th century, greatly expanded commerce in the region. The canal's role as a thoroughfare for coal and other bulky cargo supplied the growing industries of Philadelphia and Schuylkill valley, but was soon supplanted by railroads.

The construction of railroads during the 19th century drove further growth and industrial development of the region. Although three railways were constructed in the Schuylkill and Perkiomen Valleys, Lower Providence's steep and often rocky terrain excluded rail service from much of the township. Only the Schuylkill Branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad passed through Lower Providence. This railroad's former right-of-way is now the path of the Schuylkill River Trail. In the present day, the nearest existing railway is Norfolk Southern's Harrisburg Line, located just beyond the township's southern boundary, on the opposite bank of the Schuylkill River.

Trolley service from Norristown reached Lower Providence in 1896, with the construction of a Schuylkill Valley Traction Company line on Ridge Pike. This trolley line was eventually extended as far west as Pottstown. From 1902 to 1925 another trolley, operated by the Montgomery County Rapid Transit Company, also served Lower Providence, passing by the eastern corner of the township on its run between Harleysville and Norristown. Trolley service ceased in Lower Providence in 1933. As the Schuylkill Valley trolley lines on Ridge Pike and elsewhere closed, they were replaced with bus service. The Schuylkill Valley Lines bus company was incorporated into SEPTA in 1976, forming the basis of the region's modern suburban bus routes.

Transportation in Lower Providence is now defined by the township's access to expressways. The completion of the Pennsylvania Turnpike in the early 1950s opened a new era for automobile drivers in the area. The construction of the US Route 422 expressway through the south end of the township gave Lower Providence a direct



Route 422 at the "St. Gabe's Curve"

connection to the region's highway network in 1985. Recent construction projects have expanded the capacity of US Route 422 and reconfigured the Trooper Road interchange to improve access.

In 1965, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) was created by an interstate compact between Pennsylvania and New Jersey. DVRPC is the metropolitan planning organization for the nine counties of the greater Philadelphia region and helps to coordinate planning for transportation, land use, environmental protection, economic development, and equity. DVRPC provides data and conducts studies of various transportation and other planning issues in the region, including some specific to Lower Providence, and plans for the long term transportation needs of the greater Philadelphia region.

Current Conditions

The road network in Lower Providence Township is made up of over 140 miles of streets. Major roadways extend across the township, carrying

regional traffic and hosting Lower Providence's commercial corridors. Many smaller roadways branch off of the main roads, making up the residential neighborhoods of the township. The steep, stream-cut topography and traditional cul-de-sac development patterns of the township create connectivity issues in some areas where adjacent neighborhoods lack streets linking them together.

New development generates additional traffic in the township, which can grow until off-site improvements are needed for roads or intersections. To help fund these roadway improvements, Lower Providence has enacted a Transportation Impact Fee authorized by state law (Act 209). The Act 209 Study (with its land use assumptions report, roadway sufficiency analysis, and capital improvements plan) must be updated at least once every ten years to prioritize traffic improvement projects. Lower Providence first adopted a transportation impact fee ordinance in 1991, though this was completely revised in 2001 and subsequently amended in 2009 and 2012.



Ridge Pike is a state-owned arterial road in Lower Providence.

Road and Bridge Ownership

The network of roads and bridges in Lower Providence Township is owned and maintained by a combination of public and private owners. The largest share of Lower Providence’s road network is owned by the municipal government of the township. Many of Lower Providence’s major roadways, like Park Avenue and Ridge Pike, are state roads. Germantown Pike, an arterial owned by the county, is a prominent exception.

The ownership of roads and bridges determines how maintenance is scheduled and funded and how improvements are designed. In addition to their important role within the township, state- and county-owned roads have a key relationship to the larger transportation network of the region. These major corridors must balance local priorities against those of wider region. In contrast,

the township has more freedom to set priorities for the operation, maintenance, and design of municipally-owned roads, bridges, and trails.

Traffic Volume

Roads are classified by the function they serve in the transportation network. Roads in higher classes generally carry larger traffic volumes at higher speeds. Roads in lower classes are smaller and carry less traffic at lower speeds. Lower Providence has examples of roadways in every functional class from local streets to expressways. The higher functional classes - expressways and arterials - are fewer in number and tend to be owned by the state or county. The network of township-owned roads is almost exclusively made up of collectors and local roads.

FIGURE 6.1 ROAD OWNERSHIP IN LOWER PROVIDENCE

ROAD OWNERSHIP	TOTAL MILES	PERCENT	EXAMPLE
PennDOT	34.5	24.6%	Ridge Pike
Montgomery County	2.9	2.0%	Germantown Pike
Lower Providence Township	96.2	68.6%	Rittenhouse Road
Private	6.7	4.8%	Surrey Lane
Total Roads	140.3		



Henry Road is a township-owned local road with very low traffic volumes.

FIGURE 6.3 – ROAD AND BRIDGE OWNERSHIP MAP

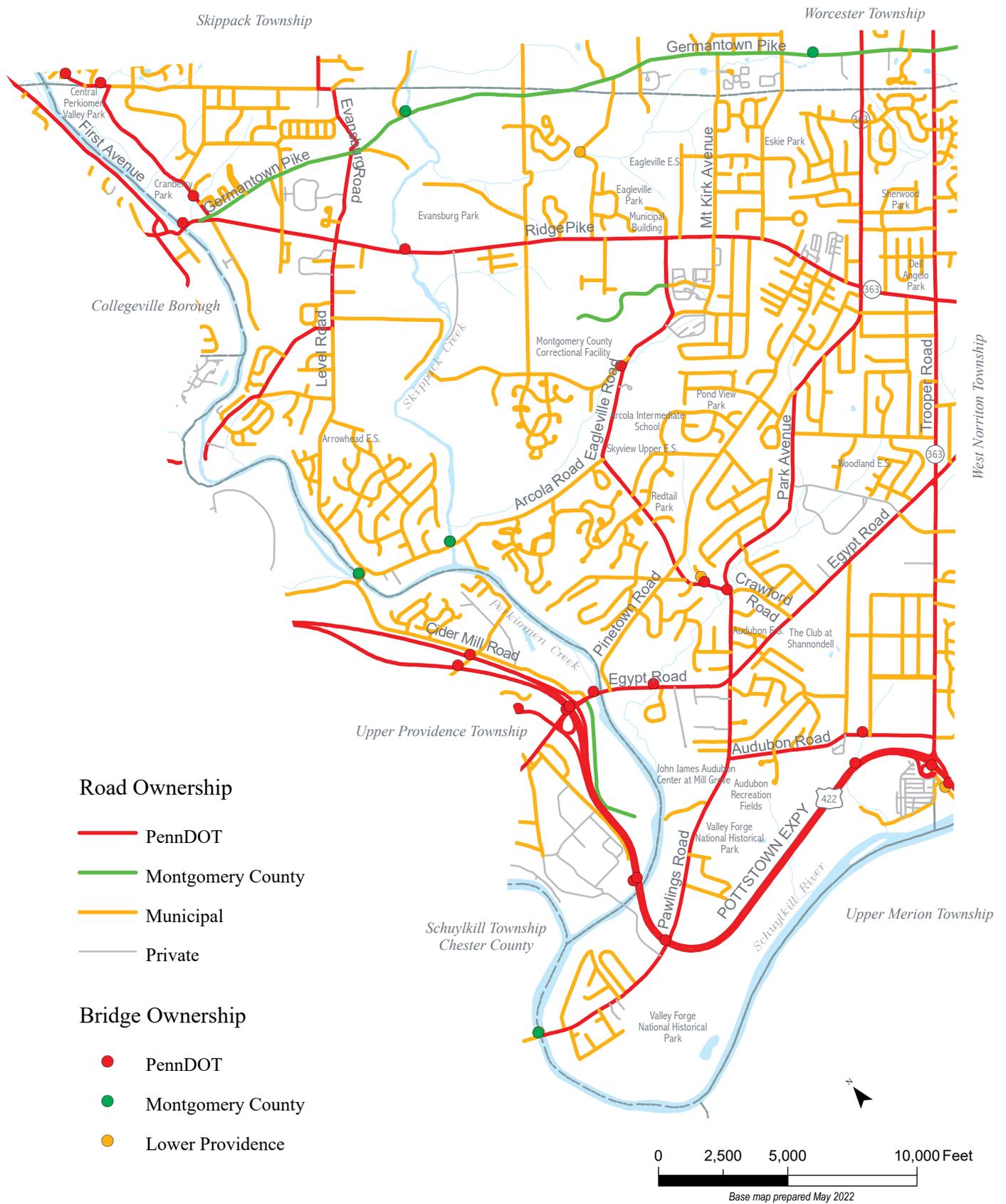


FIGURE 6.3 – ROADWAY FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

ROADWAY FUNCTIONAL CLASS	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLES
Expressway	Limited access divided roads for long-distance travel and high speeds	US Route 422
Principal Arterial	Serve major activity centers and provide longer regional connections	Ridge Pike Germantown Pike Egypt Road
Minor Arterial	Provide links between principal arterials and connects activity centers	Pawlings Road Park Avenue
Collector	Create connections between arterials and neighborhoods, collecting local traffic and distributing arterial traffic	Eagleville Road Level Road Audubon Road Arcola Road
Local	Provide direct access to homes and businesses, meant for low speeds and traffic volumes	Rittenhouse Road Yerkes Road Sunnyside Avenue

ANNUAL AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC (AADT)	EXAMPLES
30,000 and over	Route 422 Expressway
10,000 to 30,000	Ridge Pike, Germantown Pike, Pawlings Road, Egypt Road, Trooper Road, Park Avenue
5,000 to 10,000	Audubon Road, Evansburg Road, Eagleville Road
Up to 5,000	Level Road, Pinetown Road, Crawford Road, Sunnyside Avenue, Yerkes Road

Traffic volumes are measured in annual average daily traffic (AADT). Route 422 carries the highest traffic volume of any roadway in Lower Providence, roughly equal to the combined traffic volume carried by all of the arterials in the township.

Road Safety

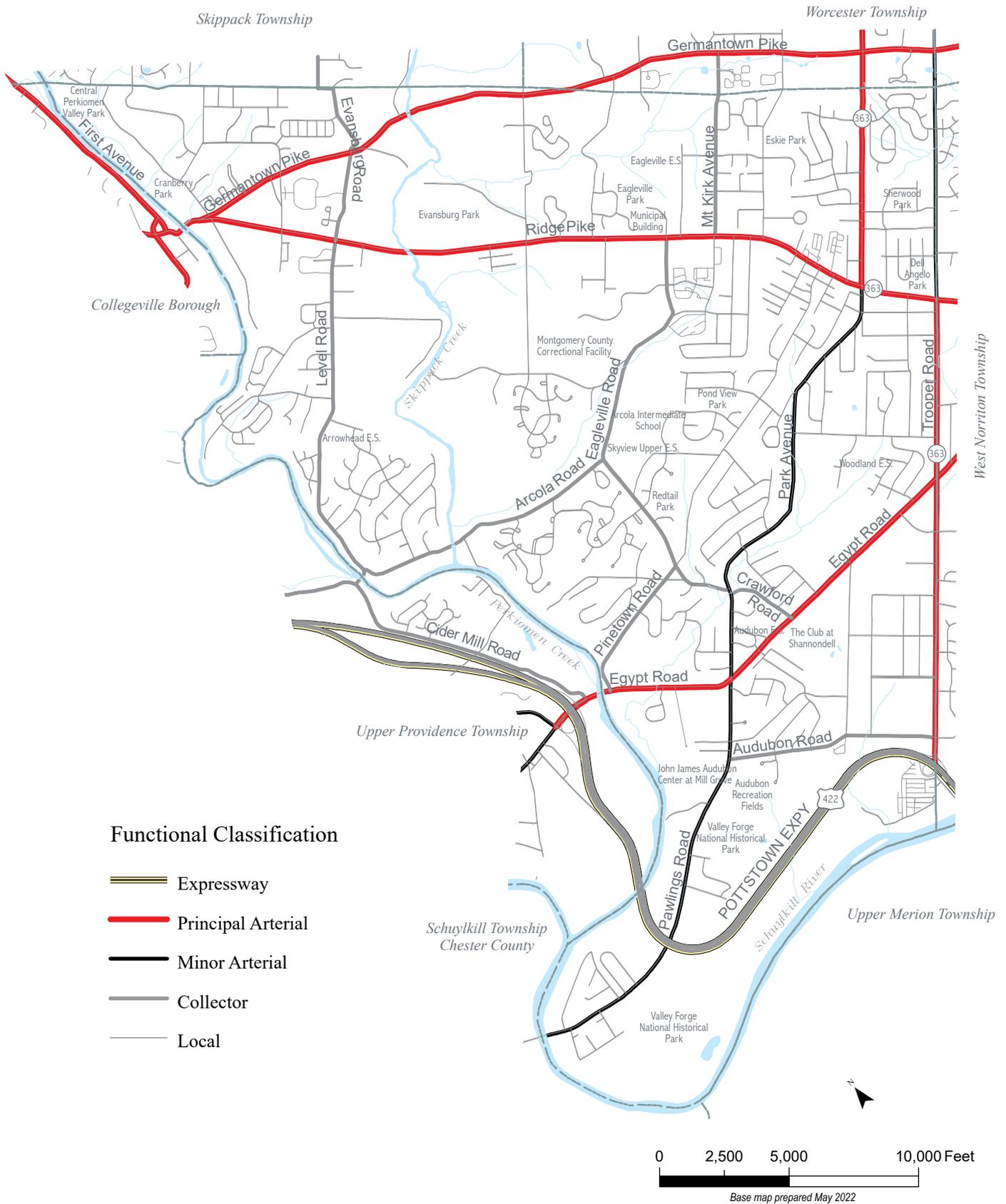
Crashes are a major public safety concern. Over the past decade, Lower Providence has averaged 236 reportable traffic crashes¹ each year, resulting in property damage, injuries, and loss of life. Since 2010, the numbers of reportable crashes and injuries have varied year-to-year, with both statistics figures a slight downward trend over

time. During that same period, crashes in Lower Providence resulted in 14 fatalities. Crashes tend to occur on roadways with higher traffic volumes, particularly at intersections and in other places where drivers make turns across the path of traffic. During the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, business closures and related disease-prevention efforts resulted in drastic reductions in travel and traffic volumes. During this period of reduced traffic volumes, Lower Providence saw fewer crashes and crash injuries in 2020 than in any year of last decade. The number of traffic crashes remained relatively low through 2021, despite an increase from 2020.

¹ In Pennsylvania, a reportable crash means that at least one of the following things is true:

- A vehicle must be towed from the scene (cannot be driven away under its own power)
- A person sustains any type of injury
- A fatality occurs

FIGURE 6.3 – ROADWAY FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION MAP



Significant changes will need to be made to the character of the roadways to improve safety and reduce the number of crashes. Traffic light sequencing, intersection design, and restricting driveway curb cuts (access management) can help to reduce traffic conflicts and reduce the number and severity of crashes.

Although crashes involving bicyclists and pedestrians are only about two percent of Lower Providence’s total crashes each year, they are of particular concern because bicyclists and pedestrians are more likely to be injured in crashes. Slowing traffic and providing safe facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians can help to protect these road

FIGURE 6.4 – TRAFFIC CRASHES AND CRASH INJURIES IN LOWER PROVIDENCE
SOURCE: PENNDOT

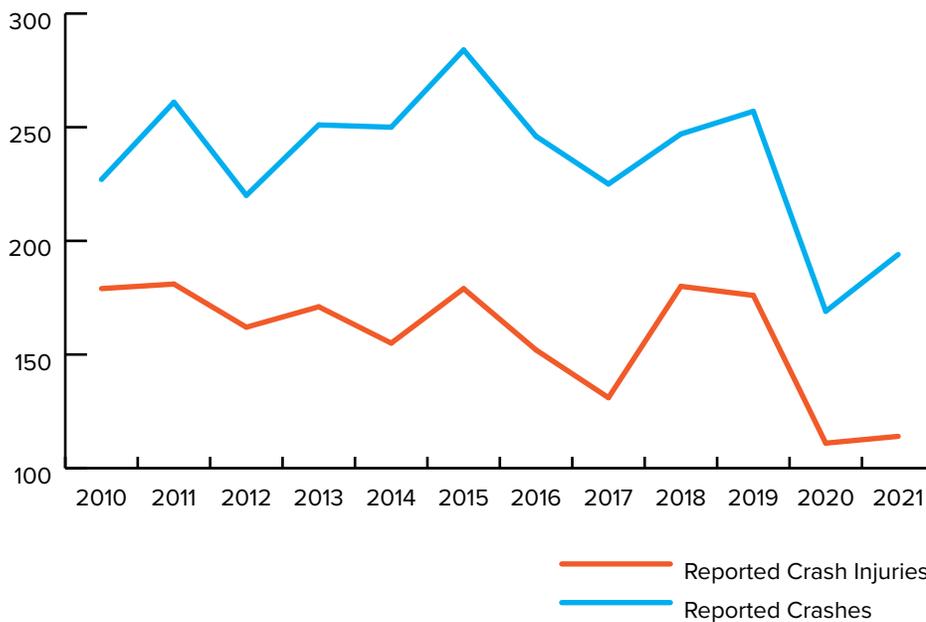


FIGURE 6.5 – BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN CRASHES IN LOWER PROVIDENCE
SOURCE: PENNDOT

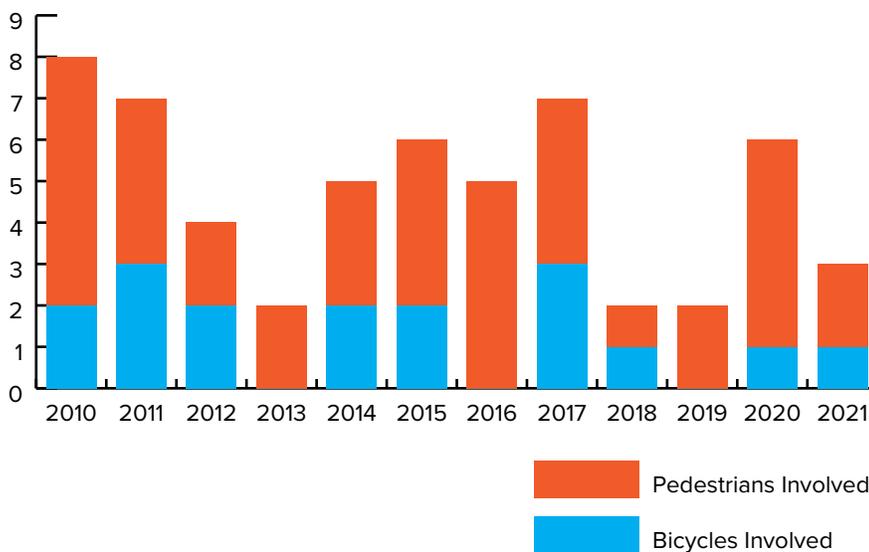
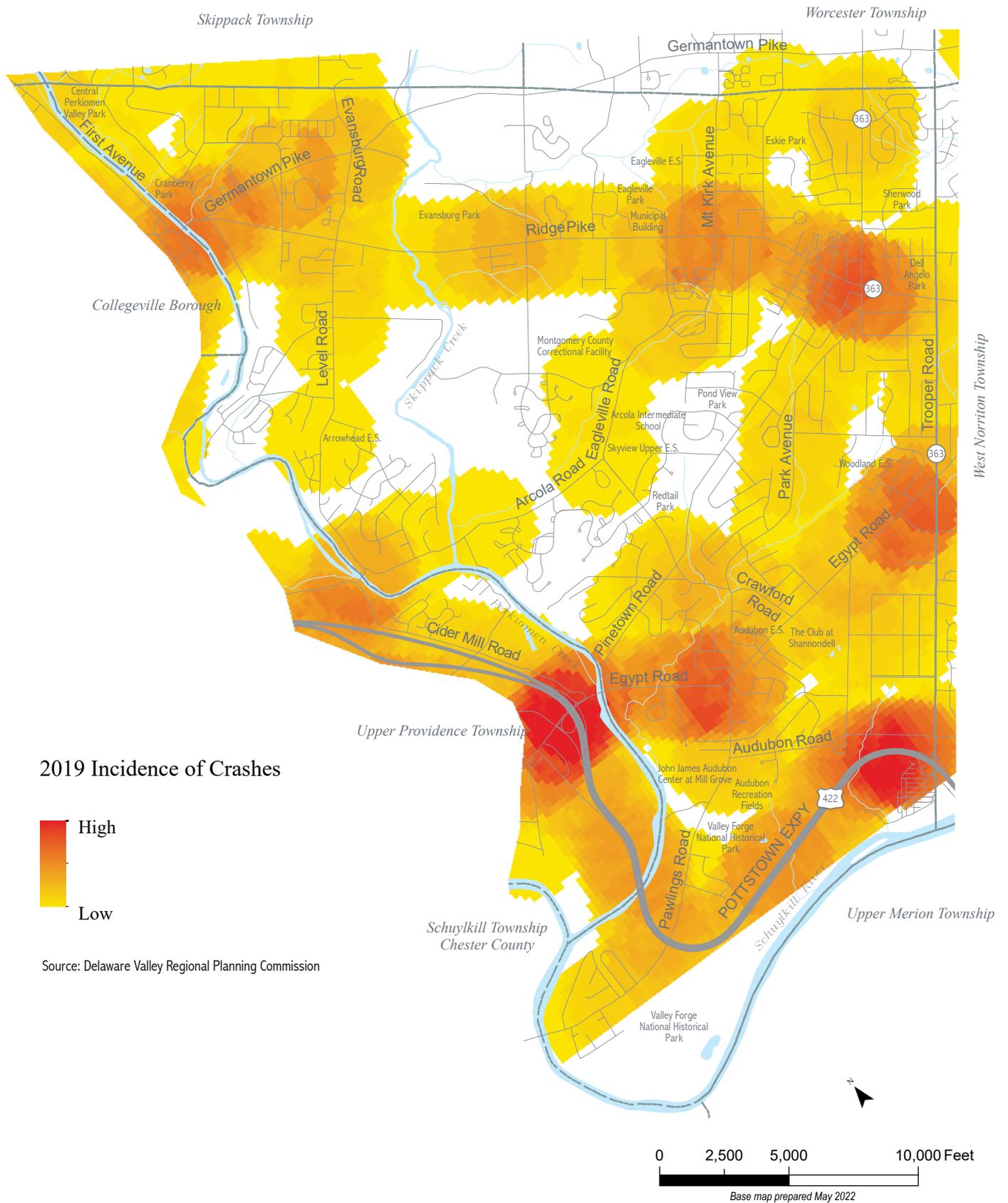
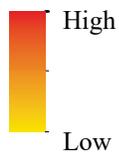


FIGURE 6.6 – INCIDENCE OF CRASHES HEAT MAP
SOURCE: DVRPC



2019 Incidence of Crashes



Source: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

users. PennDOT analyzes all reportable crashes in Pennsylvania, and has found that speed-related crashes result in the most fatalities and are the main source of crashes that involve driver error. Pedestrian- and bicycle-involved crashes in which a driver is speeding are much more likely to be fatal for the pedestrian or bicyclist.

Speed is a major factor in the severity of all types of crashes, as has been shown quite vividly nationwide trends over the past few years. As traffic volumes dwindled and road congestion plummeted during COVID restrictions, the incidence of extreme speeding and other risky driving behaviors rose dramatically, resulting in a sharp rise in the number and severity of crashes². While Lower Providence has had the good fortune to not experience this increase in crashes, the township can benefit from the emerging research into the contributing factors of this trend.

Slowing traffic is one way to reduce crashes and decrease their severity when they do occur. Traffic calming is a term that encompasses various ways of slowing cars down and reducing conflicts. There are a wide variety of possible measures to take that can slow traffic, including speed bumps (or speed cushions or tables), reducing lane width or making travel lanes appear narrower, using pavement markings or textures, or creating turns or curves such as chicanes or roundabouts. All of these and more are structural ways of encouraging drivers to pay attention and slow down. Different types of traffic calming devices are appropriate for different types of streets.

Many roadway improvements and traffic calming strategies can be first implemented as pilot projects. Temporary lane width reductions, curb bulb-outs, bike lanes, and other changes can be executed with paint, planters, and traffic barrels for a trial period. Temporary installations are typically less expensive than permanent installations. If the pilot

² <https://aashtojournal.org/2022/07/08/study-covid-19-pandemic-sparked-speeding-epidemic/>

of the change is successful, efforts can be made to get funding for more permanent elements. Temporary installations should be in place for several months in order to evaluate their impact.

Where traffic calming uses design to control vehicles speed and movements in the roadway, access management applies a design-based approach to controlling access points where vehicles enter and leave the roadway from adjacent land uses. Frequent driveways and uncontrolled access points present more opportunities for turning vehicles to come into conflict with other road users. One of the main methods of improving access control involves reducing the number of driveways on a roadway and constraining what turning movements are allowed at different access points. Ensuring the safety of turning vehicles can also involve design elements within the roadway, creating dedicated turn lanes or installing medians or barriers to restrict turns where they would be hazardous.

Complete Streets are designed to consider of the needs of all possible users of the street – cars, bicycles, and pedestrians – including children, the elderly, and those with mobility challenges. A



This entrance to Park Ridge Shopping Center is an example of an older driveway design that could be enhanced to reduce the possibility of vehicle conflicts and improve safety for pedestrians.

Complete Streets Policy requires that all possible users of a street be considered every time work is done on a street. Considering all users does not necessarily mean that changes will be made to a roadway every time. It depends on how the street is used, traffic volumes and speeds, history of crashes, etc. Many small local streets probably do not need bike lanes, or in some cases even sidewalks. A Complete Streets Policy would simply require a moment to step back and reflect on the various uses of the street anytime repaving or other work is taking place on a street. Where warranted and practical, modification to a street should be made to improve safety and accessibility for all possible users.

Montgomery County has a Complete Streets Policy that can be adopted by local municipalities.³ The county’s Complete Streets Policy guides the design of projects on county-owned roads and facilities and informs the county’s partnerships with other transportation agencies. Montgomery County works with DVRPC, PennDOT, and municipalities to identify opportunities for Complete Streets upgrades and other improvements during

³ See: <https://www.montcopa.org/3277/Montgomery-County-Complete-Streets-Polic>

regular repaving and maintenance projects. A local Complete Streets Policy would perform a similar role, guiding the design of township-owned roads and bridges and partnerships with Montgomery County and PennDOT on roads that they own.

Roadway safety projects should be focused on Egypt Road and Ridge Pike – the streets with the most crashes in Lower Providence (besides 422). Parts of Egypt Road have a speed limit of 45 miles per hour. This may be too high for this roadway considering the volume of traffic and the number of crashes. In addition, Egypt Road is proposed as a bicycle route (see below), thus furthering the case for a lowered speed limit. Reducing traffic speeds is most successful when a lowered speed limit is combined with other traffic calming measures.

Road Projects

With increases in traffic volumes, driving miles, and vehicle sizes that have occurred over the past several decades, a community’s road network may need improvements beyond the regular maintenance and resurfacing. There are currently two road projects



The Ridge/Germantown Realignment Project is the second portion of a larger effort to improve traffic circulation near the historic Perkiomen Bridge

on the region’s Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) that are located in Lower Providence. The largest of these, the Ridge/Germantown Intersection Realignment, will relocate the intersection of Ridge and Germantown Pikes. This project developed from past studies, including the 2018 Ridge Pike West Corridor Study, exploring the potential for a second bridge crossing Perkiomen Creek and additional means for reducing traffic congestion in the vicinity. The realignment plan will create a roundabout on Germantown Pike, east of the existing intersection with Ridge Pike. From this roundabout, a new connector road will lead south to Ridge Pike. Germantown Pike will be closed prior to its current terminus with Ridge Pike. Along with the connector roadways, intersections, and turning lanes, this project will also add sidewalks and bike lanes to the affected portion of Ridge Pike. This project is scheduled to begin in 2024 and be completed in 2025.

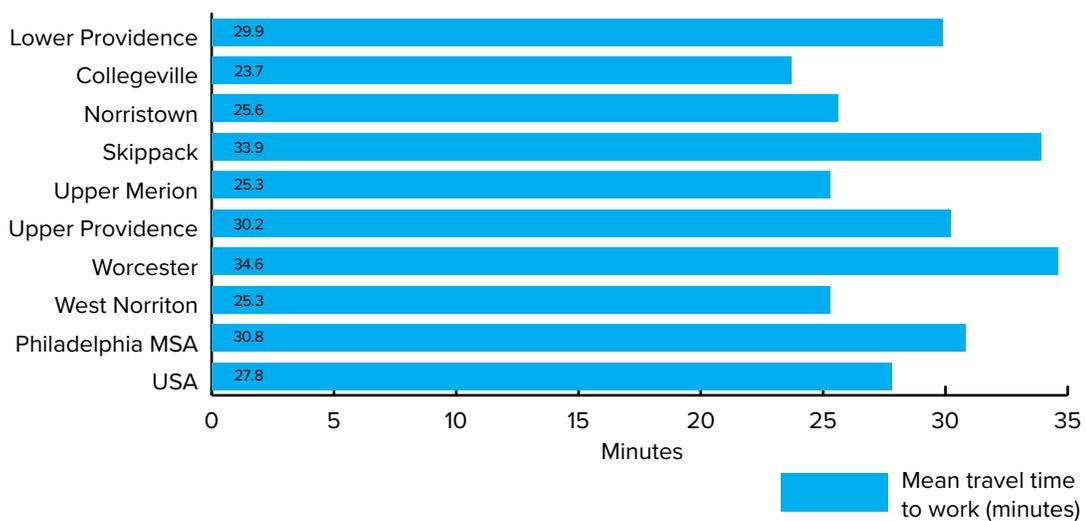
The Crawford, Eagleville, and Park Realignment is another notable project in the township involving the realignment of a challenging intersection. Cur-

rently, Eagleville and Crawford Roads meet South Park Avenue in two, closely-spaced intersections separated by Mine Run. This project will align Eagleville and Crawford Roads to create a single four-way intersection. This project is planned to begin construction in 2023 with an anticipated completion at the end of 2025.

Commuting

Commuting is one of the best-understood aspects of the transportation system. Federal agencies conduct regular, nationwide surveys that collect information about the modes of transport, destination, distance, and duration of people’s daily trips to and from their workplaces. The most recent National Household Travel Survey found that commuting to work accounted for 16.6% of all trips in the United States in 2017. While commutes only comprise a fraction of all trips, commutes tend to be longer distances than other trips. Commutes accounted for 20.8% of driving miles in the United States in 2017.

FIGURE 6.7 – AVERAGE TRAVEL TIME TO WORK COMPARISON
SOURCE: 2019 ACS 5-YEAR ESTIMATES



In Lower Providence, workers traveling by all modes have an average commute length of 29.9 minutes. This figure is comparable to average commute times in neighboring municipalities, and closely matches those reported at the metropolitan and national level. Commute length can vary considerably, depending on what mode transport is used. Less than two percent of Lower Providence commuters travel by transit, but their average commute time of 76.6 minutes is far longer than the commutes of residents who carpool or drive alone.

In Lower Providence, and neighboring municipalities, automobiles are the dominant mode of transport for commuters. Over 98% of Lower Providence commuters travel by car, truck, or van. Most of these automobile commuters drive alone, but over 10% of Lower Providence commuters carpool. In the Philadelphia region, DVRPC’s Share-a-Ride program helps commuters to participate in carpooling with a ride-matching service.

FIGURE 6.8 – AVERAGE TRAVEL TIME TO WORK BY MODE IN LOWER PROVIDENCE
SOURCE: 2019 ACS 5-YEAR ESTIMATES

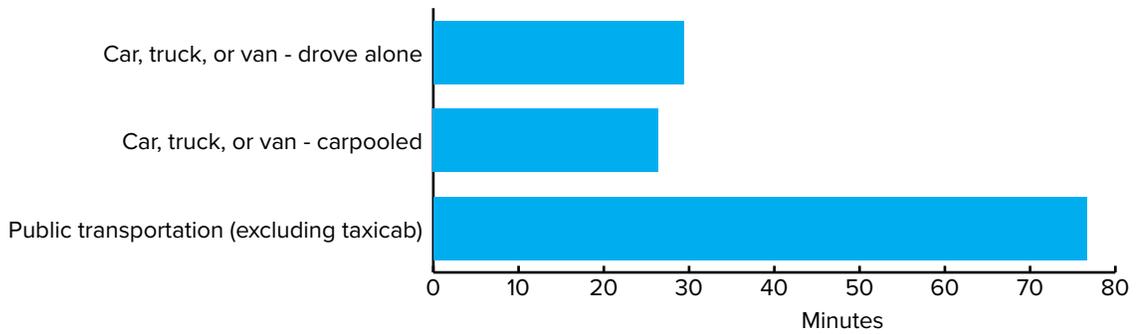
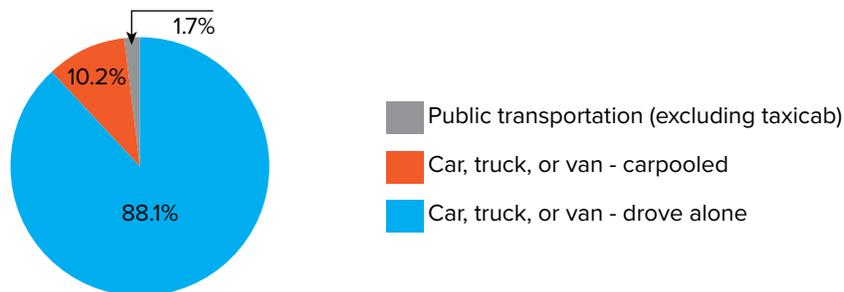


FIGURE 6.9 – COMMUTES BY MODE IN LOWER PROVIDENCE
SOURCE: 2019 ACS 5-YEAR ESTIMATES



Motor Vehicles

Census data tells us that about 4.5 percent of Lower Providence households do not have a vehicle available. This is similar to most comparison municipalities and indicates that most Lower Providence households have good vehicle access. However, for those households without vehicles, the lack of sidewalks is a significant safety concern. In Lower Providence, renter households are nearly three times more likely than home-owning households to have no vehicle available. The township’s renter-occupied households are concentrated mainly in apartment developments located on or near the major arterial roads of the township. These roads carry high volumes of traffic and lack continuous sidewalks, but also carry the township’s bus routes.

