



Parks, Recreation & Open Space Plan

Board of Supervisors & Public Meeting 3 – April 15, 2021



Agenda

- Introductions
- Project Scope & Schedule
- Project Goals
- Updated Survey & Wikimapping Results
- Township Recreation Facilities Improvements
- Conceptual Open Space Acquisitions & Recommended Partnerships
- Greenway Recommendations
- Multimodal Connections
- Maintenance and Programming
- Priority Recommendations
- Next Steps

Open Space Committee

- **Colleen Eckman** - Supervisor
- **Jean Akers** - Chair for Open Space Committee and member of Park Board Committee
- **Susan LaPenta** – Township Planning Commission
- **Bill Brooke** – Township Planning Commission
- **Erin DiPaolo** - Township Park Board Committee
- **Beth Ann Mazza** – Township Park Board Committee
- **Katherine McGrath**- Township Park Board Committee – Student Representative
- **Jane Delaney** – Parks and Recreation Director
- **Donald Delamater**- Township Manager



Project Scope & Schedule

- Existing conditions inventory and data collection
- Activities and facilities analysis
- Site reconnaissance
- Public participation
 - 4 committee meetings
 - 4 public meetings
 - Key persons interview
 - Public opinion survey
- Vision goals and objectives
- Report with recommendations for open space, recreational facilities and programming, and multi-modal and greenway connections
- Implementation strategies
- Regulations, management, planning and financing

	Meeting Title	Meeting Date
2020	Open Space Committee Meeting #1	Wednesday, August 12th
	Open Space Committee Meeting #2	Thursday, Sept 10
	Public Meeting #1	Monday, October 26
	Open Space Committee Meeting #3	Wednesday, November 18
	Focus Group Meeting #1 - Active Sports	Late November
	Focus Group Meeting #2 - Passive Activities	Late November
	Focus Group Meeting #3 - Senior Activities	Early December
	Focus Group Meeting #4- Cultural, Arts, Religious	Early December
2021	Open Space Committee Meeting #4	Wednesday, January 6
	Public Meeting #2	Tuesday, January 26
	Open Space Committee Meeting #5	Wednesday, February 3
	Open Space Committee Meeting #6	Thursday, March 25
	Key Person Interviews (12)	Dates TBD
	Web Based Survey - write and administer	Oct 1 through April 1
	Wiki - Mapping interactive community mapping	Oct 1 through April 1
	Public Meeting #3 with Board of Supervisors	Thursday, April 15
	Open Space Committee Meeting #7	Tuesday June 1
	Public Meeting #4	Thursday, June 24

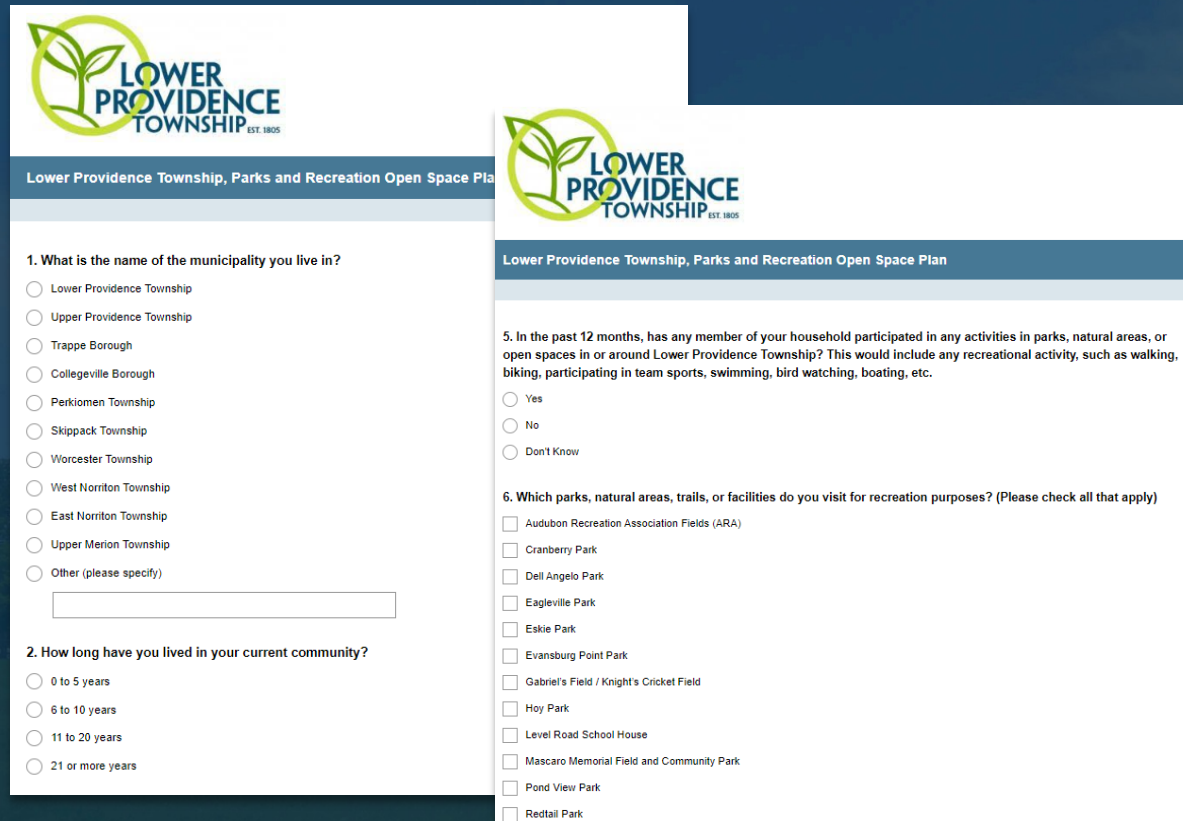
Plan Goals

- Create a **sustainable plan** for parks, recreation and open space
- Provide **equitable access** and opportunities to all residents
- Preserve cherished Township characteristics and **valued natural resources**
- Plan for **safe multi-modal connections** between various Township park, recreation, and open space resources



Public Survey Results

648 completed surveys



The image shows two overlapping screenshots of a survey form titled "Lower Providence Township, Parks and Recreation Open Space Plan". The form includes the township's logo and the following questions:

1. What is the name of the municipality you live in?

- ☐ Lower Providence Township
- ☐ Upper Providence Township
- ☐ Trappe Borough
- ☐ Collegeville Borough
- ☐ Perkiomen Township
- ☐ Skippack Township
- ☐ Worcester Township
- ☐ West Norriton Township
- ☐ East Norriton Township
- ☐ Upper Merion Township
- ☐ Other (please specify)

2. How long have you lived in your current community?

- ☐ 0 to 5 years
- ☐ 6 to 10 years
- ☐ 11 to 20 years
- ☐ 21 or more years

5. In the past 12 months, has any member of your household participated in any activities in parks, natural areas, or open spaces in or around Lower Providence Township? This would include any recreational activity, such as walking, biking, participating in team sports, swimming, bird watching, boating, etc.

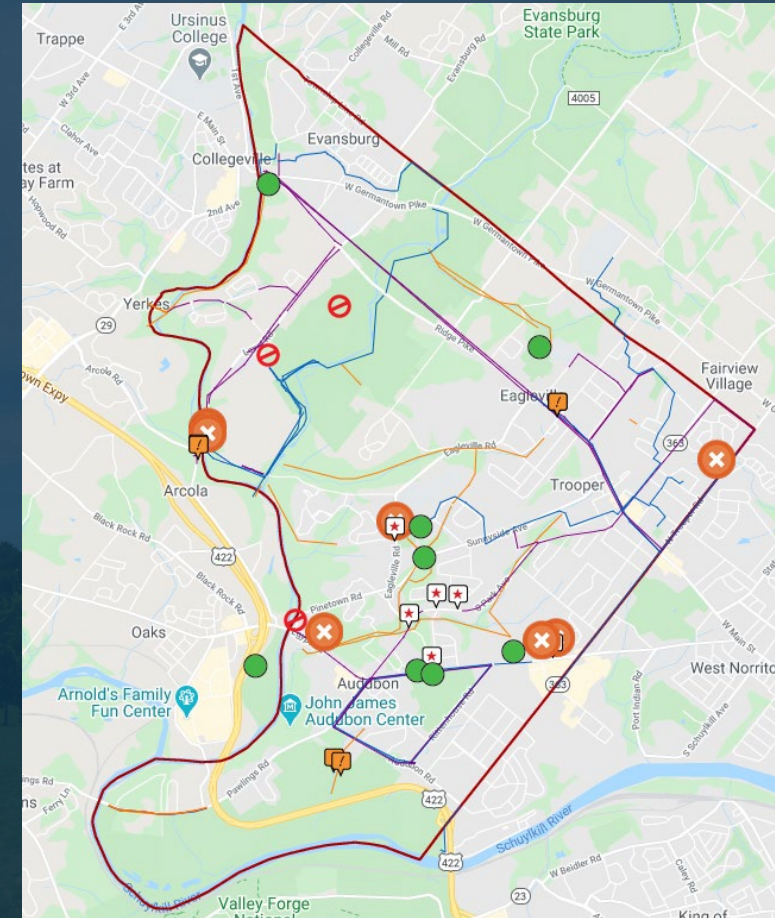
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't Know

