



RECOMMENDATIONS

Photo: Dell Angelo
Park

Park Facility Recommendations

Township-Wide Park Facility Recommendations

Lower Providence Park System

As noted in the previous chapter, Lower Providence has a robust park system that provides many recreational opportunities for its residents. Parks are one of the main settings for residents of Lower Providence to interact with the community. Parks are areas where residents of all ages, ethnicities, economic statuses, and abilities will interact and create community-building experiences that are a tangible reflection of the quality of life within the community. Beyond the many benefits parks provide as open space, they are also noted as important indicators of community livability and they create a sense of pride within the community. This has become more evident during the COVID-19 Pandemic where parks and trails became essential for support of both physical and mental health of the residents as was reflected in the dramatic increase of park and open space use.

A successful park system:

Will be a catalyst for community revitalization, economic development, promote public health, create community engagement opportunities, and provide green infrastructure,

Will have diverse inventory of assets and sufficient staffing, equipment and, management to maintain safe, functional, and attractive parks, and

Will be well used, which is a sign that parks are attractive, meet user needs, and are safe.

Park Furnishings & Materials

Lower Providence Township Parks and Recreation should develop a set of standards for park furnishings. These park furnishing standards then should be used to start replacing existing park furnishings that do not meet these standards. Using standard elements will also facilitate common spare parts and maintenance consistency.

Choices in site materials can have the potential to affect the health of a park's environment and its life cycle. Park material and design standards should include priorities for sustainability. These can include using local sustainable products that are selected for longevity, durability, and ease of maintenance. The standards should also consider consistency in materials, colors, and aesthetics to create a sense of identity or "branding" for the park system.

Landscaping

Township parks should provide green infrastructure using native plant materials. Plantings can serve many purposes, including but not limited to shade, absorption of stormwater run-off, habitat, and beauty. The Township has been successful in securing several parcels along riparian zones in Lower Providence which should be planted with a mix of diverse native plant material.

In all Lower Providence park facilities, additional shade trees should be planted for their numerous benefits, including:

- Shade for park users and spectators
- Improving the overall air quality
- Providing habitats for wildlife
- Increased property values
- Carbon dioxide reduction
- Stormwater runoff reduction

The Township should assist residents with setting up "Friends of" groups (either system-wide or for specific parks) that can provide volunteers that can assist in management of the planted areas of the parks. "Friends of" groups can also assist in other park maintenance needs.



ADA Access / Safety requirements

ADA Access to the parks has already been recognized by the Township as a priority improvement to the park system. ADA access includes providing paths to park amenities, bench placement, parking spaces, site furnishings, and inclusive play equipment. Some basic provisions for providing an ADA access are:

- Providing access to one of each type of ground-level equipment,
- Providing ramps or transfer system to some elevated structures, and
- Surfacing that accommodates people using wheelchairs.
- Equipment and bathrooms need to meet ADA compliance.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission Guidelines for public parks were established to reduce serious injury to users of play equipment.

The guidelines are recommendations that address hazards that can result in playground related injuries and include:

- Potential falls from play equipment,
- Protective surfacing under and around play equipment,
- Scale of equipment related to users age,
- Playground layout, and
- Installation and maintenance.

It is recommended that the Township perform an annual playground audit using a Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI) to identify potential hazards on playground equipment, provide information for equipment specifications and safety surfaces, and provide risk management methods. The Township should invest in playground surface edging to keep safety surfacing material in the playground fall zones. Other individual park recommendations are provided later in this chapter.

Photo: Eagleville Park



Facility-Specific Improvements

Cranberry Park

Township-Owned

Cranberry Park was identified during this planning process as a location for potential boating access to the Perkiomen Creek. While the consultant team identified safety and portage distance concerns, further analysis is needed to fully determine the suitability of this location for water access. This location works well for the Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy’s annual sojourn, and would require additional facility improvements (including parking) to maintain year-round use. Due to floodplain proximity, Cranberry Park and the Central Perkiomen Valley Park are best suited to remain open space with minimal facility improvements beyond the earthen / mown loop trail proposed later in chapter 3.



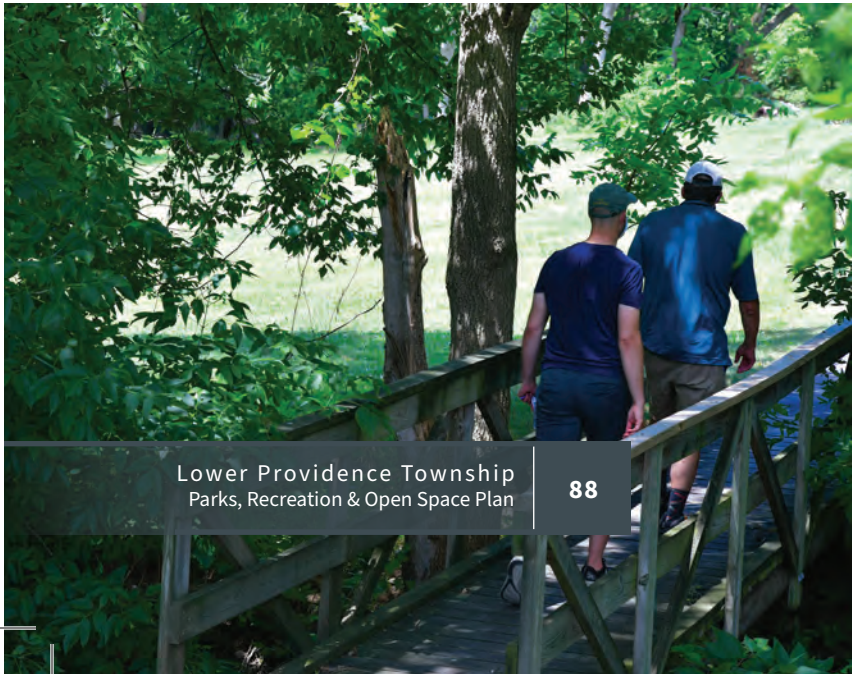
Dell Angelo Park

Township-Owned

Located north of Ridge Pike, Dell Angelo Park is a well-used community park. Accessible by sidewalk via neighborhoods to the north and east, this park includes ample seating areas and a playground. Dell Angelo’s established tree canopy is among the nicest of the Township park facilities and should be viewed as the standard for other facilities.