Despite their prevalence and convenience as transportation in Lower Providence and the wider region, there is growing awareness of hazards created by motor vehicles and inefficiencies inherent in transportation systems that are based

upon them. Among the most prominent risks comes from the greenhouse gases contained in engine exhaust. In Lower Providence, private vehicles account for 30.2% of the township’s total greenhouse gas emissions, according to a 2018 greenhouse gas emissions inventory by DVRPC.⁴ While electric cars are growing in popularity, and accounted for 2.0% of new cars sold in the US in 2020⁵ they remain only a small fraction of the nation’s vehicle fleet. Newer model vehicles of all types have increased in durability and reliability in recent years, as they have grown in price. Both factors have contributed to the upward trend in the average age of motor vehicles in the United States, which recently passed 12 years.⁶ Viewed together, it is clear that eliminating transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions in a timely manner will require more than what can be achieved through

4 <https://www.dvrpc.org/webmaps/municipalenergy/mcdDetail.aspx?mcdcode=4209145080>
 5 <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2021/06/07/todays-electric-vehicle-market-slow-growth-in-u-s-faster-in-china-europe/>
 6 <https://www.caranddriver.com/news/a33457915/average-age-vehicles-on-road-12-years/>

FIGURE 6.10 – CARS PER HOUSEHOLD COMPARISON
 SOURCE: 2019 ACS 5-YEAR ESTIMATES

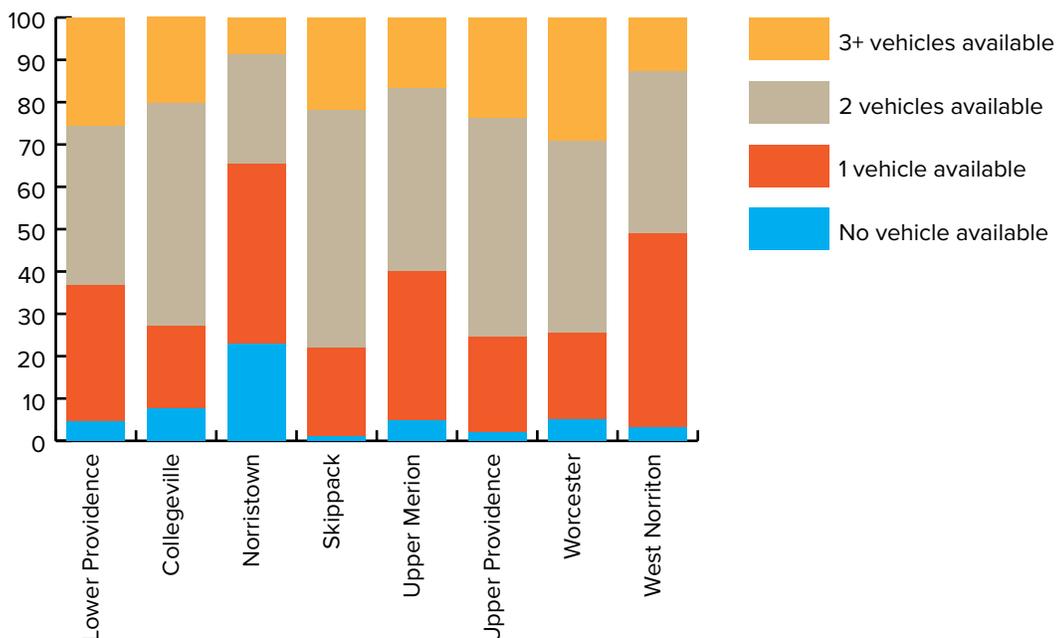
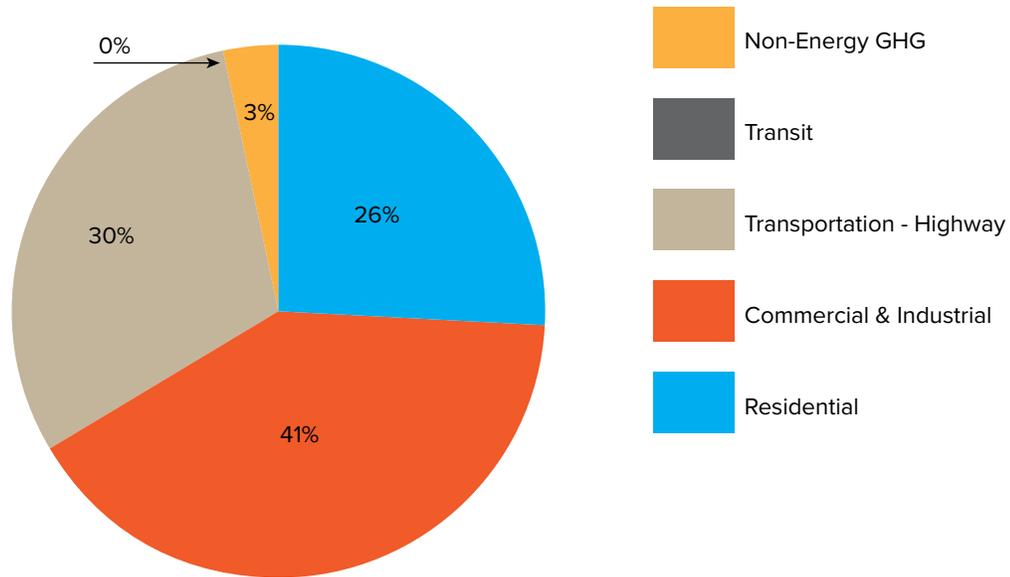


FIGURE 6.11 – LOWER PROVIDENCE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS BY SECTOR
SOURCE: DVRPC



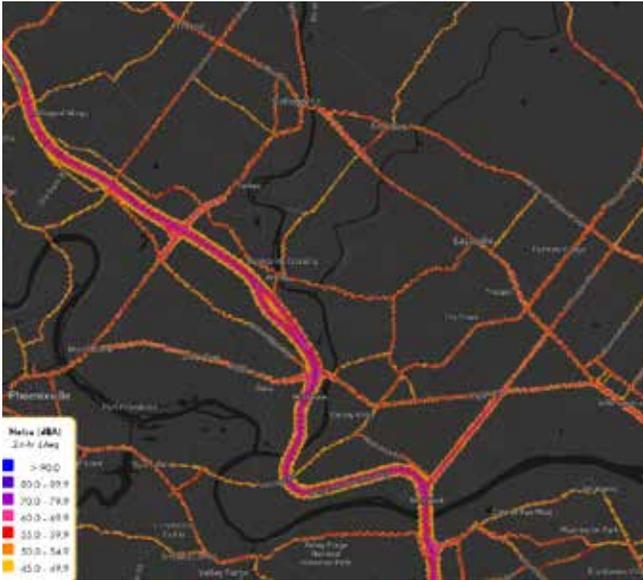
the continuation of current trends in vehicle use, market share, and lifecycle-replacement. Transitioning to a fully decarbonized transportation system- one that does not use fossil fuels or generate greenhouse gas emissions- will certainly require action by federal and state governments, but local governments have plenty they can do to assist in this effort. By making township streets safer and more convenient for walking and biking, Lower Providence can support a shift away from car trips to modes of transportation that emit less greenhouse gases.

Aside from fumes and greenhouse gases, vehicles produce other forms of pollution. One type of pollution that is receiving increasing scrutiny is

fine particulates.⁷ Pollution particles measuring 2.5 microns in size are considered especially hazardous by the US EPA⁸ because of their ability to avoid the body’s natural defenses and travel far into the respiratory system and accumulate in the body. Vehicles produce microscopic particles as different parts are worn down by friction. A vehicle’s brakes are common source of particulate pollution. Lighter vehicles and vehicles with regenerative braking produce less of this kind of pollution. A vehicle’s tire are another source of particulates. The amount of tire wear and resulting particulates produced by a vehicle is tied to the

7 <https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/resources/documents/brake-tire-wear-emissions>

8 <https://www.epa.gov/pm-pollution/particulate-matter-pm-basics>



The National Transportation Noise Map (2018) shows how traffic noise increases with the speed and volume of traffic on a roadway. Route 422 stands out against the network of major roadways of the area.

vehicle’s weight, meaning that heavier vehicles like trucks and SUVs produce more than lighter vehicles. By reducing the need for motor vehicle trips, reducing travel speeds, encouraging the use of less-polluting vehicles, and making township streets safe for walking and biking, Lower Providence can reduce the particulate pollution generated by its transportation system.

The pollution created by transportation is not limited only to the substances released by vehicles. Noise pollution is increasingly recognized as a health hazard.⁹ Transportation of all kinds creates noise, contributing a significant amount to the ambient sound levels in developed places and near certain transportation facilities like arterial roads, expressways, and airports. The size and speed of a vehicle correlates with the noise levels that it generates while traveling, presenting another benefit of smaller vehicles and lower travel speeds.

9 <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41569-021-00532-5>



Egypt Road and other main arterials can become quite congested during periods of high traffic volume.

Different types of pavement can also affect the amount of noise created by traffic.¹⁰ Use of quieter pavement types can help to reduce the amount of noise generated by high-traffic roadways.

Communities can effectively reduce the pollution types listed above by reducing traffic volumes and shifting their transportation system away from relying primarily on private motor vehicles, towards a more balanced mix of different transportation modes. The benefits of reducing traffic and shifting to other modes of travel are not limited to reducing pollution. By using public transit, walking, biking, and other alternatives to driving, communities can help to relieve congestion on existing roadways without needing to undertake costly and disruptive projects like road widening. In addition to the more established driving alternatives, emerging technologies may broaden the slate of transportation options available to communities in the future.

The Changing Transportation System

Our transportation system is constantly evolving, changing the ways transportation infrastructure is used over time. To adapt to the needs of new transportation options, increases in deliveries, new types of vehicles, and more, Lower Providence should monitor and respond to those changes.

Autonomous Vehicles

Motor vehicle types have been evolving for years, including the development of fully electric vehicles that are charged with electricity, and smaller vehicles such as Smart Cars. With the development of cruise control, automatic braking, and lane tracking, many vehicles already have the beginnings of automation. Motor vehicles are gradually becoming more autonomous, carrying

a greater variety and number of sensors and more powerful computer processors, and many vehicle manufacturers and other companies are working to get increasingly automated vehicles onto public streets. Fully-automated vehicles are predicted initially to be used for less demanding applications, such as fixed routes, low-speed local trips, and cruising on uncongested limited-access highways. Automated vehicles are starting to see use as household grocery delivery and last mile package delivery thanks in part to an act passed by the Pennsylvania legislature in 2020 which classified automated “Personal Delivery Devices” (PDD) as pedestrians¹¹.

Connected Vehicles

Connected vehicles have technology onboard that allows them to communicate with each other and with surrounding transportation infrastructure. Connected vehicle technology is commonly envisioned as a complement to the features of future autonomous vehicles, working together to improve the transportation system’s overall safety and efficiency. Future intersections may be able to send out signals to nearby vehicles with information about traffic light timing, the presence of pedestrians, and more. Cars may be able to maintain a safe distance from each other without cameras or sensors if they are all equipped with wireless technology that can judge distance. Implementation of connected vehicle technology will require the widespread deployment of small-cell 5G antennas. These are already being deployed by many mobile technology companies.

New Vehicle Types

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) has a type of vehicle certification for a Neighborhood

¹⁰ <https://acousticstoday.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Highway-Noise.pdf>

¹¹ <https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/li/uconsCheck.cfm?yr=2020&sessInd=0&act=106>

Electric Vehicle (NEV) that permits a 25 mile per hour maximum speed and does not require all of the safety features of a regular car. These vehicles will probably not look like our current cars, since they are designed to meet different standards and to operate in different types of situations. These changing types of vehicles may have different needs on the street. Pennsylvania statutes also recognize and include a definition for the NEV category.¹² Some states have a Low-Speed Vehicles (LSV) category, a category equivalent to NEV, and additional vehicle categories, like Medium Speed Vehicles (MSV) that Pennsylvania does not have. Smaller classes of vehicles like NEV, LSV, and MSV are meant to fill similar roles, seeing use where traffic speeds are low enough to allow for the use of these lightweight, low-speed, energy-efficient, less-expensive vehicles. Limiting speeds on local streets supports the use of smaller vehicles and increases safety for people to walk and bike as well.

In 2016, Pennsylvania created a new category of vehicle, the auticycle.¹³ This vehicle category applies to three-wheel motorcycles that that are similar in appearance and operation to a car. Auticycle occupants sit in seats and the driver's controls are like those of an automobile. This vehicle type is primarily used for recreation currently, but some companies are now developing vehicles that make use of this definition, and similar categories in other states, to certify lightweight three-wheeled automobiles that are designed for high efficiency. Such vehicles resemble a conventional car in outward appearance and function, but may be unfamiliar to the public and require outreach and information.

¹² <http://www.dot.state.pa.us/public/dvspubsforms/BMV/BMV%20Fact%20Sheets/fs-nev.pdf>

¹³ <https://www.dmv.pa.gov/Information-Centers/Laws-Regulations/Pages/AUTOCYCLE-LAW.aspx>

Micromobility and Shared Transport

Micromobility refers to a growing variety of very lightweight, low-speed vehicles that are becoming increasingly common in communities around the world. Bicycles may be considered one of the earliest examples of micromobility vehicles and the size and speed of bikes and electric bikes help to define the characteristics of micromobility vehicles. Newer micromobility vehicle types include electric bicycles, kickboard scooters, electric scooters, Segways¹⁴, and skateboards. In Lower Providence and other suburban places, these types of small vehicles are typically privately owned, though sharing systems and rental networks of micromobility vehicles are spreading in communities across the country. Many new rental systems for bikes and other small vehicles are dockless, which means that the vehicles can be picked up and dropped off anywhere within the service area and the next rider can utilize the GPS system to locate them– they don't need to be taken to specific docks or ports.

¹⁴ Segways are officially known in the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code as Electric Personal Assistive Mobility Devices or EPAMDs (Title 75 Part I)



Example of an electric kick scooter.

Cities around the world have seen various types of shared transport for years, but car sharing and bike sharing have increased with the ease and prevalence of digital reservations and GPS locator systems. In addition, there is a rise in shared vehicle systems using new micromobility vehicles, such as electric kickboard scooters (e-scooters) and electric motor scooters. These shared vehicle rental systems, and the growing popularity of e-bikes and e-scooters more generally, help to make these types of small vehicles available to people who do not own or would not use them otherwise. This increases mobility options for people but also increases the importance of protected infrastructure for users of these small, lightweight vehicles, to ensure the safety of less experienced users. Some cities in California are piloting low speed lanes or areas for Neighborhood Electric Vehicles and micromobility vehicles. In some cases, regular cars may be permitted to join them if they also stay under 15 miles per hour.¹⁵ Many new shared vehicle systems are operated by, or in partnership with Network Transportation Companies, to complement their primary business: ride-hailing services.

Network Transportation Companies

Companies such as Uber, Lyft, and others are known as Network Transportation Companies (NTC). In addition to their better-known ride-hailing services, NTCs commonly offer a number of other services ranging from on-demand shuttle buses to bikeshare and electric scooter rental services. The convenience of this type of service improves mobility for those without personal vehicles and has other benefits, such as last mile transportation for transit users. Where ride-hailing vehicles are operating in one location, there may

be negative impacts such as increased traffic and insufficient curb space for pick-up and drop-offs. In the future, on-demand transportation may be driverless, creating an additional set of potential benefits and challenges.

Freight and Delivery

E-commerce is increasing, and the trend towards more products being delivered to homes and businesses is likely to continue. Delivery companies are trying to deliver products faster, which means an increase in dispersed warehouse space and growing fleets of delivery vehicles, a trend already evident in Montgomery County.

In addition, more delivery vehicles, including smaller road vehicles and drones, are likely in the future. Potential impacts of increasingly convenient delivery on brick and mortar stores need to be considered. Additional delivery vehicles on roads are already causing problems that will likely increase - wear and tear on roadways and blocking traffic when stopped for deliveries.

Issues such as noise and safety will need to be addressed in the future with drone delivery. Current FAA regulations require that small unmanned aerial systems weigh no more than 55 pounds and prohibit them from flying over people other than the operator. These regulations are anticipated to evolve in the future.

Walking and Biking

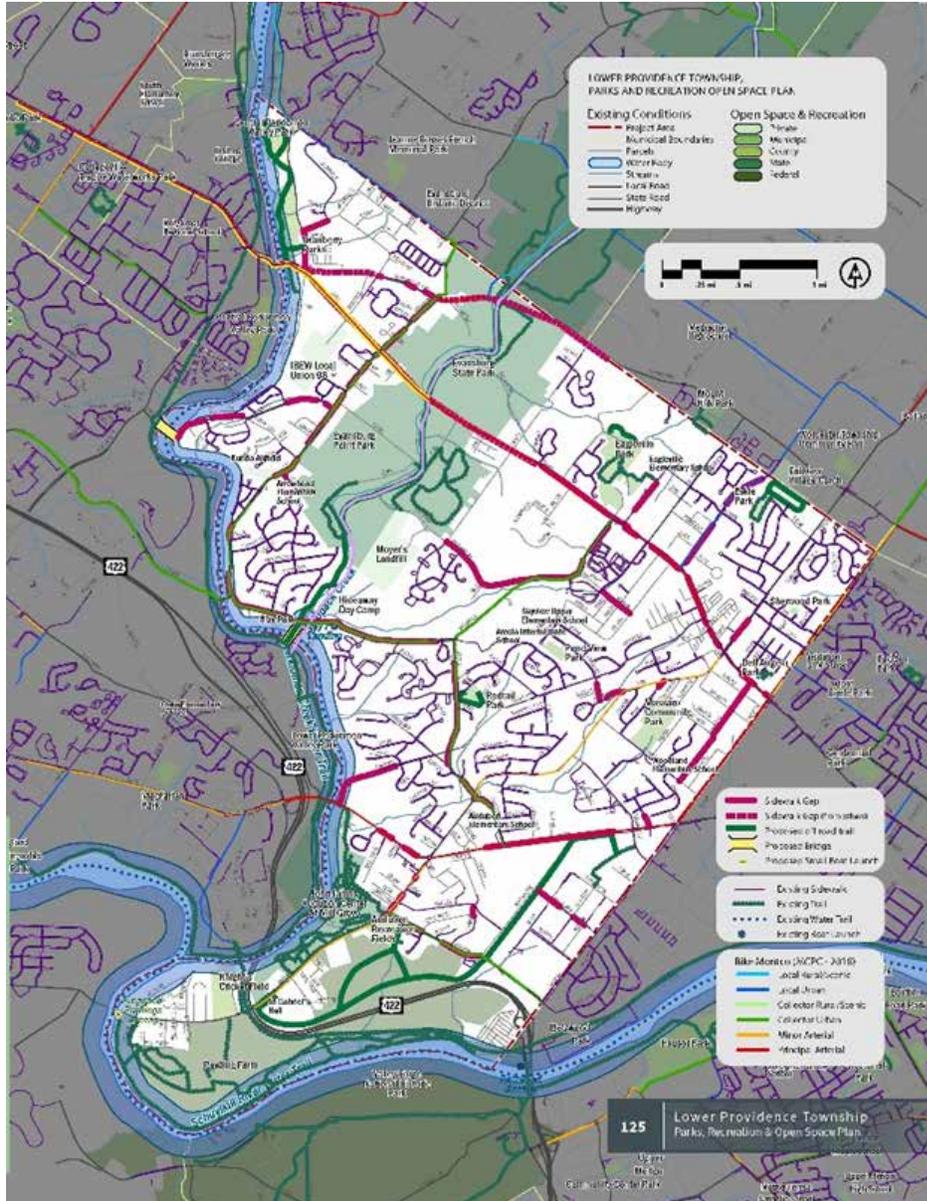
Lower Providence currently has 44 miles of sidewalks, 14.6 miles of trails, and no bicycle lanes. Many residents of Lower Providence live quite close to destinations such as restaurants, parks, trails, shops, schools, and other amenities. However, without safe routes for bicycling or walking, even short trips are made by car. Public outreach conducted for the comprehensive plan and the

¹⁵ <https://www.curbed.com/word-on-the-street/2018/7/13/17246060/scooters-uber-lyft-bird-lime-streets>

<https://la.curbed.com/2018/7/31/17623336/bird-lime-scooter-bike-app-locations-cost-hours>

TRANSPORTATION

PARKS, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACE PLAN MAP IMAGE



township’s recently completed Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) plan has determined that making the township safer for walking and biking is a very high priority for the residents of Lower Providence.

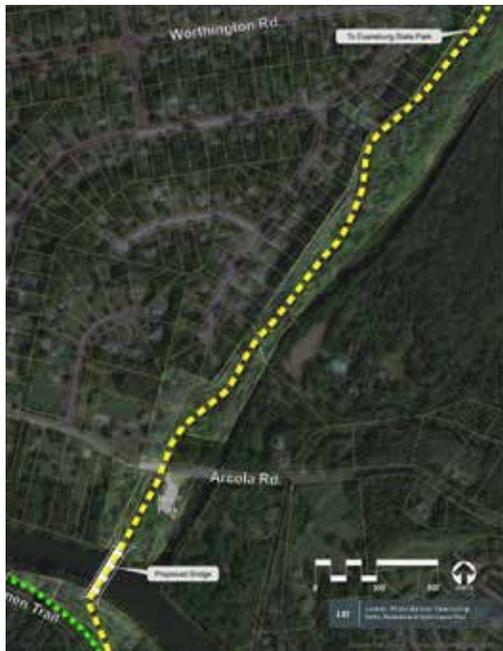
Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan

The recently-completed Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan for Lower Providence (2021) includes a number of multimodal recommendations for improving the safety and convenience of walking and biking in the township. The plan’s design guidelines describe a range of infrastructure options for walking and biking and the settings in which they are most appropriate to use. The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) plan’s proposed improvements plan identifies sidewalk gaps to fill and new multi-use trails to add to the existing network. From their recommendations,

the steering committee for this plan has identified the following projects as top priorities:

- Ridge Pike sidewalks
- Egypt Road sidewalks
- Yerkes Road new pedestrian and cycling bridge
- Hoy Park new pedestrian and cycling bridge
- Evansburg State Park Connector Trail from Evansburg State Park to Hoy Park

In total the township’s PROS plan identifies 59,000 linear feet of proposed sidewalks for installation to fill in the community’s crucial gaps. The proposed sidewalks were chosen for the combinations of benefits they offer to the community by connecting existing sidewalk networks to community destinations like schools, parks, trails, and commercial areas. The map below, from the PROS plan, displays all of the sidewalk gaps and trail connections proposed by the plan, and the proposed bike route network reproduced from the county plan, Bike Montco.



The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan recommends a number of new trail connections, including a bridge crossing Perkiomen Creek at Hoy Park

Sidewalks

Sidewalks are vital to a community, both as transportation infrastructure and recreational facilities. Many of Lower Providence’s neighborhoods are well served by sidewalks, and have sidewalks or walking paths on one or both sides of residential streets. Development codes have long required the installation of sidewalks in new neighborhoods, but many of the township’s older arterial and collector roads have discontinuous sidewalks or lack them entirely. Cul-de-sacs and dead ends also create challenges for pedestrians, forcing them to travel much longer distances than if there were a through path. As a result, across much of the township, walking within a neighborhood is an easy and comfortable experience, but walking to destinations beyond the neighborhood is much more difficult.



Township residents use private paths and informal connections where sidewalks are absent or inconvenient

For walking to be a safe and convenient means of transportation, township residents need sidewalks and paths that provide direct connections between neighborhoods and other local destinations, like commercial areas, schools, community facilities, and parks. Active transportation, like walking and biking, has health and environmental benefits for the community. Improving the pedestrian and bicycle experience by making it safer and more convenient to use these modes in Lower Providence will encourage residents to take advantage of healthy, pleasant, and inexpensive ways to get around. Sidewalks can provide for residents' active transportation needs in their neighborhoods and during daily routines, while trails are more oriented to recreational functions in open spaces and natural areas.

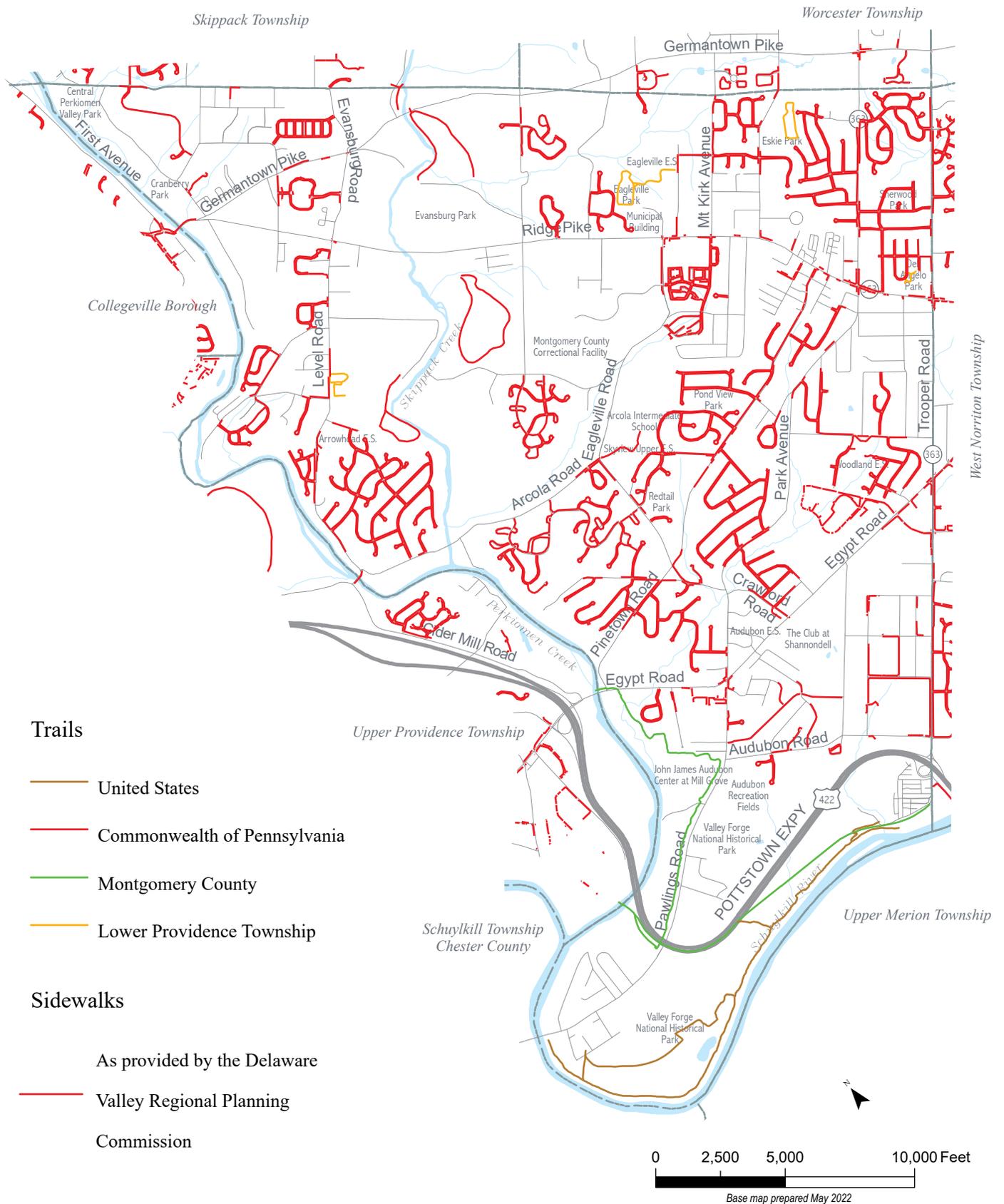
Priority areas for sidewalk and crosswalk improvements are gaps that are close to hubs of pedestrian activity, such as commercial corridors, schools, bus stops, parks, trailheads and larger office or

apartment buildings. In addition, factors such as roadway traffic volumes, traffic speeds, and crash history should be considered. Locations that are near major pedestrian activity generators but have conditions that put pedestrians at risk should be prioritized for sidewalk improvements. Any small sidewalk gap or missing crosswalk that would connect two existing areas of sidewalk should also be prioritized, especially if it meets some of the above criteria.

Trails

Trails are used for both transportation and recreation by walkers, joggers, runners, and bicyclists. Trails are a relaxing and safe way for pedestrians and bicycles to travel. Without traffic whizzing by, non-motorized travelers can enjoy a quiet route that does not have the potential danger of a large motor vehicle. Lower Providence is fortunate to have several regional trails within or adjacent to the Township. The Schuylkill River Trail (SRT) is

FIGURE 6.12 – TRAILS AND SIDEWALK NETWORK MAP



Trails

- United States
- Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
- Montgomery County
- Lower Providence Township
- Upper Merion Township

Sidewalks

- As provided by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission



The Schuylkill River Trail parallels the US Route 422 Expressway in Lower Providence Township

a regional trail that, when completed, will extend 120 miles to connect Philadelphia with Schuylkill County. Over 75 miles of the SRT have been constructed, including the 2.1 mile segment in Lower Providence Township.

Just across the Perkiomen Creek from Lower Providence is the Perkiomen Trail, a 20-mile trail that runs from the Schuylkill River to Green Lane Park along the full length of the Perkiomen Creek. Despite these close-by regional trails, few Lower Providence residents can safely walk or bike

from their homes to access these trails. There is a strong interest from the community in improving access to these trails by bicycle from residential neighborhoods throughout the township.

An additional regional trail is planned through Lower Providence Township. Montgomery County hopes to construct a multi-use (bicycle and pedestrian) trail from the Perkiomen Trail (near Hoy Park) north into Evansburg Park and through the entirety of Lower Providence and Skippack townships in Evansburg Park.

TRAIL OWNER	MILES	PERCENT	EXAMPLE
Federal	4.72	32.4%	Valley Forge NHP
State	3.36	23.1%	Evansburg SP
County	4.47	30.7%	Audubon Center
Township	2.00	13.7%	Eskie Park

Though only a small share of the trails and multi-use paths located in Lower Providence are owned by the municipality, township-owned land presents opportunities to create new paths and trails for recreation and transportation. The Club at Shannondell golf course is one notable example. The township-owned golf course has long road frontages on Egypt and Rittenhouse Roads. These road segments have each been identified as potential sites for walking and biking infrastructure. Lower Providence’s ownership of this land may allow for the creation of a walking and biking connection without requiring extensive coordination with PennDOT.

On the Street

In places where travelers using different modes of transportation interact, clearly defining the space for each mode can improve safety. Complete Streets that provide dedicated infrastructure for vehicle traffic, walking, biking, and transit service help to resolve these conflicts. Places where pedestrians

and cars interact are of special concern for safety improvements. In Lower Providence, pedestrians and cars interact at crosswalks, in parking lots, and in undefined spaces such as intersections without marked crosswalks or streets without sidewalks. Marking the pedestrian space can encourage cars to stay out of the way of pedestrians and vice versa.

For pedestrians, crossing the street can be a frightening activity if they are not certain that drivers are seeing them. There are a number of ways to improve a crosswalk, such as using a highly visible paint style, textured pavement, or a raised crosswalk. Curb bulb-outs that shorten the crossing distance can help pedestrians be more visible before they step into the street and decrease the amount of time they spend in the same space with vehicles.

Crosswalks are painted in different ways. A basic crosswalk is two parallel lines that cross the intersection. Continental, zebra, and ladder crosswalks are highly visible styles that improve safety for pedestrians. These highly visible styles should



Rectangular rapid flashing beacons, a highly visible continental crosswalk, and a pedestrian refuge island with flexible delineators make this mid-block crosswalk on a high traffic volume roadway in Lower Merion Township safer for pedestrians.



A highly visible ladder-style crosswalk in Hatboro.

be used at any pedestrian crossing with a road segment approach with more than 5,000 AADT or of average traffic speeds of 30 mph or greater.

Where roadway crossings are especially wide, refuge islands in the center of the roadway allow pedestrians space to wait if the roadway is not cleared of vehicles or if they need to rest.¹⁶ Pedestrian refuge islands particularly improve the safety and comfort of crossing the street for seniors. Pedestrian refuge islands should be considered for safety in crossings where cartway widths are 30 feet or greater, especially in areas with high traffic volumes. Pedestrian refuge islands can include gateway treatments if located near the boundaries of the Township.

Bicycling is challenging on many roads in Lower Providence. Several things can be done to support and encourage bicycling, including designating bicycle routes and marking them with wayfinding and safety signage, adding bicycle parking, calming traffic, and creating bicycle lanes. Strategic placement of bike racks in the township would encourage and support bicycling by making it easier for riders to safely park their vehicles close to their destination. Secure parking is very important to bicyclists and other micromobility users, as their vehicles are small and easily stolen. In some jurisdictions, law enforcement offers a voluntary bicycle registration service to deter bike theft and aid in the identification and recovery of stolen bikes.

For most riders, bicycling is difficult on busy roadways without dedicated bicycle lanes. Often, directing cyclists to parallel routes that have less traffic is a way to provide safer bicycle routes. However, as discussed in the road infrastructure section above, route connectivity is a challenge with many of the neighborhood areas not being connected to other neighborhoods except via a busy roadway. Improving network connectivity for



Sharrows indicate bicycle routes.



Example of bicycle lane from Whitpain Township

bicyclists will increase the ease and practicality of using that mode. Bicycling route suggestions and safety tips publicized by the township can help residents try out this healthy and inexpensive way of getting around.

DVRPC has calculated a bicycle “level of traffic stress (LTS)” for every roadway in the nine-county area they serve.¹⁷ They used number of lanes, traffic speeds, and the presence or absence of

¹⁶ Refuge islands not only make a safer and more comfortable crossing for pedestrians, they have the added benefit of reducing vehicle travel speeds one to five miles per hour. Pennsylvania’s Traffic Calming Handbook, PennDOT Publication 383, July, 2012.

¹⁷ From <https://www.dvrpc.org/webmaps/BikeStress/>

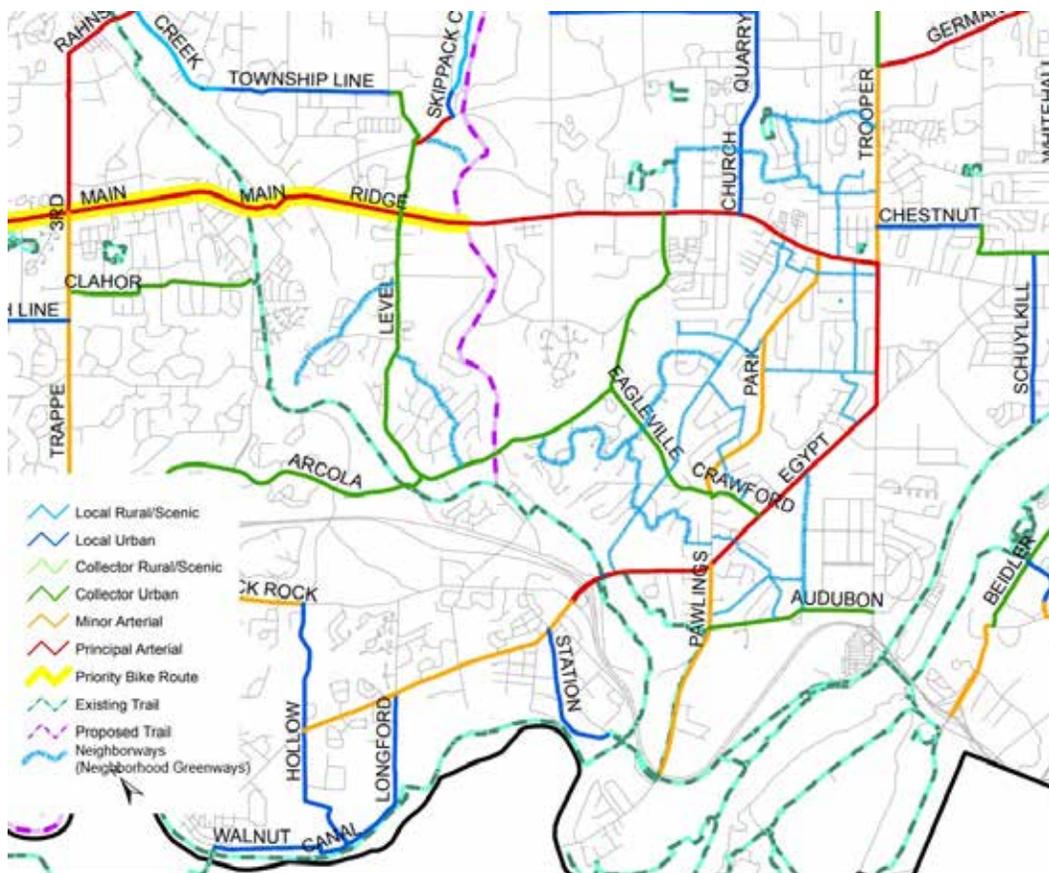
some type of bicycling facility such as bike lanes to calculate a number from 1-4, where 1 is a low-stress condition, good for biking, and 4 is a high-stress condition for only the most confident and fearless of cyclists. There are many roads within neighborhoods that are low-stress for bicyclists. However, to get from one low-stress “island” of the township to another, bicyclists must travel on a higher LTS road.

Montgomery County’s *Bike MontCo* Plan (2018)¹⁸ takes this information from DVRPC and prioritizes certain roads throughout the county to receive improvements for bicyclists to connect lower

stress roads. These designated bicycle routes may receive some type of bicycle improvement such as marked bicycle lanes on roadways, wider shoulders, signage, or shared roadway pavement markings (sharrows). Several *Bike MontCo* routes pass through Lower Providence, including a county-wide priority route.

Where bicycle lanes are not feasible, designated bicycling routes are commonly indicated by painting sharrows on the roadway. On roads that are already low-stress for bicycles, wayfinding signage for bicyclists can be used to indicate suggested travel routes.

18 <https://www.montcopa.org/2684/Bike-Montco>



Bike Montco Proposed Bike Network routes for Lower Providence and surrounding communities.

Networks of neighborhood streets with low traffic stress can be linked together with segments of on-road or off-road bike infrastructure to form longer cycling routes through a community called neighborways.¹⁹ The streets that make up a neighborway prioritize the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-vehicular road users. Neighborways serve as alternative routes to busier, parallel arterials. Neighborway streets often feature traffic calming installations to maintain slow traffic speeds may also include elements that create “filtered permeability”, where bicyclists and other non-vehicular road users may travel on a direct route that is not accessible to motor vehicles. With the addition of elements like green stormwater infrastructure and streetscaping, a neighborway can be upgraded to a neighborhood greenway.

Providing safety signage reminding motor vehicle drivers that bicycles are permitted to travel in the roadway has been shown to improve safety for

¹⁹ <https://pittsburghpa.gov/domi/neighborways>

cyclists. Pennsylvania law requires giving bicycles four feet of clearance when passing, and bicycles are permitted by law to use the whole vehicle lane whenever they need to for safety.²⁰ Signage reminding drivers of the rights of bicyclists would be helpful in supporting bicyclists in the township.

Transit Service

Transit service has played a role in Lower Providence for much of the township’s history. Beginning with private transportation services like stagecoaches and the trolleys of the Schuylkill Valley Traction Co., transit has grown and evolved with the township, helping to shape its development patterns. Today, SEPTA provides public transit services in the township with four bus routes, and township residents have convenient access to nearby rail transit lines.

²⁰ Under Pennsylvania law, bicycles must legally ride to the right of the roadway, unless it is unsafe for any reason. The cyclist may determine what is unsafe, but possible situations include unsafe surface conditions, avoiding the area adjacent to parked cars where doors open and close, avoiding any item in the roadway, or ensuring they do not get passed by too closely if lane width is not adequate for cars to safely pass bicycles.



SCHUYLKILL VALLEY TRACTION CO. 1903 BRILL NO. 119 EASTBOUND ON RIDGE PIKE, TROOPER, PA - MAY 14, 1932 - WM WATTS II PHOTO

An SVTC trolley headed to Norristown passes by the present site of Walgreens Pharmacy near the intersection of Ridge Pike and Park Avenue. Trolley service on this line ceased in 1933.

Photo: William Watts II, source: phillytrolley.org



A Route 93 bus passes through Trooper.

Bus Transit

Lower Providence is served by SEPTA’s Frontier Division, based in Plymouth Meeting. Of the four SEPTA bus routes that pass through the township, three operate on regular daily schedules (routes 93, 99, and 131) while the fourth, route 91, was a limited service and operated only on Saturdays.

Route 91 ran between the Norristown Transportation Center and the State Correctional Institution – Phoenix, in Skippack Township. It passed through the eastern corner of Lower Providence on Ridge Pike and North Park Avenue. This route was suspended as a COVID-19 measure.

Route 93 is the longest bus route serving Lower Providence. Buses on this route travel on Ridge Pike between Pottstown and the Norristown Transportation Center. In Lower Providence, the route briefly leaves Ridge Pike to provide service to the Montgomery County Correctional Facility.