6. Which parks, natural areas, trails, or facilities do you visit for recreation purposes? (Please check all that apply)

- ☐ Audubon Recreation Association Fields (ARA)
- ☐ Cranberry Park
- ☐ Dell Angelo Park
- ☐ Eagleville Park
- ☐ Eskie Park
- ☐ Evansburg Point Park
- ☐ Gabriel's Field / Knight's Cricket Field
- ☐ Hoy Park
- ☐ Level Road School House
- ☐ Mascaro Memorial Field and Community Park
- ☐ Pond View Park
- ☐ Redtail Park

WikiMapping Results

102 WikiMap comments



Survey and WikiMapping are now closed (open since October 2020)



Public Survey Results

Top 5 priorities that Lower Providence should focus on:

1. Open Space and Natural Resources Preservation: **42%**
2. Pedestrian Connections: **40%**
3. Trails: **31%**
4. Bike Lanes: **28%**
5. Improvements to Existing Facilities: **22%**

- **91%** live in Lower Providence
- **42%** of those in Lower Providence have lived in the Township for 21+ years
- **53%** of all respondents are between the ages of 45-64
- **Most respondent households have 2 members**
- **94%** of these households had members who participated in recreation in parks, natural areas, or open spaces in/around Lower Providence in the last year
- **91%** walk, run or bike on area trails or roadways
- **92%** of respondents drive to area parks; 81% feel that there are an adequate number of parks, natural areas and trails available to them or in close proximity to where they live

Facilities Improvements – Eagleville Park

- Conceptual Improvements

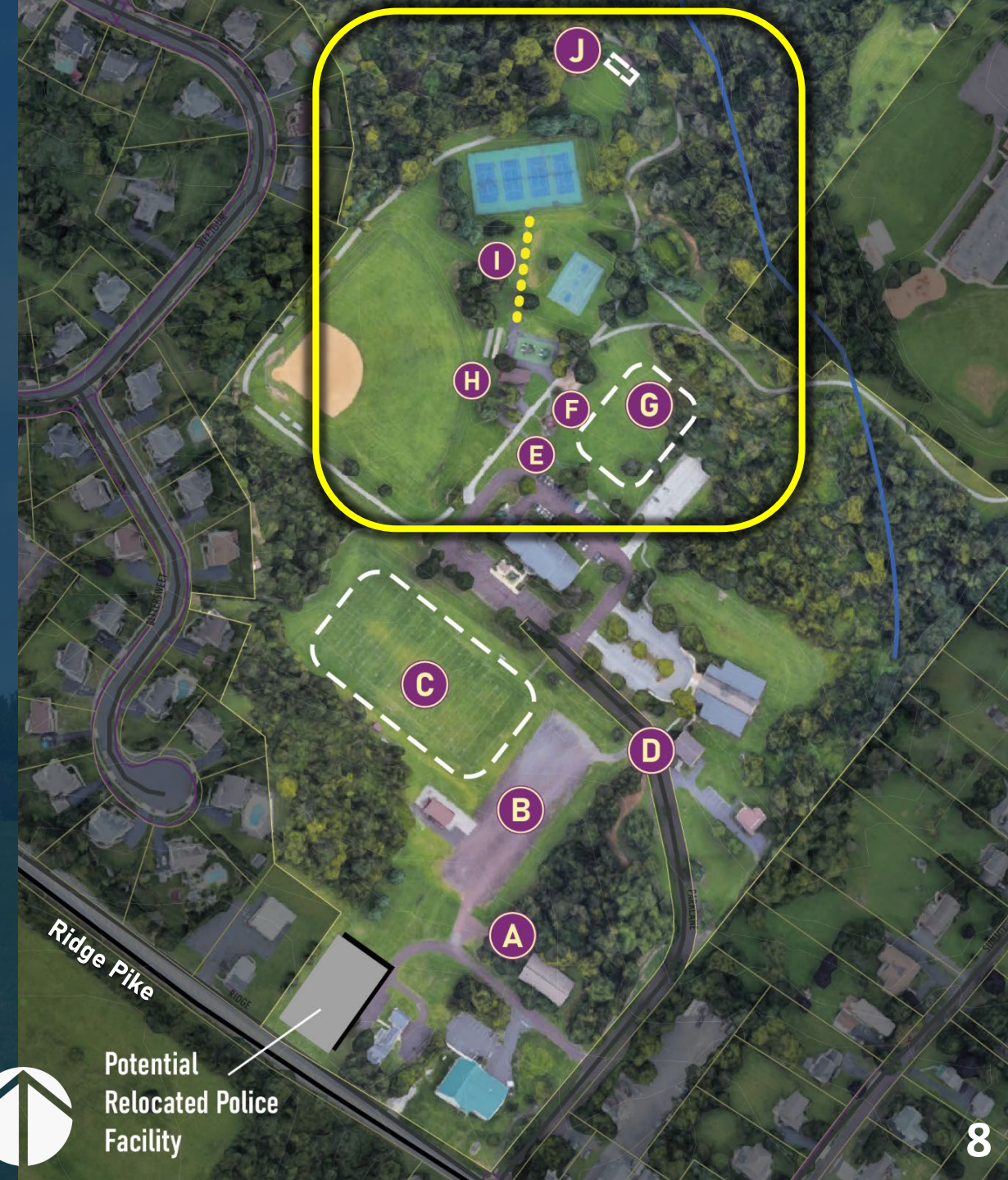
- A** Improve ADA path to bocce courts
- B** Pave and formalize parking area.
- C** Field Option A: Aerate & seed; Field Option B: Make turf field, stormwater BMP
- D** Improve parking entry and wayfinding signage.



Facilities Improvements – Eagleville Park

- Conceptual Improvements

- E** Make restroom entrance ADA accessible.
- F** Expand swing safety surface area.
- G** New Amphitheater in upper lawn.
- H** Provide ADA picnic tables, repurpose shuffleboard court for horseshoes or other activity.
- I** Make pathway ADA accessible.
- J** Convert amphitheater stage to pavilion. Move amphitheater to area G.



Potential
Relocated Police
Facility

Facilities Improvements – Eskie Park

- Conceptual Improvements

- A** Expand swing safety surface area. Add bucket seat swing.
- B** Plant shade trees.
- C** Re-grade for multi-use field.
- D** Add ADA benches in pavilion. Expand playground safety surface area.
- E** BMP plantings near impervious surfaces at public works.
- F** Plant additional shade trees, install benches
- G** Additional parking - 25 spaces.
- H** Multi-use perimeter trail (.65 miles)
- I** Potential parcel for open space acquisition.



Facilities Improvements – MARA Fields

- Conceptual Improvements (Have to be approved by the County)

- A** Add shade trees to parking area.
- B** Naturalize & Improve Stormwater Basin
- C** Thin tree buffer for security visibility.
- D** Add pavilion for spectators, close path to vehicles.
- E** ADA walking path to connect parking areas and ballfields (stone dust or asphalt).
- F** Expand safety surface area for swing set.
- G** Expand safety surface area for playground.
- H** Plant native grasses along swale.
- I** Plant shade trees along Audubon Road.
- J** Sidewalk connection along Audubon Road.
- K** Pedestrian intersection crossing improvements: ADA curb cuts, detectable warning surfaces.
- L** Additional 30 car parking area



MARA Fields 1:150

Facilities Improvements – Evansburg Point Park

- Conceptual Improvements (Have to be approved by DCNR)

- A** Connection to Level Road.
- B** Plant shade Trees.
- C** Upgrade snack shack facility.
- D** Provide ADA picnic pavilion access & ADA picnic tables.
- E** Install turf field.
- F** Plant shade trees.
- G** Reduce mown area, plant area with native grasses / wildflowers.
- H** Develop stormwater basin.



Facilities Improvements – Redtail Park

- Conceptual Improvements

- A** Sidewalk connection to existing Eagleville Rd. Sidewalk; ADA connection to parking area.
- B** Shade trees.
- C** Perimeter trail (asphalt, stone dust)
- D** Amend soil, plant shade trees.
- E** Improve existing stormwater basin to meet modern MS-4 standards.
- F** Restroom facility.