Recommended improvements Include:

- A ADA Access Path to Playground (concrete)
- B Small Pavilion
- C Swingset (Four Seats / Two Bays)
- D Swingset Safety Surface Area
- E Ridge Pike Sidewalk Connection
- F Park Signage Along Ridge Pike. Consider acquisition of vacant lot between Lidl and TD Bank for park expansion.





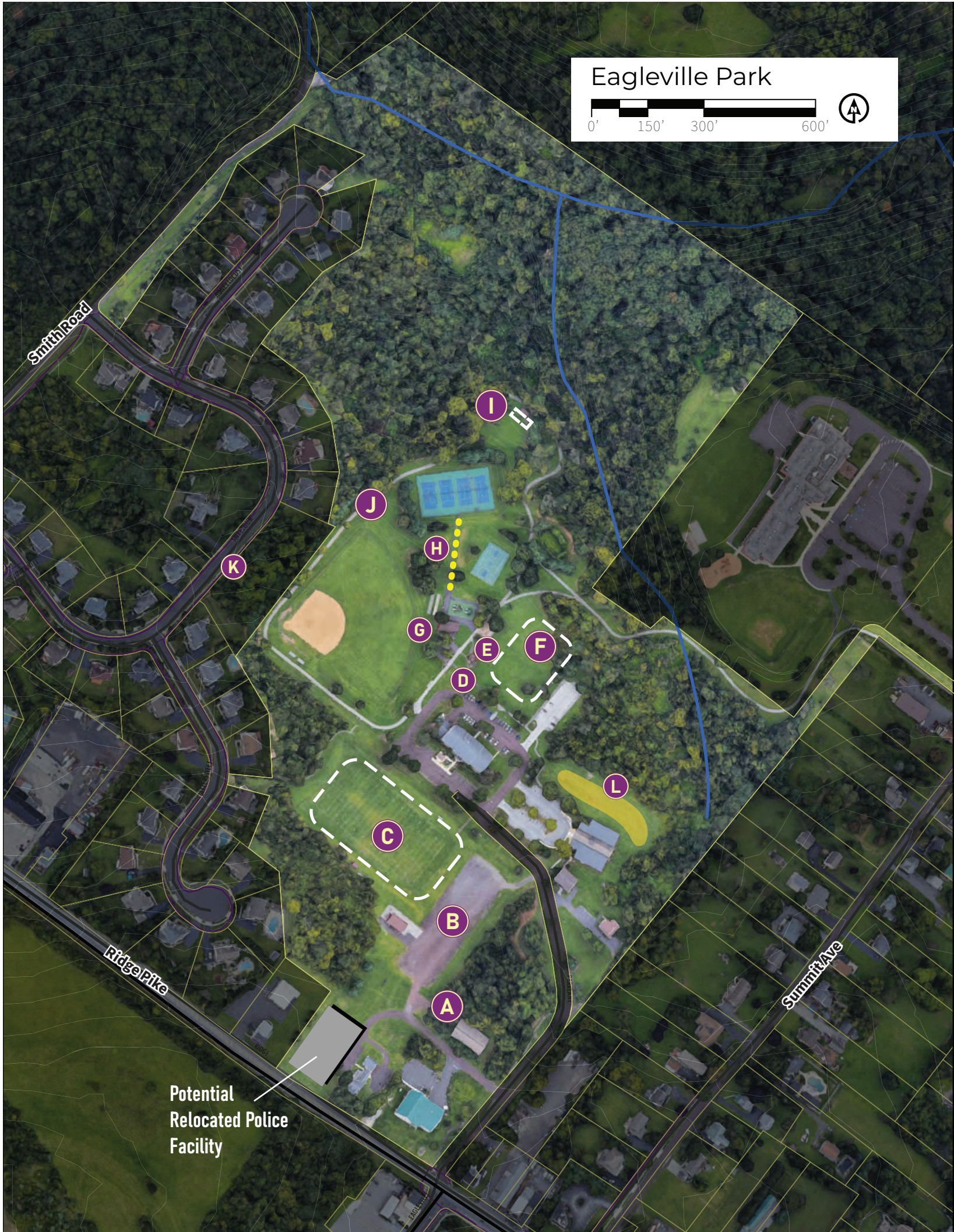
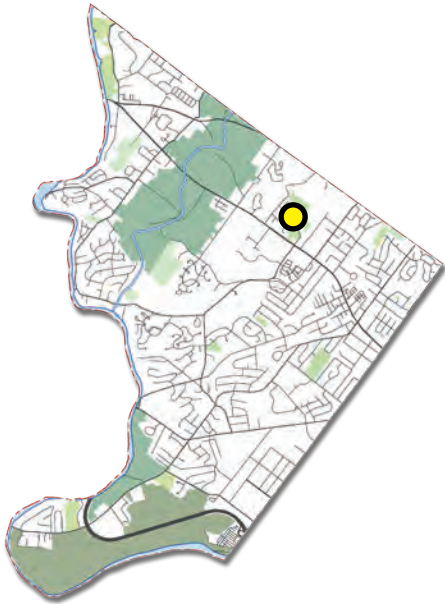


Eagleville Park **Township-Owned**

The largest municipal park in Lower Providence Township, Eagleville Park provides a wide array of facilities which are used by a wide array of Township residents.