Route 99 buses pass the Audubon Village Shopping Center on Egypt Road.

Route 99 follows a winding path, serving Bridgeport, the King of Prussia Mall, Oaks, and Providence Town Center as it travels between Phoenixville and the Norristown Transportation Center. Buses on this route follow the township boundary along Trooper Road before entering Lower Providence at Shannondell Boulevard and continuing on Egypt Road through Audubon village and on to Upper Providence Township.

Route 131 is the shortest bus route serving Lower Providence. Buses on this route travel between the Park Pointe at Lower Providence Business Center and the Norristown Transportation Center. The route enters the township on Egypt Road, proceeds through the Audubon Square Shopping Center on Shannondell Boulevard, then proceeds down Trooper Road, diverting to serve the adjacent business parks in West Norriton and Lower Providence.

The paths of Route 99 and Route 131 buses overlap on a short shared segment in the township. The two routes overlap on Shannondell Boulevard and on Trooper Road, between Boulevard of the Generals and Eisenhower Avenue. On weekdays, during peak service periods in the morning and evening, up to four buses serve each stop on this shared segment. Despite the few bus stops shared by routes 99 and 131 having the most frequent service in the township, the two routes traverse this stretch in opposite directions when heading toward Norristown, negating some of the benefit of this service overlap.

In 2021, SEPTA began a Comprehensive Bus Network Redesign project, named Bus Revolution²¹. This effort is reviewing all aspects of SEPTA's bus services and riders' experience using them. Public outreach relating to this project is ongoing and has gathered input and informed community members about the proposed network redesign.

²¹ <https://www.septabusrevolution.com/>

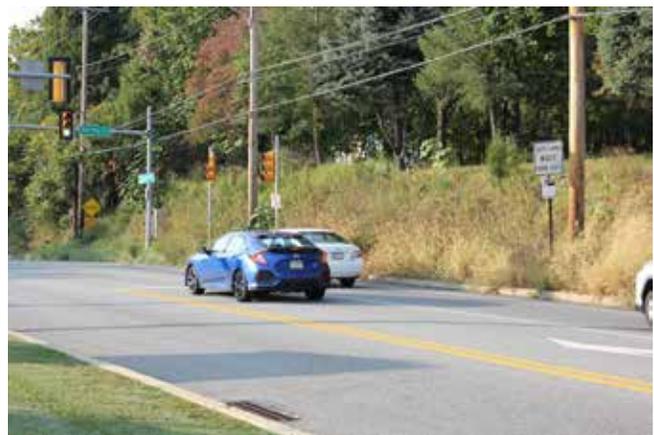
The township's bus routes are a vital service for Lower Providence's workers. In the township, the bus stops with the highest number of riders boarding and disembarking are located in or near major employers. Hundreds of people use these services to get to work in the township each day. The township's three main bus routes operate with headways of up to an hour during off-peak times, meaning riders may face a long wait at their stop if they are travelling outside of common commuting periods. The busiest bus stops (those where the most people board and leave buses) should be the top priorities for improving pedestrian connections to and from the stop. The stop locations with the highest bus ridership are shown in the table below. (Data from SEPTA, 2019). Note that the stops at Monroe & Adams and Ridge Pike & Eaglestream already have bus shelters.



FIGURE 6.13 – HIGH RIDERSHIP BUS STOPS SOURCE: SEPTA

STOP ID	STOP LOCATION	ROUTE	WEEKDAY BOARDS	WEEKDAY LEAVES	TOTAL WEEKDAY STOP USAGE
27847	Shannondell Blvd & Trooper Rd - FS	131 Eastbound; 99 Westbound	55	25	80
20854	Montgomery County Correctional Facility	93 Eastbound; 93 Westbound	47	38	85
27917	Shannondell Blvd & Trooper Rd	131 Westbound; 99 Eastbound	37	86	123
1715	Shannondell Blvd & Egypt Rd - FS	131 Westbound; 99 Eastbound	6	40	46
18318	Jefferson Av & Monroe Blvd	131 Westbound	9	33	42
1818	Audubon Rd & Adams Av - FS	131 Westbound; 131 Eastbound	9	21	30
18379	Monroe Blvd & Adams - MBNS	131 Westbound	8	24	32
1563	Ridge Pk & E Mount Kirk Av - FS	93 Westbound	3	23	26
1568	Ridge Pk & Eaglestream Dr	93 Eastbound	20	4	24
27848	Shannondell Blvd & Egypt Rd - MBNS	131 Eastbound; 99 Westbound	18	2	20
27920	Trooper Rd & Audubon Rd	99 Eastbound	16	1	17

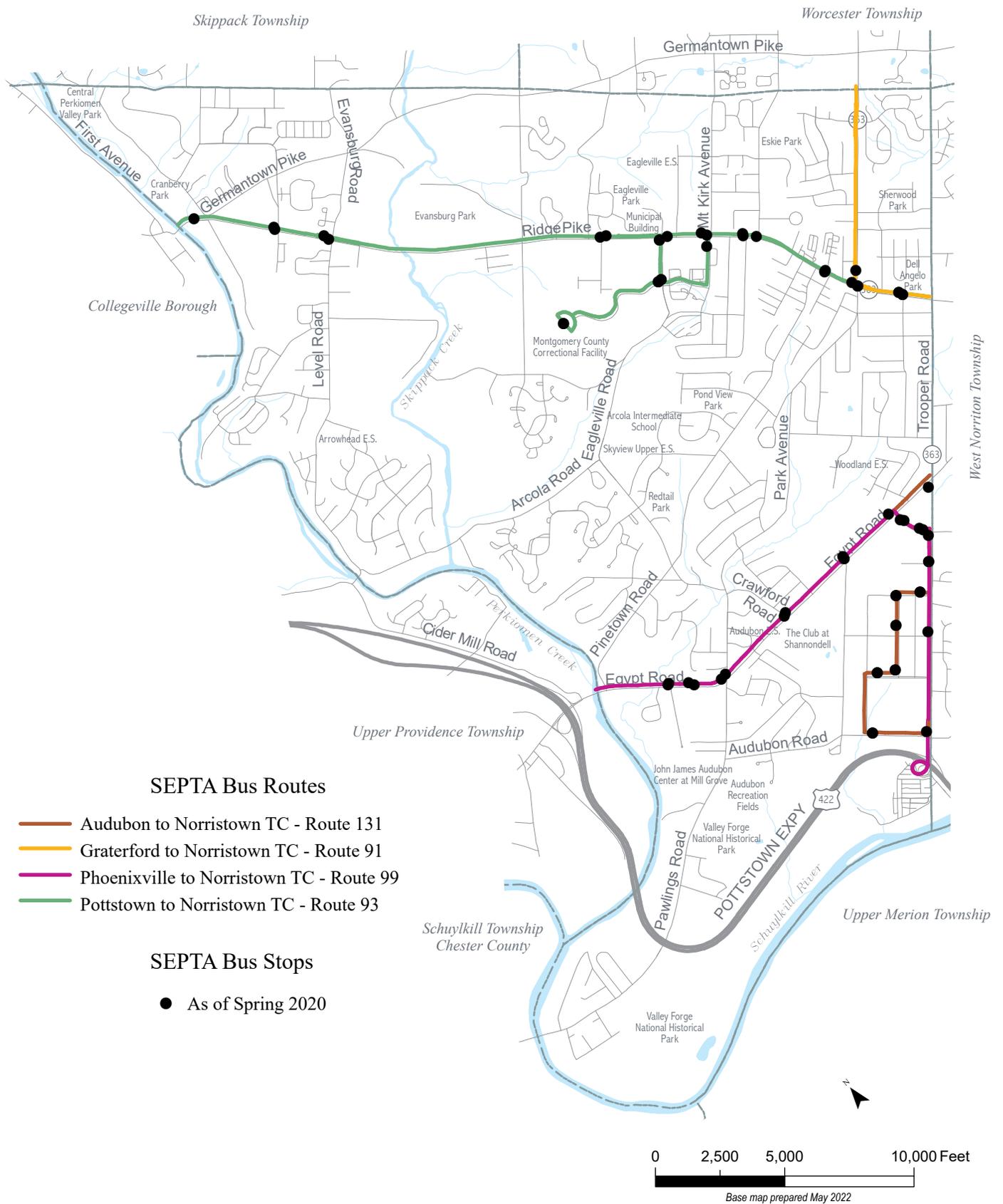
Bus shelters with seating, service information, and connected sidewalks are especially important for high-ridership bus stops. Bus stop amenities increase transit users’ safety and comfort and can help to increase ridership. There are four bus stops in Lower Providence that currently have shelters. Three of these stops are located in or near the business park and are served by buses on Route 131. The fourth shelter is located at an inbound Route 93 bus stop at the corner of Ridge Pike and Eaglestream Road. The township may gain new transit shelters or other bus stop improvements during the land development process, or through projects funded by the public or public-private partnerships. The bus stops with the most boards (people getting on the bus) should be the top



This bus stop for the Route 99 service, on Egypt Road, shows some of the obstacles people face when using transit service.

TRANSPORTATION

FIGURE 6.14 – PUBLIC TRANSIT NETWORK MAP



priority for adding shelters. The stop locations with the highest number of boards are shown in the table above. (Data from SEPTA, 2019).

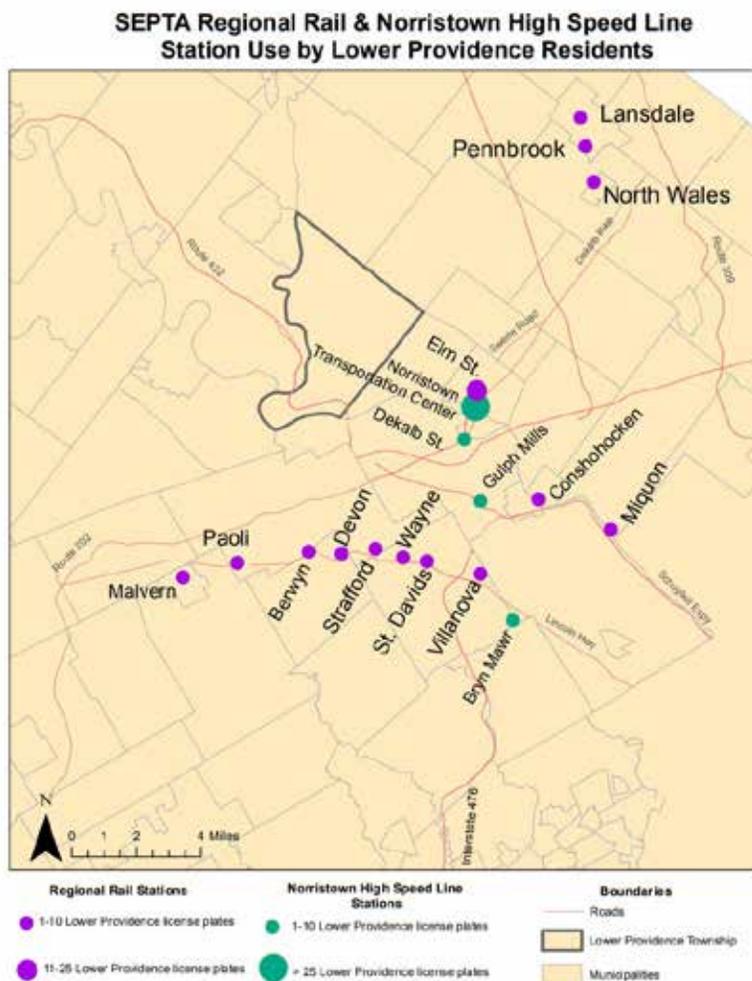
The state and DVRPC have created bus stop design guidelines that present recommendations for locating and configuring bus stops. These guidelines detail features and amenities that are appropriate for various settings and conditions, including suburban communities like Lower Providence. These guidelines can offer a template for future bus stop enhancements in the township. Some of the bus stops in Lower Providence not only lack amenities, but lack access as well. This

bus stop for route 99 has nowhere for riders to stand while waiting for the bus, and the nearest intersection has signs the prohibit pedestrians from crossing the street.

Rail Transit

Lower Providence Township no longer has any rail services within its boundaries, however, many township residents still use of SEPTA rail transportation. In recent years, license plates surveys conducted in the parking lots at SEPTA transit stations have indicated that Lower Providence

FIGURE 6.15 – LOWER PROVIDENCE RESIDENTS RAIL STATION PARK-AND-RIDE MAP
SOURCE: DVRPC



residents use several Regional Rail lines and the Norristown High Speed Line. The stations that were observed to receive the largest numbers of township residents are those located closest to Lower Providence. The Norristown Transportation Center and Elm Street regional rail station (also located in Norristown) are the closest and currently the most conveniently-located transit stations for Lower Providence residents. As with its bus system, SEPTA has an initiative, Reimagining Regional Rail²², which is studying the regional rail system and planning for future improvements. The effort has produced several reports, and three proposed alternatives- all of which would increase the frequency and speed of service on the lines nearest to Lower Providence.

Since regular passenger rail service between Reading and Philadelphia ceased in 1981, multiple studies have explored the feasibility of restoring passenger rail service in the Schuylkill Valley²³. This idea has recently received renewed attention with the establishment of the Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority (SRPRA) in 2022²⁴. SRPRA was created through a partnership between Montgomery, Berks, and Chester Counties with the purpose of reestablishing passenger rail service in the Schuylkill River Valley. All passenger rail restoration studies, to date, have proposed using existing tracks located on the opposite bank of the Schuylkill River, outside of Lower Providence. However, these studies include stations that would be considerably closer and more convenient to Lower Providence residents than existing SEPTA rail stations. A recent service expansion plan released by Amtrak includes passenger service between Philadelphia and Reading.

22 <https://planning.septa.org/projects/regional-rail-master-plan/>

23 <https://www.dvrpc.org/TOD/SchuylkillValleyMetro.htm>
<https://www.montcopa.org/1111/R6-Norristown-Line-Service-Extension-Stu>

<https://www.berksalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Reading-Rail-Business-Plan.pdf>

24 <https://gosrpri.com/>

In Upper Merion Township, SEPTA is planning King of Prussia Rail²⁵, a new spur of the Norristown High Speed Line which would extend the service through King of Prussia. This project would offer Lower Providence residents another nearby rail transportation option.

Other Transit

Methacton School District offers bus transportation for all students within the district. In 2014, the district’s school buses were purchased by the fleet’s current operator First Student, Inc.

Paratransit services provide door-to-door transportation for qualified Lower Providence residents (disabled passengers and seniors) through both SEPTA’s CCT Connect service and the TransNet, by Suburban Transit Network, Inc.

Transit-Oriented Development

In places where transit service is frequent and reliable throughout the day, the need for private vehicles is reduced. Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) is a type of development that takes advantage of quality transit service by locating residential, retail, and office uses within walking distance of transit stops. TOD areas typically feature special design requirements or guidelines to foster walkability and pedestrian-friendly buildings and streets in the vicinity of transit stations. These developments often include less parking than a similar development located away from transit.

Other Modes

Air and water transportation are not major components of the transportation system in Lower Providence. The township is home to one private airfield, Kunda Airport. The airfield has a single grass runway, and is located in the west of the

25 <https://www.kingofprussiarail.com/>

township, between Level Road and the Perkiomen Creek. The waterways of Lower Providence no longer carry commercial traffic, however, the construction of new, and improvements to existing, waterfront parks in the township and in neighboring communities is helping to increase recreational access for residents of the region. The Schuylkill River and Perkiomen Creek are both designated water trails. Hoy Park, located at the confluence of Skippack and Perkiomen creeks, is the only public boat launch in the township.

Transportation Partners

Several partner organizations operate in the area. Communication and coordination with them is essential for a high-quality transportation network. SEPTA operates train and bus service and owns the train tracks and train station. PennDOT is a road owner, and offers resources and information on roadway design, traffic calming, and intersection design on local roads. Montgomery County has several departments that manage roads and bridges they own, provide advice and information about transportation infrastructure, and assist with grant funding. Lower Providence is within the service area of the Greater Valley Forge Transportation Management Association (GVF TMA), a non-profit organization focused on improving climate, equity, and quality of life by promoting alternatives to single occupancy vehicles. GVF TMA advocates for improved mobility choices, manages the Upper Merion Rambler shuttle system, works on transportation demand management policies, and provides community education on transportation alternatives.²⁶

²⁶ See <https://www.gvftma.com/> for more information.

Goals and Recommendations

This plan envisions transportation in Lower Providence providing safety and accessibility to all township residents, no matter which mode of transport they use. That will mean creating safe and convenient walking and biking connections between neighborhoods, schools, recreation, and business areas. Within business areas and other activity centers in the township, the design and use of roadways will work with the design of surrounding development to create walkable places and support multimodal transportation. The infrastructure and services of Lower Providence's transportation network will foster physical, social, and economic connections to link the community.

TRANSPORTATION

18	Plan for and support the safety and mobility of all who travel in the township, regardless their mode of transportation.
18a	Adopt a Complete Streets policy for township-owned roads and infrastructure.
18b	Continue to regularly update the township's Act 209 Traffic Impact Fee Study.
18c	Work with Methacton School District and Worcester Township to develop a Safe Routes to School Plan and encourage safe walking and bicycling to school.
19	Improve the safety and connectivity of walking routes in the township.
19a	Identify gaps in the sidewalk network for further study and prioritize gaps for sidewalk construction projects.
19b	Work with property owners to formalize makeshift walking and biking connections or provide alternative connections wherever feasible (e.g. desire paths in sidewalk gaps, gated emergency access drives, parking lot shortcuts, etc.).
19c	Identify high priority crosswalk locations and implement improvements (e.g. the intersection of Parklane Drive and Ridge Pike).
19d	Contact and coordinate with property owners in sidewalk gap areas when planning and prioritizing sidewalk improvements and prior to seeking funding for sidewalk construction projects.
20	Ensure existing sidewalks are maintained in good condition and promote walking.
20a	Develop a sidewalk inspection and maintenance program.
20b	Create and distribute a pedestrian network map to promote safe walking and aid neighborhood navigation.
21	Adopt a bike network plan (see PROS Plan design and improvement recommendations and Bike MontCo proposed bike route network) and seek funding to implement the plan.
21a	Use PROS Plan design guidelines when planning on- and off-road infrastructure for walking and biking.
21b	Prioritize and construct multi-use trail projects including those from the PROS Plan Multimodal Recommendations.
21c	Prioritize and plan side paths or bike lanes for proposed bike routes on arterial and collector roads.
21d	Prioritize and plan a network of neighborways with signage, pavement markings, and traffic calming for biking and walking on low-LTS (Level of Traffic Stress) local streets.
21e	Evaluate the proposed Yerkes and Hoy Park pedestrian bridges and seek funding for their planning and construction.
21f	Work with DVRPC, PennDOT, and other transportation partners to explore potential bike lane pilot projects.
21g	Create and distribute a bike network map informing residents and visitors of preferred routes and existing infrastructure to help them navigate to popular destinations in and around the township.
22	Support and promote safe bicycling in the township.
22a	Expand Lower Providence Township Police Department's safe cycling program with outreach at community events and at standalone events and events to introduce residents of all ages to bicycling.
22b	Evaluate options for creating or partnering in an existing anti-theft bike registry program to help local bicycle owners to recover lost or stolen bicycles.
23	Collaborate with SEPTA and property owners to improve convenience and security for transit riders.
23a	Improve pedestrian connectivity to bus stop locations with sidewalks, walking paths, and crosswalks.
23b	Provide shelters and amenities (e.g. benches, curbing, waste receptacles, lighting) for high ridership boarding locations following DVRPC and SEPTA guidelines.
23c	Support the creation or relocation of bus stops to better serve the municipal campus and Eagleville Park.

24	Support other expansions improvements of transit service.
24a	Support rail service expansion including the King of Prussia Rail, Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority.
24b	Support improved bus service such as increased frequency and extended service hours.
24c	Consider adopting a TOD (Transit-Oriented Development) Overlay for areas within walking distance of frequent transit service.
25	Employ access management principles to reduce traffic conflicts and improve safety.
25a	Review and update access management standards in the township and encourage use of access management principles during the development process.
25b	Identify potential conflict points along roads in the township and work with property owners to consolidate driveways, share access, and improve curb cuts.
26	Periodically evaluate road safety and plan roadway improvements throughout the township.
26a	Plan and prioritize safety improvements for locations where crashes frequently occur.
26b	Conduct periodic traffic safety checks near schools, parks, and other pedestrian activity areas.
26c	Identify and prioritize sites for traffic calming and implement site-specific traffic calming measures (e.g. Level Road near Arrowhead Elementary School).
26d	Work with PennDOT to address safety concerns on state roads (e.g. installing pedestrian islands and reducing the speed limit on Egypt Road).
26e	Regularly evaluate traffic signal timing for potential improvement. Work with neighboring municipalities to coordinate signal timing on shared corridors.
26f	Identify and prioritize for improvements on township roads, such as adding left turn lanes.
27	Evaluate current parking standards to ensure that policies do not create excess parking infrastructure.
27a	Assess and update standards for shared parking, minimum parking requirements, parking held in reserve, and green parking design standards.
27b	Create standards for parking and standing areas for delivery vehicles and taxi/ride-hailing vehicles, especially for multifamily, mixed-use, and office uses.
27c	Assess and create standards and requirements for bicycle parking, especially for multifamily, mixed-use, and office uses.
27d	Create standards for EV charger parking and incentives or requirements for the provision of EV charger parking in multifamily, mixed-use, office, and industrial uses.

TRANSPORTATION

Environment and Infrastructure

Chapter 7 - Lower Providence Township Comprehensive Plan

The terrain and natural features of Lower Providence have guided the history of the township and the development of its infrastructure networks. This chapter provides an overview of the township's landscape and natural resources, the infrastructure systems that support modern life, and how these natural and constructed systems interact.

Geology

The rock formations that underlie a community form the foundation of its natural environment and the source material for its natural

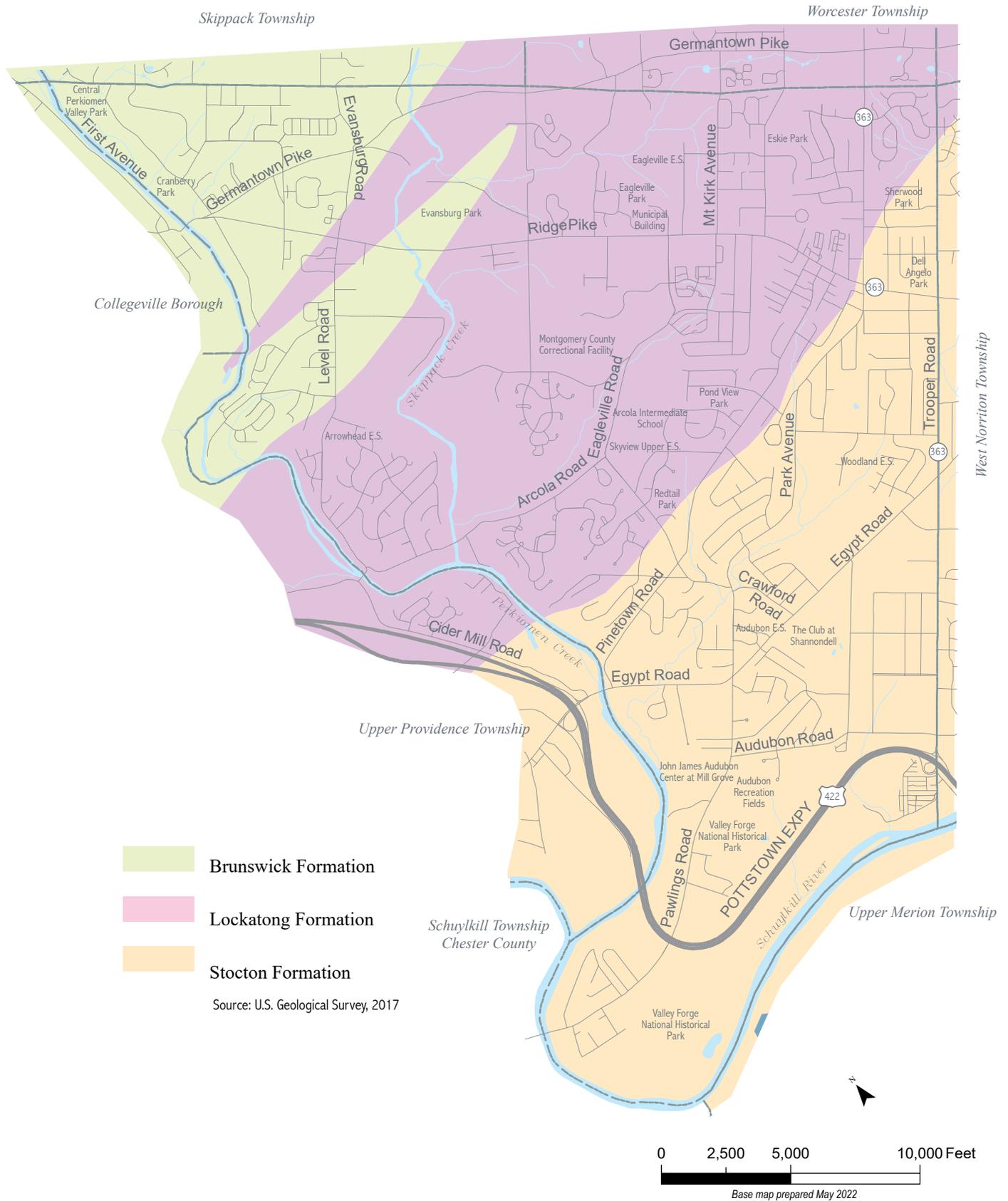
resources. The local bedrock of an area, with its unique composition and properties, exerts a powerful influence over the overlying landscape. Rock formations shape the terrain, the movement of water, and the types of habitats and human activities that take place. Lower Providence Township is located in Pennsylvania's Piedmont Physiographic Province, an area of rolling hills and valleys in the southeastern corner of the state. The township is located in the Triassic Lowland section of the piedmont province, and is characterized by bedrock from the Brunswick, Lockatong, and Stockton Formations.



Lower Providence's terrain is largely defined by rocky ridges divided by stream valleys. A highly visible ladder-style crosswalk in Hatboro.

ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

FIGURE 7.1 – BEDROCK GEOLOGY MAP



Brunswick Formation

The reddish-brown shale, mudstone, and siltstone that characterizes this formation can be found in the northern corner of the township, underlying the Evansburg area. The amount of groundwater that is available for wells or natural springs varies within the Brunswick Formation. Joints and fractures can allow for adequate water flow, despite the low porosity of this fine-grained rock.

Lockatong Formation

The Lockatong Formation underlies the central portion of the township. The argillite and shale that make up this formation are resistant to weathering, and form the prominent Methacton Ridge. Groundwater yields from the Lockatong Formation are generally low.

Stockton Formation

This formation is present in the township's southern portion, mostly to the south of Park Avenue and Pinetown Road. This formation includes conglomerate and shale strata, with coarse sandstone comprising the majority of the formation. This porous formation features excellent groundwater resources.

Topography and Steep Slopes

The slope of the ground is an important environmental condition and is defined as the amount of change in vertical elevation over a horizontal distance. The steepness of a slope is often expressed as a percentage. In Lower Providence, steep slopes are common and typically found near watercourses. The erosion caused by streams, creeks, and rivers cutting through rock layers can produce dramatic landscapes like those seen along Perkiomen and Skippack creeks. The township's hilly terrain varies from a lowest point

of 60 feet above sea level along the bank of the Schuylkill River, to a high point of 491 feet above sea level just east of Eskie Park. Steeper slopes often have a combination of vegetation, climate, soil, and underlying geology that differs from the surrounding area and can be more susceptible to erosion, especially if vegetation is removed. The instability and sensitivity of steep slope areas makes construction difficult and limits development. In Lower Providence ordinances, steep slopes are identified as having a slope of 15% or greater. A Steep Slopes Conservation zoning overlay district lends steeply sloping areas extra protection from development.

Soils

Soils are a natural assortment of organic materials and mineral fragments that cover the earth and support life. The weathering of rock and the activity of soil organisms causes the composition of soils to change slowly over time. Soils are classified based on their fertility, depth to bedrock, groundwater, texture, erodibility, and slope.

Agricultural soils are classified as prime farmland, farmland of statewide importance, and other farmland.

- △ **Prime farmland** includes deep, well-drained, and moderately-sloped soils that can support high yields of crops with little management.
- △ **Farmland of Statewide Importance** includes soils that support cultivation but require careful crop management.

Lower Providence has several areas of prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance, though most are concentrated in the northern and southern ends of the township. Areas of prime farmland have become less common as land has been developed. Preserving prime agricultural soils helps to maintain the rural character of the area and preserve historic farms.

ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

FIGURE 7.2 – STEEP SLOPES MAP

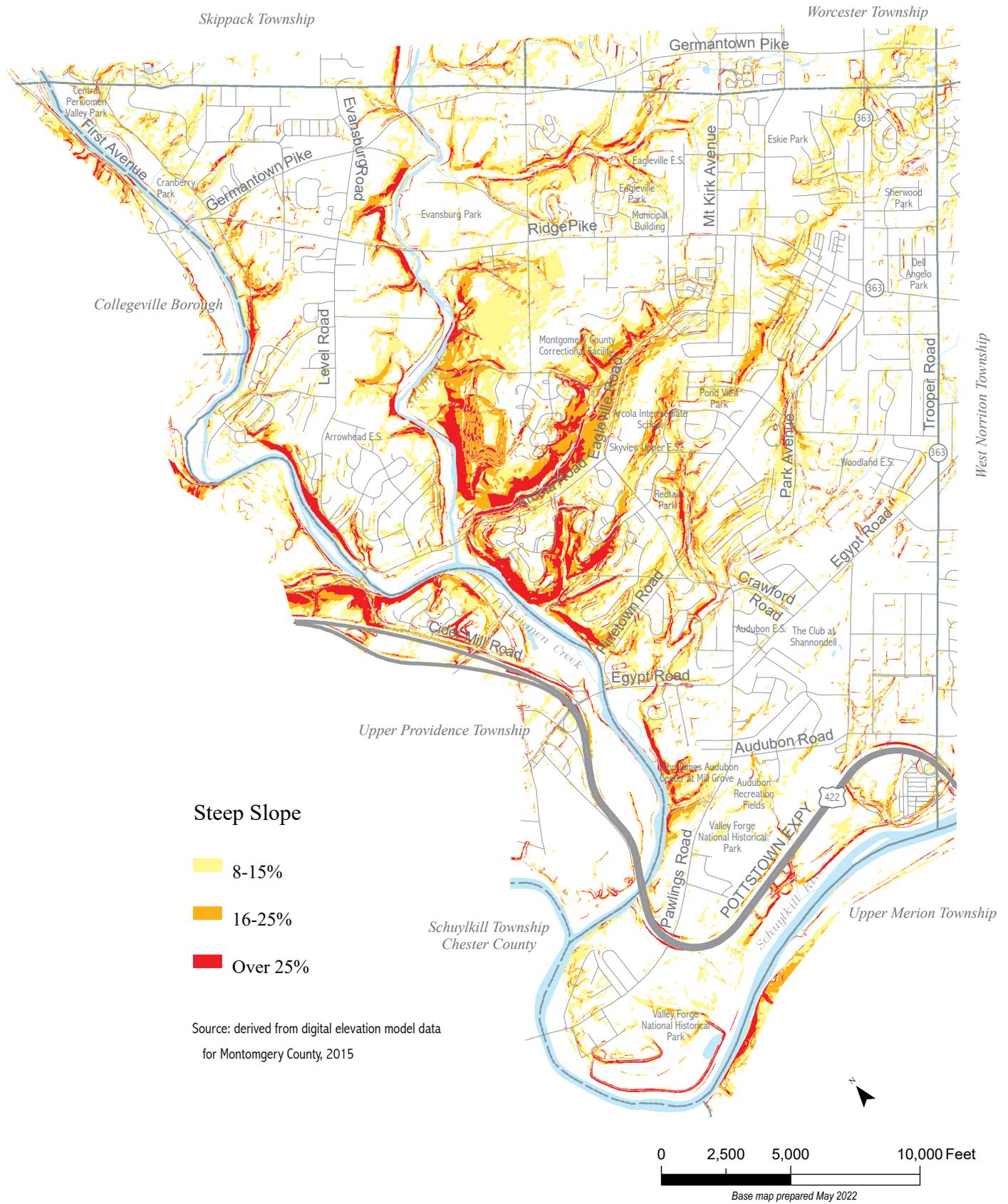
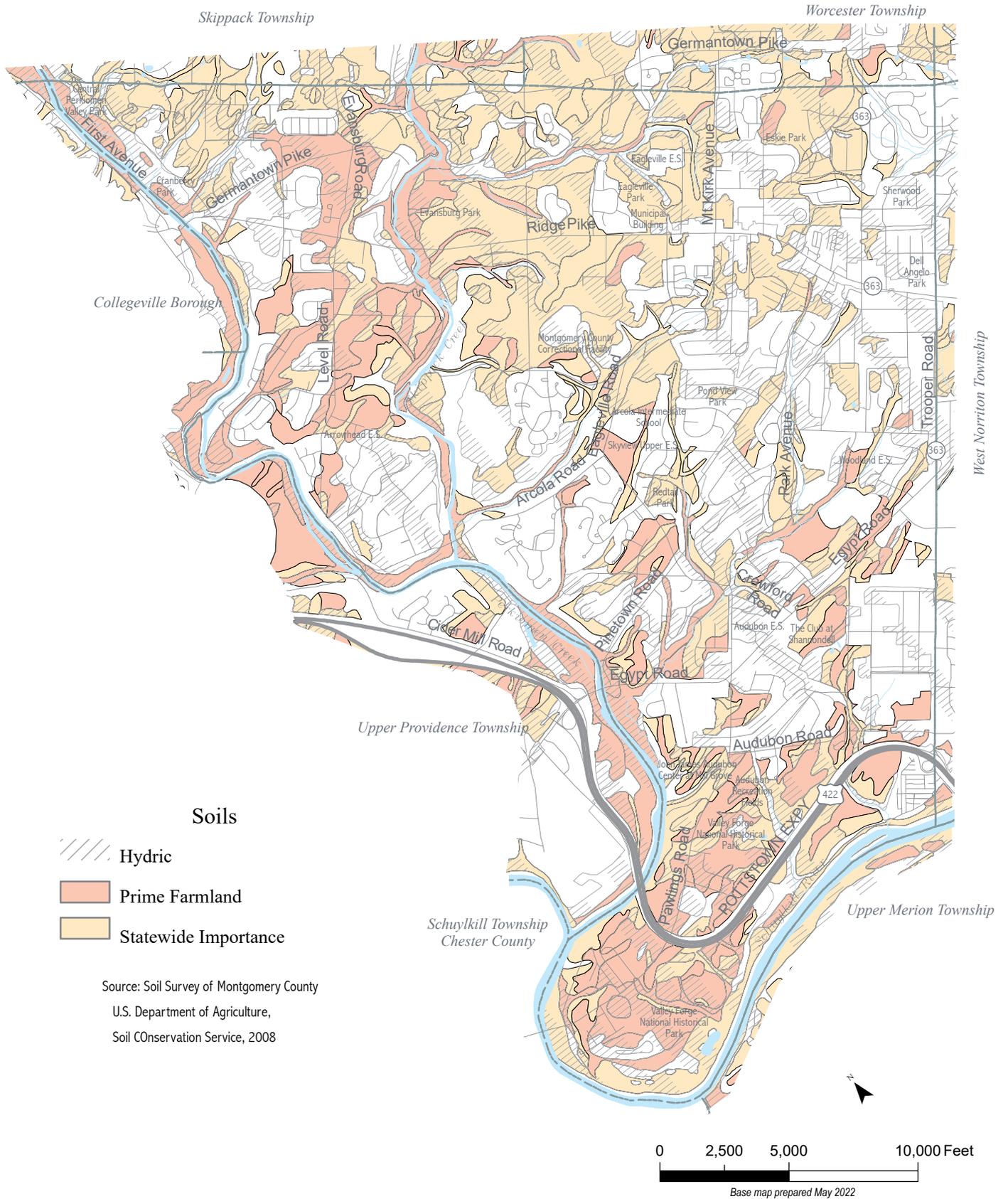


FIGURE 7.3 – SOIL MAP



Hydric soils are periodically wet soils in an undrained condition that often support the growth of wetland vegetation. Hydric soils cover large portions of Lower Providence Township. The presence of hydric soils can indicate that the area is a wetland. Figure 7.3 – Soil Map

Hydrology

Water is integral to the landscape, carving its contours, providing opportunities for recreation, and supporting life and industry. The average annual rainfall in Montgomery County varies from 43 inches near City Line Avenue to 47 inches near Green Lane Reservoir. Annual precipitation can vary from the average by as much as ten inches, though annual precipitation is now trending upward throughout the northeastern United States and is predicted to continue increasing. The frequency and severity of storms is also increasing, making extreme rainfall events larger and more common occurrences. These storms increase the risk of flooding not only in areas adjacent to watercourses, where they enlarge flood zones, larger storms also increase the likelihood of flooding in other areas, where ponding or concentrated runoff flows were not previously a problem.

The surfaces that rain falls on or travels over affects the topography, soils, and vegetation of the area. The natural groundcover found in woodlands and meadows absorbs much of the precipitation that falls on it, generating less runoff than lawns or impervious surfaces like pavement and roofs. In suburban areas, The EPA estimates roughly 25% of precipitation becomes direct runoff, 50% of precipitation evaporates or is transpired by plants, and another 25% percolates into the ground to replenish groundwater. The local soils and bedrock geology varies across the township, with actual infiltration rates varying, too. Groundwater is an important source of drinking water,

supplying public and private wells. Groundwater replenishment occurs slowly, and is largely dependent on open, undisturbed land. This recharge is aided by vegetation, which serves to retain precipitation where it falls and allows it to seep into the soil rather than run off the surface. Effluent from sewage treatment plants can contribute to stream flow, raising water temperatures and adding substances not removed in the treatment process such as salts and pharmaceuticals.