Existing Conditions Legend

- Parcel Line
- Sidewalk
- Topography (1' Contour)

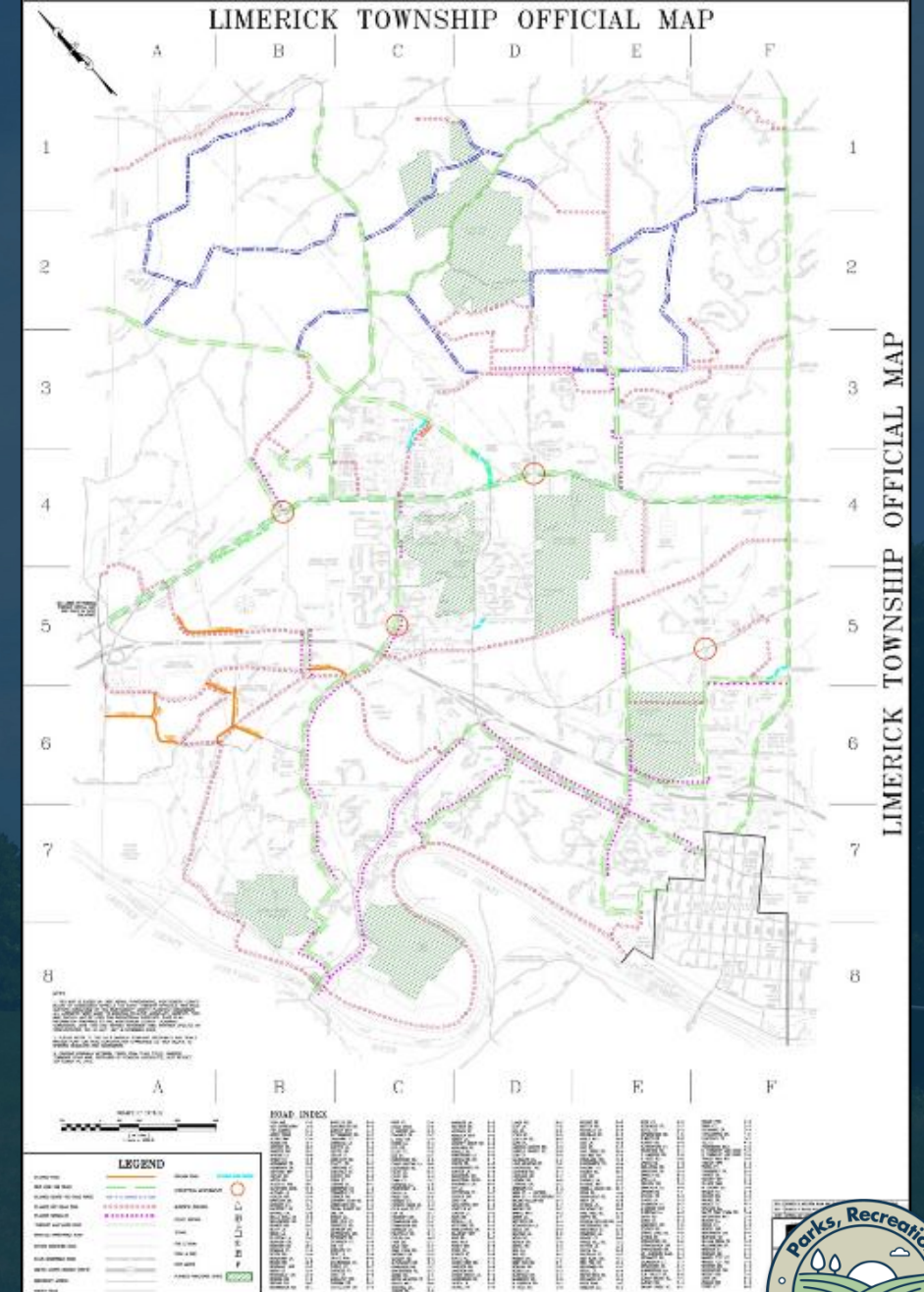


Adopt Official Map

- An official map is an effective negotiation tool for municipalities, helping to ensure long-term preservation of open space.

An Official map can include but is not limited to:

- Existing and proposed public parks, playgrounds and open space reservations
- Existing and proposed off-road trail alignments
- Flood control areas, floodways and floodplains, stormwater management areas and drainage easements.



Potential Open Space & Rec Acquisition

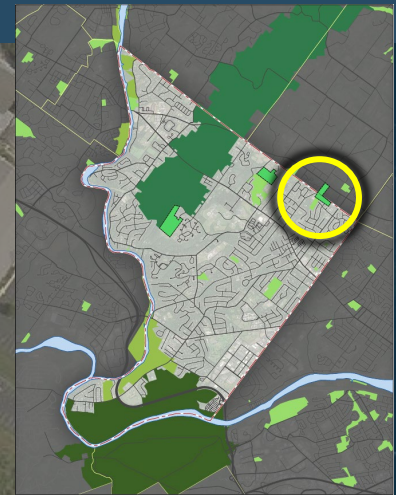
Option A: Develop for active recreation facilities.

Option B: Preserve Agriculture Fields

- Lower Providence Township has minimal preserved agricultural lands, in this option LP can purchase and permanently preserve this agriculture area
- Lower Providence should consider working with Worcester Twp. In a coordinated effort to acquire open space.