Recommended improvements Include:

- A** ADA Access Path to Bocce Courts
- B** Pave and Formalize Parking Area
- C** Field Option A: Aerate and Seed
- C** Field Option B: Convert to Turf Field. *Sports fields with synthetic turf promote year-round activity on safe and resilient surfaces. Turf fields can support a greater frequency of games and practices while significantly decreasing maintenance costs.*
 - In addition to grant funding and local funds, funding from local youth and sports organizations will be required to complete turf field conversions.
- D** ADA Access to Restroom - Remove Partition
- E** Expand Swingset Safety Surface Area
- F** New Amphitheater at Upper Lawn
- G** ADA Picnic Tables
- H** ADA Access to Tennis Courts
- I** Convert Current Amphitheater to Pavilion
- J** Add protective plastic guards to Gaugler baseball field fencing for safety
- K** Improve Park Signage at Sweetgum Lane
- L** Naturalize Basin with Native Meadow Plantings





Existing



Proposed Amphitheater





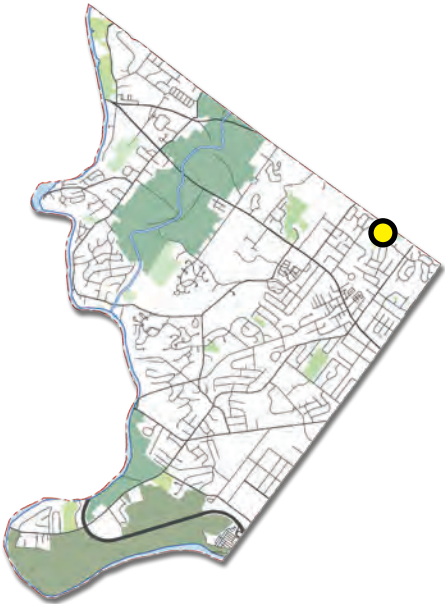
Eskie Park

Township-Owned

Located between the Township public works facility and forested areas to the west, agriculture fields to the north, residences to the east, Eskie Park is an important component of the municipal park system.

Recommended improvements Include:

- A** Expand Swingset & Playground Safety Surface Area
- B** Shade Trees
- C** Re-grade for Multi-Use Field
- D** ADA Picnic Tables
- E** ADA Benches
- F** BMP Plantings
- G** Additional Parking - 25 Spaces
- H** Eskie Loop Trail Extension
- I** Possible Land Acquisition
- J** Pickleball Court





Church Road

Deerfield Drive

Eskie Park





State-Owned, leased by Township

Evansburg Point Park

Located within Evansburg State Park, Lower Providence Township has an agreement with Evansburg and DCNR to use this area for active recreation. The original lease agreement, signed in 1987, dictated an agreement period of 35 years. The Township should reengage DCNR to extend the agreement before its scheduled end date on May 5, 2022.

Used extensively by local sports organizations for football and cheerleading practices and games, Evansburg Point Park is a vital component of the Township's active recreation park system.

Recommended improvements Include:

- A** Sidewalk Connection to Level Road
- B** Shade Trees
- C** Upgrade Snack Shack Facility
- D** ADA Access for Pavilion
- E** ADA Picnic Tables
- F** Convert to Turf Field. *If the Township wishes to pursue this alternative for turf field conversion, the Township will need to initiate a conversation with DCNR to determine feasibility within the current Evansburg Point Park agreement.*
- G** Native Meadow Plantings
- H** Stormwater Basin


Proposed - Native Meadow Plantings **G**



Existing

Evansburg Point Park

0' 50' 100' 200'





Hoy Park **Township-Owned**

Hoy Park is a small facility at the intersection of the Perkiomen and Skippack Creeks. It is recommended that this location be considered for a trail connection across the Perkiomen Creek (see map opposite page) through a trail connection north to Evansburg State Park (described in greater detail later in Chapter 3).

If this Evansburg State Park Connector is advanced, upgrades to Hoy Park may become necessary. While there is limited room for reconfigured or additional parking, the following park and trail amenities should be considered:

- A** Trail Kiosk
- B** Restroom Facility
- C** ADA Benches & Picnic Tables
- D** Trash Receptacles
- E** Evansburg State Park Connector (Described in Detail Later in Chapter 3)
- F** Perkiomen Pedestrian Bridge (Described in Detail Later in Chapter 3)



Hoy Park

0' 50' 100' 200'





Pond View Park **Township-Owned**

Pond View Park is a small , largely wooded neighborhood park. It includes one small mown area and the majority is forested. This park should remain a quiet, peaceful location for neighbors to enjoy nature.


Recommended improvements Include:

- A** Songbird & Habitat Meadow
- B** 3-5' Wide Earthen Trail



Pond View Park

0' 50' 100' 200'



Source: Esri, Microsoft, GeoEye, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

Redtail Park Township-Owned

Redtail Park is used by local soccer organizations as well as local Methacton School District students. This facility is lacking shade for spectators watching soccer games. Also, trails and connections to existing sidewalks are essential to consider.



Recommended improvements Include:

- A** Sidewalk Connection to Eagleville Rd
- B** Parking Area: Shade Trees
- C** Parking Area: Stormwater BMP
- D** Shade Trees
- E** Perimeter Trail (stone dust)
- F** Clear Debris - Amend Soil
- G** Shade Trees
- H** Improve Existing Stormwater Basin
- I** Restroom Facility - on Concrete Pad, w Electrical & Water Service
- J** Aerate and Seed Soccer Field



Existing



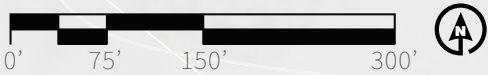
Proposed



Sherwood Park

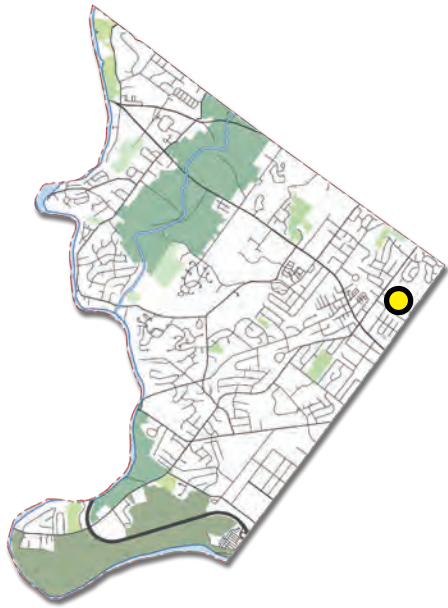
Township-Owned

Sherwood Park is a small neighborhood park which serves the nearby community. Development of this park should focus on improved shade and ADA play facilities.