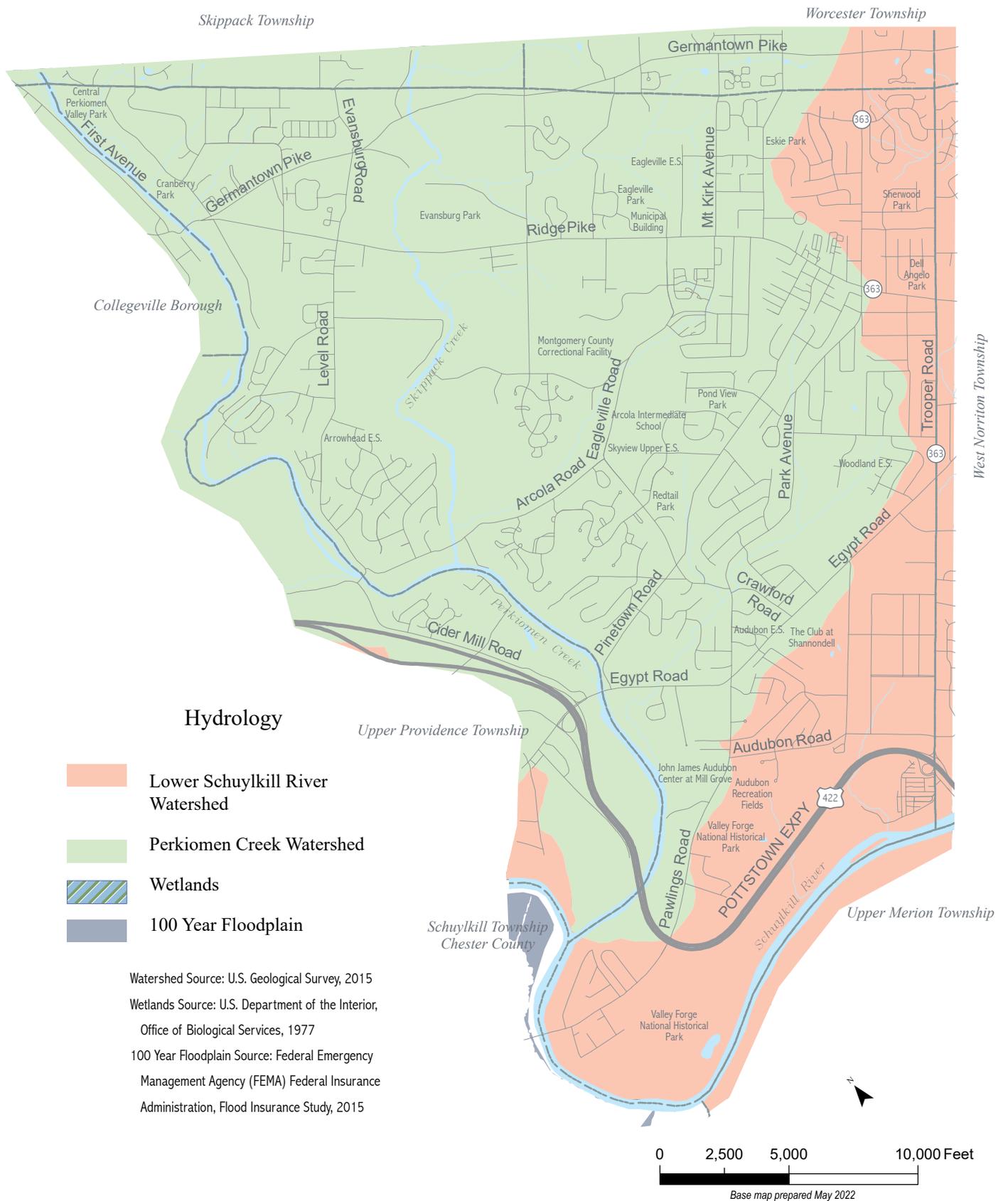
Streams and Watersheds

The landscape of the township is drained by three major waterways. To the south, the Schuylkill River flows along the township's border. All of Lower Providence is within the Schuylkill River watershed, but only areas in the south and eastern edge of the township drain directly to the river. Much of the township's central and northern areas flow to Perkiomen Creek, the township's largest tributary of the Schuylkill River. Within the township, Skippack Creek is the largest tributary joining the Perkiomen Creek. Skippack Creek and its tributaries drain much of the township's north and middle portions. To the south, Mine Run flows to the Perkiomen Creek, paralleling Park Avenue.

Floodplains and Flood Zones

Floodplains are areas of low-lying land lining rivers and streams. These areas host unique habitats adapted to handle frequent flooding. As their name suggests, floodplains are poor locations for land development. The three major waterways in Lower Providence have extensive floodplain areas along their banks, though some smaller tributaries like Mine Run also feature floodplain areas. The geology of the region causes many streams to have steep, rocky banks that reduce the width of floodplains and their ability to accommodate and slow

FIGURE 7.4 – HYDROLOGY MAP



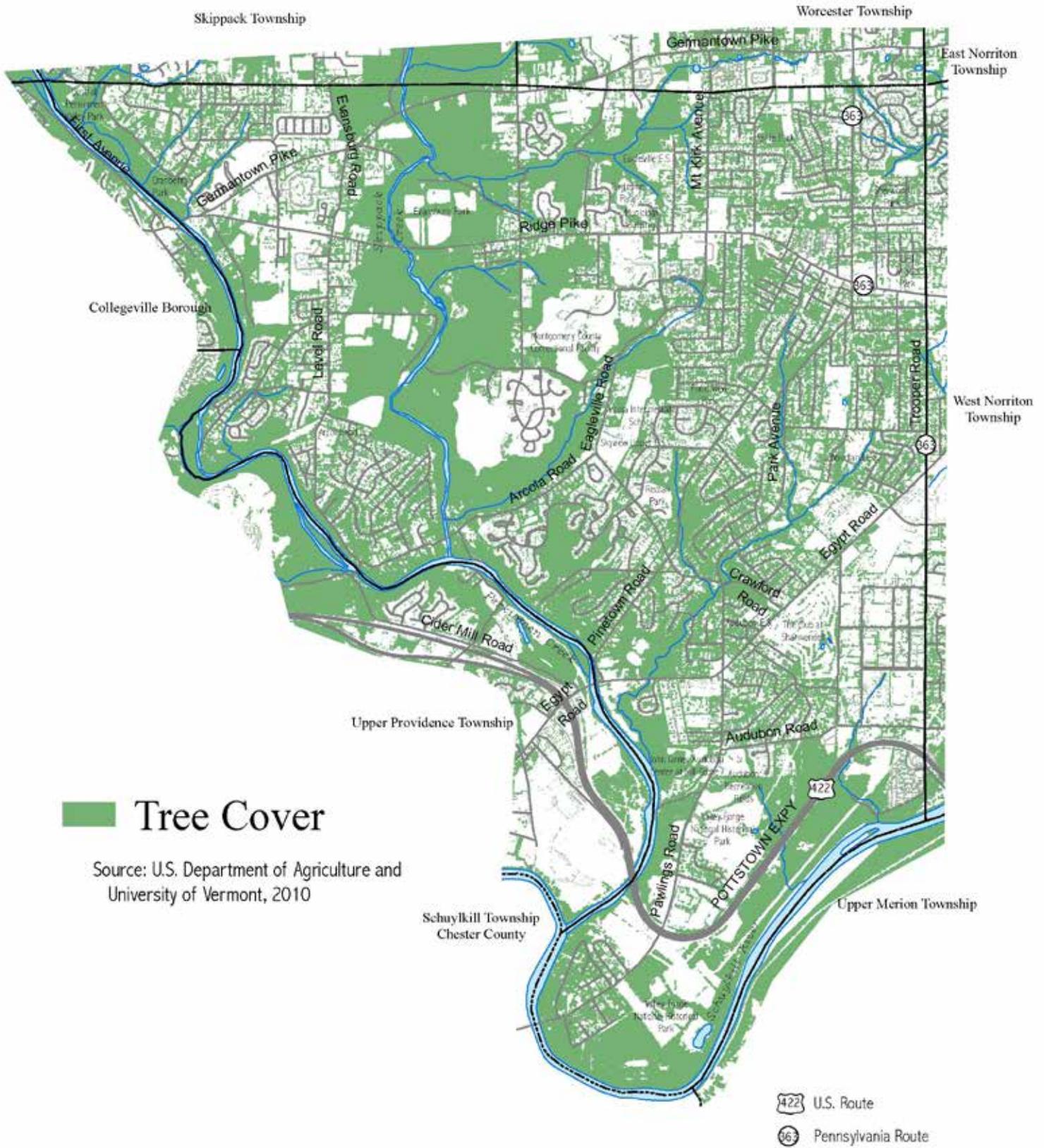
floodwaters. The foliage and soils of floodplains and surrounding riparian corridors are crucial to the township's natural ecosystems and play a role in reducing flood risks locally and downstream.

Floodplains areas are categorized by the flood hazards in a given area. The area closest to the banks of a river or stream is called the regulatory floodway. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) defines the regulatory floodway as "the channel of a river or other watercourse and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than a designated height." These areas are flooded most frequently and construction within the regulatory floodway is strictly controlled. Further from a watercourse, areas are identified by the likelihood that they will be flooded in a given year. The increasing frequency and severity of rainfall events is shifting the location of these areas, requiring regular updates and extra caution when considering development nearby. Areas that are identified as having a 1% annual chance of flooding are also known as 100-year flood zones. Likewise, areas that are identified as having a 0.2% annual chance of flooding are the same as 500-year flood zones.

Wetlands and Riparian Buffers

Wetlands are unique aquatic ecosystems that confer many benefits to a community. In Lower Providence, wetland areas are very limited and mostly confined to stream corridors by the township's well-drained and often sloping topography. Within stream valleys, a vegetated area lining the banks of the watercourse and adjacent land is called a riparian buffer. Riparian buffers provide many benefits, locally and regionally, to the community and environment. These benefits generally increase as the width and ecological health of the buffer increases, though steep streambanks can hinder a riparian buffer's performance. Improved water quality, reduced erosion, decreased frequency and severity of floods, increased biodiversity, and cooler local temperatures are some of the benefits of riparian buffers.

In the township, the banks of major waterways feature extensive riparian buffers. The quality and size of these buffers are helped by the limits placed on nearby development by flood risks, and preservation of many areas as public open space. Further upstream, smaller tributaries to the Skippack, Perkiomen, and Schuylkill that flow through more developed areas are more likely to have a small riparian buffer or lack one entirely. The health of first-order streams, the headwaters where surface runoff and groundwater flows first collect into watercourses, are especially important to the water quality of downstream areas. Lower Providence's Riparian Buffer Overlay Zone helps to protect riparian corridors and the vegetated buffers within them.



Tree Cover

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture and University of Vermont, 2010

Vegetation and Wildlife

Montgomery County was formerly a dense forest of hardwoods which covered over 99 percent of the county, with oaks being the dominant species. Chestnut, tulip poplar, hickory, ash, red maple, and dogwoods were also present. Development and several hundred years of clearing and cultivation have reduced the woodlands to a fraction of their former extent; however, large stands of forested areas are still found in the western part of the county. Second-growth woodlands are becoming more prevalent as farmland reverts to woodland through the process of succession.

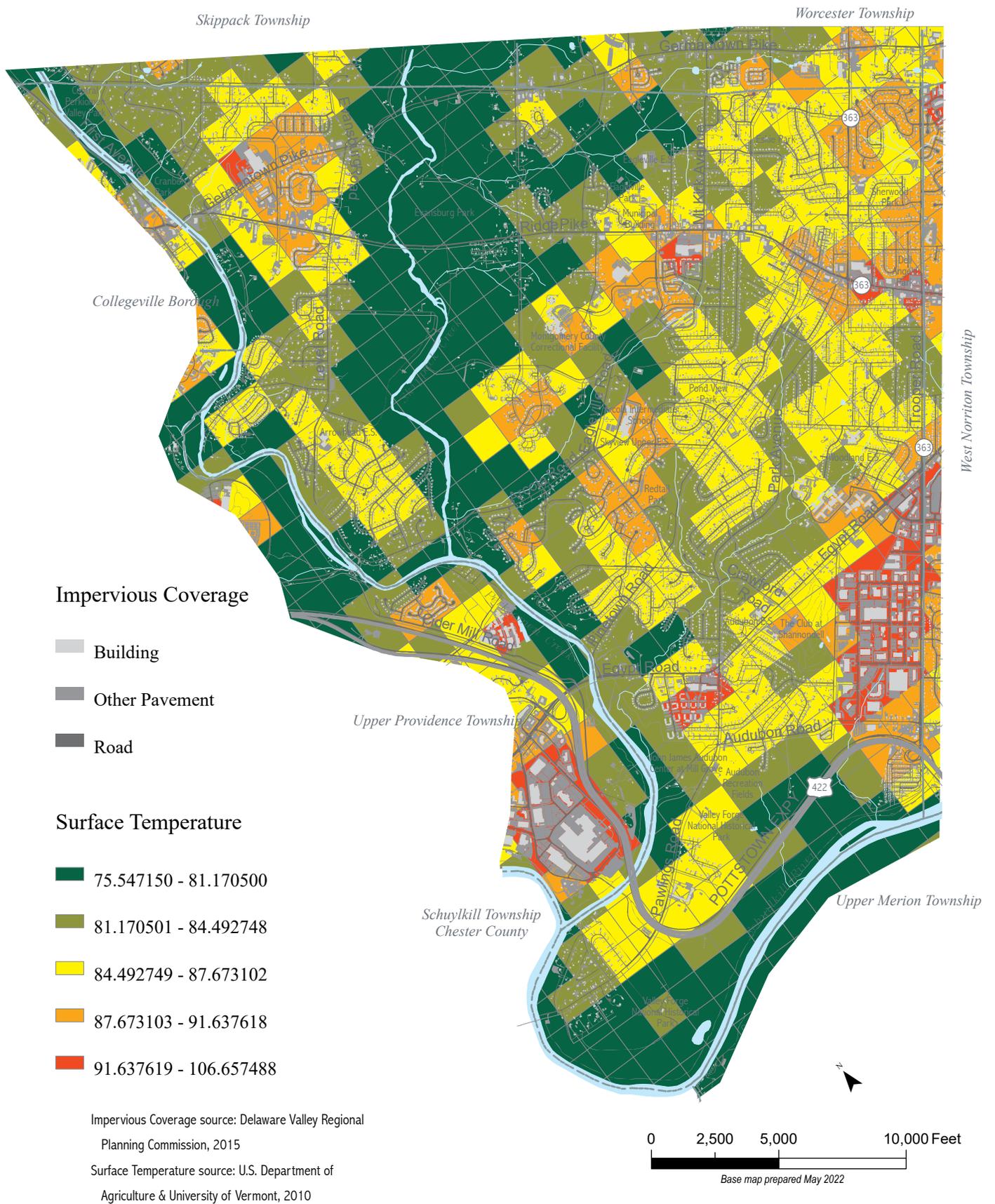
In woodlands across the region, some species cause problems for the larger ecosystem. The composition of local woodlands has been substantially altered by invasive species. The numbers of chestnut and elm trees, once common in this region, were greatly reduced in the 20th century by blights caused by invasive fungi. More recently, invasive insect species like the emerald ash borer and the spotted lanternfly have introduced new dangers. Emerald ash borer beetles are present throughout the state and have killed or damaged many native ash trees. Afflicted trees can harbor other pests and pose risks of falling, potentially causing injury or property damage. The spotted lanternfly was first found in Southeastern Pennsylvania in 2014 and has spread throughout the mid-Atlantic Region. This flying insect damages the plants that it feeds on and threatens agricultural and hardwood industries in the state. Another major issue affecting a large portion of Pennsylvania is the overpopulation of white-tailed deer. The lack of natural predators in recent years has led to a population boom of deer in the area, which can lead to the destruction of the understory layer of forests and encourage the growth of invasive

species. Deer are also a part of the Lyme disease life cycle, which can lead to an increase in cases of Lyme disease. The deer help transport ticks that carry the disease, and those ticks may eventually bite a human, causing illness. Deer are also a major cause of motor vehicle accidents in the state of Pennsylvania.

In Lower Providence, the largest areas of tree cover can be found in Evansburg State Park, along Skippack Creek. Other stream valleys contain significant corridors of continuous tree cover. In more developed areas of the township, tree cover remains widespread in residential neighborhoods, though broken into small areas and less densely covered than in woodlands. Though they no longer provide all of the habitat functions of larger, unbroken woodlands, shade trees in residential areas are still beneficial to residents, improving air quality, shading homes, and cooling their surroundings.

The temperature moderating functions performed by trees is valuable for decreasing energy costs and increasing comfort, and will only increase in importance as the climate warms and heatwaves become longer and more common. The map of surface temperatures and impervious surfaces was created using data provided by DVRPC, showing surface temperatures during extreme heat events. The hottest temperatures recorded in the township correspond with greater amounts of impervious surface cover and development, while areas with more tree cover remain cooler.

FIGURE 7.6 – HEAT ISLAND MAP



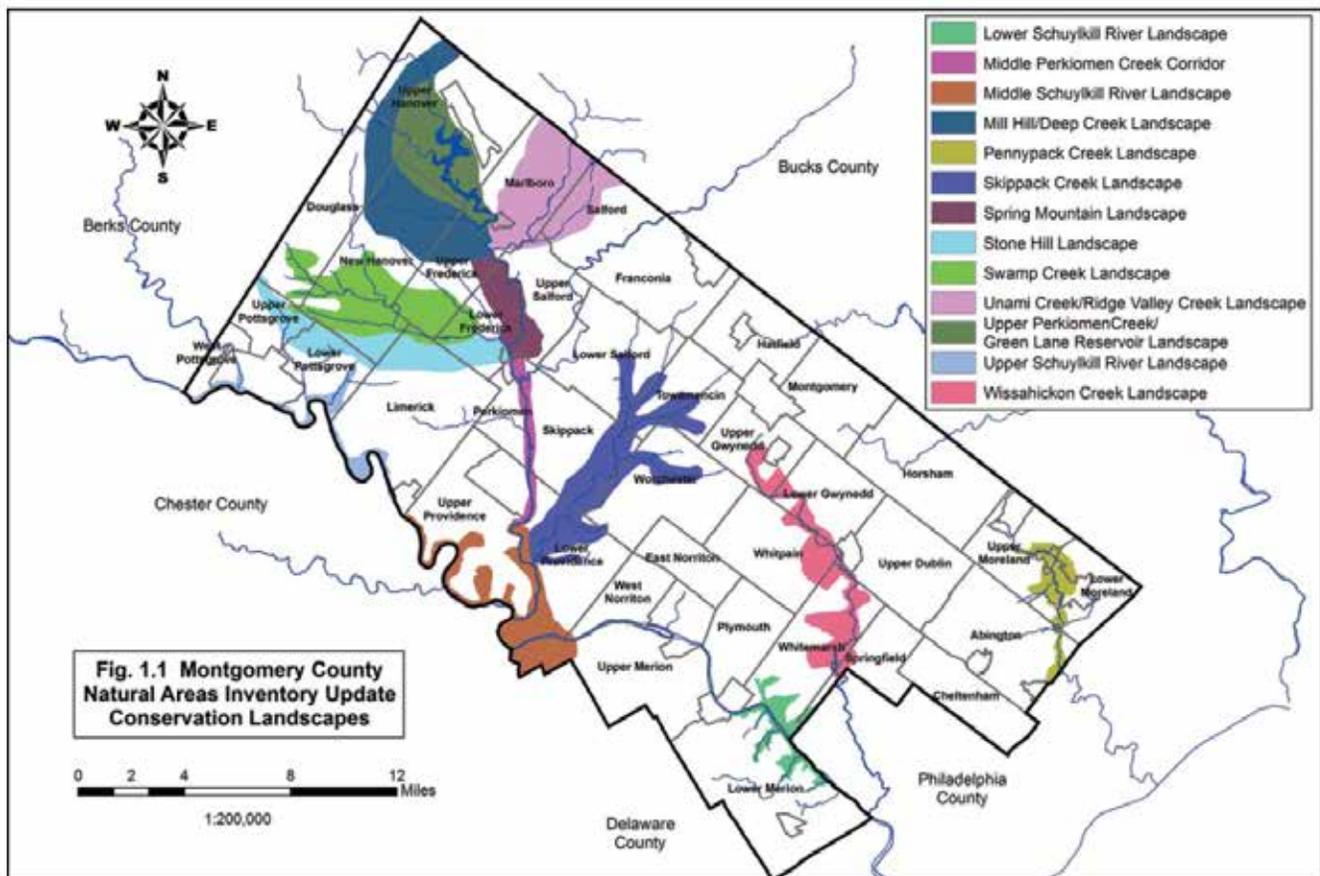
Conservation Landscapes

The Montgomery County Planning Commission’s Natural Areas Inventory was first prepared in 1995 and updated in 2007. This study identified conservation landscapes containing concentrations of biodiversity, intact habitats, and sensitive natural features. The conservation landscapes include preserved areas of open space and additional preservation opportunities surrounding them. Lower Providence contains portions of three of the 13 conservation landscapes identified in the 2007 update.

Middle Perkiomen Creek Corridor

The Middle Perkiomen Creek Corridor is focused on the riparian corridor along the Perkiomen Creek from Schwenksville to Yerkes. It provides a setting for the Perkiomen Trail and contains habitat for riparian species. The corridor is a critical link in the county trail network as it provides the connection between the Schuylkill River and Perkiomen Creek trails. Portions of this conservation landscape are protected within Lower Providence as part of the county’s Central Perkiomen Park and the township’s Cranberry Park.

Montgomery County Natural Areas Inventory Update Conservation Landscapes



Skippack Creek Landscape

Evansburg State Park makes up the majority of the Skippack Creek Conservation Landscape. The landscape contains extensive, mostly forested, floodplains along the creek that serve an important ecological role in reducing flood damage throughout the region. Forested slopes along the creek also provide habitat for a diversity of plant and animal species including riparian specialists. This conservation landscape contains a large portion of the township, extending beyond the boundaries of Evansburg State Park to encompass the watersheds of Skippack Creek and its tributaries.

Middle Schuylkill River Landscape

The confluence of the Perkiomen Creek and the Schuylkill River is at the center of the Middle Schuylkill River Conservation Landscape. The landscape includes the riparian corridor along the Schuylkill River from Port Kennedy to just below Royersford, and the Perkiomen Valley below Yerkes. Floodplains and forested cliffs and ravines along the river are significant natural features. Valley Forge National Historical Park, the John James Audubon Center at Mill Grove, and the Oakes Reach of the Schuylkill Canal are important historical resources. In Lower Providence, portions of this conservation landscape are protected in Valley Forge National Historical Park, the John James Audubon Center, and Hoy Park.

Open Space and Parks

Permanently protected lands, whether publicly or privately owned, preserve the beauty and environmental value of the landscape and create opportunities for recreation in natural settings. Lower Providence is home to national, state, county, and township parks in addition to privately-owned open spaces. Together, public and private open spaces amount to 28.1% of the township's



Skippack Creek is one of the township's larger watercourses. It flows through Evansburg State Park for much of its length and consequently features a large, undeveloped greenway.

area- double the percentage of preserved open space in the county as a whole. Agricultural and undeveloped properties are prime candidates when considering preservation opportunities. These land uses make up 6.5% of the township. Institutional land uses may also present opportunities for land conservation. In Lower Providence, institutional properties cover 7.8% of the township.

Valley Forge National Historic Park

Valley Forge National Historic Park preserves the location of the Continental Army's winter encampment from 1777 to 1778 and associated sites. The portion of the park located in Lower Providence occupies the southern end of the township, along the Schuylkill River. Valley Forge NHP contains historic Pawling Farm and the Schuylkill River Trail.

Evansburg State Park

Evansburg State Park is located along the course of Skippack Creek and adjacent slopes. The park cuts across Lower Providence, from the northern township boundary almost to the Schuylkill River. The park extends into Skippack, Lower Salford, Towamencin, and Worcester townships and encompasses 3,349 acres of woodlands, farmland, and wetlands.

ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

FIGURE 7.7 – OPEN SPACE AND PRESERVATION OPPORTUNITIES MAP

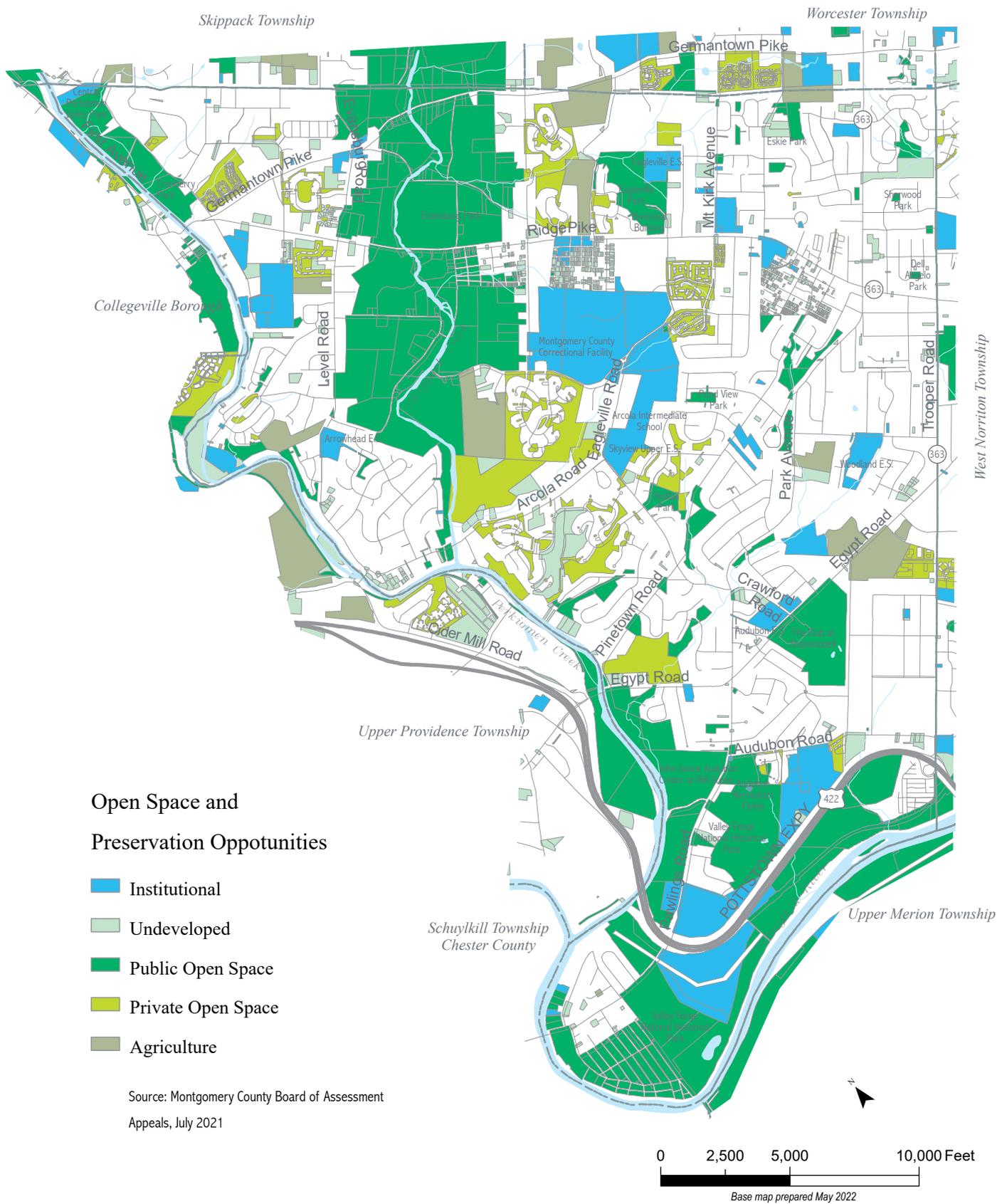


FIGURE 7.8 – TOWNSHIP PARKS AND OPEN SPACE
SOURCE: SIMONE COLLINS LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

PARK NAME	ACRES	TYPE	
		ACTIVE REC.	OPEN SPACE / PASSIVE REC.
Cranberry Park	19.08		x
Dell Angelo Park (Brant Park)	2.53		x
Eagleville Park	64.92	x	x
Eskie Park	10.8	x	
Evansburg Point Park (Warrior Field)	35.6	x	
Gabriel's Field	21.59	x	x
Hoy Park	3.76		x
Level Rd School House	0.67		
Francesco A. Mascaro Memorial Field & Community Park	10	x	
Pond View Drive Park	5.32		
Redtail Park	8.83	x	
Sherwood Park	1.012		x

County Parks and Open Space

The township is home to the county’s John James Audubon Center and a portion of Central Perkiomen Park. The Audubon Center features the Audubon Loop Trail and preserves Mill Grove, the historic home of John James Audubon. Central Perkiomen Park extends across portions of 10 different municipalities. Lower Providence’s section of the park is a passive recreation area on the bank of Perkiomen Creek.

Township Parks and Open Space

The parks and open spaces of Lower Providence are the subject of the ongoing update to the township’s parks and open space plan. The township has 13 local parks, featuring a mix of active recreation amenities like sports facilities and playgrounds, and places for passive recreation like walking or birdwatching. The parks and open spaces are extensively studied and planned for in the *Lower Providence Township Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan* (adopted in 2021) which serves as component of this comprehensive plan. The goals to offer programming and activities

for underserved groups, contained in Chapter 3, complement the recommendations for facilities from the parks plan, but may be aided by changes to some existing facilities or additional facilities (e.g. community center, aquatics center)

Utility Infrastructure

The public and private systems that move materials, energy, and information through Lower Providence are the infrastructure of the township. These networks support the township and connect it to neighboring municipalities and the wider world. These systems must be maintained to counteract normal deterioration and to keep pace with changing technologies, community needs, and growing environmental challenges. While the township has more control over public infrastructure, other systems are largely or entirely beyond local control. Nevertheless, the township can assess its needs and goals for infrastructure, and work with its various public and private partners to meet these objectives.



Water storage tanks like this one, located on the grounds of the Montgomery County Emergency Operations Center, are typically sited on high ground and can be prominent landmarks within a community.

Water Supplies

Having an adequate supply of clean water is fundamental to the wellbeing of the township’s residents and businesses. The majority of homes and businesses in Lower Providence are served by a public water supply. Lower Providence Township residents are provided with public water service by two different suppliers—Pennsylvania-American Water Company (PAWC) and Audubon Water Company. The two systems are interconnected in the vicinity of Cedar Lane and Level Road and Egypt and Trooper Roads, which helps to improve the reliability of service. The line dividing the service areas for the two water companies splits the township along a line south of Evansburg State Park, the Montgomery County Correctional Facility, and Woodland Avenue.

PAWC services the portion of Lower Providence Township to the north of this area, and Audubon Water Company serves areas to the south. Beyond Lower Providence Township, the service area for PAWC extends into several neighboring municipalities including: Worcester, Perkiomen,

and East and West Norriton Townships. PAWC provides water to approximately 4,063 service connections within the township. The majority of these connections are for domestic use. PAWC draws its water from surface sources, extracting roughly 11 million gallons of water per day out of the Schuylkill River. This water is treated at the company’s Norristown filtration plant. PAWC also operates seven treated water storage facilities, having a combined capacity of 7.7 million gallons.

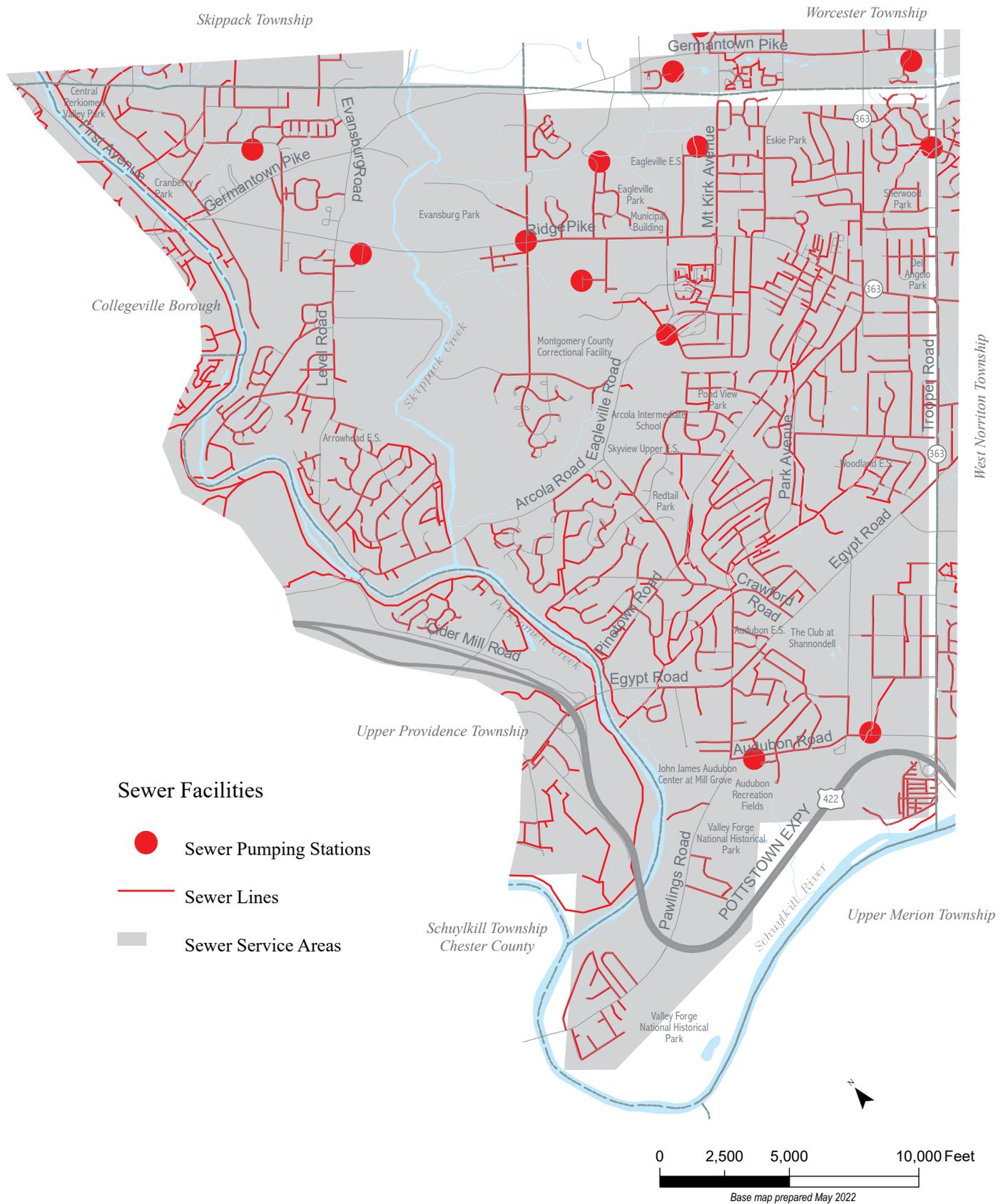
In contrast to PAWC, Audubon Water Company is a smaller and more constrained system, drawing its water from wells, except for water purchased through the interconnection. Audubon currently operates ten wells, withdrawing roughly one million gallons of groundwater per day, and storage facilities with a capacity of 1.54 million gallons. In addition, the water system serves a population of approximately 9,850 through 2,403 domestic connections and 219 commercial connections.

The Public Utility Commission (PUC) regulates both PAWC and Audubon Water Company. While existing private wells are not monitored by the township or county, new wells for private use are required to obtain permits from the county health department. All wells in the township that withdraw more than 10,000 gallons per day (gpd) are regulated by the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC), due to the township’s location in the DRBC’s groundwater protection area. The township also recognizes that the water usage of any commercial agriculture or extraction industry is regulated under specific guidelines enacted by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Wastewater Systems

In Lower Providence Township, most properties are served by public wastewater collection and conveyance facilities. However, there are a few areas within the township that are serviced by

FIGURE 7.9 – SEWER FACILITIES MAP



on-lot sewage facilities. These areas are primarily located on the periphery of the township. Maintaining wastewater collection and treatment systems- both public and private- is vital for protecting water quality and preserving the health of Lower Providence residents and natural habitats. Monitoring older septic systems and wastewater infrastructure can help to identify problems and enable the township and its partners to take action quickly.

The Lower Providence Township Sewer Authority owns and operates the public wastewater collection and pump facilities that serve the public sewer connections within the township. The township's sewer authority was established in 1962 and currently maintains approximately 100 miles of pipe and 17 pumping stations, transporting an average of 3 million gallons of sewage per day through the collection system¹.

Wastewater from the township's public sewers are treated at the Oaks Wastewater Treatment Plant. This wastewater facility serves Lower Providence and five other Montgomery County municipalities: Perkiomen, Skippack, and Upper Providence Townships, and Collegeville and Trappe Boroughs. It is owned and operated by the Lower Perkiomen Valley Regional Sewer Authority. The plant is located in Upper Providence Township near the confluence of the Perkiomen Creek and the Schuylkill River.