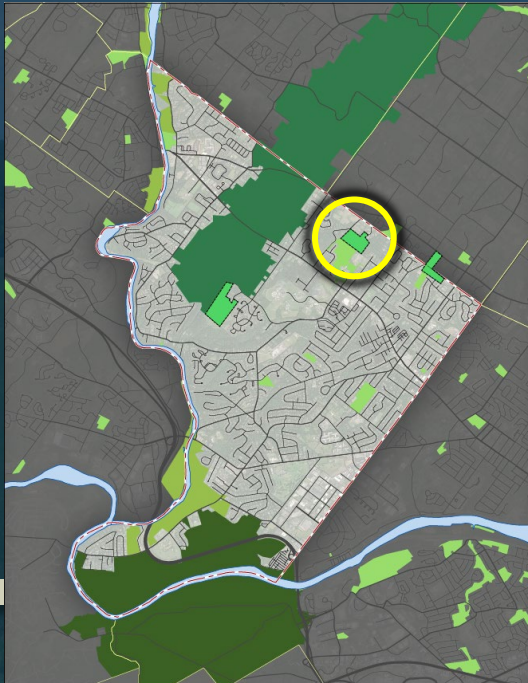


- Owner: **KeyBank**
- Size: **27 Acres**
- Characteristics: Agricultural fields



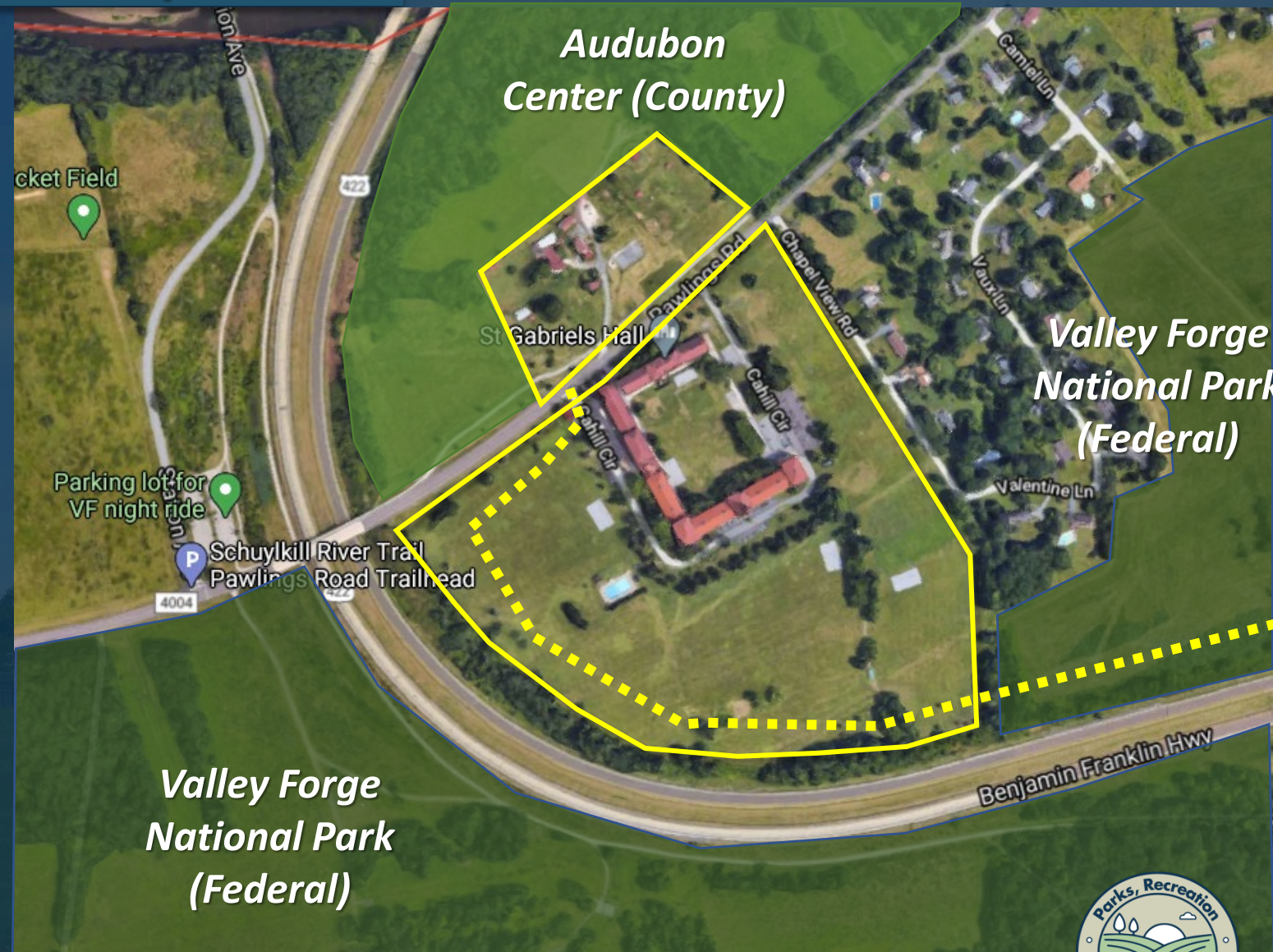
Potential Open Space & Rec Acquisition

- Owner: J. Heyser (identified in 2002/2005 OS&R Plan; BooBoo Realty)
- Size: 36 Acres; 17.5 Acres
- Characteristics: Wooded / dense vegetation
- Contains tributary to Skippack Creek



Potential Open Space & Rec Acquisition

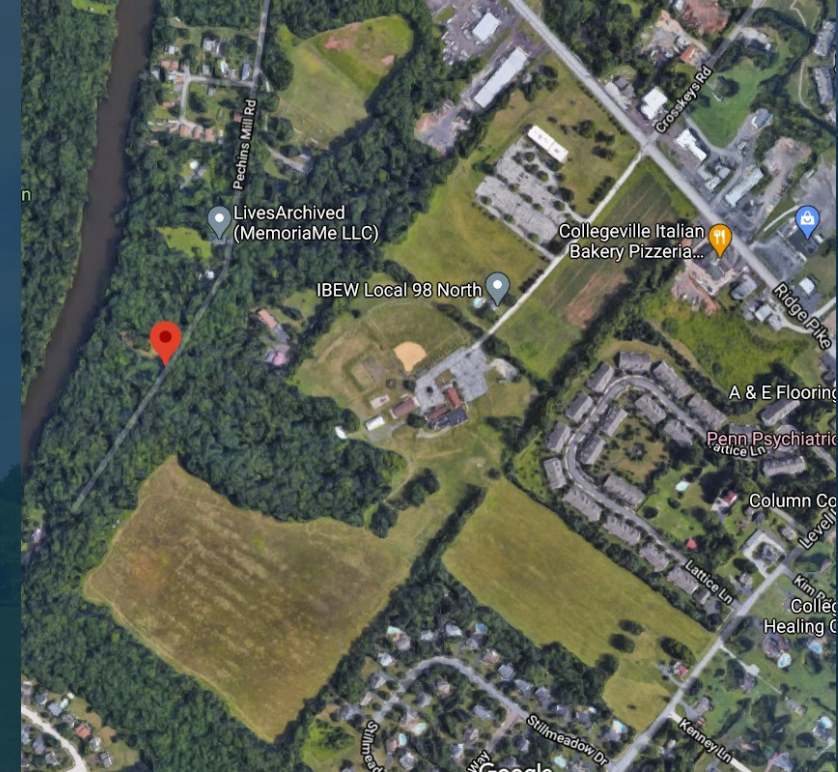
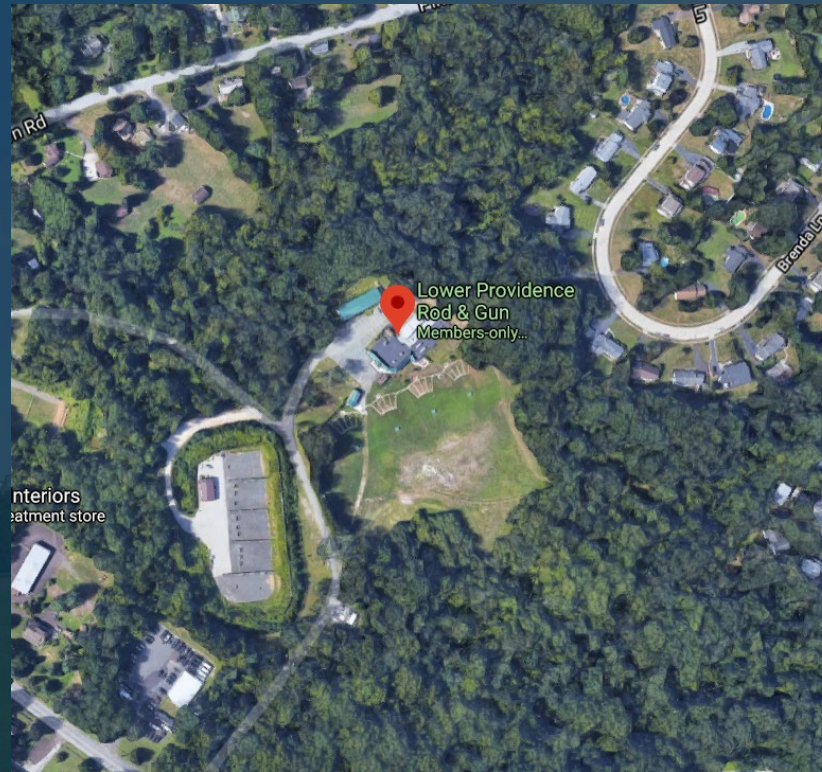
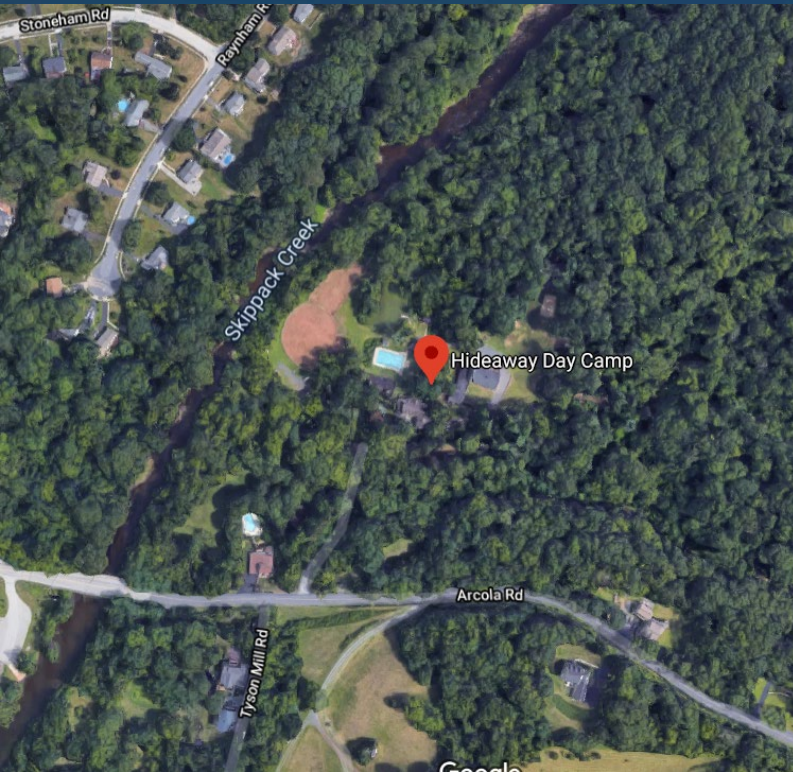
- Owner: **St. Gabriels Property (Philadelphia Protectory For Boys)** – identified in 2002/2005 OS&R Plan
- Size: **46.5 Acres**
- Potentially use St. Gabriels land (not building) to connect Audubon Center to Valley Forge & protect landscape
- Acquisition can connect ballfields and underutilized portion of Valley Forge Park
- Local, County, & Federal Project
- Could be potential application for future official map – designate fields as open space