Recommended improvements Include:

- A** Shade Trees
- B** Play Area Safety Surface
- C** Improved ADA Walkway 4' Wide
- D** Evergreen Buffer - Eastern Red Cedar
- E** ADA Benches
- F** New Swingset (remove old swingset from current location and put new near existing play structure.



Existing



Proposed

A B C E



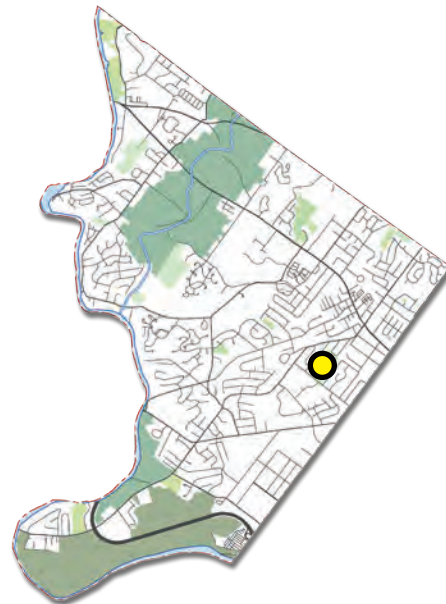
Privately-Owned, Leased to Township for Public Use

Francesco A. Mascaro Memorial Park

Owned by J.P. Mascaro & Sons, this is a high-quality facility which includes new baseball and playground facilities which are leased to Lower Providence Township for public use. Mascaro works with the Township and private recreation groups to facilitate use of this impressive facility. Lower Providence should continue to work with this important community organization to potentially implement the following improvements.

Recommended improvements Include:

- A** Native Meadow Plantings
- B** Plan for Future Baseball Facilities (Mascaro plan for this improvement discussed during active recreation focus group).



Mascaro Field

0'

125'

250'

500'





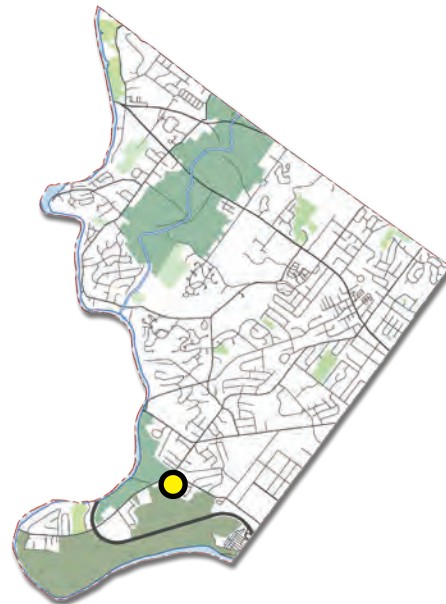
County-Owned

Methacton Audubon Recreation Association Fields (MARA)

Owned by Montgomery County, all improvements at this facility will require County approval and cooperation.

Recommended improvements Include:

- A** Naturalize & Improve Stormwater Basin, Street Trees Between Basin and Pawlings Road
- B** Shade Trees in Parking Area
- C** Limb up existing spruce trees for crime prevention through environmental design
- D** Pavilion, 24' x 44'
- E** ADA path through and around park. Connect to major amenities and to foot bridge across creek.
- F** Native Meadow Plantings
- G** New Footbridge
- H** Expand Swingset Safety Surface Area
- I** Expand Playground Safety Surface Area
- J** Sidewalk Connection Along Audubon Road
- K** Shade Trees Along Audubon Road
- L** Pedestrian Intersection Improvements
- M** 30 car parking area, coordinate with Montgomery County



MARA Fields

0' 75' 150' 300'



Google



County-Owned

Knights Cricket Field & Pawlings Road Trailhead

Owned by Montgomery County, all improvements at this facility will require County approval and cooperation. Cricket fields to remain in this location, as they are well used by local community leagues.

Recommended improvements Include:

- A** Mown Loop Trail
- B** Dog Park (areas for small & large dogs)
- C** Station Avenue Parking (50 spaces)
- D** Pawlings Road Trailhead Parking Expansion (100 spaces)
- E** Restroom Facility - on Concrete Pad, with Electrical & Water Service



Knights Cricket Field & Pawlings Road Trailhead

0' 100' 200' 400'



State & Federal Partnerships

Evansburg State Park – Future Recreation Fields

If locations for future active recreation fields are required, Lower Providence Township should consider approaching DCNR and Evansburg State Park for use of fields north of Ridge Pike. This partnership for active recreation fields on DCNR property could follow a lease model like that used for Evansburg Point Park.



National Park Service – Valley Forge Water Access

With growing demand for boating water access to the Schuylkill River, usage, and parking downstream from Lower Providence at Betzwood Park has increased dramatically over recent years and more precipitously during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additional water access with parking is needed along the waters of Lower Providence. Lower Providence should advance a collaborative effort with the National Park Service to establish water access at the Pawlings Road Valley Forge National Historic Park River Trail Trailhead.

While the National Park Service would be responsible for this project, Lower Providence Township would coordinate on this effort.