Stormwater Management

Proper stormwater management protects both the natural and built environment. While wetlands and riparian buffer habitats can provide a natural form of stormwater management along the township's waterways, rain falling on developed areas require other forms of stormwater management. Impervious surfaces like buildings, streets, and parking

lots act to both collect and concentrate stormwater runoff. Flows of stormwater carry pollutants to streams, cause damaging erosion, and exacerbate floods. Lower Providence has taken action by adopting a stormwater management ordinance in 2017. Using best management practices can reduce the risks from stormwater runoff and address other risks to water quality. Decreasing the amount of impervious coverage works more directly to eliminate runoff and reduce the need for stormwater management.

The design elements of development, especially the amount and configuration of impervious surfaces, plays a major role in determining the amount of stormwater management that will be needed to capture and handle runoff flows. While new development may bring an increase in impervious coverage in some instances, current standards for stormwater management are more rigorous than what was required of development in decades past. Older commercial and residential development throughout the township may feature inadequate stormwater management or lack it entirely. Unmanaged runoff can easily cross property lines, leading to issues such as ponding, erosion, or flooding in yards and basements. In some cases, it may be possible to address runoff issues through small interventions, such as rain gardens. Where larger stormwater issues exist, such as those involving multiple properties or public infrastructure, a more intensive and systemic effort may be needed. Funding assistance for such efforts is sometimes available from state and federal sources, but the township may wish to study the potential benefits of a stormwater fee. As with impact fees, the stormwater fee assessed for a property is in proportion with the runoff it generates. This provides a municipality with a consistent source of local funding to operate ongoing stormwater management programs.

¹ <https://www.lowerprovidence.org/sewer-authority>

Under the Clean Water Act, Pennsylvania administers the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) program to manage the quality and quantity of stormwater runoff. Municipalities are required to implement six minimum control measures to fulfill their MS4 permit. Locally, the Montgomery County Conservation District administers one of these, Construction Site Stormwater Runoff and Control, and is currently expanding its capacity to include assistance with another, Post Construction Stormwater Runoff for New Development. Lower Providence is responsible for the other four minimum control measures and is working with Worcester, Skippack, and Lower Salford Townships in a joint pollution reduction plan (PRP) to manage sedimentation and water quality in the Skippack Creek watershed. This cooperative effort should result in better stormwater management and cost savings. The Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy offers Public Education and Outreach programs and Public Involvement and Participation services, offering the township another opportunity for partnership in fulfilling MS4 requirements.

Energy

The energy sources that power modern life are distributed by networks of power transmission lines and pipelines that cross the landscape. While some communities own and operate municipal or cooperative utility companies, Lower Providence, like most communities in Montgomery County, is served by private energy suppliers. The placement and operation of pipelines and electrical systems is publicly regulated through the Pennsylvania Utilities Commission. Lower Providence is crossed by a high voltage electric transmission corridor and a pipeline corridor that follow roughly parallel routes through the southern end of the township.

Lower Providence is served by the Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO), which supplies

electrical power and natural gas to much of the county. The Limerick Generating Station, a nuclear power plant owned and operated by PECO's parent company, is located nearby and provides 2.3 gigawatts of electrical power². Lower Providence is located on the edge of the Limerick Generating Station emergency planning area, a 10-mile radius surrounding the power station. The emergency plan is updated biannually and identifies evacuation routes and reception sites township residents should follow in the case of an emergency³.

The greenhouse gas emissions created by electric power generation are comparatively low in Pennsylvania and especially low in the commonwealth's southeastern portion, thanks in large part to the region's abundance of nuclear power. While renewable energy sources are growing, the township's greenhouse gas emissions from other sources are significant, with annual per capita emissions of 10.1 metric tonnes of CO₂ equivalent (MTCO₂e)⁴. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions is a key sustainability initiative. The accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere is driving changes in the Earth's climate including rising average temperatures, shifting weather patterns, intensifying storms, and leading to changes in other environments and ecosystems. Electrification is one of the most prominent methods for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and entails replacing machines that use fossil fuels with ones that are powered by electricity. This has the immediate effect of reducing local emissions of greenhouse gases and other pollutants, and enables the use of renewable energy to further reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

2 <https://www.exeloncorp.com/locations/power-plants/limerick-generating-station>

3 <https://www.exeloncorp.com/locations/Documents/Limerick%20Emergency%20Planning%20Brochure.pdf>

4 This draws on a 2018 report by DVRPC <https://www.dvrpc.org/energyclimate/inventory/>. Lower Providence's data: <https://www.dvrpc.org/webmaps/MunicipalEnergy/mcdDetail.aspx?mcdcode=4209145080>

ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

FIGURE 7.10 – MAJOR ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE MAP

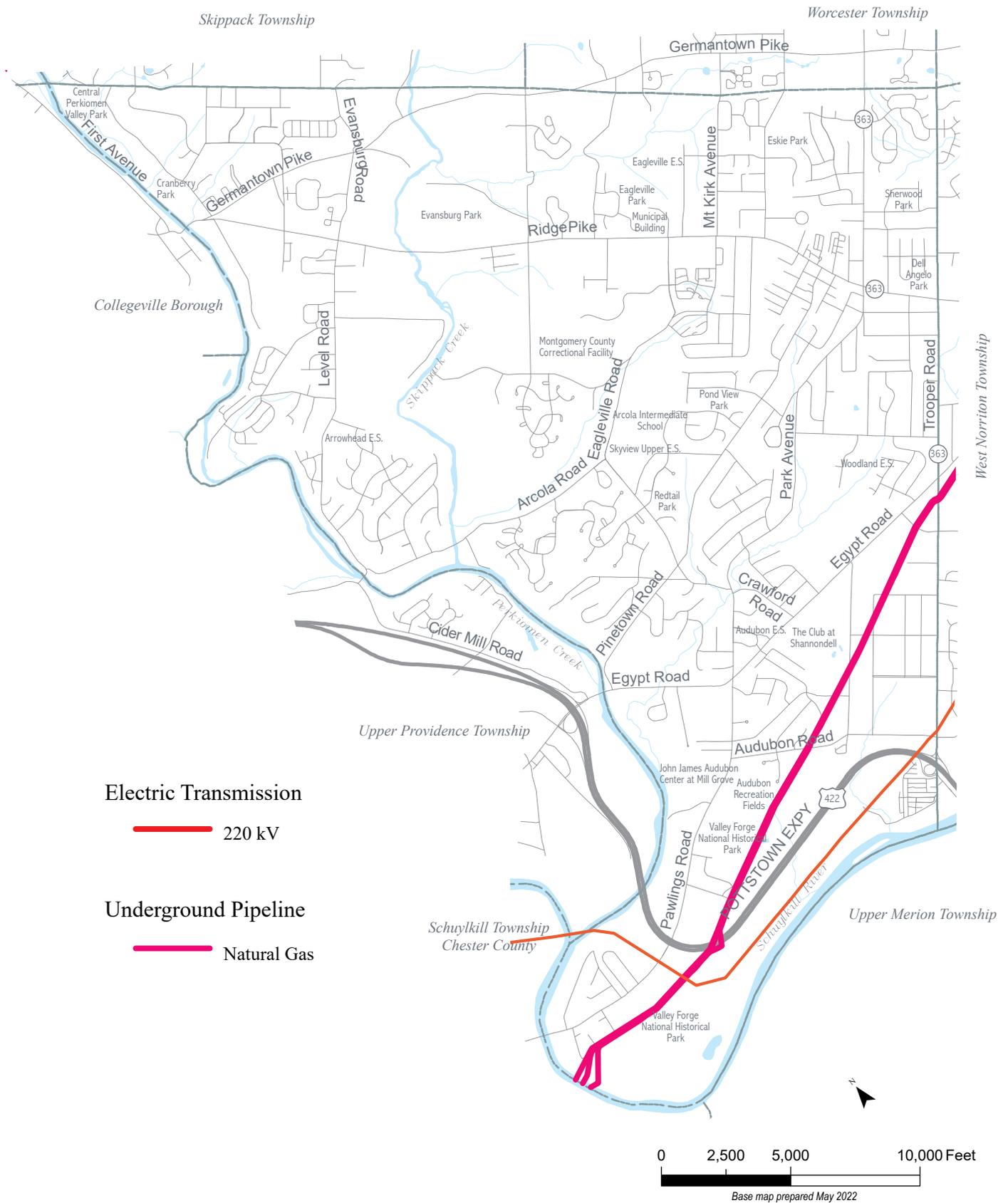
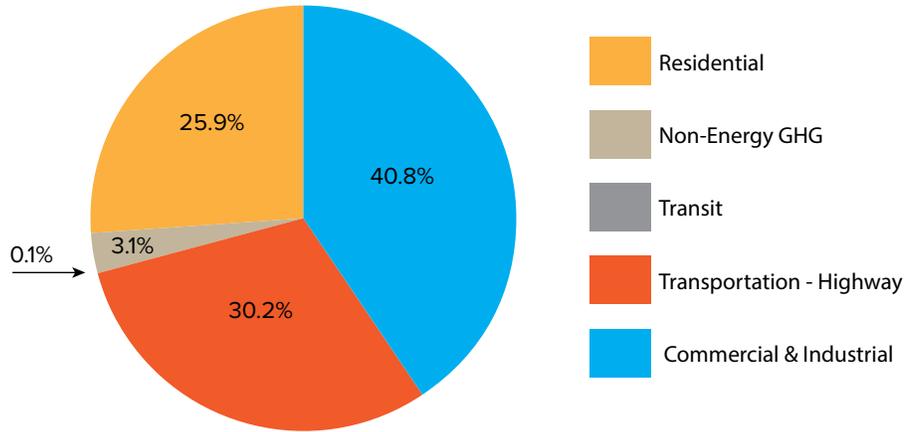


FIGURE 7.11 – GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS BY SECTOR
 SOURCE: 2018 DVRPC GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS INVENTORY



In Lower Providence, residential emissions account for a quarter of the township’s total output of greenhouse gases. In the home, heating and cooking are the most common uses for fossil fuels, though a wide and growing array of electrification options exist for both of these applications.

Renewable Energy

Across the world, the share of electrical generating capacity from renewable sources is expanding and even at smaller scales, renewable energy systems like wind, solar, and geothermal, are rapidly growing in popularity. Where local conditions are favorable, renewable energy technologies can make electrical generation feasible even at the scale of individual properties. This allows for dispersed installations of renewable energy systems like photovoltaic panels or wind turbines on homes and businesses. Lower Providence regulates the size and placement of such systems in the zoning ordinance. These restrictions help to ensure the safety of renewable energy systems. Throughout southeastern Pennsylvania, including

Lower Providence, the potential for utility-scale wind power is comparatively low due to the area’s lack of sustained strong winds. For this reason, photovoltaic solar power is the most common renewable energy system, though there may be opportunities for small wind power installations where local conditions are favorable. Geothermal Heat Pumps are feasible for individual heating and cooling needs in Southeastern Pennsylvania for properties that have adequate space for the underground pipes to be installed. Renewable energy technologies are an area of active research and new products and systems are becoming available. This is one subject of regulation that the township should monitor and regularly review and update relevant ordinances.

Trends and Challenges

Ongoing changes in the local climate, ecosystems, and weather patterns noted throughout this chapter present challenges to many communities, including Lower Providence. In many cases, these issues are interconnected and influence one another.

One example of these linkages is how the rise in average temperatures and the associated increase in precipitation and flooding have contributed to the increasing risk of mosquito-borne diseases like West Nile Virus and the Zika Virus. Municipalities now have to undertake mitigation efforts in response to diseases that were previously confined to more tropical climates. The changes in Earth's climate that are driven by accumulating greenhouse gases will likely bring more challenges for communities in coming years. In response to such challenges there are steps Lower Providence can take to improve the community's sustainability and increase its resilience.

By pursuing sustainability, the township works to ensure that the resources it uses come from renewable sources and that the use of these resources does not degrade the natural environment or lead to an accumulation of pollutants. When planning sustainability improvements, one guiding document the township can look to is the state's climate action plan. The *Pennsylvania Climate Action Plan*⁵ was completed in 2021 and presents strategies that businesses, community leaders, and all Pennsylvanians can take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the impacts of climate change, as reported in the *Pennsylvania Climate Impacts Analysis (2021)*⁶. The climate impacts analysis and climate action plan offer the township a roadmap to managing climate challenges and developing a municipal climate action plan. The township can also encourage sustainable practices and land stewardship by land owners in the community. Supporting stewardship practices on private land, such as natural land cover, native plantings, and permaculture practices is important because a majority of the township's land area

is privately-owned. Sustainability improvements are essential to protecting natural resources and reducing the scale and severity of climate change hazards, but the township must also take steps to prepare for hazards that cannot be averted.

When communities work to make their homes, businesses, and infrastructure better able to endure environmental hazards they increase the resiliency of their community. Resiliency planning is a necessary supplement to sustainability planning and each goal helps to ensure the success of the other. When planning for resiliency, the township again has guiding documents to look to. The *Montgomery County Hazard Mitigation Plan*⁷ provides comprehensive reporting of environmental hazards and recommends precautions municipalities can take to safeguard their residents and property. The county's current hazard mitigation plan was completed in late 2017 and all 62 municipalities in the county are asked to adopt the plan. The hazard mitigation plan is updated every five years, and the new update is now underway. A risk factor was calculated for each of 23 hazards. The four hazards with the highest risk factors in Montgomery County were floods, winter storms, hurricanes or tropical storms, and extreme temperatures. Specific recommendations include advocating for expedited permitting for municipalities trying to clean out silt and sediment from stream beds, helping municipalities better manage floodwaters at a watershed level, conducting countywide trainings on hazard mitigation for emergency management personnel and others, and expanding and improving emergency warning and information systems like Ready Montco.

5 <https://www.dep.pa.gov/Citizens/climate/Pages/PA-Climate-Action-Plan.aspx>

6 <https://www.dep.pa.gov/Citizens/climate/Pages/impacts.aspx>

7 <https://www.montcopa.org/3850/Hazard-Mitigation-Planning>

Goals and Recommendations

Lower Providence will conserve and protect the natural resources and ecosystems which beautify and enrich the township. Public facilities and open spaces will exemplify land stewardship, energy conservation, and waste reduction. The township

will offer dynamic and inclusive programming for residents from all walks of life in its parks and recreation facilities. Roads and other infrastructure systems in the community will be improved to be resilient to extreme weather events and operate more sustainably.

28	Maintain and enhance the natural resources and amenities in the township’s parks and open spaces.
28a	Remove invasive plant species from township-owned property.
28b	Monitor township-owned property for invasive insect species and disease-carrying species and mitigate their threats to public health and local environment.
28c	Coordinate with state agencies to manage local deer populations.
29	Preserve and enhance environmentally-sensitive lands and natural features.
29a	Prioritize the preservation of natural areas identified as open space preservation opportunities in the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan and other preservation opportunities.
29b	Strengthen standards for tree preservation and replacement and require the removal of invasive plant species.
30	Work with neighboring municipalities to conserve shared natural resources.
30a	Collaborate with upstream and downstream municipalities when planning around issues related to shared watersheds.
30b	Collaborate with neighboring municipalities to create connected networks of preserved open spaces, parks, and trails.
31	Restore, protect, and improve riparian buffers.
31a	Identify and prioritize gaps in riparian buffers throughout the township. Restore riparian buffers on township properties.
31b	Work with property owners to restore riparian buffers that are located on private property.
32	Identify and implement stormwater management best practices to mitigate stormwater runoff in compliance with PA DEP requirements.
32a	Conduct a feasibility study of funding sources such as impact fees to support stormwater management efforts.
32b	Prioritize the PROS Plan recommended stormwater management installations and other opportunities to implement best practices on township-owned properties.
32c	Incorporate educational components in stormwater management facilities where they can be safely accessed by the public.
32d	Assist interested property owners working individually or in cooperation with one another to create and enhance stormwater management facilities (e.g. provide design guidebook, professional directory, funding sources list).

ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

33	Monitor changing environmental conditions and improve the township's resilience.
33a	Work to address risks to existing development in flood-prone areas and areas that may become more flood-prone.
33b	Reduce the potential for development in areas with significant risk of flooding.
33c	Educate residents about flood preparedness and safety and conduct yearly outreach to residents in flood-prone areas.
33d	Review the information and recommendations of the Montgomery County Hazard Mitigation Plan (2017) and incorporate future updates into township plans and policies.
33e	Review the Pennsylvania climate impacts assessment report and climate action plan and consider creating a municipal climate action plan.
34	Plan for and support the continued reliability of essential infrastructure in the township.
34a	Conduct regular assessments of township ordinances regulating energy systems and communications infrastructure and update township codes in response to new technology and in compliance with state and federal requirements.
34b	Work with the Lower Perkiomen Valley Regional Sewer Authority and other member municipalities to plan for future improvements to meet wastewater treatment needs.
35	Improve energy efficiency and employ sustainability best practices in township facilities.
35a	Conduct energy audits on township facilities to assess priority for improvements in energy efficiency. Implement energy efficiency improvements wherever feasible.
35b	Assess opportunities to reduce water use and waste generation at township facilities and implement efficiency improvements wherever feasible.
35c	Evaluate options for installing renewable energy systems and EV chargers on township-owned property.
35d	Evaluate options for reducing the fuel consumption of the township's vehicles and equipment and consider opportunities for electrification.

36	Support environmental stewardship and incentivize sustainable practices by property owners and developers.
36a	Continue to provide up-to-date information regarding natural resource conservation, stormwater management, invasive species, and other environmental stewardship issues.
36b	Update ordinances to enable and encourage property owners to use land stewardship practices (e.g. install native meadow plantings and other lawn alternatives, practice permaculture).
36c	Revise development standards to mitigate stormwater runoff and heat island effects through increases in tree cover and reductions in impervious coverage.
36d	Create zoning incentives for building to higher sustainability standards than are required by building codes.
36e	Encourage property owners to implement energy conservation improvements such as installing white roofs, insulated windows, and other sustainable building practices.
36f	Promote the electrification of new and existing buildings and the installation of renewable energy systems. Provide information about current township codes regarding these systems.
36g	Work with property owners to maintain and enhance the township's tree canopy. Encourage tree planting in areas where heat island effects are pronounced.

Future Land Use

Chapter 8 – Lower Providence Township Comprehensive Plan

Land Use Vision

The community’s vision for how the township will evolve over the coming years is explored in previous chapters through study of the different natural and constructed elements that make up the township. In its plan for future land use, this vision is laid on the map and the community’s aims and aspirations are described for different places throughout the township. The Future Land Use Plan is not a zoning map and does directly not affect the township’s current zoning ordinances and maps. However, the township’s desired land use distribution and the characteristics of its natural and built landscapes as described in the future land use plan should inform future amendments to the township’s zoning and land development ordinances and zoning map.

The Future Land Use Plan for Lower Providence Township is generally consistent with that of the county comprehensive plan, *Montco 2040: A Shared Vision*. The ten future land use categories (shown in Figure 8.1) of the township plan are similar in description and placement to the nine categories of the county plan. Aside from the many parks in the township, *Montco 2040* identifies the majority of

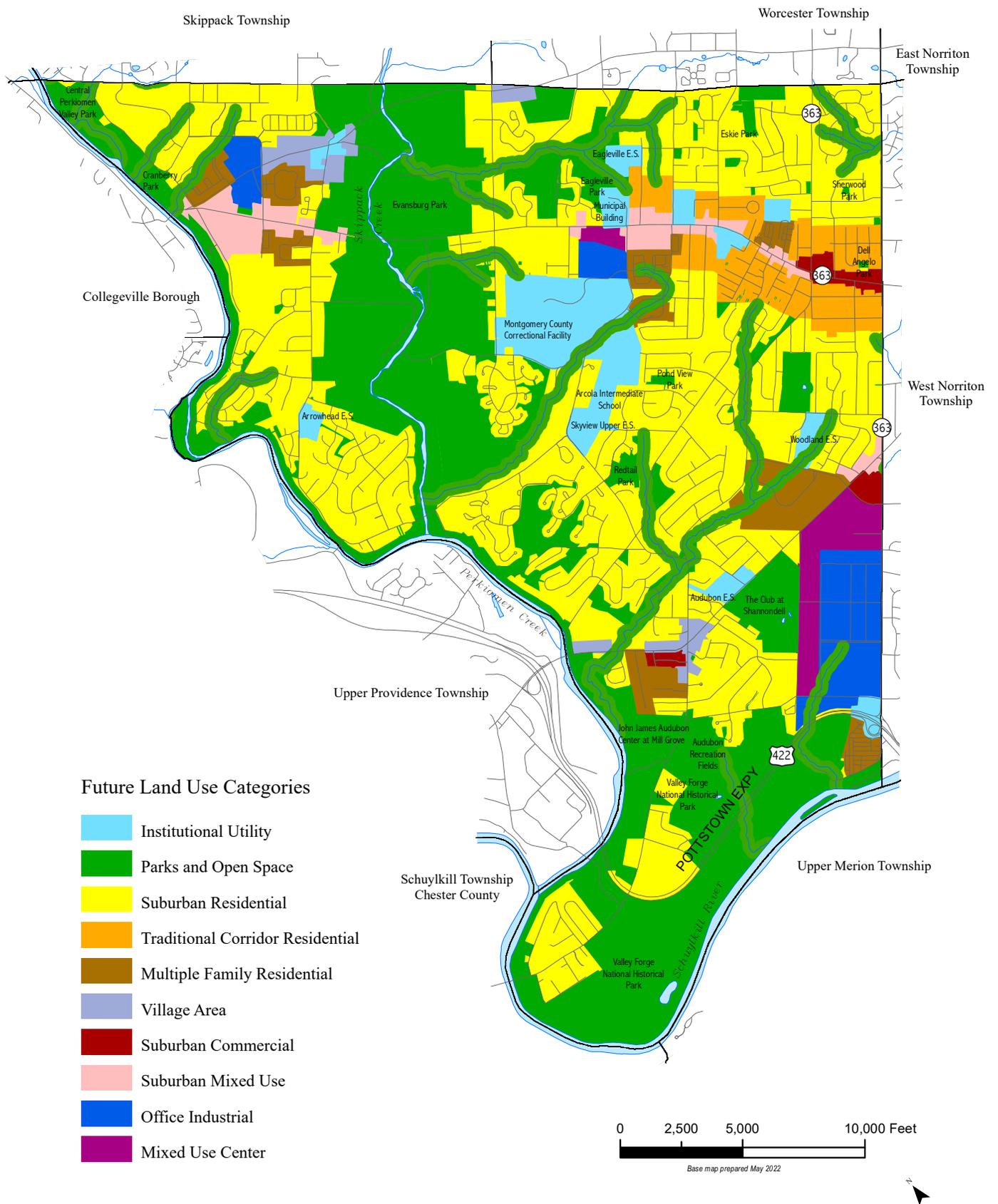
Lower Providence’s area as developed land within the county’s Designated Growth Area. The county comprehensive plan characterizes developed land in growth areas with this description:

These properties are already developed with homes, businesses, and institutions. Some Developed Land properties, such as a vacant shopping center, old office building, or underutilized industrial site, will redevelop and intensify. In addition, infill development may occur in many different locations.

The township’s Future Land Use Plan primarily differs from *Montco 2040* for mapping the township in greater detail. The township map applies future land use categories to specific properties, rather than designating general areas, and it draws finer distinction between land uses of varying intensity. As a township that is largely ‘built-out’, the processes of redevelopment, intensification, and infill development described in the quote above are likely to become a more significant feature in Lower Providence’s future. Bearing this in mind, a major element of the township’s Future land Use Plan is identifying where these

FUTURE LAND USE

FIGURE 8.1 – PROPOSED FUTURE LAND USE MAP



gradual processes of renewal should occur, what form they should take, and at what intensity they should be permitted.

The future land use categories of this plan can be grouped under three general goals: Preserve, Enhance, and Transform. These goals are drawn from the 'Preserve-Enhance-Transform' planning exercise, which is commonly used when identifying community issues. Here, the three correspond with the overall degree of change envisioned for the land use categories in each group. The land use categories at the low end of this scale are grouped under **Preserve**, those at the high end are grouped in **Transform**, while those in the **Enhance** group span a range of anticipated change.

PRESERVE

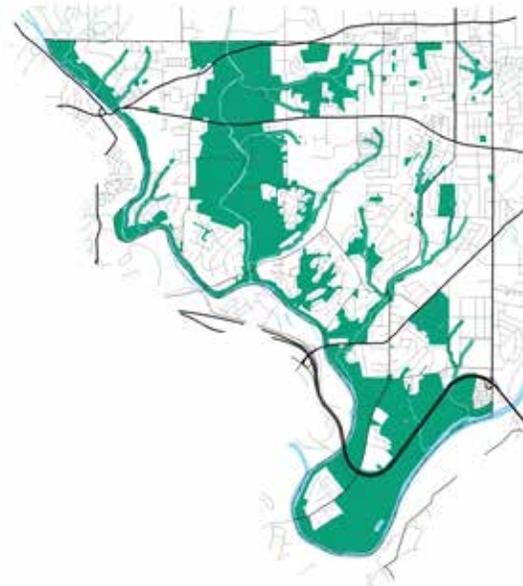
The land use categories grouped under **Preserve** are intended to remain very similar to their present conditions. The uses, design, and infrastructure found in these categories are expected to change only slowly and slightly over the coming years, if they change at all.

Parks and Open Space

The primary use in areas of this category is permanently preserved land, whether in the form of public or private open space. Waterways, parks, trails, and other recreation outdoor facilities are major features of this area. While many of the township's natural areas are contained within existing parks and preserved open space, numerous riparian corridors extend upstream and downstream through other land uses.

Preserving the natural areas in Parks and Open Space and limiting the uses that are permitted there helps to ensure that sensitive habitats are protected from human activities, and that buildings and infrastructure are separated from natural

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE



Dell Angelo Park

hazards. While preservation is the primary goal of this category, these areas do require some level of maintenance and stewardship to keep recreation facilities functioning safely and to support the health of local habitats. The township's *Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan* contains recommendations of future expansions and improvements for public parks and open spaces in the township which are supported by the Future Land Use Plan.

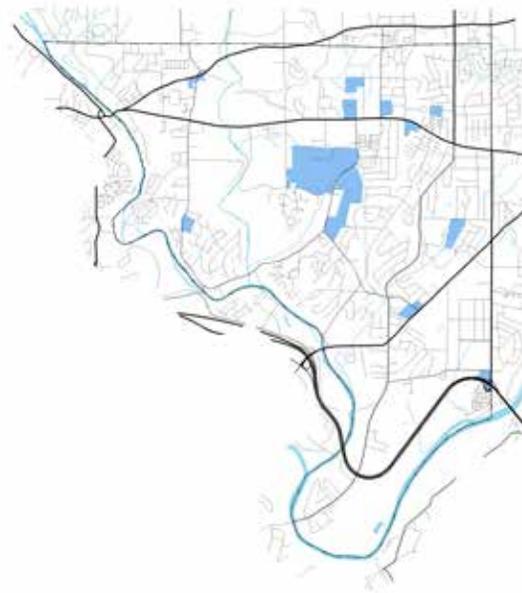
Institutional and Utility

Institutional and Utility areas contain lands occupied by the township's large public and private institutions, as well the community's supportive infrastructure. Facilities owned by public entities, including county and township government and Methacton School District account for the majority of the areas in this category, though several churches are also represented. This land use category aims to accommodate the needs of the township's various institutions, utilities, and other significant quasi-public entities as they plan for the future of their organizations.

Many of the facilities in Institutional and Utility areas employ large numbers of people and serve a significant client population. Uses in this category typically need good transportation access, whether by private vehicle, transit service, walking, or biking. Going forward, the township will closely follow organizations' future plans, especially plans to expand or close facilities. Lower Providence

will coordinate with institutions regarding changes in land use to ensure their compatibility with township's overall land use vision.

INSTITUTIONAL AND UTILITY



Montgomery County Emergency Operations Center

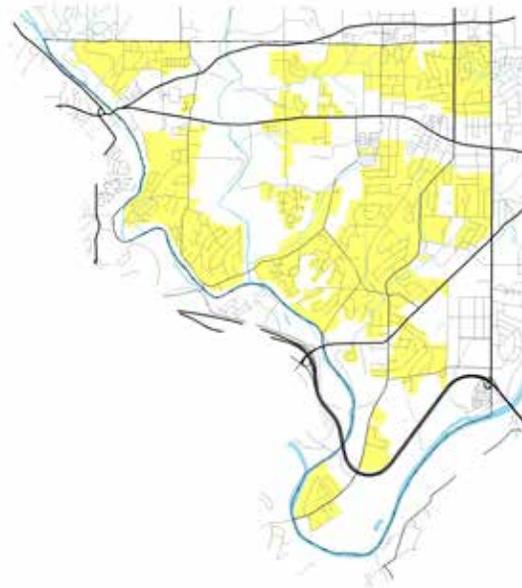
Suburban Residential

Suburban Residential is the largest future land use area. The dominant land use in these areas is single-family detached housing, commonly on lots larger than a quarter-acre in size. Instances of other uses within these low-density residential areas are generally small in size and are not clustered together. Non-residential uses in or adjacent to Suburban Residential Areas should be buffered from neighboring residences and incorporate other measures to minimize impacts.

Due to the large amounts of land and large number of residents in Suburban Residential areas, the future of this land use category will have a large influence on the future of the township as a whole. Conservation of the existing housing stock is the primary aim of this area, and it is expected to remain an area consisting mainly of single-family detached residences. Environmental goals of land stewardship and resource conservation are also of great and growing importance throughout Suburban Residential areas. Improved walking and biking connections will help to provide these

expansive residential areas with greater access to nearby parks, trails, neighborhoods, schools, businesses, and other destinations.

SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL



Evansburg Crossing Subdivision

Traditional Corridor Residential

Traditional Corridor Residential areas are primarily residential areas located in Eagleville and Trooper in the eastern end of the township's Ridge Pike corridor. These areas are defined by their proximity to the concentration of businesses, services, and supportive infrastructure along Ridge Pike. The Traditional Corridor Residential category encompasses areas within approximately a quarter-mile or a five-minute walk of Ridge Pike. Despite being generally similar in their land use and physical character to the township's Suburban Residential areas, this land use category contains many of the township's older neighborhoods, which were developed early in Lower Providence's period of rapid suburban development. Houses tend to be smaller and have smaller lots than is typical of newer single-family detached housing developments. One of the oldest and most compact area of development, known as the 'Movie Lots', is located south of Ridge Pike and was platted as a streetcar suburb. Traditional Corridor Residential areas have experienced some infill development, redevelopment, and renovation activity, as might be expected of developments of their vintage.

As in other residential areas, the primary goal of the Traditional Corridor Residential area is the conservation of the area's existing housing stock. In addition to conserving the housing stock, this area has the secondary purpose of identifying the places in the township which are uniquely situated to offer traditional walkable neighborhood living. In the past, "Missing Middle" housing types (see *Chapter 5: Housing*) were a common component in traditional walkable neighborhoods, and are similar in style and comparable in scale to the houses that are already permitted there. These areas are likely to experience further redevelopment and infill- through the slow turnover of existing properties. Allowing that process to include single-family houses on smaller lots and some compatible "missing middle" types such as duplexes or triplexes will help to ensure that these neighborhoods continue to provide a variety of homes in attractive and walkable neighborhoods, at attainable prices.

TRADITIONAL CORRIDOR RESIDENTIAL



Wayne Avenue, Trooper



ENHANCE

The land use categories that are envisioned to experience a moderate amount of change, or which are identified to receive public improvements are grouped in the goal of **Enhance**. The degree of change that is anticipated in these categories ranges from marginal changes in Multiple Family Residential areas, to more widespread and ongoing redevelopment across the Suburban Mixed-Use areas.

Multiple Family Residential

Multiple Family Residential areas are mainly occupied by the township’s denser housing types: townhouse developments, apartment complexes, and mobile home parks. Areas of this land use category are typically located in or near the township’s major commercial activity centers. Developments of these types are naturally compact, making them well-suited for walking, biking, and transit service, but are often sited on or near major arterial roadways where traffic can present environmental and safety risks. Although these areas are small and scattered throughout the Lower Providence, they contain roughly one-third of the township’s total supply of housing units.

The primary goal for Multiple Family Residential areas (as it is in the other residential areas) is the conservation of the area’s existing housing stock. As the existing development in this area ages, ongoing processes of renovation and improvement are expected. Where these areas interface with adjacent uses, especially those in the township’s activity centers, it is of particular importance to both insulate these populous residential areas from outside nuisances or hazards, and provide safe and convenient connections between them. Any redevelopment in this land use category should feature denser types of housing, to ensure the township maintains its supply of smaller, less-expensive housing units.

MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL



Valley Forge Crossing

Village Area

The Village Area category applies to three places in the township that are sites of historic, long-established settlements: Evansburg, Providence Square, and Audubon. Historically- and culturally-significant structures are especially common in these areas and often occupy prominent locations. These areas feature a wide assortment of uses, often in close proximity. This eclectic, fine-grained mixing of uses is a part of their distinctive historic character and reflects the importance they held as the activity centers of centuries past.

The primary goal of this land use category is to retain the quaint charm of Lower Providence's old village centers through historic preservation and thoughtful design standards. This includes retaining historic structures through preservation and adaptive reuse. Improving walking connections throughout Village Areas will help to strengthen businesses and enhance the historic character of these areas. Adopting design standards helps to ensure redevelopment, infill development, and adaptive reuse projects honor the scale and architectural styles of the village's existing build-

ings. Encouraging mixed use, dining, retail, small multi-family, professional services offices, artisan production, and other compatible, low-intensity small-scale uses will help activate disused properties and build upon the strengths of these unique and cherished places.

VILLAGE AREA



Germantown Pike, Evansburg

Suburban Commercial

The defining feature of Suburban Commercial areas are large clusters of retail establishments, typically in shopping centers. These areas feature commercial uses that are larger than those located elsewhere in the township. The large collections of commercial uses draw in many customers from the township and surrounding regions, and so are sited on high-traffic arterial roadways and served by large parking areas. These areas are central to several of the township’s largest commercial activity areas, and also feature many related uses like offices.

Supporting the continued vitality of these areas is the main aim of this land use category. Mitigating traffic concerns in these areas is of particular importance, as well as improving the convenience and safety of alternative modes, such as transit, walking, and biking, through site design and dedicated infrastructure. Suburban Commercial areas are expected to change over time as new businesses replace old ones and commercial properties are redeveloped in these desirable sites. The township

will use design and performance standards to ensure this gradual process of renewal works to improve multimodal access, manage stormwater, and mitigate heat island effects and respond to the changing nature of retail and commercial development.

SUBURBAN COMMERCIAL



Park Ridge Shopping Center

Suburban Mixed-Use

Suburban Mixed-Use areas are envisioned as walkable, mixed-use corridors featuring nonresidential first-floor uses with residential uses above and behind them. Buildings should be located somewhat close to the street to be visible to and feel accessible to pedestrians. The addition of landscaping, small, plazas, and street furniture such as benches will create more vibrant, walkable business corridors, with a variety of uses. Access consolidation is envisioned to reduce the number of driveways in these areas. This land use category makes up much of the township's commercial activity centers and includes historic village centers, like Eagleville, which retain some examples of historically-significant buildings.

The primary goal of these areas is to encourage revitalization and reinvestment in the township's established mixed-use commercial corridors. Preservation and adaptive reuse of historic structures is another aim of this area, though a less significant component in this category than in the Village Areas. The Suburban Mixed-Use corridors are extensive and contain many opportunities for new businesses to locate in Lower Providence

and where mixed-use development could include housing options, such as the common arrangement of housing atop commercial space. As in other commercial categories, design and performance standards will help to guide the evolution of Suburban Mixed-Use Areas, and create in them a more attractive, and vibrant environment on Lower Providence's main street. See the rendering on page 147 for an example of the vision for this future land use category.

SUBURBAN MIXED-USE



Ridge Pike, Eagleville

TRANSFORM

Transform collects the two land use categories that are both expected to see the largest and most rapid change in the coming years, and the best-suited to accommodate such change and development. Areas in these categories are already host to many of the township’s most intense land uses, so shifts in the particular type of land use, whether through redevelopment or infill, will be well-served by existing infrastructure and are less likely to introduce any new impacts on neighboring areas.

Office Industrial

Office Industrial Areas are defined by their mix of industrial and office uses. These areas are home to a large proportion of Lower Providence’s private employment and many facilities that have significant demand for transportation access to the wider region. These areas are prominent features of the township’s commercial activity centers and are located on major arterial roads. The office, industrial, and occasional institutional and retail uses that fill Office Industrial areas currently are occupied by large buildings on large lots.

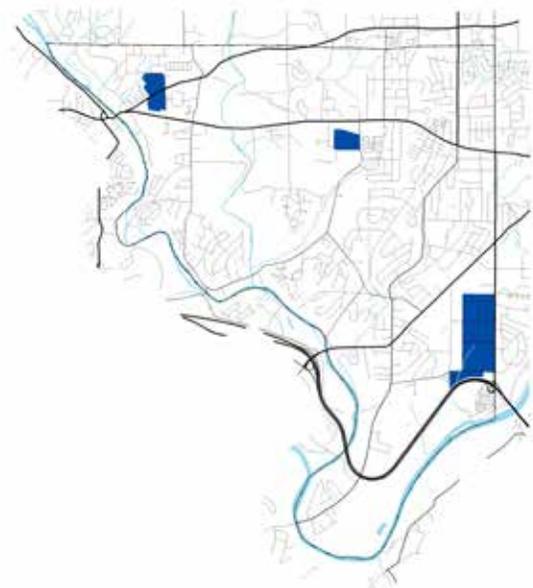
The primary goal of this land use category is to ensure the township’s major employment areas remain

competitive in the region and adapt to changes in office workplaces, and from land uses associated with emerging industries and businesses. As large sites are put to new uses or redeveloped, the township’s Business Areas will grow and change. Recent increases in working-from-home has reduced demand for office space, potentially allowing for increases in flex space, producer-retailers, and other emerging industries. Mitigating traffic congestion is very important to supporting Business Areas’ need to move employees and products. Improving alternatives to driving will also offer workers more options for commuting, and enable them to access and support nearby businesses. The relatively intense land uses that are commonly found in Business Areas must be buffered from adjacent land uses (especially residences) to screen out unwanted noise, glare, dust, and other nuisances. The design of individual properties within Business Areas is important to mitigating nuisances and can also work in combination with other properties to achieve other goals, like reducing impervious coverage, increasing tree cover, and improving walking and transit access in these areas.