Place on Official Map


Parcels Identified in 2002 Open Space Plan & 2005 Open Space Plan Update

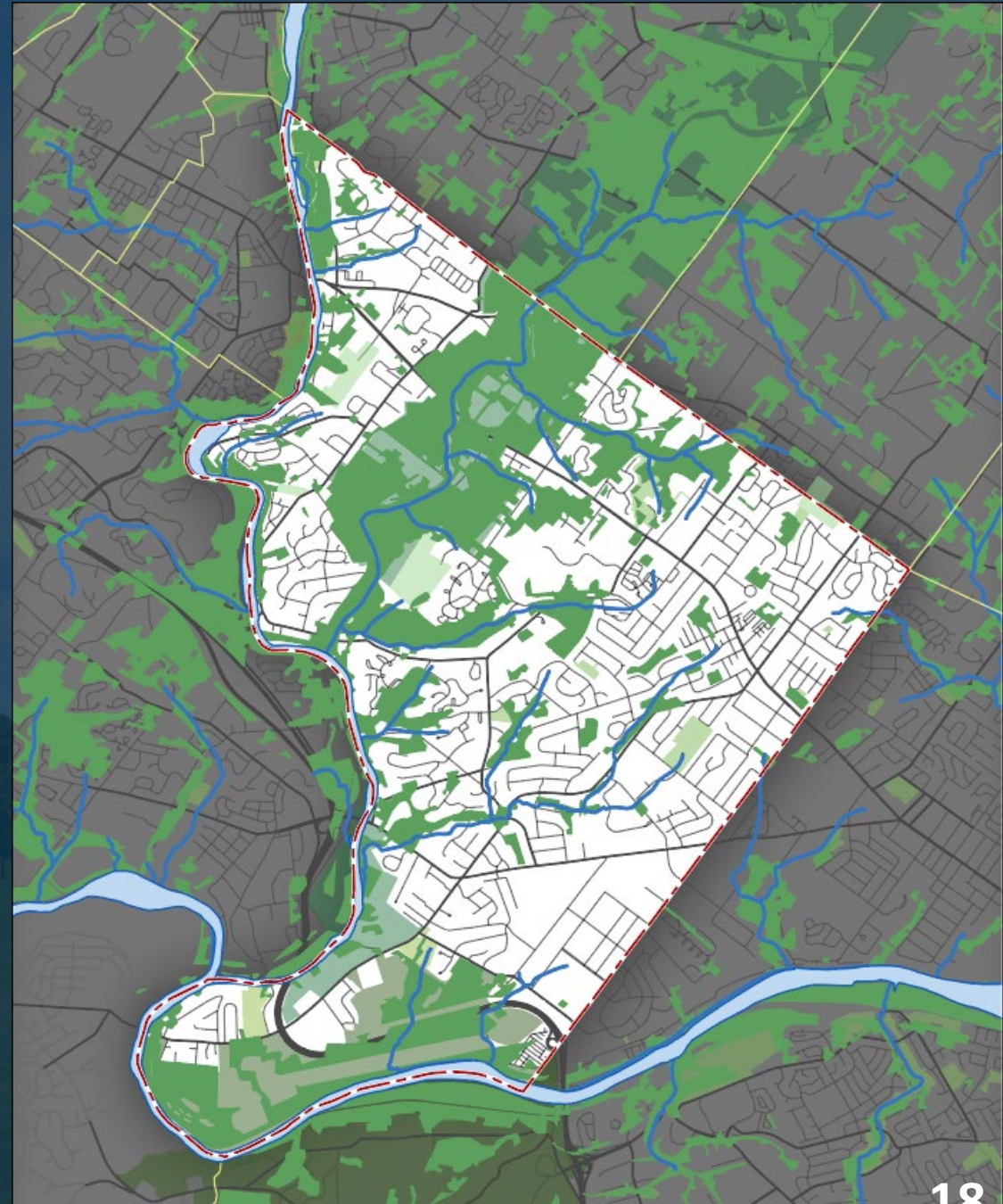
- *Arcola Road – Camp Hideaway.*
- *Lower Providence Rod and Gun Club.*
- *Pechins Mill Road Area / IBEW Property*



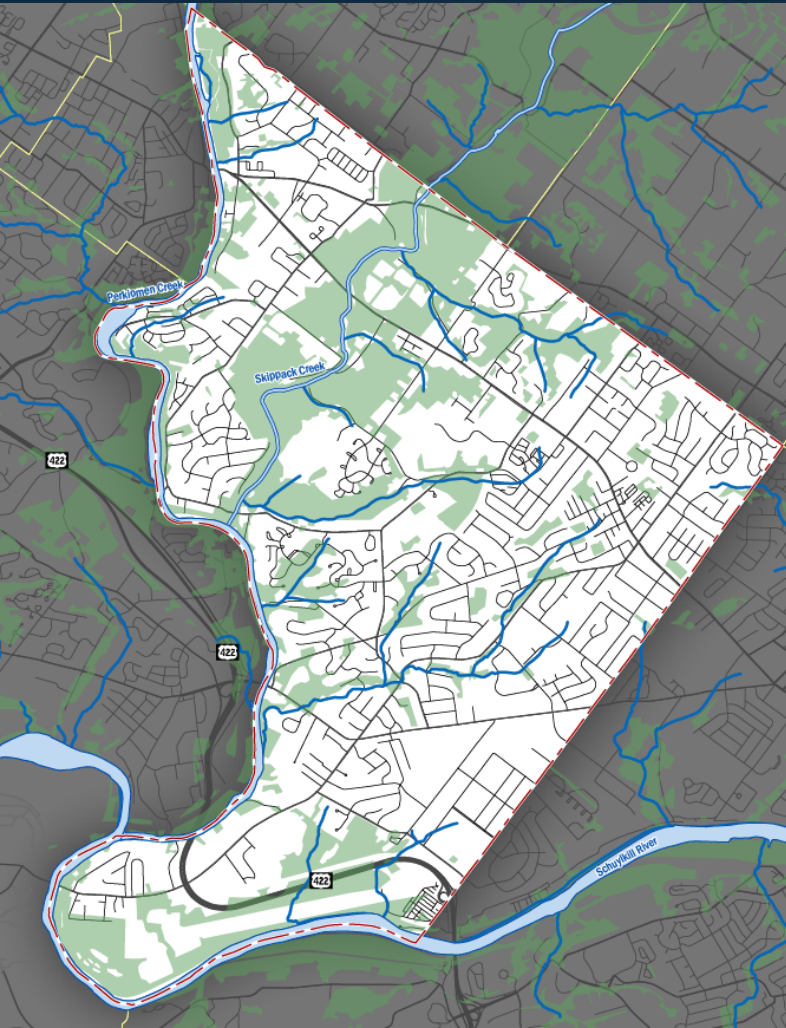
Greenway Recommendations

- The primary purpose to designate a “Greenway”:
 - Foster the preservation and protection of critical habitats
 - Protect and enhance the water quality
 - Greenways may or may not contain a trail or allow access
- Additional Greenways should be considered along hydrologic resources and extend from existing Township-owned parcels.
- In Lower Providence Township they are protected under **ARTICLE XXXIV (Riparian Buffer Overlay Zone)** This ordinance regulates land use to ensure natural resources are preserved and protected.