Open Space Preservation Recommendations

Parcels were considered for preservation by the following criteria:

- Parcels which provide a vital link to complete a trail connection or serve as a necessary link in a future trail connection for pedestrian and bicycle mobility.
- Parcels which contain rare old growth forests, areas considered to be the most important natural habitats in a region, places of large specimens of valued vegetation. Places where rare and valued animals live and birds roost are also considered vital priorities, especially a high-quality wildlife refuge.
- Parcels which maintain scenic qualities, especially if identified in Township documents including the Comprehensive Plan or Open Spaces Plan as preserving a scenic viewscape.
- Parcels that protect natural features, including water resources, especially floodplain areas, riparian buffers, streams, creeks, and waterways.
- Parcels that preserve significant agricultural land that is threatened by development.
- Parcels that are contiguous to existing private or public open space and are significant for both active and passive recreation.

Preservation Strategy: Township Preservation or Acquisition

Key Bank Parcels (Parcel 1: 15 acres & Parcel 2: 12 acres)

Character: Agriculture

Option A: Preserve Agriculture Fields

Lower Providence Township has minimal preserved agricultural lands, in this option the Township should permanently preserve this agriculture area.

If the northern 12-acre parcel is desired for permanent open space Lower Providence should work with Worcester Township in a coordinated effort to acquire this open space. A coordinated multi-municipal effort may be more attractive to funding agencies when pursuing grant funding.

Option B: Develop for active recreation facilities.

These parcels can be used to accommodate future Township recreational facility needs and expand upon and connect to existing Eskie Park facilities.

In either option A or B, a .65-mile loop trail should be considered around the perimeter of these parcels. This concept is discussed in the multi-modal trail recommendations section.



Cicchiello Parcel (37 Acres)

Character: Agriculture

As one of only a handful agricultural parcels remaining in Lower Providence, the Township should consider acquisition or work with local conservation organizations such as Natural Lands to permanently preserve the Cicchiello parcel for agriculture. Some of this parcel is in Worcester Township.





Heyser Parcel (36 acres) & BooBoo Realty Parcel (10 acres)

Character: Wooded

Both parcels are north of Eagleville Park and are densely forested and contain some of the few old-growth forests in the region. If acquired, these parcels should become part of Eagleville Park and remain wooded. They contain a tributary to the Skippack Creek – acquisition of these parcels could ensure long term stormwater management for this hydrologic resource.

The BooBoo Realty parcel was the result of a subdivision project that was approved, modified, never built, and then sold to allow two lots instead of six. While the new land owner (BooBoo) intend to keep in private ownership, this plan recommends longterm preservation of this parcel.

Conceptual park elements within these parcels could include:

- Low-impact earth hiking trails (3-5' width)
- Educational interpretation signage
- Forested / stormwater best management practices (BMPs)

Challenge - Deer Populations & Forest Health: Many of the natural and forested areas of Lower Providence have been degraded in recent years. Deer grazing is a factor as populations eat the seedlings and saplings before they can mature. Deer populations alter the balance of native plants in favor of invasive plants. As a result invasive plants leave fewer opportunities for native animals who depend on the native plants. Within Lower Providence and across the region aging forest canopies are not replaced by new trees, as new trees are decimated by deer populations. Many of the open space ecological areas require a general uplift to prevent the previously described impacts to forested and natural areas.

Philadelphia Protectory For Boys / St. Gabriel's (Parcel 9.61 acres)

Lower Providence Township should work with the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and consider acquisition / suggest Montgomery County to acquire the St. Gabriel's 9.61-acre parcel north of Pawlings Road.

Montgomery County could merge this 9.61-acre parcel with Mill Grove lands which could add value to existing County facilities. This parcel could potentially include areas for: recreational programming & sports courts, community gardens, watershed native plant production or small-scale farming.

As of 2021 this 9-acre parcel is being used by the Township for community gardens.

Philadelphia Protectory For Boys / St. Gabriel's (Parcel: 46.69 acres)

Lower Providence Township should work with the Archdiocese and consider partial acquisition of, or easement on the former St. Gabriel's property (south of Pawlings Road). The Valley Forge Connector Trail detailed later in this chapter has a conceptual alignment which runs north of Route 422 along this property.



While it is not financially feasible or prudent for Lower Providence Township to pursue acquisition for all of the parcels noted for preservation – each parcel noted is worthy of long-term conservation. If, however, an official map designates a parcel planned for development or subdivision as future open space the Township creates opportunities. It may seek to acquire the parcel or discuss the preservation of parts of it as open space---in addition to whatever provisions may already exist in the ordinances for trails or open space preservation. This does not affect existing property ownership and municipalities must act within one year once notice is given of intent to develop.

*Refer to Parcel Preservation Matrix on page 114 on for full description and future action of each parcel identified for preservation.

Preservation Strategy: Official Map

What is an official map?

As permitted by the PA Municipal Planning Code, the Official Map is a combined map and ordinance designed to implement the goals and community vision set forth in the Comprehensive Plan.

The Official Map shows the locations of planned future public lands and facilities such as transportation, recreational parks and trails, and open space.

The Official Map expresses a municipality's interest in acquiring these lands for public purposes at some future time. The Official Map process does not mandate any action by the Township. However, if a parcel designated as future open space is planned for development or subdivision of a land development or subdivision application, it gives the Township an opportunity to discuss preserving at least part of the parcel as open space, in addition to whatever provisions may exist in the zoning ordinance for open space preservation or providing residents with public trails.

An official map may include but need not be limited to:

- Existing and proposed public streets, watercourses, and public grounds, including widenings, narrowings, extensions, reductions, openings or closing of same.
- Existing and proposed public parks, playgrounds, and open space reservations.
- Existing and proposed pedestrian ways (trails) and easements.
- Flood control areas, floodways and floodplains, stormwater management areas and drainage easements.