OFFICE INDUSTRIAL



Park Pointe Business Park



Mixed-Use Center

Mixed-Use Center are envisioned as new developments that feature a mix of land uses that includes prominent retail and residential components. This style of development is often referred to as “town center” or “lifestyle center” development, among other names. Lower Providence does not currently feature any purpose-built developments of this type, though Audubon features a somewhat similar combination Suburban Commercial and Multiple Family Residential areas that were developed separately, in close proximity. Mixed-Use Center areas identify locations in the township’s commercial activity centers that are best-suited for mixed-use developments of a larger scale.

The primary goal of the Mixed-Use Center land use category is the development of vibrant and vital mixed-use places to function both as walkable destinations and attractive new neighborhoods. These areas also serve a secondary purpose of supporting adjacent land uses in their commercial activity centers by bringing retail and dining options closer to places of employment, creating denser housing nearer to existing businesses, installing streetscaping, and adding new community ameni-

ties. This land use category has an especially great need for high-quality walking, biking, and transit access to serve customers, residents, and employees. As in Multiple Family Residential areas, it is important that developments in Mixed-Use Center areas feature pedestrian-oriented architecture and design, to make walking pleasant and convenient throughout each site and between neighboring land uses. Creating new parklets, plazas, and a developing a ‘Main Street’ environment are desired outcomes from development in Mixed-Use Center areas.

MIXED-USE CENTER



Audubon Square Shopping Center

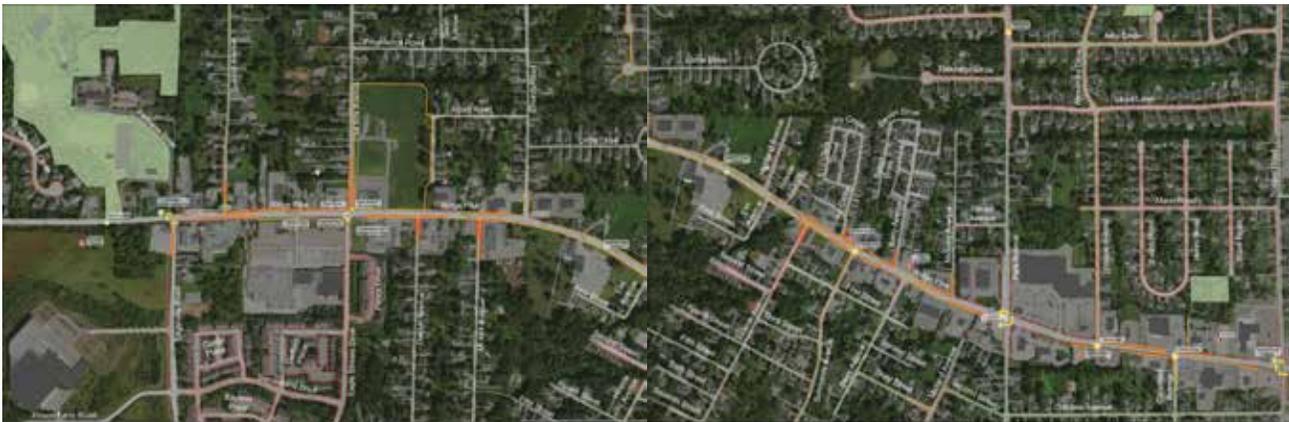
Focus Area: Eastern Ridge Pike

Throughout the township, there are several activity centers where land uses are more concentrated and in greater variety than can be found elsewhere. Some of these activity centers correspond with villages that were founded early in Lower Providence's history: Audubon, Evansburg, Trooper, and Eagleville. Others are the product of more recent development. In the present day, these places remain important hubs in the daily life of the township. As such, these centers of economic, civic, and social activity merit a more detailed exploration of where and how the recommendations of this plan may be implemented. The most prominent of these focus areas are Trooper and Eagleville in the eastern end of Lower Providence's Ridge Pike corridor.

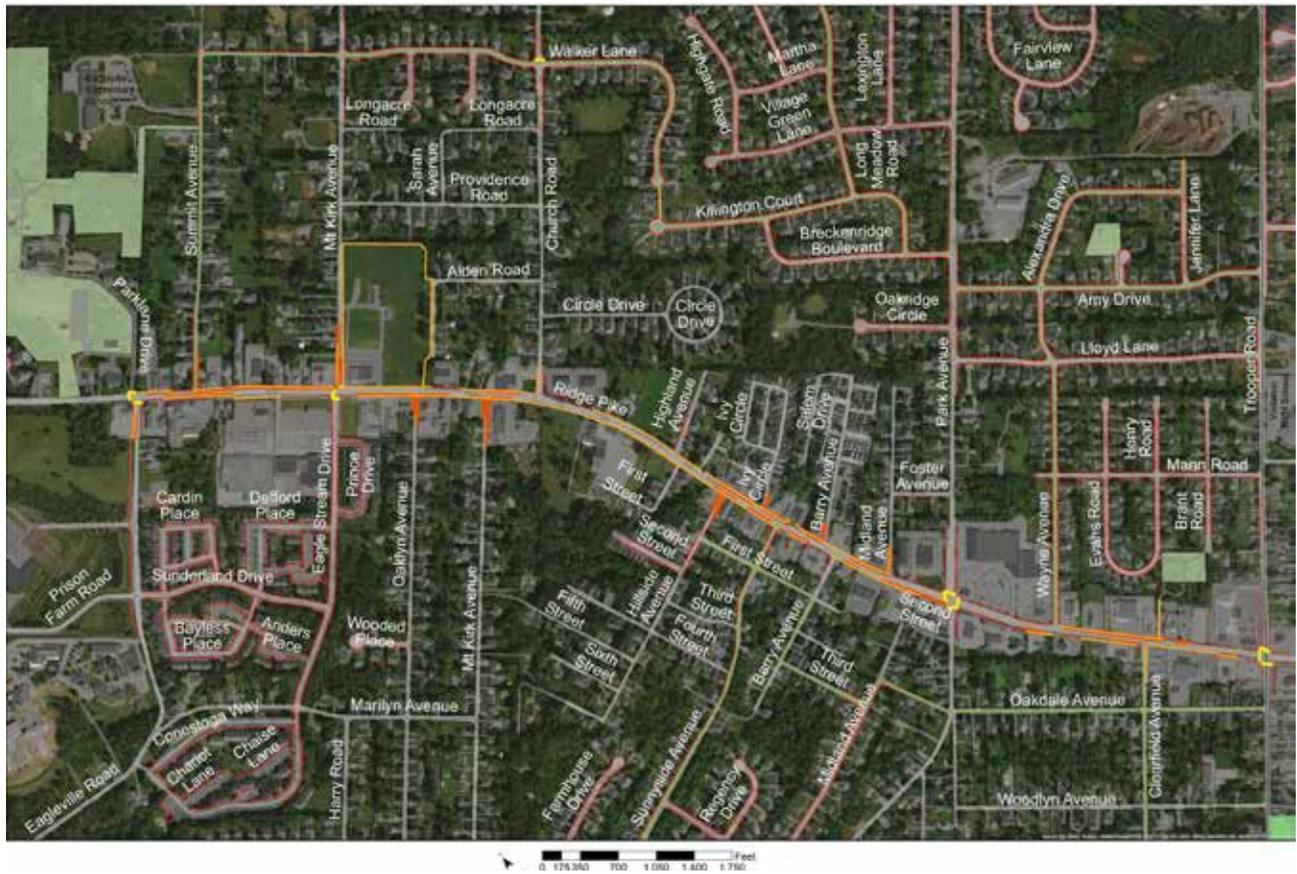
The eastern Ridge Pike corridor stretches more than a mile-and-a-half across Lower Providence, from the township's southeastern border of Trooper Road, uphill to the northwest, to the old village of Eagleville. This corridor is a largely unbroken

strip of mixed-use, retail, office, and institutional uses with a few rare residential properties. This irregular mix of uses has developed haphazardly, as new buildings and uses have accumulated along the ancient thoroughfare during the past three centuries of intensifying development.

In this comprehensive plan, the eastern Ridge Pike commercial corridor encompasses areas from nearly all of the identified future land use categories. In Trooper, the thriving eastern end of the corridor is capped by a Suburban Commercial area, that transitions into Suburban Mixed-Use in the west, while the Eagleville segment of the corridor is mostly comprised of more Suburban Mixed-Use with an undeveloped area identified as Mixed-Use Center. This combination of categories recognizes Eagleville's considerable potential for reuse, reinvestment, and redevelopment. Residential use surround the corridor's commercial core and even front on Ridge Pike in several locations, meaning many of the township's most populous neighborhoods are very close to its main commercial corridor.



In the map above, the Eagleville-Trooper corridor is labeled to show recommended improvements and highlight significant implementation opportunities.



In the map above, some of the residential areas that surround and intermingle with the eastern Ridge Pike corridor can be seen. A network of low-traffic neighborhood streets are highlighted in green to show potential routes that could form a network of designated neighborways, or neighborhood greenway streets, where walking and biking are given priority. To create a neighborway, a street typically receives pavement markings to raise awareness, traffic calming installations to reduce vehicle speeds, and wayfinding signage to aid in navigation.

Trooper

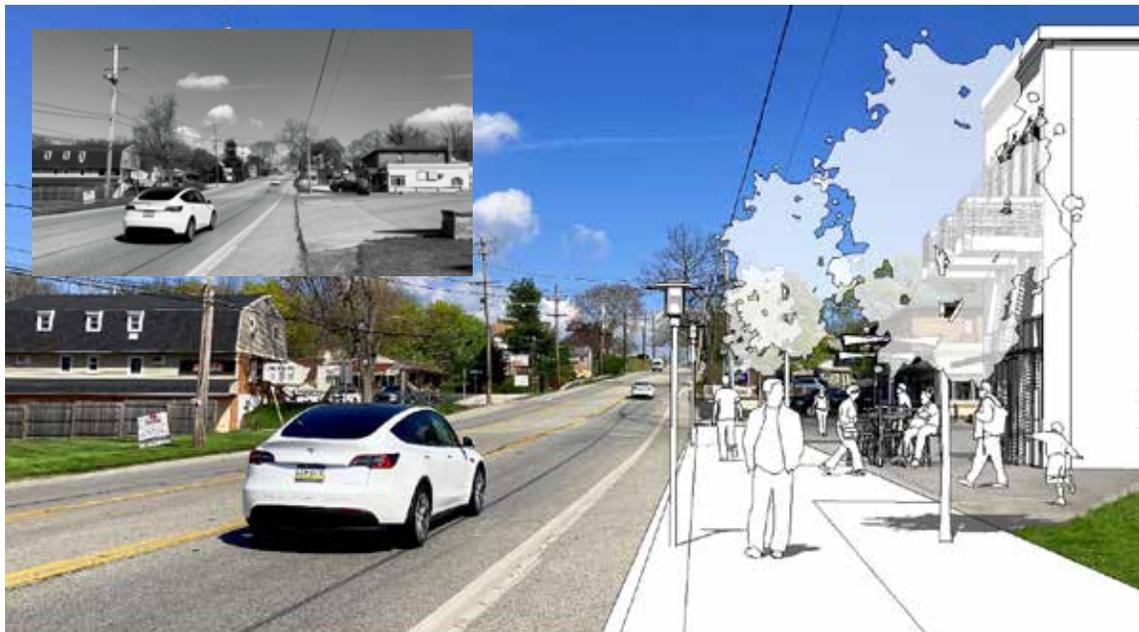
Trooper is located at the easternmost end of Lower Providence’s Ridge Pike corridor, where the roadway carries some of the heaviest traffic volumes in township and supports a highly-developed retail and residential center. While this section of Ridge Pike is home to the Park Ridge shopping center and other popular destinations, gaps in the sidewalk and extreme distances between crosswalks makes walking a daunting proposition to many nearby residents. Connecting the sidewalk network and improving road safety in this area

are high priorities, and will allow employees and customers to move between businesses and invite residents from nearby neighborhoods.

West of Park Avenue, where Trooper begins to transition into Eagleville, business vacancies and missing sidewalks and curbing are more common. Streetscaping, façade improvements, and filling vacancies will help this area to grow as an attractive, walkable community destination and thriving mixed-use area.



The conceptual plan above depicts an example of a potential pedestrian connection between Ridge Pike and surrounding neighborhoods, with other features recommended for the corridor. In Trooper, and elsewhere along the Ridge Pike corridor, walking to businesses from nearby homes is made more difficult by the large size of blocks and the long distances between crosswalks. Creating new pedestrian pathways would help to improve walkability.

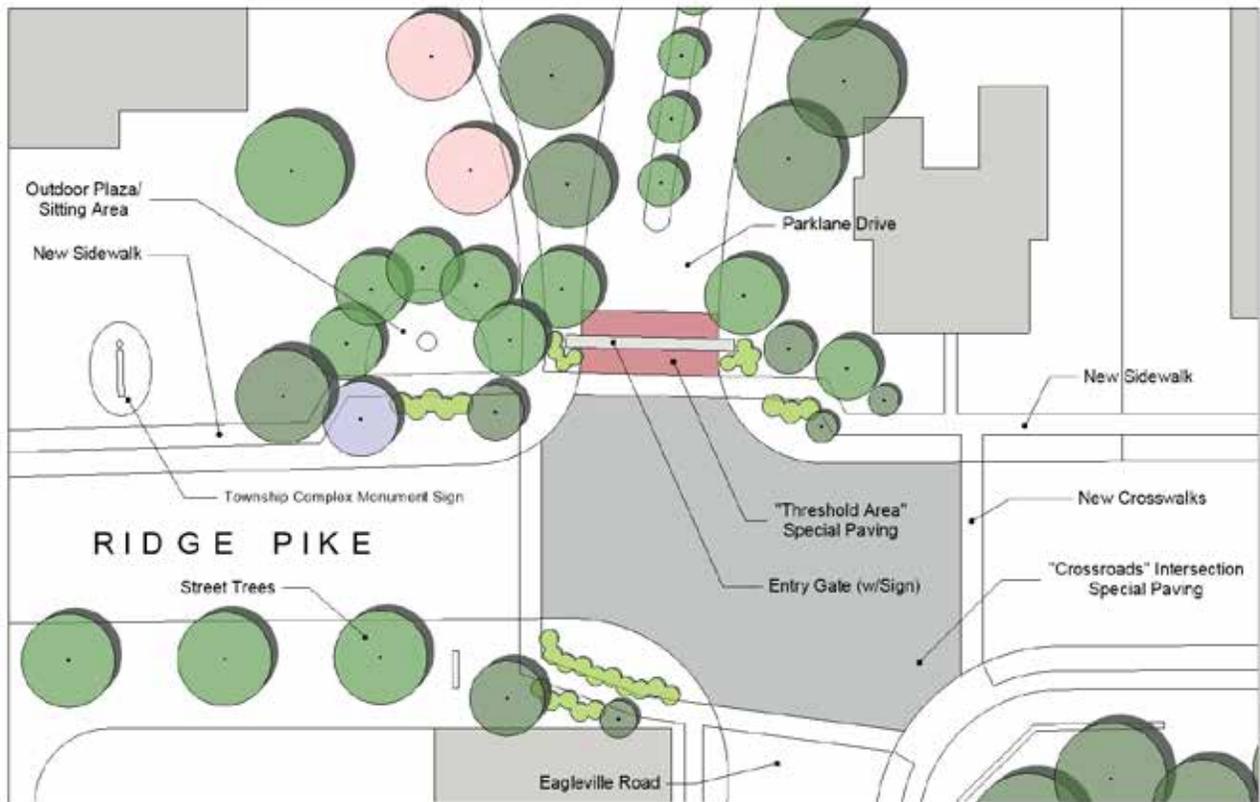


The conceptual rendering above depicts how a site in Trooper might appear with recommended streetscape improvements and standards for commercial and mixed-use development. The addition of curbing and sidewalks improving the safety and convenience of walking throughout this corridor, while planted verges, street trees, and pedestrian oriented lighting helps make walking a pleasant and comfortable experience. This plan also envisions the addition of new crosswalks and the creation of new parklets, plazas, and other public spaces to further enhance the eastern Ridge Pike commercial corridor.

Eagleville

Eagleville is an historic area perched atop Methacton Ridge in the center of Lower Providence’s Ridge Pike corridor. The township’s municipal campus and other community institutions put this area in the heart of township life. This segment of the corridor also features a shopping center, Eagleville Plaza, though its retail activity is markedly lower than Park Ridge. This is due, in part, to having a self-storage facility as the shopping plaza’s largest

tenant. Properties in this segment of the corridor tend to be smaller than in Trooper, and smaller buildings are also more common. Retail and office uses in converted residences are also more common in Eagleville, with widely-varying architecture, site design, and streetscaping. Improving Eagleville’s streetscapes and filling vacancies are priorities for this segment of the corridor.



The conceptual plan above shows a potential arrangement of some recommended features at the entrance to the township campus and the surrounding area. This conceptual design is intended to make the park, library, and township building more visible, more inviting, and more accessible from Ridge Pike.

Implementation

Chapter 9 - Lower Providence Township Comprehensive Plan

Setting Priorities

This chapter presents the full list of recommendations and details their relative priority and tentative timeframes for completion. The implementation chapter identifies partner organizations that may contribute to the implementation of this comprehensive plan, in addition to the government departments and boards of the township that will lead the implementation of each item. Crucially, the implementation chapter also identifies potential funding sources to augment the township's financial resources and aid in the implementation of recommended projects and programs.

Implementation Partners

The partners listed for each of the recommendation's implementation items include the boards, departments, and consultants of the township and external parties that may have a role to play in the completion of various initiatives. Other organizations not listed here may contribute to the realization of these recommendations, and the partners involved with each item may change as implementation proceeds. The Lower Providence Board of Supervisors may convene other boards, as-needed, to implement the recommendations of this plan.

TOWNSHIP BOARDS AND DEPARTMENTS

ABBREVIATION	TOWNSHIP BOARDS AND DEPARTMENTS
BOS	Board of Supervisors
CDD	Community Development Department
EAC	Environmental Advisory Council
PC	Planning Commission
PRB	Parks and Recreation Board
PRD	Parks and Recreation Department
PWD	Public Works Department

IMPLEMENTATION

EXTERNAL AGENCIES

ABBREVIATION	EXTERNAL AGENCIES
CT	<i>Conservancies and trusts that assist with land conservation</i>
DCED	Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development
DCNR	Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
DEP	Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection
DVRPC	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
HP	<i>Public and private entities working with historically and culturally significant properties</i>
MCPC	Montgomery County Planning Commission
NM	Neighboring or nearby municipalities
PennDOT	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
SEPTA	Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority

Potential Funding Sources

As previously noted, the township's municipal budget, unaided, can only sustain a limited amount of implementation work at one a time. Securing additional sources of funding is vital to the completion of many of the comprehensive plan's recommendations. Some opportunities for outside funding, such as state and county grant programs, are longstanding and well known. Many

other funding sources which may be less established or less consistent may still offer additional options for achieving the township's goals. New funding sources may become available at some later point during the implementation of the plan. The following are just some of potential sources of funding for implementing the Lower Providence Comprehensive Plan:

FUNDING PROGRAM	GRANTOR/FUNDING SOURCE
Community Conservation Partnership Program (C2P2)	DCNR
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)	Montgomery County
Green Light Go (GLG)	PennDOT
Greenways, Trails, and Recreation Program (GTRP)	DCED
Local Share Account Gaming Funds (LSA)	DCED
Multi-Modal Transportation Fund (MMTF)	PennDOT and DCED
Montco2040 Implementation Grant Program (Montco2040)	Montgomery County
PECO Green Region	PECO
Keystone Historic Preservation Planning Grant Program	PHMC
Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program	DVRPC
Transportation and Community Development Initiative (TCDI)	DVRPC
American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)	Montgomery County
Community Change Grants	America Walks
WalkWorks Active Transportation Grants	Pennsylvania Department of Health/ Pennsylvania Downtown Center

Monitoring Progress

The process of implementing the comprehensive plan and all of its various initiatives and projects requires coordination and cooperation among the many volunteers, township staff, and the elected and appointed officials who put these plans into action. Implementation partners should regularly report on the status of their efforts, to give the township a basis for periodically assessing the progress towards implementing the comprehensive plan. This may be done through an annual review, where township officials meet to review ongoing initiatives and evaluate upcoming projects. As implementation progresses, township officials may find it necessary to adjust the priority of different comprehensive plan initiatives depending on current factors such as funding opportunities, staff availability, and land use changes.

IMPLEMENTATION

CHAPTER	ITEM	RECOMMENDATIONS & STRATEGIES	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY TYPE		
			REGULATORY CONTROLS		
			ZONING ORDINANCE	SALDO	OTHER ORDINANCES
COMMUNITY IDENTITY, SERVICES, AND FACILITIES	1	Establish and support a strong community identity and sense of place through events, programming, and public spaces that encourage social interaction.			
	1a	Encourage community building and neighborhood identity through neighborhood activities such as block parties and welcoming committees for new neighbors.			
	1b	Create and expand pleasant public spaces that foster gathering and social interaction in the township's activity centers and neighborhoods (e.g. plazas, parklets, dog parks, community gardens, spray parks).			
	1c	Support the expansion of programs and activities for groups that are not currently offered (e.g. non-sport youth activities, adult sports).			
	2	Develop distinctive signage to identify sites in the township and link them to the shared identity of Lower Providence.			
	2a	Place gateway or landmark signage on major roadways to mark Lower Providence's activity centers.			
	2b	Install wayfinding signage to identify township facilities (e.g. parks, trails, township buildings) and assist in navigation within and around them.			
	3	Identify and protect significant cultural and historical resources.			
	3a	Work with property owners to assess resources for conservation and preservation.			
	3b	Become a "Certified Local Government" for access to grants and technical assistance for historic preservation.			
	3c	Adopt a historic preservation overlay to address the preservation of historic resources throughout the township.	X		
	4	Create a long-range strategic capital plan for township facilities and township-supported services.			
	4a	Conduct an annual review of comprehensive plan implementation progress among township staff, boards, and other implementation partners.			
	4b	Ensure that township parks remain in good condition and evolve to meet the needs of the community. Include recommendations for park improvements from the PROS plan in capital planning.			
	4c	Plan with the fire company and EMS to ensure they have sufficient staffing, funding, and facilities to provide excellent emergency services for the township.			
	4d	Plan for future facility needs of the township administration and police department and identify funding opportunities for improvements to the municipal campus.			
	4e	Support the Lower Providence Community Library and its programming. Evaluate and plan for the future needs of the library.			
	4f	Coordinate with Methacton School District regarding shared facilities and the potential for township use of Audubon Elementary School property.			
	4g	If the opportunity to acquire or build a community center arises, create a use plan for the facility identifying how the space will be used and by whom. Consider encouraging uses that generate revenue to help fund the center.			

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY TYPE				PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	PRODUCTS	IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
CAPITAL INVESTMENTS	EXTERNAL COORDINATION	DEVELOPMENT PROCESS	OUTREACH					
	X		X	medium	ongoing		PRB, BOS	event participation
X		X		medium	long term		PRD, EAC, PC, CDD, BOS	
X	X		X	high	near term		PRB, PRD	participation or enrollment
X				low	long term		PC, CDD, PWD	
X				medium	long term		PC, CDD, PWD	
			X	high	as needed		EAC, BOS, PC	participation
X				high	near term		BOS, PC	certification
				medium	long term		PC, MCPC, BOS	
	X		X	high	ongoing		BOS, PC, EAC, PRB, BDC	annual report
				high	ongoing		PRB, PRD, BOS	
X	X			medium	as needed		Fire department, EMS	
X				high	long term		Township Police	
X	X			medium	long term		Library	
X	X			medium	as needed		Methacton School District, PRB	
X				low	as needed		BOS, PRB, PC, CDD, BDC	

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CHAPTER	ITEM	RECOMMENDATIONS & STRATEGIES	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY TYPE		
			REGULATORY CONTROLS		
			ZONING ORDINANCE	SALDO	OTHER ORDINANCES
COMMUNITY IDENTITY, SERVICES, AND FACILITIES	5	Provide information to residents to find supportive services and be active participants in the community.			
	5a	Provide easily accessible information on the township's website, through police encounters, and at the township building on programs and services including Montgomery County's Navicate program, local food pantries, and PA's Drug and Alcohol Referral Tool (DART).			
	5b	Pursue partnerships and opportunities to address public health and safety issues such as domestic violence, childhood obesity, drug use, and impaired driving.			
	5c	Maintain a list of volunteer opportunities and promote it on township platforms.			
	5d	Create a community calendar to share events and resources of local organizations (e.g. library, youth sports leagues, scout groups, non-profits).			
	5e	Build relationships with organizations providing programs for township residents and promote their events and activities.			
	6	Support the township's diverse cultural and institutional facilities as important community amenities that provide social, spiritual, and educational opportunities.			
	6a	Coordinate with local organizations that provide services to township residents to understand the needs of the organizations and their clientele, and to identify opportunities to improve residents' access to information and services.			
	6b	Enhance the township's communication and outreach to engage with religious and cultural organizations through regular newsletter communications and regular check-ins.			
	7	Assess and improve the availability and accessibility of township services and facilities to all residents, accommodating the full diversity of ages, abilities, income levels, national origin, languages, races, ethnicities, etc.			
	7a	Improve the reach and timeliness of information distribution to township residents and businesses.			
	7b	Evolve communication methods with effective, new technology and communication platforms.			
	7c	Expand the township's ability to communicate with and provide services to residents in their primary language.			
	7d	Explore ways of establishing communications with renting households to ensure they receive important safety updates and township information.			
	7e	Support aging-in-place through programs and services for seniors.			
	8	Continue and improve coordination and cooperation with neighboring and similar municipalities for efficiency of services and inspiration for government management.			
	8a	Partner with surrounding municipalities in planning efforts. Work towards establishing a regional commission for regular communication and coordination among neighboring municipalities.			

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY TYPE				PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	PRODUCTS	IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
CAPITAL INVESTMENTS	EXTERNAL COORDINATION	DEVELOPMENT PROCESS	OUTREACH					
			X	high	near term		Communications department, BOS	
			X	medium	as needed		BOS, County Health Department, Township Police	
	X		x	medium	ongoing	X	Communications department	volunteer participation
	X		X	medium	near term	X	Communications department	number of events, event participation
	X		X	low	ongoing		PRB, PRD, BOS	participation or enrollment
	X		X	medium	ongoing		BOS, Communications department	
			X	low	ongoing		BOS, Communications department	
			X	high	ongoing		BOS, Communications department	residents reached, message engagement
X			X	low	as needed		BOS, Communications department	
	X		X	high	as needed		BOS, Communications department	
X			X	medium	near term		BOS, Communications department	renting households reached
				medium	ongoing		BOS, CDD, County Health Department	
	X		X	medium	ongoing		Neighboring municipalities, BOS	

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CHAPTER	ITEM	RECOMMENDATIONS & STRATEGIES	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY TYPE		
			REGULATORY CONTROLS		
			ZONING ORDINANCE	SALDO	OTHER ORDINANCES
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	9	Help local businesses successfully develop and thrive.			
	9a	Connect business and commercial property owners to resources and programs provided by government agencies such as the Montgomery County Commerce Department.			
	9b	Connect residents seeking employment with County Workforce Development services.			
	9c	Encourage township residents to support local businesses through special events and promotions that support local businesses (e.g. restaurant week, shop local days, food truck festival, community showcases).			
	9d	Consider creating a Business Improvement District (BID) for increased marketing and services in some business areas.			X
	10	Create opportunities for new commercial uses and support a mix of compatible retail, office, and industrial land uses.			
	10a	Update commercial zoning standards to reflect new commercial uses such as technology-based manufacturing industries, artisan industries, co-working offices, e-commerce fulfillment centers, and small-scale production-retailers.	X		
	10b	Encourage the development of high-quality, walkable mixed-use areas by updating zoning ordinances to allow retail, restaurants, entertainment, office, and housing uses together and in close proximity in activity centers.	X		
	10c	Encourage and support a mix of land uses and businesses that bolsters the township's revenue (i.e. additional employment and income).	X		
	11	Enhance Lower Providence's commercial areas to create vibrant and attractive corridors, shopping centers, employment areas, and village centers.			
	11a	Establish regular, open communications with business owners in the township's commercial activity centers (e.g. Ridge Pike, Park Pointe, etc.) regarding the planning and coordination of local improvements.			
	11b	Encourage redevelopment of vacant or disused sites in the business areas of Lower Providence through ordinance updates, incentives, and partnerships with the County Redevelopment Authority.	X	X	X
	11c	Create design standards for façades, streetscaping and greening, to encourage pedestrian activity in new development and redevelopment in activity centers.	X	X	
	11d	Create new pocket parks, plazas, and gathering spaces in activity centers. Green spaces should incorporate outdoor seating where space allows.	X		
	11e	Evaluate Park Pointe design standards (from Park Pointe at Lower Providence Land Use and Design Manual) for applicability in Lower Providence's other commercial areas.	X		

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY TYPE				PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	PRODUCTS	IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
CAPITAL INVESTMENTS	EXTERNAL COORDINATION	DEVELOPMENT PROCESS	OUTREACH					
			X	medium	as needed		CDD, PC, BOS	number of referrals
			X	medium	ongoing		CDD, PC	number of referrals
X			X	high	ongoing		CDD, PC, BOS	event participation
	X		X	low	long term		CDD, BOS	
				low	as needed		CDD, PC, MCPC, BOS	
				high	near term		CDD, PC, MCPC, BOS	area/uses in business district walkshed
				medium	ongoing		CDD, PC, MCPC, BOS	net revenue
			X	high	ongoing		CDD, BOS	
X	X	X	X	medium	as needed		CDD, BOS, County Redevelopment Authority	vacancies filled
		X		high	as needed		PC, CDD, BOS	facades improved
X		X		medium	long term		PC, PRD, EAC, BOS	number/area of spaces
				low	long term		PC, CDD	

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CHAPTER	ITEM	RECOMMENDATIONS & STRATEGIES	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY TYPE		
			REGULATORY CONTROLS		
			ZONING ORDINANCE	SALDO	OTHER ORDINANCES
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	12	Coordinate with adjacent municipalities to discuss appropriate land uses and development types for shared commercial corridors and business areas.			
	12a	Create consistent streetscape standards for shared corridors such as Germantown and, Ridge Pikes, Egypt Road, and Park Avenue.	X		
	13	Ensure new commercial development and redevelopment in business areas incorporates amenities and facilities that encourage walkability and multimodal transportation access.			
	13a	Require new commercial development and redevelopment projects, including shopping centers, to integrate transit facilities, green space, and pedestrian connections within the site and to adjacent uses.	X	X	
	13b	Allow mixed-use development on sites served by transit with access to arterial roadways. Create design standards for internal pedestrian connections, shared parking, and central green spaces (see mixed-use development in chapter 5: Housing and Neighborhoods).	X	X	
	13c	Incentivize or require shared driveway access as part of new commercial developments and redevelopments (see access management in chapter 6: Transportation).	X		X
	13d	Work with property owners to explore opportunities to share parking facilities and incentivize the installation of shared parking in business areas.	X		X
	13e	Identify and prioritize projects to provide ADA-compliant accessibility, or better, within and around activity areas.			

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY TYPE				PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	PRODUCTS	IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
CAPITAL INVESTMENTS	EXTERNAL COORDINATION	DEVELOPMENT PROCESS	OUTREACH					
	X		X	medium	long term	X	PC, BOS, West Norriton Township, Worcester Township	
		X		high	near term		CDD, PC, MCPC, BOS	
		X		medium	near term		CDD, PC, MCPC, BOS	
		X		high	near term		PC, CDD, BOS	
X	X	X	X	medium	as needed		PC, CDD, BOS	prevalence of shared parking
X	X		X	medium	ongoing		PWD PC, CDD	Resolved ADA access issues

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CHAPTER	ITEM	RECOMMENDATIONS & STRATEGIES	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY TYPE		
			REGULATORY CONTROLS		
			ZONING ORDINANCE	SALDO	OTHER ORDINANCES
HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS	14	Encourage the preservation and reuse of historically or culturally significant buildings.			
	14a	Update zoning to allow for the adaptive reuse of historically or culturally significant institutional buildings as multi-family residential use.	X		
	14b	Update zoning to create provisions that would limit or delay the demolition of historic or culturally significant structures.	X		
	15	Conduct periodic reviews of building, zoning, and property maintenance codes and update them as needed.			
	15a	When enforcing codes, refer eligible residents to home repair assistance programs (e.g. Montgomery County Navicate, Owner-Occupied Housing Rehabilitation Program).	X		X
	15b	Ensure information about code enforcement policies and procedures are clear to all residents and accessible to non- or limited-English speaking households. Place information in township newsletter semiannually.			
	16	Provide opportunities to create housing in a range of sizes and prices to meet the changing needs of township residents.			
	16a	Update zoning to accommodate multifamily and residential mixed-use development in the township's activity centers (see Future Land Use).	X		
	16b	Create standards for mixed-use development to ensure it functions well in both its residential and commercial uses, is compatible with adjacent development, and is supportive of walking to community destinations and businesses.	X	X	
	16c	Create standards for Missing Middle housing types such as 2-, 3-, or 4-unit multiplex buildings to allow them in Traditional Corridor Residential areas ensure they are compatible with existing housing.	X	X	
	16d	Revise standards for Accessory Dwelling Units to allow use of ADUs as rental units, and create more opportunities for this small home and aging-in-place option.	X	X	
	17	Periodically review and update zoning and development standards for residential development.			
	17a	Assess and address innovations in residential construction, changes in household demographics, and to encourage walkability and pedestrian-oriented design.	X	X	X

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY TYPE				PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	PRODUCTS	IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
CAPITAL INVESTMENTS	EXTERNAL COORDINATION	DEVELOPMENT PROCESS	OUTREACH					
				high	near term	X	PC, BOS	properties reused
				high	near term		PC, BOS	historic resources retained
			X	high	as needed		CDD, Communications department	number of referrals
			X	high	near term		CDD, Communications department	
				low	near term		PC, BOS	homes in activity center walksheds
				high	near term	X	PC, CDD, MCPC, BOS	
				low	long term	X	PC, CDD, MCPC, BOS	
				medium	near term		PC, CDD, MCPC, BOS	properties eligible for ADUs, installation of ADUs
				low	as needed		CDD, PC, BOS	

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CHAPTER	ITEM	RECOMMENDATIONS & STRATEGIES	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY TYPE		
			REGULATORY CONTROLS		
			ZONING ORDINANCE	SALDO	OTHER ORDINANCES
TRANSPORTATION	18	Plan for and support the safety and mobility of all who travel in the township, regardless their mode of transportation.			
	18a	Adopt a Complete Streets policy for township-owned roads and infrastructure.			X
	18b	Continue to regularly update the township's Act 209 Traffic Impact Fee Study.			
	18c	Work with Methacton School District and Worcester Township to develop a Safe Routes to School Plan and encourage safe walking and bicycling to school.			
	19	Improve the safety and connectivity of walking routes in the township.			
	19a	Identify gaps in the sidewalk network for further study and prioritize gaps for sidewalk construction projects.			
	19b	Work with property owners to formalize makeshift walking and biking connections or provide alternative connections wherever feasible (e.g. desire paths in sidewalk gaps, gated emergency access drives, parking lot shortcuts, etc.).			
	19c	Identify high priority crosswalk locations and implement improvements (e.g. the intersection of Parklane Drive and Ridge Pike).			
	19d	Contact and coordinate with property owners in sidewalk gap areas when planning and prioritizing sidewalk improvements and prior to seeking funding for sidewalk construction projects.			
	20	Ensure existing sidewalks are maintained in good condition and promote walking.			
	20a	Develop a sidewalk inspection and maintenance program.			X
	20b	Create and distribute a pedestrian network map to promote safe walking and aid neighborhood navigation.			
	21	Adopt a bike network plan (see PROS Plan design and improvement recommendations and Bike MontCo proposed bike route network) and seek funding to implement the plan.			
	21a	Use PROS Plan design guidelines when planning on- and off-road infrastructure for walking and biking.			
	21b	Prioritize and construct multi-use trail projects including those from the PROS Plan Multimodal Recommendations.			
	21c	Prioritize and plan side paths or bike lanes for proposed bike routes on arterial and collector roads.			
	21d	Prioritize and plan a network of neighborways with signage, pavement markings, and traffic calming for biking and walking on low-LTS (Level of Traffic Stress) local streets.			
	21e	Evaluate the proposed Yerkes and Hoy Park pedestrian bridges and seek funding for their planning and construction.			
	21f	Work with DVRPC, PennDOT, and other transportation partners to explore potential bike lane pilot projects.			
	21g	Create and distribute a bike network map informing residents and visitors of preferred routes and existing infrastructure to help them navigate to popular destinations in and around the township.			