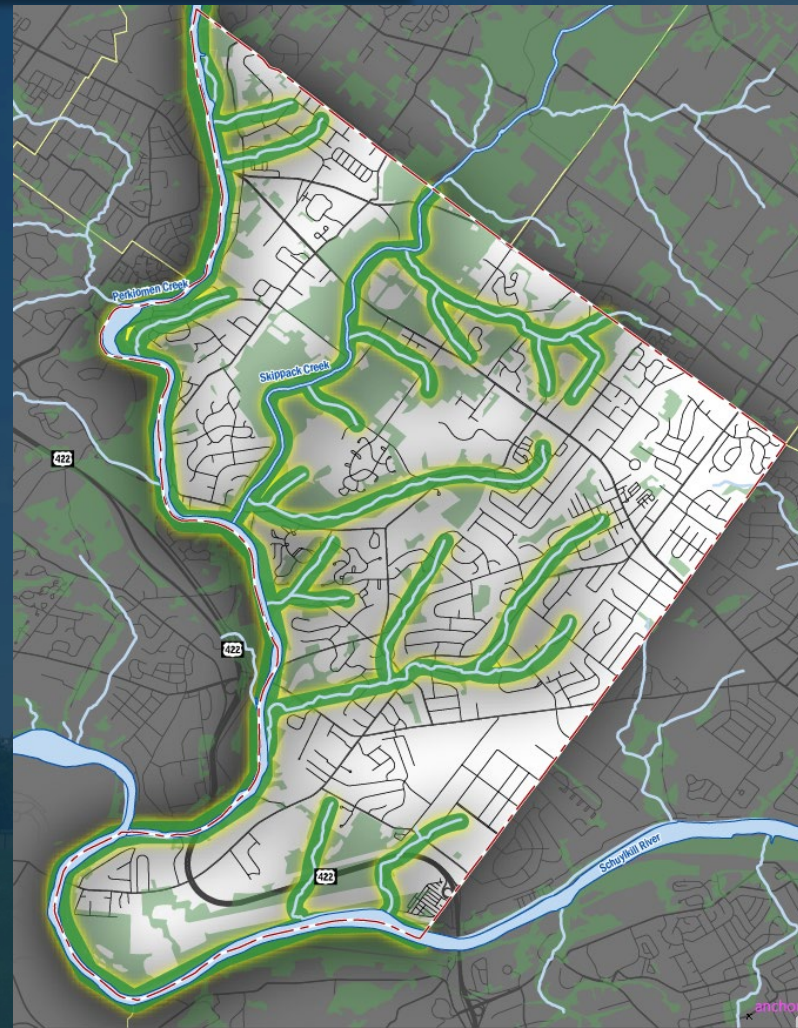
 Existing Greenway



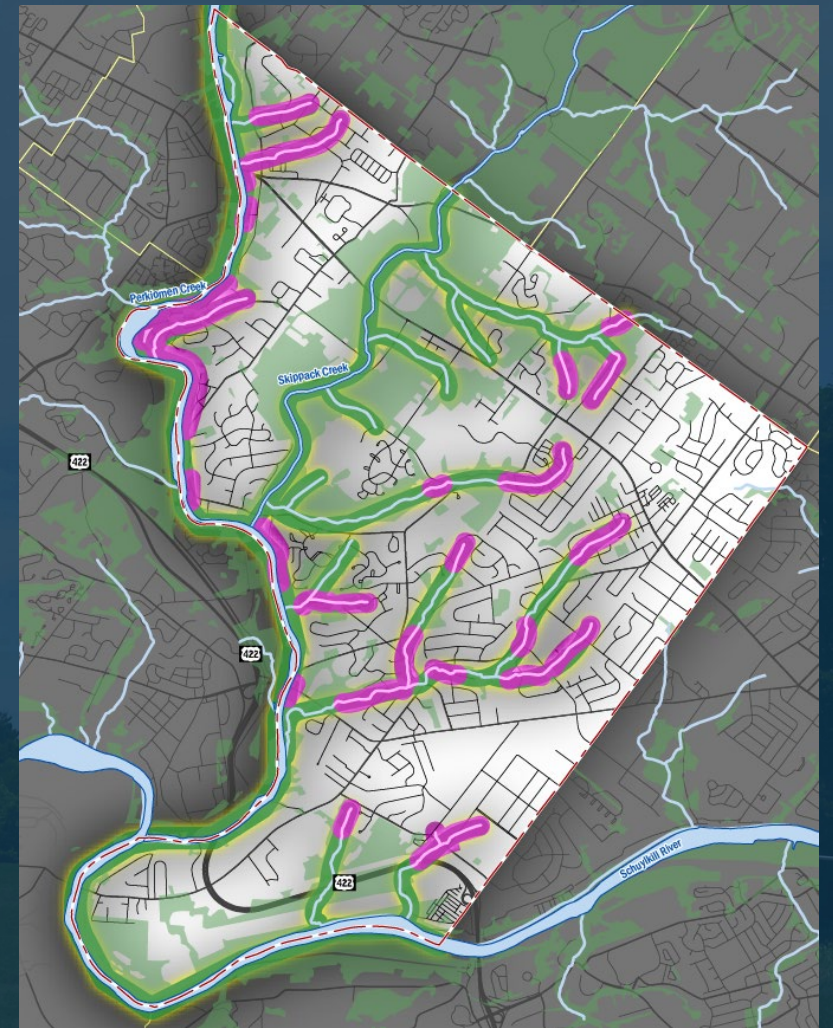
Greenway Recommendations



- *Existing Greenways & Waterways*



- *Ideal Riparian Greenway Corridors*



- *Gaps in greenway vegetation cover*

Greenway Recommendations

Example of Larger Parcels for Potential Future Greenway Expansion

Acquire, Protect (through official map)
or through conservation easement
potential greenway parcels

A. Gorski 12ac

B. Kunda 30ac

C. Parris 7ac

D. McKay 12ac

E. Hideaway 67ac

F. Webster 7ac



Greenway Recommendations

Successful greenway expansion & improved water quality will require action by local government and private citizens.

The Township has done a great job of acquiring key greenway parcels, and will need the help of private citizens, as the Township is largely built-out.

- Create program for revegetation of greenway cover gaps
- Consider retroactive application of greenway buffer ordinance as a means to better address MS-4 mandate

Local Government

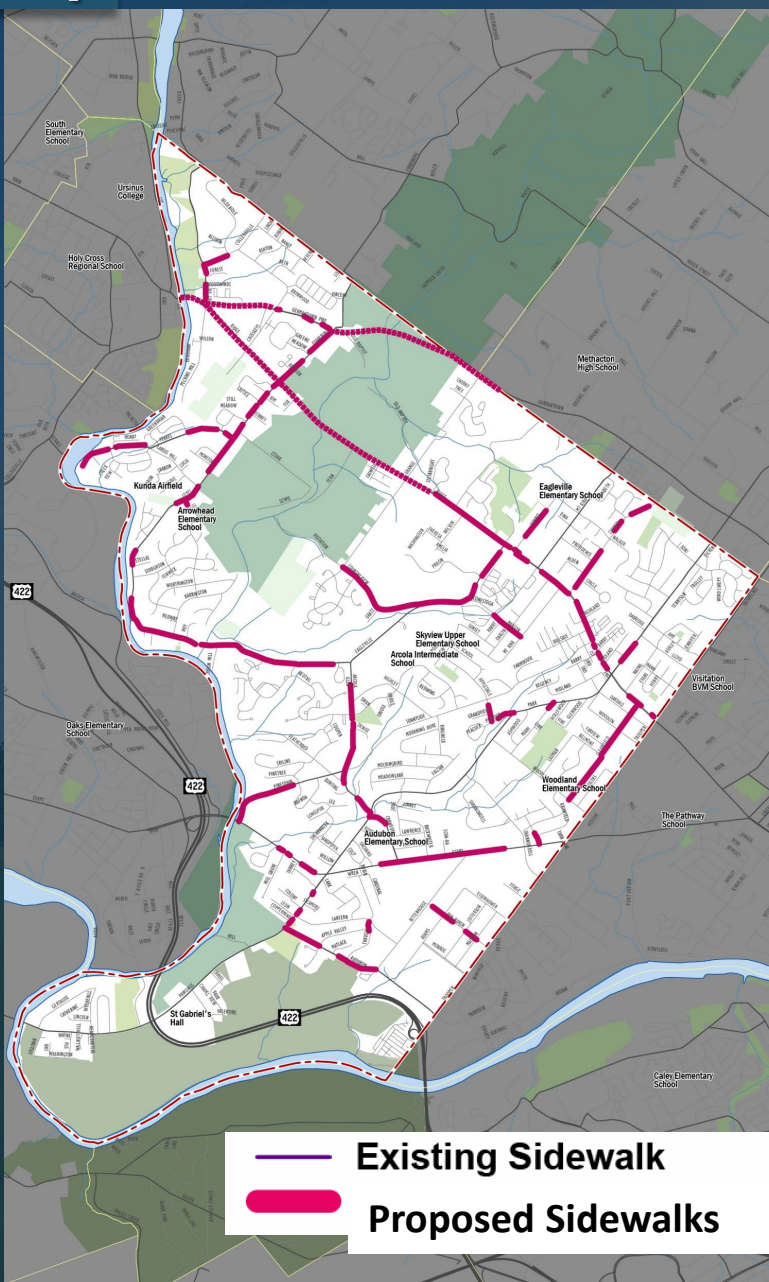
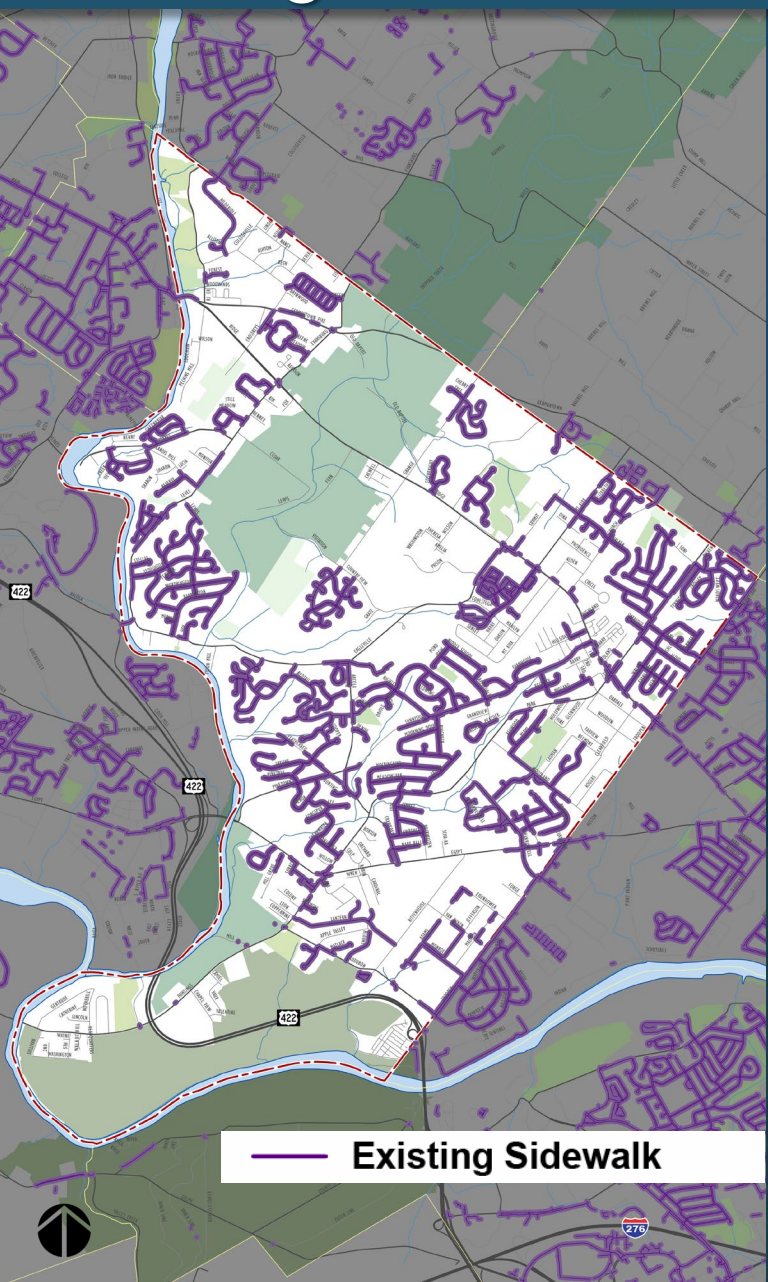
- Set vision
- Secure larger parcels for greenway expansion
- Encourage / incentivize private conservation efforts