Benefits of an official map

Adoption of an official map was a recommendation in the 2005 Lower Providence Open Space Plan and this plan builds on that recommendation. Benefits of an official map are:

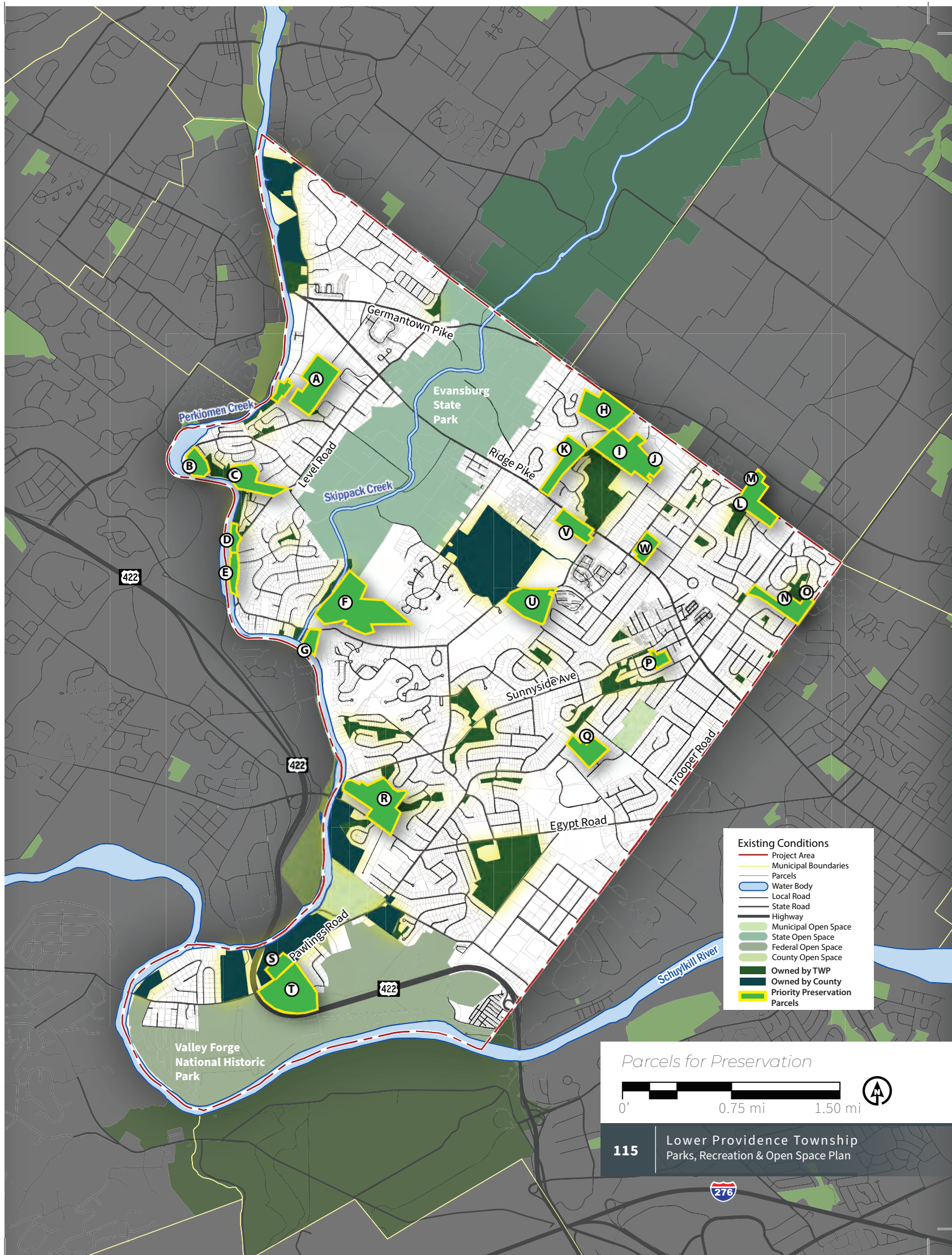
- Helps to focus limited financial resources on projects that meet and advance community goals.
- Helps to make improvements such as the street network improvements, intersection improvements, protecting natural areas, providing more green space, recreation facilities, trails, and sidewalks.
- Saves time and money by informing property owners and developers of municipal goals and intentions in advance of land development plans.
- Effective negotiation tool for municipalities, helping to ensure development is compatible with and supportive of public goals.
- Gives municipalities advantage in securing grants.

Lower Providence should place select parcels on the official map as 'open space' to ensure they remain open space in the future. Such actions can also be the first step towards Township acquisition.

More information can be found in the PennDOT guidebook, The Official Map: A Handbook for Preserving and Providing Public Lands and Facilities, available at <https://www.dot.state.pa.us/public/PubsForms/Publications/PUB%20703.pdf>.