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY TYPE				PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	PRODUCTS	IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
CAPITAL INVESTMENTS	EXTERNAL COORDINATION	DEVELOPMENT PROCESS	OUTREACH					
X				medium	long term	X	CDD, PWD, PC, BOS	policy adoption
				medium	near term	X	Traffic Engineer	
	X		X	low	long term	X	Methacton School District, Worcester Township	rate of walking/ biking to school
X			X	high	near term	X	CDD, PC	number of gaps eliminated
X			X	medium	ongoing		CDD, PWD, BOS	number of connections
X	X		X	high	near term		PWD, PC	number of crosswalks improved
			X	medium	ongoing		CDD, BOS	
X			X	low	as needed		PWD, CDD, BOS	
X			X	high	near term	X	PC, EAC	
X				high	near term		PWD, PC, EAC, CDD	
X	X		X	high	near term	X	PRB, PRD, PWD, PC, EAC, CDD	length of trails completed
X	X		X	medium	near term	X	PC, CDD, PWD, PennDOT	length of paths/ lanes completed
X			X	medium	near term	X	PWD, PC, EAC, CDD	length of network completed
X			X	medium	long term		PC, EAC, PRB, MCPC, Upper Providence Township	
X	X		X	low	as needed		PWD, CDD, PC, PennDOT, MCPC, DVRPC	
			X	medium	near term	X	PC, EAC	

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CHAPTER	ITEM	RECOMMENDATIONS & STRATEGIES	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY TYPE		
			REGULATORY CONTROLS		
			ZONING ORDINANCE	SALDO	OTHER ORDINANCES
TRANSPORTATION	22	Support and promote safe bicycling in the township.			
	22a	Expand Lower Providence Township Police Department’s safe cycling program with outreach at community events and at standalone events and events to introduce residents of all ages to bicycling.			
	22b	Evaluate options for creating or partnering in an existing anti-theft bike registry program to help local bicycle owners to recover lost or stolen bicycles.			
	23	Collaborate with SEPTA and property owners to improve convenience and security for transit riders.			
	23a	Improve pedestrian connectivity to bus stop locations with sidewalks, walking paths, and crosswalks.			
	23b	Provide shelters and amenities (e.g. benches, curbing, waste receptacles, lighting) for high ridership boarding locations following DVRPC and SEPTA guidelines.			
	23c	Support the creation or relocation of bus stops to better serve the municipal campus and Eagleville Park.			
	24	Support other expansions improvements of transit service.			
	24a	Support rail service expansion including the King of Prussia Rail, Schuylkill Valley River Passenger Rail Authority.			
	24b	Support improved bus service such as increased frequency and extended service hours.			
	24c	Consider adopting a TOD (Transit-Oriented Development) Overlay for areas within walking distance of frequent transit service.	X		
	25	Employ access management principles to reduce traffic conflicts and improve safety.			
	25a	Review and update access management standards in the township and encourage use of access management principles during the development process.	X	X	
	25b	Identify potential conflict points along roads in the township and work with property owners to consolidate driveways, share access, and improve curb cuts.			

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY TYPE				PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	PRODUCTS	IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
CAPITAL INVESTMENTS	EXTERNAL COORDINATION	DEVELOPMENT PROCESS	OUTREACH					
			X	low	as needed		Township Police	program participation
	X		X	low	as needed		BOS, Township Police	
X	X		X	high	near term		EAC	area of transit stop walksheds
X	X		X	high	near term		SEPTA, PWD	number of improved stops
X	X		X	low	as needed		SEPTA, PC, PennDOT	
	X		X	low	long term		SEPTA, NM, BOS	
	X		X	high	ongoing		SEPTA, NM, BOS	
				low	as needed		NM, PC, CDD, MCPC, BOS	
		X		low	near term		PC, CDD, PWD, PennDOT	
X	X		X	medium	ongoing		BOS, PC, CDD, PWD	number of access management projects

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CHAPTER	ITEM	RECOMMENDATIONS & STRATEGIES	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY TYPE		
			REGULATORY CONTROLS		
			ZONING ORDINANCE	SALDO	OTHER ORDINANCES
TRANSPORTATION	26	Periodically evaluate road safety and plan roadway improvements throughout the township.			
	26a	Plan and prioritize safety improvements for locations where crashes frequently occur.			
	26b	Conduct periodic traffic safety checks near schools, parks, and other pedestrian activity areas.			
	26c	Identify and prioritize sites for traffic calming and implement site-specific traffic calming measures (e.g. Level Road near Arrowhead Elementary School).			
	26d	Work with PennDOT to address safety concerns on state roads (e.g. installing pedestrian islands and reducing the speed limit on Egypt Road).			
	26e	Regularly evaluate traffic signal timing for potential improvement. Work with neighboring municipalities to coordinate signal timing on shared corridors.			
	26f	Identify and prioritize for improvements on township roads, such as adding left turn lanes.			
	27	Evaluate current parking standards to ensure that policies do not create excess parking infrastructure.			
	27a	Assess and update standards for shared parking, minimum parking requirements, parking held in reserve, and green parking design standards.	X	X	
	27b	Create standards for parking and standing areas for delivery vehicles and taxi/ride-hailing vehicles, especially for multifamily, mixed-use, and office uses.	X	X	
	27c	Assess and create standards and requirements for bicycle parking, especially for multifamily, mixed-use, and office uses.	X	X	
	27d	Create standards for EV charger parking and incentives or requirements for the provision of EV charger parking in multifamily, mixed-use, office, and industrial uses.	X	X	X

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY TYPE				PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	PRODUCTS	IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
CAPITAL INVESTMENTS	EXTERNAL COORDINATION	DEVELOPMENT PROCESS	OUTREACH					
X	X			high	near term	X	PC, PennDOT, PWD, Township Police	number of safety projects, reduction in crashes
	X		X	medium	as needed		Township Police	reduction in crashes/speeding
X				high	as needed		PC, Township Police, PWD, BOS	reduction in crashes/speeding
	X			medium	ongoing		PC, PennDOT, PWD, Township Police	reduction in crashes/speeding
	X			medium	as needed		NM, Traffic Engineer	
X			X	high	ongoing	X	PC, Traffic Engineer, PWD, BOS	
				medium	as needed		PC, CDD, MCPC, BOS	
				low	long term	X	PC, CDD, MCPC, BOS	
				low	long term	X	PC, CDD, MCPC, BOS	
				high	near term	X	PC, CDD, MCPC, BOS	

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CHAPTER	ITEM	RECOMMENDATIONS & STRATEGIES	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY TYPE		
			REGULATORY CONTROLS		
			ZONING ORDINANCE	SALDO	OTHER ORDINANCES
ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE	28	Maintain and enhance the natural resources and amenities in the township's parks and open spaces.			
	28a	Remove invasive plant species from township-owned property.			
	28b	Monitor township-owned property for invasive insect species and disease-carrying species and mitigate their threats to public health and local environment.			
	28c	Coordinate with state agencies to manage local deer populations.			
	29	Preserve and enhance environmentally-sensitive lands and natural features.			
	29a	Prioritize the preservation of natural areas identified as open space preservation opportunities in the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan and other preservation opportunities.			
	29b	Strengthen standards for tree preservation and replacement and require the removal of invasive plant species.	X	X	X
	30	Work with neighboring municipalities to conserve shared natural resources.			
	30a	Collaborate with upstream and downstream municipalities when planning around issues related to shared watersheds.			
	30b	Collaborate with neighboring municipalities to create connected networks of preserved open spaces, parks, and trails.			
	31	Restore, protect, and improve riparian buffers.			
	31a	Identify and prioritize gaps in riparian buffers throughout the township. Restore riparian buffers on township properties.			
	31b	Work with property owners to restore riparian buffers that are located on private property.			
	32	Identify and implement stormwater management best practices to mitigate stormwater runoff in compliance with PA DEP requirements.			
	32a	Conduct a feasibility study of funding sources such as impact fees to support stormwater management efforts.			
	32b	Prioritize the PROS Plan recommended stormwater management installations and other opportunities to implement best practices on township-owned properties.			
	32c	Incorporate educational components in stormwater management facilities where they can be safely accessed by the public.			
	32d	Assist interested property owners working individually or in cooperation with one another to create and enhance stormwater management facilities (e.g. provide design guidebook, professional directory, funding sources list).			

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY TYPE				PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	PRODUCTS	IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
CAPITAL INVESTMENTS	EXTERNAL COORDINATION	DEVELOPMENT PROCESS	OUTREACH					
X				medium	as needed		EAC, PRD, PWD	
X				high	as needed		EAC, PRB, PRD, PWD	
	X			low	as needed		EAC, BOS, DCNR	
X		X	X	high	near term		EAC, PRB, PC, BOS	Area/resources preserved
		X	X	high	near term		EAC, PC, BOS	
	X			medium	as needed		NM, EAC, BOS	
X	X			medium	long term		NM, EAC, PRB, BOS	
X				medium	near term	X	EAC, BOS, DCNR	amount of buffer restored
X			X	medium	as needed		EAC, BOS, DCNR	amount of buffer restored
				high	near term	X	EAC, BOS, DEP	
X			X	medium	near term		EAC, PRB, BOS	number of implementations
X			X	low	ongoing		PRD, EAC	
			X	high	as needed	X	EAC, BOS, DEP, DCNR, MCPC	program participation

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CHAPTER	ITEM	RECOMMENDATIONS & STRATEGIES	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY TYPE		
			REGULATORY CONTROLS		
			ZONING ORDINANCE	SALDO	OTHER ORDINANCES
ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE	33	Monitor changing environmental conditions and improve the township's resilience.			
	33a	Work to address risks to existing development in flood-prone areas and areas that may become more flood-prone.			
	33b	Reduce the potential for development in areas with significant risk of flooding.	X	X	
	33c	Educate residents about flood preparedness and safety and conduct yearly outreach to residents in flood-prone areas.			
	33d	Review the information and recommendations of the Montgomery County Hazard Mitigation Plan (2017) and incorporate future updates into township plans and policies.	X	X	X
	33e	Review the Pennsylvania climate impacts assessment report and climate action plan and consider creating a municipal climate action plan.			X
	34	Plan for and support the continued reliability of essential infrastructure in the township.			
	34a	Conduct regular assessments of township ordinances regulating energy systems and communications infrastructure and update township codes in response to new technology and in compliance with state and federal requirements.	X	X	X
	34b	Work with the Lower Perkiomen Valley Regional Sewer Authority and other member municipalities to plan for future improvements to meet wastewater treatment needs.			
	35	Improve energy efficiency and employ sustainability best practices in township facilities.			
	35a	Conduct energy audits on township facilities to assess priority for improvements in energy efficiency. Implement energy efficiency improvements wherever feasible.			
	35b	Assess opportunities to reduce water use and waste generation at township facilities and implement efficiency improvements wherever feasible.			
	35c	Evaluate options for installing renewable energy systems and EV chargers on township-owned property.			
	35d	Evaluate options for reducing the fuel consumption of the township's vehicles and equipment and consider opportunities for electrification.			

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY TYPE				PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	PRODUCTS	IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
CAPITAL INVESTMENTS	EXTERNAL COORDINATION	DEVELOPMENT PROCESS	OUTREACH					
X	X		X	high	near term		EAC, PC, CDD, BOS	
				high	near term		PC, CDD, BOS	
			X	medium	ongoing		EAC, CDD, Communications department	residents reached
				high	as needed	X	EAC, PC, CDD, BOS	
				low	long term		EAC, PC, CDD, BOS	
				medium	as needed		EAC, PC, CDD, BOS	
X	X			medium	long term		NM, BOS	
X				high	ongoing		EAC, PWD, BOS	energy expenses
X				high	ongoing		EAC, PWD, BOS	water consumption, amount of recycling, waste generated
X				high	near term		EAC, PRB, BOS	
X				high	near term		EAC, PWD, PRD, BOS	fuel expenses

IMPLEMENTATION

CHAPTER	ITEM	RECOMMENDATIONS & STRATEGIES	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY TYPE		
			REGULATORY CONTROLS		
			ZONING ORDINANCE	SALDO	OTHER ORDINANCES
ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE	36	Support environmental stewardship and incentivize sustainable practices by property owners and developers.			
	36a	Continue to provide up-to-date information regarding natural resource conservation, stormwater management, invasive species, and other environmental stewardship issues.			
	36b	Update ordinances to enable and encourage property owners to use land stewardship practices (e.g. install native meadow plantings and other lawn alternatives, practice permaculture).	X	X	X
	36c	Revise development standards to mitigate stormwater runoff and heat island effects through increases in tree cover and reductions in impervious coverage.	X	X	
	36d	Create zoning incentives for building to higher sustainability standards than are required by building codes.	X	X	
	36e	Encourage property owners to implement energy conservation improvements such as installing white roofs, insulated windows, and other sustainable building practices.			
	36f	Promote the electrification of new and existing buildings and the installation of renewable energy systems. Provide information about current township codes regarding these systems.	X	X	X
	36g	Work with property owners to maintain and enhance the township's tree canopy. Encourage tree planting in areas where heat island effects are pronounced.			

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY TYPE				PRIORITY	TIMEFRAME	PRODUCTS	IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR
CAPITAL INVESTMENTS	EXTERNAL COORDINATION	DEVELOPMENT PROCESS	OUTREACH					
			X	medium	ongoing		EAC, Communications department	
				medium	near term		EAC, PC, BOS	
				medium	long term		EAC, PC, CDD, BOS	
				medium	long term		EAC, PC, CDD, BOS	
		X	X	low	ongoing		EAC, Communications department, CDD, BOS	program participation
		X	X	low	ongoing		EAC, Communications department, CDD, BOS	Use of renewable energy
			X	medium	ongoing		EAC, Communications department, CDD, BOS	Tree cover

IMPLEMENTATION

Appendices

Chapter 10 - Lower Providence Township Comprehensive Plan

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

HISTORIC RESOURCES LIST

ADDRESS	PRIMARY HISTORIC NAME	ER NUMBER	NATIONAL REGISTER STATUS	RESOURCE CATEGORY	YEAR BUILT
Egypt Rd	Audubon Elementary School	1995-0311-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	
2639 Audubon Rd	Audubon Road Residential District	2005-8003-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	District	1951;1952
2615 Audubon Rd	Audubon Road Residential District	2005-8003-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	District	1951;1952
2820 Egypt Rd	Audubon Sunday School	1990-2564-091	SHPO: Eligible	Building	1878
3851 Germantown Pike	Baker, Melvin House (Stephen Rush House)		Unevaluated	Building	c1803
Fern Rd	Balmer House		Unevaluated	Building	1875
Old Baptist Church Rd	Baltz, George & Thomas, Melham Houses		Unevaluated	Building	c1813;1820
Coal St	Bausman's Lock No. 12, Schuylkill Canal	2003-8005-029		Site	1824
Evansburg Rd	Bean, Jesse Jr.		Unevaluated	Building	1847;1877
125 E Mount Kirk Rd	Beehler House		Unevaluated	Building	c1780;c1850
Evansburg Rd	Boyer, Henry K. School		Unevaluated	Building	c1916;c1952
2785 Audubon Rd	Branca Property	2005-8003-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	1950
2798 Egypt Rd	Brene, John & Sarah Home	2004-2818-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	1818
Grange Ave	Brown, Samuel S., House		Unevaluated	Building	
Ridge Pike	Brunner's Store		Unevaluated	Building	c1840
	Building A, B	1992-3343-091	SHPO: Eligible	Building	
	Building C, D, E	1992-3343-091	SHPO: Eligible	Building	
2711 Audubon Rd	Carrio/Jeffries Property	2005-8003-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	1950
225 Evansburg Rd	Casselberry Barn		Unevaluated	Building	c1800

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ADDRESS	PRIMARY HISTORIC NAME	ER NUMBER	NATIONAL REGISTER STATUS	RESOURCE CATEGORY	YEAR BUILT
Evansburg Rd	Casselberry, Anna, House		Unevaluated	Building	c1798
Evansburg Rd	Casselberry, Derrick, Farm		Unevaluated	Building	c1734;c1860
3827 Germantown Pike	Casselberry, Isaac, House		Unevaluated	Building	c1872;c1877
2854 Egypt Rd	Casselberry, Richard, House		Unevaluated	Building	1809
	Catfish Lock No. 63	2003-8005-029		Structure	1846
9 Catfish Ln	Cockburn, James House	2005-8003-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	1814;1824
Old Baptist Church Rd	Commonwealth of Pa. Property		Unevaluated	Building	c1830
Grange Ave	Cope, Jacob House & Blacksmith Shop			Building	c1785
2709 Audubon Rd	Costa, Albert R. & Colleen T., Property	2005-8003-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	1952
2703 Audubon Rd	Cotteta, Barbara, Property	2005-8003-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	1940
SR 7046	County Bridge # 135		SHPO: Not Eligible	Structure	1931
37 Crawford Rd	Crawford Farm	2017-0691-091	SHPO: Eligible	Building	c1732
3761 Germantown Pike	Croll, Daniel, House		Unevaluated	Building	c1800;c1835
1651 Green Hill Rd	DGS 003100-007: Rothenberger Barn W 11-2B	1997-8083-091		Building	
1651 Green Hill Rd	DGS 003100-011: Rothenberger Wagon House W11-2F	1997-8083-091		Building	
3754 Old Baptist Rd	DGS 003106-0016: Hammer House	1997-8083-091		Building	1965
3752 Old Baptist Rd	DGS 003106-0027: Greco Residence	1997-8083-091		Building	1966
3751 Old Baptist Rd	DGS 003106-0062: Sauer Residence	1997-8083-091		Building	1950
3749 Old Baptist Rd	DGS 003106-0065: Kern Residence	1997-8083-091		Building	1958
3660 Germantown Pike	DGS 003106-0089: Maintenance Building	1997-8083-091		Building	1968
25 Fern Ave	DGS 003106-0122: Zajkowski House	1997-8083-091		Building	1953
25 Fern Ave	DGS 003106-0123: Zajkowsky Garage	1997-8083-091		Building	1963
3735 Fern Ave	DGS 003106-0138: Snell Residence	1997-8083-091		Building	1958
3032 Grange Ave	DGS 003108*0063: Honsberger Poultry House	1997-8083-091		Building	1950
3032 Grange Ave	DGS 003108-0062: Honsberger Calf Barn	1997-8083-091		Building	1950
837 May Hall Rd	DGS 003108-0085: Goodchild Barn (Youth Hostel)	1997-8083-091		Building	1960
851 May Hall Rd	DGS 003108-0086: Park Office (Hartman)	1997-8083-091		Building	1956
3624 Water St	DGS 003108-0102: Metz Residence	1997-8083-091		Building	1955
528 Skippack Creek Rd	DGS 003108-0140: McDonnell#3 House	1997-8083-091		Building	1965
528 Skippack Creek Rd	DGS 003108-0141: McDonnell #3 Garage	1997-8083-091		Building	1965
3586 Mill Rd	DGS 003108-0160: Bartillucci Residence	1997-8083-091		Building	1956
3032 Grange Ave	DGS 003108-061: Hornsberger Corn Crib	1997-8083-091		Building	1950
3715 Wayland Rd	DGS 003108-120: Posen Garage S52-30C	1997-8083-091		Building	
3715 Wayland Rd	DGS 003108-122: Posen Barn S52-30E	1997-8083-091		Building	

ADDRESS	PRIMARY HISTORIC NAME	ER NUMBER	NATIONAL REGISTER STATUS	RESOURCE CATEGORY	YEAR BUILT
1651 Green Hill Rd	DGS 003110-0009: Rothenberger Quonset Hut	1997-8083-091		Building	1950
3746 Old Baptist Rd	DGS 03106-025: Moyer Residence	1997-8083-091		Building	1950
101 Old Baptist Rd	DGS 03106-035: Nagy Residence LP 35-47	1997-8083-091		Building	1958
3603 Germantown Pike	DGS 03106-037: Belz Property	1997-8083-091		Building	1913
3710 Ridge Pike	DGS 03106-115: Metzger Residence	1997-8083-091		Building	1928
3032 Grange Ave	DGS 03108-059: Honsberger Barn	1997-8083-091		Building	c1800
3032 Grange Ave	DGS 03108-060: Honsberger Garage	1997-8083-091		Building	
3715 Wayland Rd	DGS 03108-119: Posen barn S52-30B	1997-8083-091		Building	
1651 Green Hill Rd	DGS 03110-008: Rothenberger Pole Barn	1997-8083-091		Building	1964
36 Evansburg Rd	Dove-Engle-Carter House		Unevaluated	Building	c1708
3846 Germantown Pike	Dull, Christian, House		Unevaluated	Building	c1791;c1855
3842 Germantown Pike	Dull, Christian, House		Unevaluated	Building	c1791;c1855
2731 Audubon Rd	Durante, Anne C. & William J, Property		SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	1912;1927
Ridge Pike	Eagleview Sanitarium	1993-0516-091	Unevaluated	Building	
Eagleville Rd	Eagleville Rd. Bridge 46 20 0066 0 008590		SHPO: Not Eligible	Structure	1935
Crawford Rd	Edwards Estate		Unevaluated	Building	c1730;c1870
2705 Audubon Rd	Eisenberger, Karl R. & Janet E., Property	2005-8003-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	1955
4007 Germantown Pike	Evans' House and Forge		SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	c1709
3845 Germantown Pike	Evans, Edward, House		SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	c1806;c1811
Grange Ave	Evans, George House & Barn			Building	c1854
3856 Germantown Pike	Evans, Owen House & Gunshop		Keeper: Eligible	Building	c1784;c1805
3864 Germantown Pike	Evans, William L., House		Unevaluated	Building	c1836
	Evansburg Free Library		Unevaluated	Building	c1731;c1792
	Evansburg Historic District		Listed	District	1800
	Evansburg Historic District (Boundary Increase)	1997-8083-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	District	c1750;c1900
3833 Germantown Pike	Evansburg Inn		Unevaluated	Building	c1803;c1806
3877 Germantown Pike	Evansburg Methodist Episcopal Church		Unevaluated	Building	1841
3899 Germantown Pike	Evansburg Methodist Episcopal Church School House		Unevaluated	Building	c1817;c1842
3831 Germantown Pike	Everhart, Abraham, House		Unevaluated	Building	1844;1857
	Farmhouse Group A	1992-4003-091	SHPO: Eligible	Building	
	Farmhouse Group B	1992-4002-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	
	Fatlands, The	1998-2058-042, 2014-8177-029		Site	
2714 Audubon Rd	Finkelstein, Irene J., Property	2005-8003-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	1942
2700 Audubon Rd	Finkelstein, Irene J., Property #2	2005-8003-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	1930

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ADDRESS	PRIMARY HISTORIC NAME	ER NUMBER	NATIONAL REGISTER STATUS	RESOURCE CATEGORY	YEAR BUILT
2632 Audubon Rd	Fulmer, Hiram M. & Evelyn K., Property	2005-8003-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	1928
3526 Germantown Pike	Fulton, John, House		Demolished or 100% Destroyed	Building	c1805;c1877
	Funkite Cemetery & Church Site		Unevaluated	Site	1815
Fern Ave	Gambone House	1988-0643-091	SHPO: Eligible	Building	1848
Arcola Rd	Garfinkel, Marvin & Marian, Property		Unevaluated	Building	c1860
1775 Wilson Rd	General Maxwell's Quarters	1998-2058-042, 2014-8177-029		Building	
1775 Wilson Rd	General Maxwell's Quarters	1998-2058-042, 2014-8177-029		Building	
3814 Germantown Pike	Glebe House & Lands		Unevaluated	Building	c1732
2626 Audubon Rd	Grisafi, Susan J. and Joseph P., Property	2005-8003-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	1951
3861 Germantown Pike	Haraczka, Joseph, House		Unevaluated	Building	1837
3581 Visitation Rd	Heardgrove Property	1987-1310-091	SHPO: Eligible	Building	1750;1799
2642 Audubon Rd	Heckert, George W. Jr. & Lynn H., Property	2005-8003-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	1955
Yerkes Rd	Heebner's Mill		Unevaluated	Building	c1810;c1860
3852 Germantown Pike	Henry, Joseph, House		Unevaluated	Building	c1784;1800
3831 Township Line Rd	Heyser Homestead			Building	c1811
2702 Audubon Rd	Highley, George Farmstead	2005-8003-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	1834
2797 Egypt Rd	Jack's Tavern		Unevaluated	Building	c1776
2783 Audubon Rd	Johnson, Russell D. & Flora, Property	2005-8003-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	1951
2744 Audubon Rd	Kay, Michael H. & Joann E., Property	2005-8003-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	1956
1305 Trooper Rd	Kelly, Ruth, Property	2005-8003-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	1940
3839 Germantown Pike	Keyser, Howard Store (Patterson/Shupe)		Unevaluated	Building	c1856;c1859
3847 Germantown Pike	Keyser, John, House & Blacksmith Shop		Unevaluated	Building	1799;1804
Skippack Creek Rd and Germantown Pike	Keyser's Mill	2013-2051-091	Unevaluated	Building	c1849
2779 Audubon Rd	King, Timothy, Property	2005-8003-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	1950
1725 Valley Forge Rd	Knox, Brig. Gen. Henry, Quarters	1998-2058-042, 2014-8177-029			
1725 Valley Forge Rd	Knox, Brig. Gen. Henry, Quarters	1998-2058-042, 2014-8177-029			
1725 Valley Forge Rd	Knox, Brig. Gen. Henry, Quarters	1998-2058-042, 2014-8177-029			
2775 Egypt Rd	Kulp, J., House		Unevaluated	Building	c1840
3838 Germantown Pike	Leshner, Samuel House (Mathias Yost House)		Unevaluated	Building	c1850
	Level Road Schoolhouse		Unevaluated	Building	1872
3755 Germantown Pike	Livezy Property		Unevaluated	Building	1946
2660 Audubon Rd	Longacre/Buttersaw Farmstead	2005-8003-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	1772;1784

ADDRESS	PRIMARY HISTORIC NAME	ER NUMBER	NATIONAL REGISTER STATUS	RESOURCE CATEGORY	YEAR BUILT
Ridge Pike	Lower Providence Meeting House		Unevaluated	Building	1877
3050 W Ridge Pike	Lower Providence United Presbyterian Church		Unevaluated	Building	c1844;c1868
Grange Ave.	McEwen, Hiram & William, House			Building	1826;1834
30 Catfish Ln	McFadden, John, House	2005-8003-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	1835;1845
40 Evansburg Rd	McGarvey Property	1997-8083-091		Building	1933
Evansburg Rd	McMullin, Robert J., House			Building	1840;1858
Evansburg Rd	Mester, Isaac, House			Building	c1869
Pawling Rd	Mill Grove		NHL	Building	1762;1820
3370 Arcola Rd	O'Hara & Rossetti Property		Unevaluated	Building	c1840
Valley Creek	Patriotic Order Sons of America Property	1998-2058-042, 2014-8177-029		Building	c1820;c1860
Pawlings Rd	Pawlings Intercounty Bridge		Unevaluated	Structure	1912
	Pennsylvania Railroad: Schuylkill Valley Branch (West Philadelphia to New Boston Junction)	2010-9001-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	District	c1882;c1887
	Pennsylvania Railroad: Schuylkill Valley Division: Bridge (Oaks)	2002-8052-091	SHPO: Eligible	Structure	1912
	Pennsylvania Schuylkill Valley Railroad		Unevaluated	District	
	Pennsylvania Schuylkill Valley Railroad (Norristown to Pottstown)	2003-8003-042	SHPO: Not Eligible	District	c1883;1884
3457 Ridge Pike	Persons, Daniel & Karen, Property		Unevaluated	Building	c1860
3865 Germantown Pike	Rekup, Christian, House		Unevaluated	Building	c1797;c1803
2600 Egypt Rd	Richards, Daniel, House		Unevaluated	Building	1814
2719 Audubon Rd	Ridolfi, Alfonso, Property	2005-8003-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	1952
Cedar Ln	Robinson House		Unevaluated	Building	1807
121 Pinetown Rd	Rogers, Roberta, Property		Unevaluated	Building	1761
Grange Ave	Rosenberry House & Barn		Unevaluated	Building	c1768;c1812
	S.P.G. School House		Unevaluated	Building	1781
Germantown Pike	S.P.G. School House		Contributes to Resource	Building	1781
Pawlings Bridge Rd	Saint Gabriel's Hall		Unevaluated	Building	c1898
3768 Germantown Pike	Saint James Perkiomen Church		Contributes to Resource	Building	1843
2729 Audubon Rd	Saurmelch, Charles F. & Anne M., Property	2005-8003-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	1925
1126 Pawlings Bridge Rd	Saylor, Valentine, Estate		Unevaluated	Building	1774;c1790
	Schuylkill Navigation Canal Bunkhouse & Stable	2005-8003-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	Site	1816;1824
	Schuylkill Navigation Company Canal (Port Carbon to Philadelphia)	2003-8005-029	SHPO: Eligible	District	c1816;c1925
	Schuylkill River Desilting Project	2003-8003-042	SHPO: Eligible	Structure	1947;1951
3875 Germantown Pike	Selcer, George, House		Unevaluated	Building	1844

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ADDRESS	PRIMARY HISTORIC NAME	ER NUMBER	NATIONAL REGISTER STATUS	RESOURCE CATEGORY	YEAR BUILT
Baptist Church Rd	Shainline, James C., House			Building	c1832
2805 Egypt Rd	Shannon's Inn	2004-0552-091	Unevaluated	Building	c1757
420 Church Rd	Shrawder, Dr. J.S., Estate		Unevaluated	Building	c1865
Germantown Pike	Skippack Bridge		Listed	Structure	1792
W Germantown Pike	Snovel, Norman, House			Building	c1817
S Trooper Rd	St. Teresa of Avila	2005-8003-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	1952
2919 Ridge Pike	Thomas, Earl & Treva, Property		Unevaluated	Building	c1890
Level Rd	Tyson Mill Complex	2007-6143-091	SHPO: Eligible	Building	c1800;c1840
Level Rd	Tyson Mill Complex	2007-6143-091	SHPO: Eligible	Building	c1800;c1840
Level Rd	Tyson Mill Complex	2007-6143-091	SHPO: Eligible	Building	c1800;c1840
Township Line Rd	Umstadt, John, House & Springhouse			Building	c1744;c1825
	Union Church	2005-0003-091	SHPO: Eligible	Building	c1830
405 Yellow Springs Rd	Valley Forge Historic District: Outer Line Defenses	1998-2058-042, 2014-8177-029		Site	
	Valley Forge National Historic Landmark	2014-8177-029	NHL	District	1778
Visitation Rd	Valley Hi-West Farm	1992-4002-091	SHPO: Eligible	Building	
Port Kennedy Rd	Varnum's Quarters	1998-2058-042, 2014-8177-029		Building	1711;1735
Audubon Rd	Waggonseiler-Wismer Farm	2001-3500-091	SHPO: Eligible	Building	1785
2750 Audubon Rd	Wallace, Richard A., Property	2005-8003-091	SHPO: Eligible	Building	1955
Pawlings Bridge Rd	Walnut Hill	2013-0117-091	SHPO: Eligible	Building	1845
3822 Germantown Pike	Weber, Isaac, House		Unevaluated	Building	1866;1874
Cedar Ln	Welde House		Unevaluated	Building	1793
	Wetherill's Corner Blacksmith Shop	2005-8003-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	District	1865
Pawlings Rd	Wetherill Mansion	1998-2058-042, 2014-8177-029		Building	1843
2749 Audubon Rd	Wetherill, Martha/ Jesse Jarrett House	2005-8003-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	1840
2767 Audubon Rd	Williams, John, House	2005-8003-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	1863;1869
Germantown Pike	Williams, Peter, Tavern	2013-2051-091	Unevaluated	Building	c1709
Yerkes Rd	Yerkes Rd. Bridge 46 20 0067 0 001309		SHPO: Not Eligible	Structure	c1931
903 South Park Ave		2017-8274-091	Unevaluated	Building	1760
811 South Park Ave		2017-8274-091	Unevaluated	Building	c1750
2800 Eagleville Rd		2017-8274-091	Unevaluated	Building	c1850
1309 Trooper Rd		2005-8003-091	SHPO: Not Eligible	Building	1950
Valley Forge Rd		1998-2058-042, 2014-8177-029		Building	c1740
Orchard Ln		1998-2058-042, 2014-8177-029		Building	c1820;c1860

ADDRESS	PRIMARY HISTORIC NAME	ER NUMBER	NATIONAL REGISTER STATUS	RESOURCE CATEGORY	YEAR BUILT
Colonial Springs Rd		1998-2058-042, 2014-8177-029		Building	c1730;c1900
Colonial Spring Rd		1998-2058-042, 2014-8177-029		Building	c1900;c1930
Colonial Spring Rd		1998-2058-042, 2014-8177-029		Building	c1900;c1930

APPENDICES

Appendix 2

Public Input Reporting

Public Workshop

The Zoom workshop was held on March 29th, 2021 and featured a “Preserve, Enhance, Transform” Exercise (PET) before moving into breakout room discussions. Attendees joined breakout rooms dedicated to a number of topics and the plan’s vision statement. The following are summaries of comments received during those activities:

PET Exercise

The mentions of economic development, commercial character, and related topics during this exercise followed a few common themes, but also introduced some novel ideas. Many attendees expressed a desire for more walkable business areas and more beautification and indicated support for small businesses.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	MENTIONS
Ridge Pike	13
Businesses/economic Development	10
Small businesses	9
Main street/center/downtown	8
Restaurants/Dining	6
Concerts/music/venue	7
Arts/culture	6
Entertainment	5
Attractive/appealing	4
Shopping	3
Taxes	3
Coffee shop/other	2
Farmers market	2

The mentions of natural features, open space, utility infrastructure, and related topics during this exercise highlighted core community values, like open space preservation and emphasized a widespread familiarity with runoff and flooding.

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT	MENTIONS
Open space	12
Environment/nature	6
Creeks/streams	4
Gardens/gardening	4
Trees	2

The mentions of housing, neighborhoods, and related topics during this exercise were generally very positive. The township’s neighborhoods were mentioned primarily during the ‘Preserve’ and ‘Transform’ segments of the exercise. During each segment, the current conditions and future conditions of neighborhoods were described in similar, positive terms. One comment expressed a specific preference for single-family housing and the exclusion of new apartment buildings.

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS	MENTIONS
Welcoming/Sense of Community	13
Neighborhood/Neighbors	11
Real Estate/Property	5
History	4
Smart development	4

Transportation issues featured prominently during the PET exercise. Transportation issues were popular, receiving numerous mentions and making up a significant share of the total comments:

TRANSPORTATION	MENTIONS
sidewalks/walking connections	17
Location/Access	12
Trails	11
biking/bike connections	4
transit	4
traffic/roads/congestion/speeds	3
highways	2
intersections	2
streetlights	1

The mentions of public services, community identity, and related topics during this exercise were often positive but also allowed room for improvement. While the library, police department, and other public services were lauded as elements to preserve, attendees expressed a desire for more community spaces and additional programming in existing parks and community facilities (e.g., community gardens, public art, community center, better design/sense of place, lower taxes, dog park).