Property Owners & Private Citizens

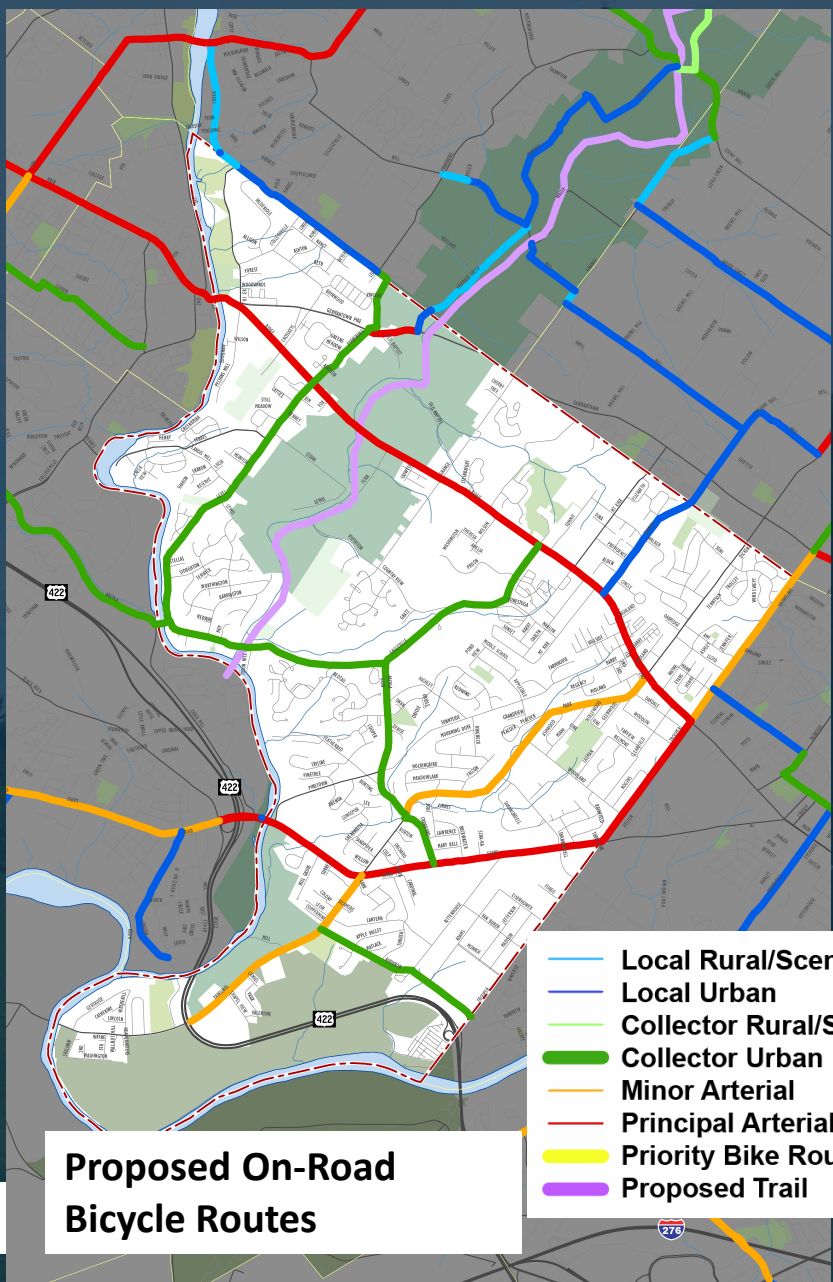
- Reduce large lawn areas, replace with meadows & grasses
- Limit pesticide use
- Plant native / diverse tree species