Lower Providence Township Parcel Preservation Matrix

Key	Parcel	Notes	Size	Acres	Character	Conceptual Future Use	Action	Reasoning / Justification	Priority
A	IBEW	International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW). Four properties between Level Road and Perkiomen Creek. Large central recreation fields/picnic area with natural area steep slopes along west and south edge = 39 acres; Level Road property = 9.2 acres; Property adjacent to driveway - 5.5 acres ; Natural area along Perkiomen Creek = 3.4 acres;	57	Acres	Park & Open Space	Park Facilities & Open Space	Maintain / preserve as open space, pursue acquisition if possible	Greater than 10 acres. Identified in previous Township OS&R plan.	Medium
B	Gorski	Gorski property, largely floodplain with frontage along Perkiomen Creek at Yerkes section of Township	12	Acres	Wooded	Remain Wooded, Greenway, Water Access	Maintain / preserve as open space, pursue acquisition if possible	Greater than 10 acres. Identified in previous Township OS&R plan.	High
C	Kunda	Kunda Airfield property. Airfield currently in use. Take action if airfield closes.	30	Acres	Open Space	Remain Wooded, Greenway	Maintain / preserve as open space, pursue acquisition if possible	Greater than 10 acres. Located along primary greenway corridor (identified by County in Montco 2040); connects adjacent Township-owned riparian greenway parcels.	Low
D	Parris	Parris property along Perkiomen Creek.	7	Acres	Wooded, Steep Slopes	Remain Wooded, Greenway	Maintain / preserve as open space, pursue acquisition if possible	Connects adjacent Township-owned riparian greenway parcels. Located along primary greenway corridor (identified by County in Montco 2040)	Low
E	McKay	McKay property along Perliomen Creek	12	Acres	Wooded, Steep Slopes	Remain Wooded, Greenway	Maintain / preserve as open space, pursue acquisition if possible	Greater than 10 acres. Connects adjacent Township-owned riparian greenway parcels. Located along primary greenway corridor (identified by County in Montco 2040)	Low
F	Hideaway	Camp Hideaway property, wooded, adjacent to Skippack Creek	67	Acres	Wooded	Remain Wooded, Greenway	Maintain / preserve as open space, pursue acquisition if possible	Greater than 10 acres. Identified in previous Township OS&R plan.	Medium
G	Webster	Webster property, at terminus of Skippack Creek where meets the Perkiomen Creek.	7	Acres	Wooded, Steep Slopes	Remain Wooded, Greenway, Access	Maintain / preserve as open space, pursue acquisition if possible	Located at intersection of primary and secondary greenway corridors (identified by County in Montco 2040)	Medium
H	Cicchello	Cicchello property, 41.5 acres situate Smith Road, adjacent to Worcester Township.	37	Acres	Agriculture	Preserved Agriculture	Township preservation or acquisition	Greater than 10 acres. Identified in previous Township OS&R plan.	High
I	Heyser	Heyser property, Smith Road, traversed by tributary of Skippack Creek. Contains stream valley riparian corridor.	36	Acres	Wooded	Expand Eagleville Park, Remain Wooded	Township preservation or acquisition	Greater than 10 acres. Identified in previous Township OS&R plan.	High
J	BooBoo	BooBoo Realty property, east of Heyser parcel. Wooded	10	Acres	Wooded	Expand Eagleville Park, Remain Wooded	Township preservation or acquisition	Greater than 10 acres. Could connect to and expand upon existing adjacent Township-owned open space at Eagleville Park.	High
K	Mascaro	Mascaro property Largely wooded, strategically located near Eagleville Park and other open space	26	Acres	Wooded	Remain Wooded, Greenway	Maintain / preserve as open space, pursue acquisition if possible	Greater than 10 acres. Could connect to and expand upon existing adjacent Township-owned open space at Eagleville Park.	Medium
L	KeyBank	KeyBank property, 15.0 acres - adjacent to Eskie Memorial Park. Gentle slopes 1-3%, generally open with hedgerows along boundaries; suitable for active and passive recreation.	15	Acres	Agriculture	Preserved Agriculture	Township preservation or acquisition	Greater than 10 acres. Few remaining agricultural parcels in Township.	High
M	KeyBank	KeyBank property in Worcester Township, adjacent to Item M (above)	12	Acres	Agriculture	Preserved Agriculture	Township preservation or acquisition	Greater than 10 acres. Few remaining agricultural parcels in Township.	High
N	ValleyCrest	Valley Crest Landscaping (portion of) - situate between Park Avenue and Trooper Road	20	Acres	Wooded	Remain Wooded, Greenway	Maintain / preserve as open space, pursue acquisition if possible	Greater than 10 acres. Could connect to and expand upon existing adjacent Township-owned open space.	Low
O	SLI Enterprises	SLI enterprises property heavily wooded, join with above. Older farmhouse residence adjacent to Trooper Road.	2.75	Acres	Wooded	Remain Wooded, Greenway	Maintain / preserve as open space, pursue acquisition if possible	Could connect to and expand upon existing adjacent Township-owned open space.	Low
P	Sunnyside Ave	East of Sunnyside Avenue. Heavy wood - low area. (Movie lots.) Largely land locked. Consists of low natural wooded area surrounded by single family lots.	4.3	Acres	Wooded	Remain Wooded, Greenway	Maintain / preserve as open space, pursue acquisition if possible	Could connect to and expand upon existing adjacent Township-owned open space.	Low
Q	Shannondell	Shannondell property. 17 acres between Heatherwood Hill and Park Avenue. Includes some floodplain and wooded areas.	17	Acres	Wooded	Remain Wooded, Greenway	Maintain / preserve as open space, pursue acquisition if possible	Greater than 10 acres. Identified in previous Township OS&R plan.	Medium
R	RG Club	Lower Providence Rod & Gun Club; frontage along Egypt Road; includes floodplain.	47	Acres	Wooded	Remain Wooded, Greenway	Maintain / preserve as open space, pursue acquisition if possible	Greater than 10 acres. Identified in previous Township OS&R plan.	Low
S	St. Gabriel's A	St. Gabriel's Protectorate - North of Pawlings Road. Encourage Montgomery County to acquire and merge with adjacent County parcels.	10	Acres	Open Space	Park Facilities & Open Space	Montgomery Co. Acquisition	Greater than 10 acres. Identified in previous Township OS&R plan.	High
T	St. Gabriel's B	St. Gabriel's Protectorate - South of Pawlings Road.	46	Acres	Open Space	Park Facilities & Open Space	Maintain / preserve as open space, pursue acquisition if possible	Greater than 10 acres. Identified in previous Township OS&R plan.	High
U	Hospital	Eagleville Hospital Open Space -South of Eagleville Road.	26	Acres	Wooded	Remain Wooded, Greenway	Maintain / preserve as open space, pursue acquisition if possible	Greater than 10 acres. Identified in previous Township OS&R plan.	Medium
V	Ridgetop	Ridgetop Associates property, south of Ridge Pike. Part of Streamlight, Inc. parcel.	20	Acres	Open Space	Open Space	Maintain / preserve as open space, pursue acquisition if possible	Greater than 10 acres. Could connect to and expand upon existing adjacent Township-owned open space at Eagleville Park.	Medium
W	Fire Co.	Located at the intersection of East Mt. Kirk Avenue and Ridge Pike, owned by the Township Fire Company. Largely vacant, although it does contain a fire hall, some radio towers, and various outbuildings.	15	Acres	Open Space	Open Space	Maintain / preserve as open space, pursue acquisition if possible	Greater than 10 acres. Identified in previous Township OS&R plan.	Medium
Total Acres			536.05						



Greenways

The primary purpose to designate a “Greenway” is to:

- 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 through them.