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES	MENTIONS
Safe/safety	8
Sense of Community	8
community facility	6
concerts/music	6
Arts/culture	6
Clean	5
Activities	5
welcoming	5
entertainment	5
History	5
recreation	4
Events	3
sports	3
taxes	3
Library	2
Schools	2
volunteerism	2
farmers market	2
community garden	2

Community Identity Room

- △ History, historic sites are special feature of the community with parks, trails, and water access
- △ Township has good regional access, good location and connections. Its convenient
- △ Appreciate cultural diversity, can do more to celebrate and affirm it
- △ Township has distinct areas (Eagleville, Audubon, etc.) but municipal campus is recognizable
- △ Describe your place by what it's between (e.g. between Collegeville and Norristown) because there's less recognition of place names (e.g. Eagleville or Lower Providence Township)
- △ Township is a community of villages
- △ Google, postal address work against township identity in some places
- △ Villages come from township's history
- △ Having villages makes room for more variety
- △ Connect Shannondell residents to larger community
- △ Lots of activities for kids
- △ Evansburg has historic village character to build on

- △ Identity of township as a whole is not very strong now
- △ “In-between place” surrounded by better known places, landmarks
- △ School district
- △ Township events are a nice aspect, a way to identify with township
- △ Open space and parks, youth leagues are distinct
- △ Suburban feeling
- △ Safe community
- △ Public meetings, engagement opportunities help to feel involved and included
- △ Virtual meetings/virtual option help to offer more access to meetings

Employment & Business Development

- △ Evansburg could be more like Skippack village
- △ West end of Ridge Pike has (re)development opportunities, but rather see walkable business there than multi-unit residential
- △ Businesses benefit from having other businesses nearby
- △ Attracting Mom & Pop businesses would be good
- △ Flexible zoning like Village Commercial is good for businesses
- △ Get investment in Park Pointe, make it more sidewalk accessible and attractive
- △ Vacancy is a problem and looks bad
- △ Façade improvement in commercial areas
- △ Attract more businesses and more employers
- △ Lower taxes attract businesses, which employ more people, which brings new residents, who pay taxes
- △ What to do about work from home?
- △ How does zoning impact businesses?
- △ Create opportunities for small businesses
- △ Business parks are changing, diversifying
- △ Lack of walking connections is a major issue
- △ Township has “No place to spend the afternoon”
- △ Make Park Pointe/Egypt Area more community-oriented

Commercial Character

- △ Interest in finding higher-end restaurants to choose from in our own township, including more outside dining, less “chain” restaurants
- △ More entertainment options without leaving the township - Arts/Theater/Entertainment - we always have to travel to another township for these
- △ Bowling, Miniature Golf, Movie Theater, etc.
- △ Ridge Pike is unattractive, you don’t feel “proud” to be from the area. Would like it to look more welcoming!
- △ Some possible areas of major improvement: the giant empty parking lot in front of the Storage store on Ridge Pike, vacant Einstein Bagels building
- △ Could these spaces be reused for green? (Not necessarily another business)
- △ Reiteration of creating an atmosphere that encourages passersby to stop and stay for food, entertainment, shopping, etc.
- △ Evansburg has potential for “village commercial”, a mini-Skipack?
- △ Areas to improve: streetscaping - greenery!
- △ More places to dine and maybe even a winery
- △ Mainstreet feel like Media, Pottstown, Reading
- △ Town Center-maybe this could happen at the Fatlands and even maybe at St. Gabe’s
- △ Preserve St. Gabe’s-maybe condos-it is a beautiful building
- △ more walkable. want to park once and go to shops, then dine
- △ like the feeling of Evansburg as a village-it could be “little Skipack”
- △ Reclaim old parking lots as green space
- △ need entertainment venues-like theatres and places for weddings, outdoor concerts and seating
- △ liked the look of Ardmore downtown-for the most part. Two stories are okay, but many balked at 3 stories or more.
- △ more connectivity with their trails-connect the golf course to the SRT-maybe through St, Gabe’s and the Fatlands

Natural Environment

- △ Flooding issues are worsening
- △ Partnership with state park to mitigate flooding
- △ Issues with flooding in parking lots
- △ Ridge and State Park abandoned building is a danger

APPENDICES

- △ Coordinate recreation offerings with state and township
- △ Need easily accessible guidance for stormwater management on residential properties. Who should residents contact
- △ Trooper and Rogers storm drain needs maintenance for clogging
- △ Beautification and landscaping in public places
- △ New development by creek makes flooding issues, road safety, winter icing
- △ Residential rain gardens
- △ Native planting in basins
- △ Trash/pollution in riparian buffers and community spaces
- △ Grange Ave storm drain holds water and collects trash
- △ Encourage more pervious driveways
- △ Standing water in places- sheets across the road
- △ Bamboo found in public land by Level and Yerkes intersection
- △ Education events
- △ maintenance for community spaces, invasive species, snow removal
- △ Spotted lanternfly
- △ Leaf litter blocking drains

Housing and Neighborhoods Room

- △ More affordable options needed, first-time homebuyers and 55+
- △ Make options for downsizing
- △ Where is there room for housing? Where or how can this happen?
- △ Good mix of housing ages and types
- △ Great time to sell a home! Difficult market for buyers
- △ People are looking for Ranch homes and other single-level, accessible options
- △ People wanting to downsize and looking for other ways to simplify and reduce expenses still want amenities- choosing apartments over HOA communities
- △ Attract more families with single-family detached- would need rezoning, but is that even possible/ plausible/feasible
- △ “Nowhere to go” in the township when looking to downsize
- △ Age-targeted options in apartments
- △ People want to live in attractive places! Demand for living in Lower Providence is a sign of success

- △ Help Shannondell residents to connect with larger community
- △ Township has a good variety of housing types
- △ Lack of walkability is an issue
- △ Possibility for housing in or around Park Pointe
- △ Few shopping options close by

Walking and Biking

- △ Park Ave lacks sidewalks
- △ No connection to trails
- △ Level Road could be a connection
- △ Sidewalks do not connect
- △ Eagleville Road
- △ Can't get business across from Shannondell
- △ Ridge Pike is not consistent with sidewalks
- △ Ridge/Trooper - Perkiomen Creek
- △ Snow is piled onto the corners
- △ Bike lanes: would have to cut into properties
- △ Lighting would help
- △ Bridge over the Perkiomen at Yerkes
- △ More signage for walking and biking
- △ Walkability to shopping from neighborhoods
- △ Park Ave: Church Road sidewalk to Eskie
- △ Loop Trail in park to get plowed
- △ Sidewalks to ARA Fields
- △ Ridge Pike: cross over at old Genuardi's
- △ Sidewalk to get to library
- △ Ridiculous to put bike on car to get to nearby trail
- △ Need walking/biking access to parks
- △ Children can't bike anywhere!
- △ Sidewalks on Ridge are inconsistent - need to fill gaps
- △ Need sidewalks on Level Road
- △ Need good crosswalks across major roads to connect neighborhoods

APPENDICES

- △ Want access to other neighborhoods
- △ Resident works at Eagleville Hospital but has to drive there even though it isn't far
- △ (other commutes mentioned)
- △ Need bicycle parking
- △ Want to walk to nearby businesses
- △ Arcola bridge has nice sidewalks but there are no ped connections to it
- △ Barriers for peds/bikes throughout township - creek, Trooper Road, other big roads
- △ Handicapped ramps at corners not adequately plowed. Township shouldn't pile snow at intersections b/c it blocks ped access
- △ Lighting needed for ped/bike safety
- △ Want a Ped/bike Yerkes Road bridge across Perkiomen to connect to trail! +
- △ A redevelopment project near Eagleville Hospital got a sidewalk waiver somewhat recently, but maybe there was money paid to the township instead???
- △ In the short term, add signs to improve bike safety
- △ 4 feet to pass
- △ Bicycles may use full lane
- △ People walking and bicycling promotes safety - eyes on the street
- △ To get outside your neighborhood you have to drive
- △ Want to bike to trails (this note was very popular)
- △ Want walkable grocery stores and restaurants
- △ Where the Audubon loop gets close to and joins Egypt road - needs to be better separated from fast-moving cars
- △ Plow the loop trail in Eskie park - popular walking area
- △ Add sidewalks along Church between Ridge and Eskie Park
- △ Sidewalk needed along Ridge from Church to library
- △ Need more ped/bike crossings across Ridge
- △ Need trails to get to the fields at Pawlings & Audubon
- △ Sidewalks needed throughout Park Pointe

Road Safety, Traffic, and Transit

- △ The participants mentioned most major intersections as being problem areas. They identified Ridge and Trooper, S. Park and Crawford, Audubon and Pawlings, Egypt and Trooper, and Egypt and Pawlings. Major concerns were congestion, walkability, and crashes at each of those.

- △ Adding sidewalks for walkability was a common theme. Several mentioned working with PennDOT to ensure that road and bridge projects include plans to link to sidewalks in the future. Another suggestion was to look at the timing of lights at major intersections to help with traffic flows.
- △ Never really touched on [transit]. One resident asked about transit for disabled residents to get to appointments. Matthew directed her to suburbantransit.org.
- △ Follow-up: How could transit be made more convenient in the township?

Vision Statement

- △ Develop the local economy by spending locally
- △ Use what works- imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, we don't have to be original
- △ Local character and unique businesses need more development, more options to become destinations
- △ Value diversity of opinion and include people
- △ Bridge the old and new residents
- △ Embrace new ways
- △ Celebrate history
- △ Respect different people
- △ Stronger sense of community
- △ Increase community support and positivity for school district
- △ Increase community connection

Reimagine Ridge Pike Tabling Posters

The Reimagine Ridge Pike event was hosted by Methacton High School on May 10, 2021. The posters were shown again at the Lower Providence Library on May 22, 2021. Members of the public were invited to provide input on the comprehensive plan during the two public showings of the Reimagine Ridge Pike contest entries. One poster invited attendees to place stickers next to their top three priorities out of a list of ten topics. The other was a sounding board for freeform feedback written on sticky notes.

Sticker Board

Attendees were asked "What do you think is the most important aspect of the township to improve or enhance?" and were each given three stickers to mark their chosen topics. A total of 133 stickers were placed on the board, representing the input of at least 45 attendees from the two Reimagine Ridge Pike events.

"**Walking and Biking** (Sidewalks, paths, and safe routes)" received 36 votes and was the highest-ranked of the ten topics on the board.

“**Natural Environment** (protecting woodlands, streams, open space)” received 33 votes- the second-most votes.

“**Commercial Character** (the appearance and activities of business areas)” received 18 votes- the third-most votes.

“**Historic Preservation** (protecting historic sites)” received 15 votes. This vote total puts the topic in the fourth rank, just after Commercial Character.

“**Community Identity** (sense of place for a community of villages)” received 7 votes.

“**Transportation** (Driving, transit, and road safety)” received 6 votes and finished as one of the lower-ranked topics, tied with “**Community Services**” for sixth place.

“**Community Services** (municipal building, library, public works, first responders)” received 6 votes.

“**Economic Development** (local business attraction and retention)” received 5 votes.

“**Housing** (maintaining neighborhoods, meeting the community’s changing needs)” received 4 votes and finished as the second-lowest ranked topic.

“**Infrastructure** (sewer, water, electric)” received 3 votes- the lowest of any topic.

Note Board

Attendees were offered a space to comment on the Reimagine Ridge Pike entries, elaborate on their thoughts from the sticker board, and add their vision to the blank poster using sticky notes. The board received 23 submissions of varying lengths. Some notes contain a single idea or even just a single word. Others have bulleted lists. They read:

- △ Dog Park
- △ Plants other than grass
- △ Community pool
- △ Spray park
- △ More trees
- △ I'd like a free community art center
- △ Community crosswalks
Art on the road
- △ Sidewalks
- △ Natural features
- △ Bike racks
- △ Skate park
- △ Free vegetable garden
- △ Animal park

- △ Fountain
- △ Green space
 - Area dedicated to farmers market, community yoga/exercise, community gatherings, live music shows
- △ #3 - loved the outdoor rooftop seating concept!
 - #5 - renewable energy was a great touch
 - #7 - “living building” - nice!
 - #11 - I would love to have a bookstore/cafe near me
 - #25 - Really impressed with the level of detail here. Curious to learn more about the “ramps”
 - #17 - wonderful use of open green space
- △ #18 - nice “downtown” feel. I like the clustering of businesses
 - #22 - there is clearly a recurring theme with green buildings and green spaces
 - #23 - I love pavers. They really create an intimate setting
 - #16 - Also seeing playgrounds in a lot of these concepts
- △ More green
 - Fewer parking lots
- △ Electric charging stations and bike lanes
- △ EV charging stations
- △ Rental bikes
- △ Food truck Fridays
 - Farmers market in Eagleville Park
 - Skateboard park
- △ Community center

2021 Web Survey

The web survey was released shortly after the public workshop and collected responses until July 10th. The survey’s 15 questions covered a range of comprehensive plan topics and demographic subjects. A total of 124 participants completed the survey.

Q1: Are you a resident of Lower Providence Township?

119 Yes (96%), 5 No (4%).

The results given for the rest of the questions include only the responses from those survey takers who responded “yes” to this question.

Q2: (If you answered “yes” for question 1) How long have you been a resident of Lower Providence Township?

All 119 respondents answered. The most popular response was “**21 years or more**” with 41 respondents. The next-largest group responded they have been residents for “**1 to 5 years**”.

For comparison, see the graph below, with the year householders moved into their current unit (as reported by the Census Bureau in the 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates). Note that the categories are not a 1-for-1 correspondence with those from the web survey:

Respondents’ length of residency roughly corresponded with that reported by the Census Bureau for the population of the township, overall. One notable difference is the apparent abundance of respondents reporting residency of 1 to 5 years relative to that group’s presence in the whole population.

Q3: Pick the place name that best fits your neighborhood:

All 119 respondents gave answers to this question. The most common response was “**Collegeville**”. Seven respondents selected “**Other**” and wrote in their own neighborhood names:

- △ Level Road
- △ West Norriton
- △ Yerkes
- △ Arcola
- △ Warrior Field Area
- △ Arcola
- △ Phoenixville

Q4: What is your home ZIP code?

117 respondents answered this question. This question was posed as an open-ended question and respondents typed in their home ZIP codes. Three ZIP codes were submitted by respondents.

ZIP CODE	COUNT
19403	59
19426	56
19460	2

Q5: What do you like best about living in Lower Providence?

113 respondents submitted answers to this question. The following community topics received mentions:

- △ Schools/School District (24 mentions)
- △ Sense of Community/Community Feel/etc. (19 mentions)
- △ Family/Friends (9 mentions)
- △ Welcoming/Friendly (6 mentions)
- △ Events/Fairs/Activities (6 mentions)
- △ Housing/homes (5 mentions)

The following environment and infrastructure topics received mentions:

- △ Open space/parks (26 mentions)
- △ Trees/woods (3 mentions)
- △ Nature/environment (2 mentions)

The following housing and neighborhood topics received mentions:

- △ Sense of Community/Community Feel/etc. (19 mentions)
- △ Neighbor/Neighborhood (16 mentions)
- △ Family/Friends (9 mentions)
- △ Welcoming/Friendly (6 mentions)
- △ Housing/homes (5 mentions)

The following transportation topics received mentions:

- △ Access/proximity/location/convenience (44 mentions)
- △ Trails/Paths (16 mentions)
- △ Quiet/low traffic (8 mentions)
- △ Short commute/close to work (5 mentions)
- △ Bikes/biking (3 mentions)
- △ Sidewalks/walking (2 mentions)
- △ Road maintenance (1 mention)

Q6: For any or all of the listed areas, indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements

116 respondents answered this question. Respondents indicated Audubon as the business area with the best appearance, and Trooper as the least positive appearance. All of the areas were identified as needing pedestrian improvements.

% STRONGLY AGREE OR AGREE	EVANSBURG	AUDUBON	EAGLEVILLE	TROOPER	EGYPT/ TROOPER
The businesses in this area present a positive appearance	34.5%	52.6%	22.3%	25.3%	43.5%
Pedestrian connections in this area need to be improved	72.3%	72.9%	68.8%	73.9%	61.2%
Traffic in this area is difficult during morning and evening peaks	52.6%	76.3%	56.7%	81.9%	82.8%

% STRONGLY DISAGREE OR DISAGREE	EVANSBURG	AUDUBON	EAGLEVILLE	TROOPER	EGYPT/ TROOPER
The businesses in this area present a positive appearance	30.97%	19.58%	47.88%	48.35%	28.24%
Pedestrian connections in this area need to be improved	6.25%	9.38%	7.30%	7.96%	7.06%
Traffic in this area is difficult during morning and evening peaks	7.02%	5.15%	13.40%	2.13%	1.15%

The number of respondents who “strongly agree” or “agree” that “**Pedestrian connections need to be improved**” was nearly tied across three areas: Trooper (74%), Audubon (73%), and Evansburg (72%)

The number of respondents who “strongly agree” or “agree” that “**Traffic in this area is difficult during morning and evening peaks**” was above 50% in all areas, with the three highest being: Egypt/Trooper (83%), Trooper (82%), and Audubon (76%)

Q7: Of the following areas, which would be your top priority for corridor improvements (i.e., road safety, sidewalk connections, beautification)?

This question received 115 responses and resulted in clear first and last place rankings, with closer results among the middle three areas:

1. Trooper (29%)
2. Evansburg (23%)
3. Eagleville (21%)
4. Audubon (19%)
5. Egypt/Trooper (8%)

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Evansburg (Germantown and Ridge Pike, from Evansburg Rd to Perkiomen Bridge)	23.48%	27
Audubon (Egypt Rd and Pawlings Rd area)	19.13%	22
Eagleville (Ridge Pike between Eagleville Rd and Church Rd)	20.87%	24
Trooper (Ridge Pike between Trooper Rd and Church Rd)	28.70%	33
Egypt Rd and Trooper Rd area	7.83%	9
	ANSWERED	115

Q8: In the list below, please rank the following housing types by their suitability in the township (1 = more suitable/suitable for more places, 7 = less suitable/suitable for fewer places)

114 Respondents answered this question, though not all respondents gave rankings to all of the housing types. In the table below, the housing types from the question are listed with the number of respondents who gave it a ranking. **Accessory dwelling units (ADUs)** were ranked most often (111 respondents) while **Townhomes or twins** were ranked the least often (102 respondents).

HOUSING TYPE	TOTAL VOTES
Small-lot single-family housing (less than a 1/4 acre)	106
Large-lot single-family housing (1/4 acre or larger)	105
townhomes or twins	102
Small multi-family housing (1-4 units)	108
Accessory dwelling units (AKA in-law suite, guest cottage, granny flat, etc.)	111
Mixed-use buildings (residential over commercial/office)	107
Large multi-family housing (5 or more units)	106

In the graph below, the housing types are shown with the average ranking they received. A lower ranking corresponds with housing type have a higher suitability or being suitable in more locations.

The graph below depicts how many respondents gave each housing type a certain ranking. The housing types are stacked, top to bottom, in descending order by the average ranking they received (see above). This graph gives some impression of how sentiment for each housing type is distributed and allows for comparisons between housing types across the rankings.

Q9: For the following statement, please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement: “Lower Providence is a welcoming and inclusive community where differences are respected”

All 119 respondents answered this question. Over 60% of respondents answered “**Agree**” or “**Strongly Agree**”. Just shy of 11% answered “**Disagree**” or “**Strongly Disagree**”.

Q10: Assume all the following transportation options were available, accessible, and convenient to you in Lower Providence and the wider region. Select any or all of the transportation modes you would like use for the following purposes:

This question asked survey takers to consider four modes of transportation and whether or not they would use each mode for a given purpose, assuming each mode was available to them. The modes were not equally popular, and received different total numbers of responses: walking (112 responses), bicycling (100 responses), taxi/ride-hailing (61 responses), and bus transit (54 responses).

Q11: How do you rate the following services or aspects of the township?

118 respondents answered this question, one respondent skipped it. “School/Education” and “Parks, Recreation and Open Space” received ratings from 117 respondents, having each been skipped by one respondent. Survey-takers generally expressed satisfaction with all of the listed services. 7 respondents selected “Other” and gave written responses:

- △ Love the library - they were amazing at providing and communicating about their services during COVID. Also love being so close to so many trails and open space.
- △ The township lacks sidewalks and safe walking spaces for pedestrians.
- △ Our schools need to be improved. Inclusion is a struggle. Special Education employees are overloaded.
- △ Township building offices - neutral
- △ Too much code enforcement vs other municipalities
- △ Why so many ambulance ems sirens. 50% Of runs are to shannondell, please silence the incessant sirens. Use sirens only when at intersections. Continuous horn and siren (from ems#2 at audubon) is disrespectful and a disservice to the residents. Please. Stop. The. Incessant. Use. Of. Sirens. I left philadelphia to avoid this nuisaene.
- △ I would have liked to see excellent as an option choice

Q12: How would you rate the importance of encouraging the preservation or reuse of historic buildings, structures, or sites in Lower Providence?

All 119 respondents answered this question. The results indicate a widespread support for historic preservation and reuse among the survey respondents.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
High Importance	53.78%	64
Moderate Importance	35.29%	42
Low Importance	8.40%	10
N/A or No Opinion	2.52%	3

Q13: If you could make one change to improve quality of life in your community, what would that be?

108 respondents gave answers.

The following housing and neighborhood topics received mentions:

- △ Sense Community/Community Feel (11 mentions)
- △ History/Culture/Art (9 mentions)
- △ Social/Activity/Events (7 mentions)
- △ Welcoming/Friendly/Inviting (5 mentions)
- △ Safety/Health (5 mentions)
- △ Family/Friends (4 mentions)

The following economic development topics received mentions:

- △ Business/companies (14 mentions)
- △ Sense Community/Community Feel (11 mentions)
- △ History/Culture/Art (9 mentions)
- △ Stores/Shops/Shopping (8 mentions)
- △ Social/Activity/Events (7 mentions)
- △ Restaurant/bar/café (6 mentions)
- △ Work/Working (2 mentions)

The following economic development topics received mentions:

- △ Open space/parks (7 mentions)
- △ Nature/environment (4 mentions)
- △ Trees/woods (2 mentions)
- △ Stormwater (2 mentions)

The following transportation topics received mentions:

- △ Sidewalks/walking/walkability improvements (32 comments)
- △ Traffic/congestion reduction (11 comments)
- △ Bike lanes/bicycling improvements (9 comments)
- △ Road maintenance/safety features (8 comments)
- △ New trails/paths (6 comments)
- △ Transit improvements (1 comment)
- △ New road connections (1 comments)

The following housing and neighborhood topics received mentions:

- △ Community (11 mentions)
- △ Homes/Housing (10 mentions)
- △ Neighbor/Neighborhoods (7 mentions)
- △ Welcoming/Friendly (4 mentions)
- △ Family/Friends (4 mentions)
- △ History/Historic Preservation (2 mentions)

Q14: Please select the top 3 issues the township should focus on:

All 119 survey takers responded to this question:

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Appearance of commercial areas	66
Traffic	63
Addition of new sidewalk and trail connections	62
Road conditions and maintenance	43
Stormwater management	36
Community events and programming	34
Bike access/safety on roads	29
Township identity and name recognition	11
Housing options	11

The greatest number of respondents chose “**Appearance of commercial areas**” as one of their top 3 issues for the township. The importance of transportation should be apparent, however, when the votes in favor of its various aspects are added. Altogether, this topic was the most-popular issue from this list. 34 respondents selected “**Community events and programming**” as one of their top 3 issues. 36 respondents selected “**Stormwater management**” as one of their top 3 issues. 11 respondents chose “**Housing options**” as one of their top 3 issues for the township. This topic tied with “**Township identity and name recognition**” as the least-popular issue.

Q15: Do you have any additional comments?

65 respondents gave answers to this question. The following housing and neighborhood topics received mentions:

- △ Schools/School District (4 mentions)
- △ History/Historic Preservation (3 mentions)
- △ Community Center (2 mentions)

The following economic development topics received mentions:

- △ Main Street/walkable/downtown (7 mentions)
- △ Stores/Shops/Shopping (5 mentions)
- △ Business/companies (4 mentions)
- △ Social/Activity/Events (4 mentions)
- △ Restaurant/bar/café (2 mentions)

The following economic development topics received mentions:

- △ Nature/environment (4 mentions)
- △ Open space/parks (3 mentions)
- △ Trees/woods (3 mentions)
- △ Stormwater (3 mentions)
- △ Climate/sustainable/resilient (2 mention)
- △ Creeks/streams (2 mentions)

Transportation topics received several mentions:

- △ Sidewalks/walking/walkability improvements (8 comments)
- △ Traffic/congestion reduction (5 comments)
- △ New trails/paths (5 comments)
- △ Bike lanes/bicycling improvements (4 comments)
- △ Road maintenance/safety features (2 comments)

The following housing and neighborhood topics received mentions:

- △ Housing/Homes (6 mentions)
- △ Neighbor/Neighborhood (5 mentions)
- △ History/Historic Preservation (3 mentions)

Public Open House

The comprehensive plan open house was hosted by the Lower Providence Fire Department at the Ridge Pike fire station. While open houses are typically held as a single 3- or 4-hour session, this event was held as a pair of two-hour sessions on May 4th, 2022. The first session ran from 3 PM to 5 PM. After a one-hour break, the event resumed for the evening session, which ran from 6 PM to 8 PM. The open house was split in this way to make it more accessible to a wider range of community members, while not requiring too much time from volunteers.

During the open house, attendees were greeted at a welcome table where they could view the plan's vision statement and locate their home on a township map. At this first station, they were invited to

sign in and introduced to the lay out of the event. Attendees could then proceed around the room to see the six stations dedicated to different subjects covered by the comprehensive plan, and indicate for their preferred recommendations using sticker dots.

Welcome Table

In total, 63 attendees signed in at the open house. Of these attendees, 44 indicated that they are township residents and an additional 6 non-resident attendees identified their relationship to the township as being either a business owner, property owner, an employee in the township, or as an elected or appointed official.

Attendees did not offer any input regarding the introductory poster and overall vision statement of the comprehensive plan (above left). The 'I Live Here' map (above right) shows that the event drew attendees from areas distributed across the township. Potential coverage gaps highlighted by this exercise include the mobile home parks, apartment complexes, and some of the township's townhouse developments. The map also shows potential gaps in residential neighborhoods south of Ridge Pike and north of Audubon village.

Community: Facilities and Services

At this station, the most popular item, by far, was planning "...for the future needs of township facilities and township supported services like fire, EMS, and the library." This item received 23 stickers. In addition to voting, attendees attached three notes, reading "Dog Park Please!", "Parks!", and "Community Pool. Community Center". Conversation notes taken by volunteers at this station touched on the importance of having a local newspaper to know the goings-on of the community, the value of community identity and sense-of-place, a desire for access to the Perkiomen Trail, more sidewalks to access the library, landscaping and attractive streetscaping along Ridge Pike, and interest in the relation between housing for people with mental impairments and the community's mental and physical wellbeing.

Economic Development

This station's top item, "Ensure that Lower Providence is a place where business of all sizes, local employers, and workers can grow and thrive while serving the needs of residents." received 22 votes. Notes left by attendees read "incentivize businesses who demonstrate environmentally sustainable practices", "incentivize trade bottomline business or offer support to get business there", and "Encourage (music) theater in Industrial park/shopping center areas". Volunteers recorded the following conversation notes:

- Make Ridge Pike walkable, walk from neighborhood to destinations, crosswalks or ramps to go over the street midblock.
- More coordination with West Norriton, Trooper is a barrier, Ridge Pike needs more coordination.
- "Mix of small businesses creates unsightly hodgepodge." People are hesitant about 'businesses of all sizes'
- Many comments support a diverse mix of businesses.
- Do something with the Commodore building
- Want more attractive business areas.
- Where does LPT begin and end? Need signage and streetscaping to tell us.

Housing and Neighborhoods

The most popular item here was regarding the preservation and reuse of historically- or culturally-significant buildings, with 17 stickers. Attendees attached notes reading “Township-certified ADU- rented, delivered, reused”, “Strongly consider affordable workforce housing. People who work in LPT should be able to find housing here that they could afford”, “Apartments appropriate in development/shopping centers”, “Walkability of residential areas”, and “Encourage construction of net zero carbon, net zero energy, sustainable housing and commercial buildings”. The conversation notes from this stations volunteers included additional thoughts regarding the idea of certifying and supplying ADUs (as is done in Canada, possibly) and a note regarding the opinion that the standards for sheds and accessory buildings in residential districts are too lax.

Transportation

The top transportation item, with 28 stickers, covers road safety and road improvements. The three items covering walking and biking in the township gathered a combined total of 31 stickers. An attendee left one note, reading “Rapid transit”. Volunteers at this station recorded questions regarding the Old Perkiomen Hotel and the Crawford Road project- referring to the two largest transportation projects now in the works in Lower Providence.

Environment and Infrastructure

The items at this station were relatively more balanced in their sticker totals than the other posters. The top item, addressing preserving open spaces, received 15 stickers. The item covering the township’s overall resilience, came in second with 14 stickers. No item on this poster received fewer than 7 stickers, setting this topic apart from the other stations. Attendees left two notes: “Dog Park- Please!” which was later appended “We agree!” and another reading “Is this a ‘Green’ thing? ??” referring to the energy efficiency/sustainability of township facilities. Volunteers did not record any conversation notes at this station.

Future Land Use and Focus Areas

At this station, attendees left two notes on the Focus Areas poster: “Great idea” and “Walkable, pretty Ridge Pike/Main Street”. Attendees left two notes on the Future Land Use poster: “Buildings too close to Ridge will make it hard to widen road” and “Want to park once and go to multiple shops (Ridge)”. In conversation, an attendee opined that the Ridge Pike frontage of the Streamlight property should be identified for residential use, rather than mixed-use or commercial uses.

2022 Web Survey

A second web survey was released with the open house, to supplement the in-person outreach event, and increase access for those who could not attend. The survey collected responses until July 11, 2022. The survey consisted of 18 questions that reflected the topics and content of the posters that were shown at the open house and several demographic questions to allow for comparisons to the first survey. A total of 98 participants gave responses to this survey.

Q1: Please check all that apply (n=96)

- △ 98% I am a resident of Lower Providence Township
- △ 17% I work in Lower Providence Township
- △ 54% I own property in Lower Providence Township
- △ 2% I own a business in Lower Providence Township

Q2: Check all that apply (n=96)

- △ 88% none of the above
- △ 4% I attended the comprehensive plan open house on May 4, 2022
- △ 5% I attended another comprehensive plan event (Reimagine Ridge Pike, Zoom Workshop)
- △ 4% I have attended one or more of the monthly comprehensive plan steering committee meetings

Q3: After reading the vision statement, is there anything you would want to change or add? (n=55)

Most respondents answered in the negative, or skipped the question entirely. Of those that gave responses, several participants suggested specific policies or issues to include. The most suggestions were to place more emphasis on schools and businesses. The responses to this question were mostly positive. Examples include:

- △ “I appreciate the emphasis on inclusivity. By 2040, I hope Lower Providence is known as a safe place for all races, genders, ethnicities, religions, and cultures to live and work.”
- △ “Is a township that strives to bring in new business to the area to help lower property taxes. That all business in the township pay their fair share in the support of the township and the schools.”

Q4: After reading the themes, is there anything you would want to change or add? (n=55)

Like question 3, most participants skipped or responded in the negative, declining to offer suggestions. In their responses, survey takers highlighted outdoor family recreation, revitalization and beautification of business areas, flooding, and balancing community and township identity. Examples include:

- △ “No - I am very excited by the idea of expanding walkability!”
- △ “Plenty of areas for outdoor sports and family get togethers”
- △ “Provide INCENTIVES for businesses and commercial enterprise firms to locate in LPT. Do something about the abandoned buildings in the business park. Do something about the open/vacant spaces by the Rite-Aid and Chickie & Pete’s area.”

Q5: Rank the following recommendations from your highest priority to lowest (n=71)

This question presented the goals from the Community Services and Facilities poster and asked participants to rank them. The standout favorites were:

- △ Build community identity and ‘sense of place’ through events, programming, and public spaces that encourage social interaction. (first-ranked by 27 people)
- △ Plan for the future needs of township facilities and township supported services like fire, EMS, and the library. (first-ranked by 21 people)

Q6: Is there anything you would like to add regarding Community Services and Facilities? (n=39)

Although fewer than half of survey respondents offered suggestions, several submissions for this question advocated for more sidewalk and trail connections in the township. Aside from the perennially popular walking and biking, the responses covered a range of topics, among which were:

- △ “I think building infrastructure to support connectedness is an integral goal that is missing (sidewalks, paths, parking, etc).”
- △ “Provide a community swimming facility, both indoor and outdoor for use by residents.”
- △ “Add a Career Fire Department”
- △ “Some of these items don’t seem like they fall under the responsibility of local government that the taxpayers have to fund.”

Q7: Rank the following recommendations from your highest priority to lowest (n=65)

This question presented the goals from the Economic Development poster and asked participants to rank them. Participants offered diverging opinions regarding:

- △ Update development and zoning standards to ensure that the design of new commercial development and redevelopment in business areas supports community life, walkability, and multimodal transportation access with amenities and facilities. (first-ranked by 21 people, ranked last by 15 people)

Q8: Is there anything you would like to add regarding Economic Development? (n=28)

While few participants offered suggestions on this topic, those that did highlighted several common issues including the walkability and appearance of business areas, the value of transparency regarding regulations, and the difficulty of obtaining permits when starting a business. Some representative comments include:

- △ “Big emphasis on improving walkability”
- △ “Don’t go changing zoning without a ton of notices to residents!”
- △ “Attractive, safe and walkable business areas. Branding and signage not as important as more safe, walkable sidewalks.”

Q9: Rank the following recommendations from your highest priority to lowest (n=63)

This question presented the goals from the Housing poster and asked participants to rank them. Participants were highly supportive of:

- △ Ensure information about code enforcement policies is accessible and clear to all residents and connect eligible residents to home repair assistance programs. (first-ranked by 18 people)
- △ Update zoning to encourage the preservation and reuse of historically or culturally significant buildings and create provisions to limit or delay the demolition of historically- and culturally-significant structures. (first-ranked by 17 people)

Participants held diverging opinions on:

- △ Revise standards for Accessory Dwelling Units (in-law suites) to create more opportunities where ADUs maybe allowed as a small home and aging-in-place option. (no consensus among rankings)

Participants showed general agreement on this goal, placing it in the middle of the ranking:

- △ Update standards for multifamily and residential mixed-use development to ensure these options are compatible with their surroundings and also support the economic development goals for Mixed-Use areas in the township's activity centers. (Ranked third by 19 people)

Participants gave bottom ranking to:

- △ Establish standards for Missing Middle Housing types (2-, 3-, or 4-unit, multiplex buildings) to allow them as an option in designated Neighborhood Residential areas and ensure they are compatible with existing housing. (Ranked last by 19 people)

Q10: Is there anything you would like to add regarding Housing? (n=24)

As with all the open-ended questions, the majority of survey participants declined to comment on this topic. Once again, several participants again took the opportunity to call for sidewalks and walkability. This question also received responses expressing disapproval of new residential development, and criticism of historic preservation. Example responses include:

- △ "Sidewalks needed to be added that allow families to safely walk their children to and from parks and schools."
- △ "Don't want more multi family units in LP"

Q11: Rank the following recommendations from your highest priority to lowest (n=60)

This question presented the goals from the Transportation poster and asked participants to rank them. Unsurprisingly, participants were most supportive of:

- △ Identify and prioritize sidewalk gaps, pedestrian safety concerns, and maintenance issues. (first-ranked by 14 people, ranked last by only one)

The goals for bicycling, transit, and access management were among the lowest ranked in this topic.

Q12: Is there anything you would like to add regarding Transportation? (n=23)

Despite participation steadily dropping over the length of the survey, participants who weighed in on transportation offered more support for pedestrian comfort and safety. They highlighted concerns like lighting at intersections, obstructed visibility, and a lack of crossing signs. Comments included:

- △ “We need a few additional street lights at Grange and Germantown and Grange and Ridge. Also shrubbery that blocks visibility onto this roads need to be addressed.”
- △ “will this include removing plantings and signage that block the views for drivers and bikers to continue forward with safety?”
- △ “Add pedestrian crossing signs on heavily travelled roads”

Q13: Rank the following recommendations from your highest priority to lowest (n=57)

This question presented the goals from the Environment and Infrastructure poster and asked participants to rank them. Participant responses were broadly supportive of:

- △ Support the continued reliability of the township’s essential infrastructure, including water, sewer, power, and communications. (first-ranked by 20 people)

Opinions diverged on the topic of infrastructure resilience:

- △ Monitor changing environmental conditions and improve the township’s resilience, especially regarding storm-water management and mitigating flood risks. (no consensus among rankings)

Participants placed this topic at the lowest rank:

- △ Improve energy efficiency and employ sustainability best practices in township facilities. (ranked last by 10 people)

Q14: Is there anything you would like to add regarding Environment and Infrastructure? (n=24)

Though most participants skipped this question or otherwise gave no suggestions, a few people took the opportunity to raise concerns or express support for specific issues. Among the comments were:

- △ “Attempt to remove bamboo from open spaces. It grows out of control and you are not able to walk on the sidewalk on Yerkes Road”
- △ “Storm water management needs to be addressed especially in new development; new arrowhead severely changed run off causing damage to homes and property”
- △ “It would be nice for the township to have a couple of EV charging stations for public use”

Q15: Is there anything you would like to add regarding the Future Land Use map? (n=26)

For this question, participants were shown the future land use map, rather than a list of goals or recommendations. The more freeform question collected diverse comments, including:

- △ “Need to keep more open spaces and less housing developments squeeze as many house as possible”
- △ “Not enough open space. At present, housing going up everywhere. Doubtful that even the little open space shown on this map will be left in the future.”
- △ “I’m concerned about extra traffic on our streets as it is already extremely backed up during rush hour”
- △ “build trails along township owned creek ROWs”

APPENDICES

Q16: What is your age group (n=53)

Similar the results from the previous comprehensive plan survey, most respondents reported being between the ages of 45 and 65. No participants reported being under the age of 25.

Q17: What is your gender? (n=53)

Responses to this question also aligned with the previous survey, showing roughly equal participation among women and men.

Q18: How long have you been a resident of Lower Providence Township? (n=54)

In this question, the 2022 survey results differed from the first survey in having a markedly higher representation of longer-term residents.

LOWER PROVIDENCE TOWNSHIP
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

RESOLUTION # 2023-16

**A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LOWER PROVIDENCE,
COUNTY OF MONTGOMERY, COMMONWEALTH OF
PENNSYLVANIA, ADOPTING AND APPROVING THE
LOWER PROVIDENCE 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

WHEREAS, pursuant to Article III of the *Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code*, Act 247, 53 P.S. §§ 10301-10307, municipalities are required, from time to time, to prepare, adopt, and update their comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, after careful consideration, the Lower Providence Township Board of Supervisors, 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, comments received from the public at public hearings, and from the Montgomery County Planning Commission, adjacent municipalities, and the Methacton School District have been duly noted; and

WHEREAS, comments received from the Lower Providence Township Planning Commission and the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority, as set forth in Appendix A attached hereto, have been duly noted and shall be incorporated into the Lower Providence 2040 Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Township's Planning Commission and the Township Board of Supervisors 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 Lower Providence 2040 Comprehensive Plan proposed for adoption is dated February of 2023 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 Lower Providence 2040 Comprehensive Plan has been the subject of a duly advertised public hearing held by the Lower Providence Township Board of Supervisors on February 2, 2023 and February 16, 2023.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Township of Lower Providence, County of Montgomery, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in accordance with and in furtherance of the powers granted to it, hereby does adopt the Lower Providence 2040 Comprehensive Plan, prepared by the Lower Providence Township Board of Supervisors with the assistance of a citizen steering committee and the Montgomery County Planning Commission, as the official comprehensive plan of Lower Providence Township.

RESOLVED at a duly convened meeting of the Board of Supervisors conducted on this 2nd day of March, 2023.



LOWER PROVIDENCE TOWNSHIP
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



Cara Coless, Chair

ATTEST:



E. J. Mentry, Secretary



Prepared by:
Montgomery County Planning Commission
P.O. Box 311, Norristown, PA 19404-0311
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