GOAL:
Healthy & Clean
Waterways

Existing Sidewalks & Gaps



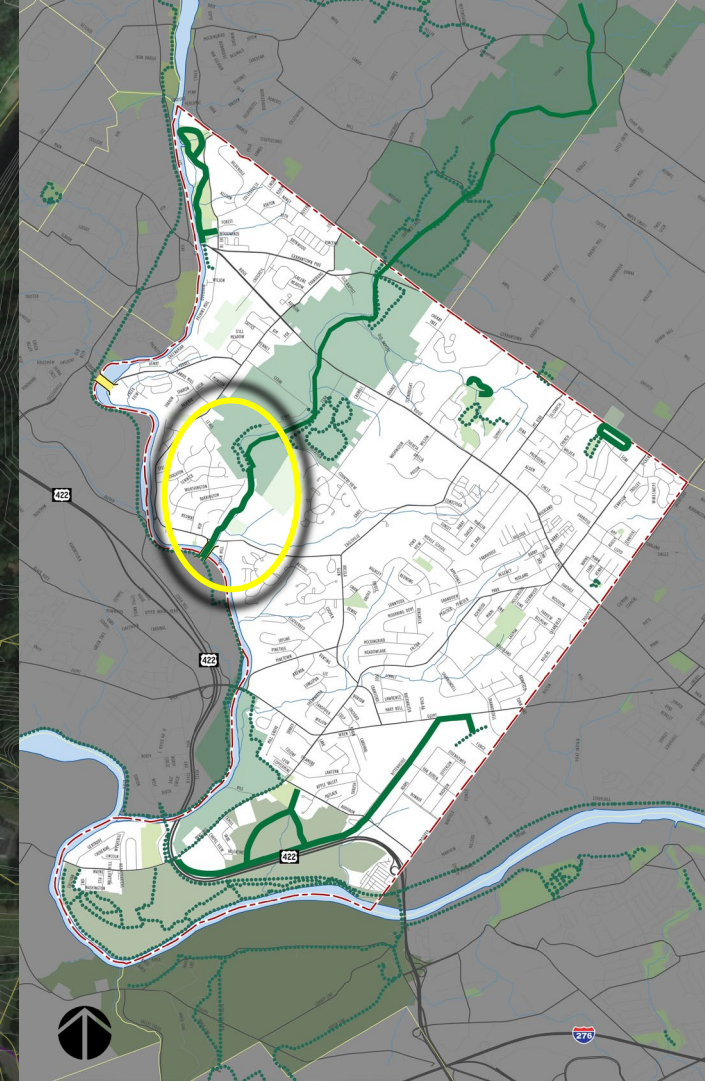
Bike Montco Routes



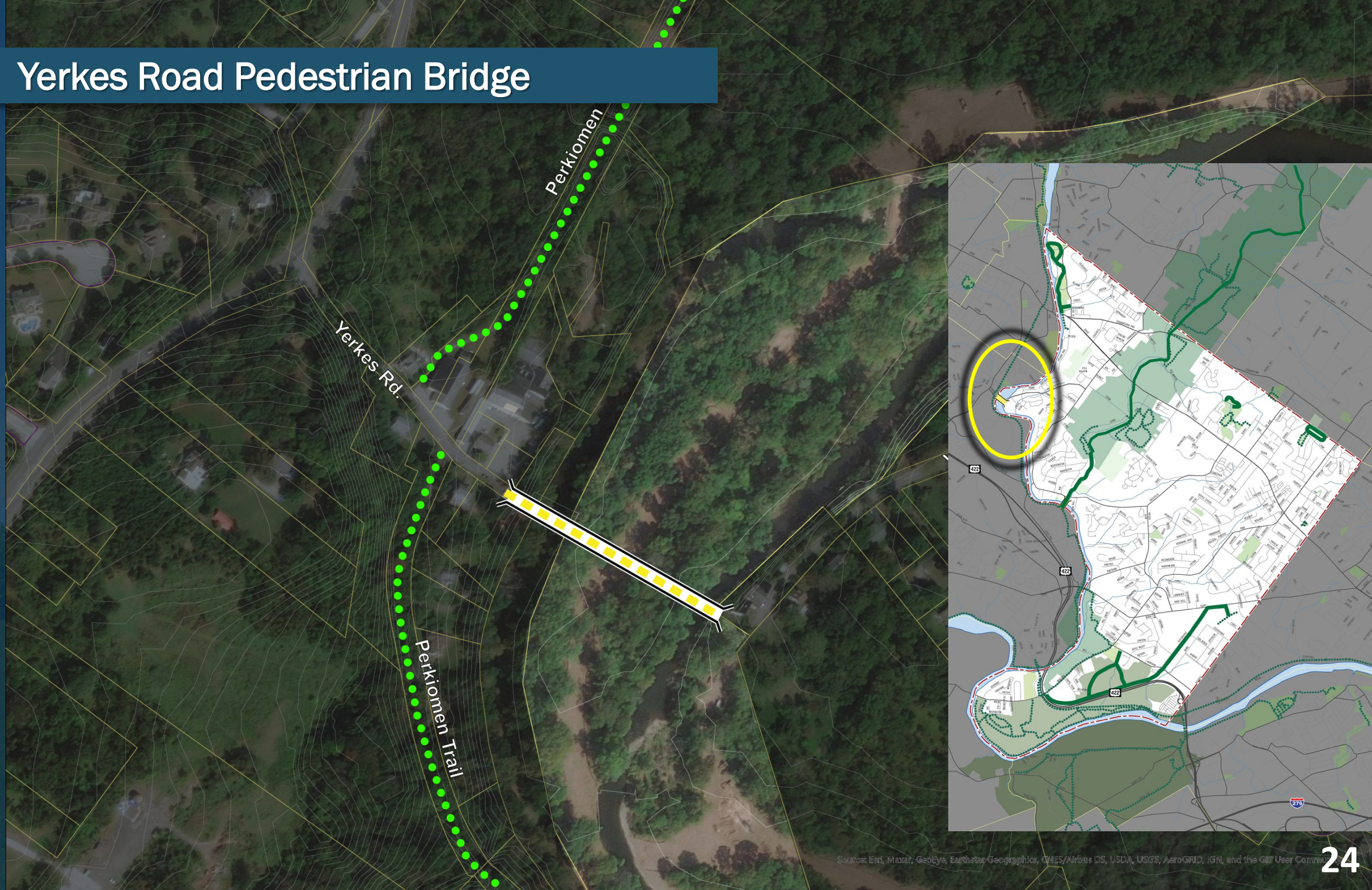
Trail:

Evansburg State Park Connector

3.25+ Miles

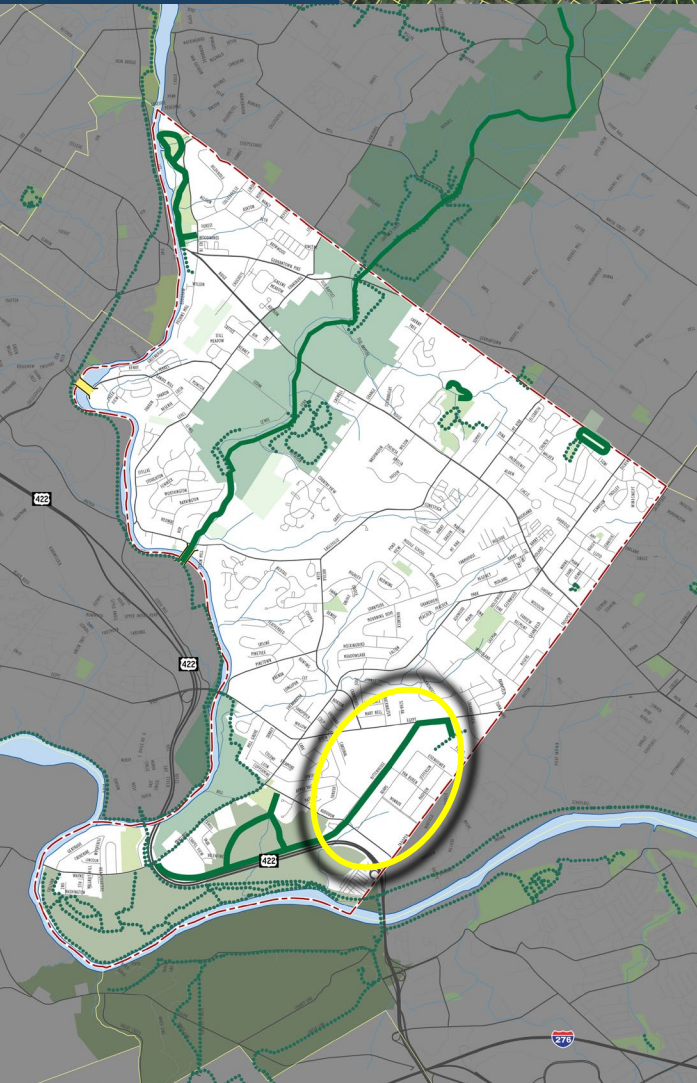


Trail: Yerkes Road Pedestrian Bridge



Trail: Park Pointe Sidepath

1.4 Miles



Maintenance & Programming

Recreation Programming Opportunities

- Improve offerings by providing year-round activities
 - Community has noted desire for additional programming
- Indoor facilities are needed for an enhanced programming schedule
 - Current facilities do not permit for increased programs
- Create or increase partnerships (schools, county, private facilities, M.O.U.'s)
 - Schools are used in the summer; expand to include year-round through new partnerships
- Programs are well received, but we need to “climb the ladder” and register for more activities
 - Currently, there are limited spaces for fall, winter and spring locations to offer programs



Maintenance & Programming

Financial Structure

- Additional revenues will be realized if/when additional programs are introduced
- **Program fees are well thought out and a sound practice is in place for fee determination**
- New programs may take a year or two to become profitable
- Parks & Recreation Board should review resident rate vs. non-resident rate

Maintenance Practices

- Opportunities exist for increased park amenities

Risk Management

- Consumer Product Safety Commission guidelines
- ADA compliance
- **DVIT performs annual park review**

Administrative Actions

- **Administration is run very well**
- **Consider 2 seasonal maintenance employees who report directly to Parks & Rec Director**



Priority Recommendations

Facility Improvements

1. Eagleville Park
2. Eskie Park
3. ARA Ball Fields
4. Redtail Park
5. Sherwood Park
6. Evansburg Point Park
7. Cranberry Park

Trails – Short Term

1. Park Pointe Path
2. Eskie Park Loop Trail Extension
3. Evansburg Trail MS-4 Mitigation

Trails – Long Term

1. Yerkes Bridge Crossing OR
2. Evansburg Park Bridge

Land Acquisition (Place 1-6 on Official Map)

1. Eskie Park (KeyBank Property)
2. Eagleville Park (J. Heyser and BooBoo Realty Property)
3. St. Gabriel's
 - 9-acre lot north of Pawlings Rd.
 - Building
4. Camp Hideaway
5. Rod and Gun Club
6. IBEW Local 98 property
7. Audubon Elementary School – work w/ MSD for community center.

Greenways

1. Create program for revegetation of greenway cover gaps



Next Steps

Next Public Meeting:

Thursday June 24, 2021 7:00 PM-9:00 PM :

Public Meeting 4 Link:

<https://tinyurl.com/lowerprovidence4>

Contact Information:

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Michelle Armour, Staff Landscape Architect

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Draft Plan Public Comment Review Period:

April 22 – May 27

Public can review the Draft Plan on the project website:

<https://www.lowerprovidence.org/parks-and-recreation/pages/open-space-plan-update>

People can comment on the draft plan:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LowerProvidenceRecPlanFeedback>

Public Meeting 4

June 24, 2021

Final Plan Presentation

<https://tinyurl.com/lowerprovidence4>