Additional Greenways should be considered along hydrologic resources and extend from existing Township-owned parcels.

In Lower Providence Township greenways are protected under ARTICLE XXXIV (Riparian Buffer Overlay Zone – Zones 1 & 2) This ordinance regulates land use to ensure natural resources are preserved and protected. The extent of the riparian buffer is described below:

(1) Zone One. This zone will begin at each edge of a stream channel/waterline/wetland edge (whichever is applicable) and occupy a minimum width of 30 feet measured horizontally on a line perpendicular to the top of the bank/edge of waterline or wetland.

Where the land within 30 feet of the defined edge of a stream channel has an upland slope greater than 10%, Zone One shall include the land from the stream channel edge and the upland slope and shall further extend outward 30 feet from the edge or top of such upland slope; and

(2) Zone Two. This zone will begin at the outer edge of Zone One and occupy a minimum width of 60 feet in addition to Zone One, unless modified herein. Where the one-hundred-year floodplain extends greater than 90 feet from the waterway, Zone One shall remain a minimum of 30 feet, and Zone Two shall extend from the outer edge of Zone One to the outer edge of the one-hundred-year floodplain.

Lower Providence Township has done well to acquire parcels along important riparian and greenway corridors. Gaps in existing greenways should be filled starting from existing Township-owned parcels.

Successful greenway expansion & improved water quality will

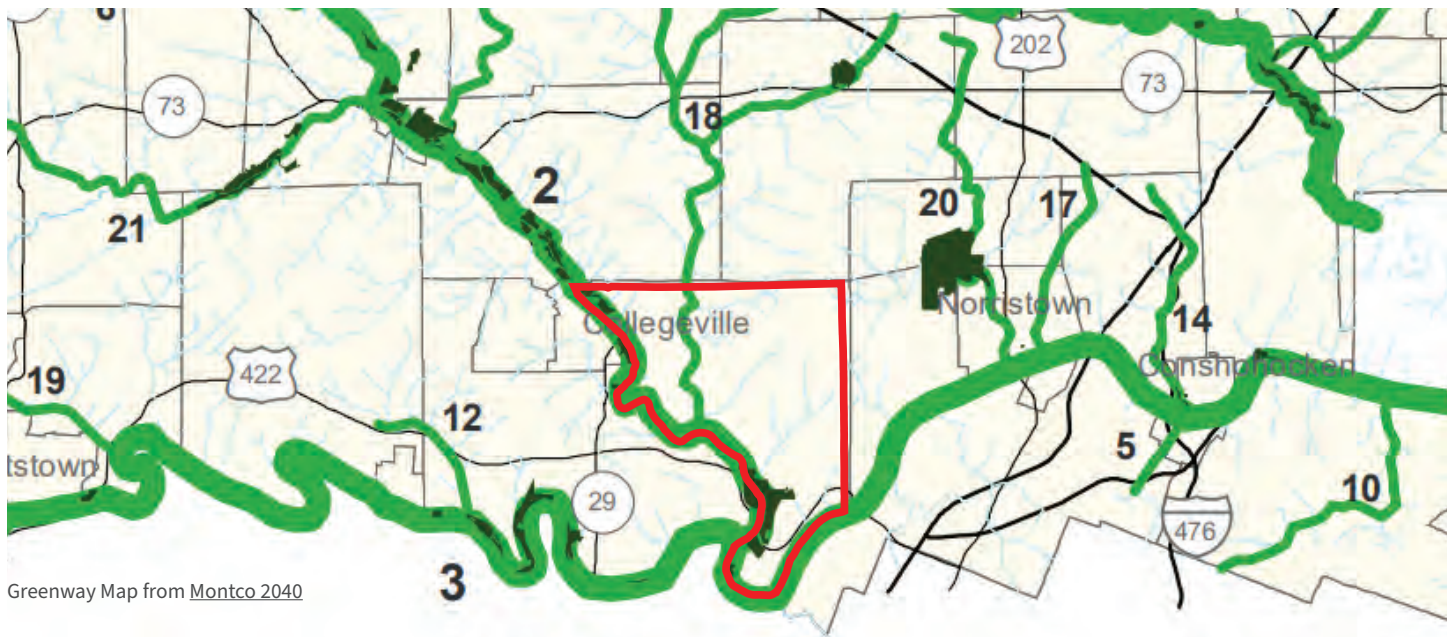
require action by local government and private citizens. The Township has done a great job of acquiring key greenway parcels, and will need the help of private citizens, as the Township is largely built-out.

Article XXXIV (Riparian Buffer Overlay Zone) of the Zoning Ordinance includes provisions for the restoration and revegetation of riparian buffers. The Township should institute a program to revegetate any greenway cover gaps in order to provide for continuous ribbons of land that protect natural habitats and enhance the water quality of the Townships creeks, streams and tributaries. Any program should follow the established regulations in Article XXXIV that call for the installation of three layers of vegetation consisting of native material when replanting the riparian buffer: a ground cover, understory shrubs and trees that form an overhead canopy.

In addition, the Township can work with existing private landowners to institute retroactive improvements to greenways on their land. Article XXXIV outlines the improvements that can be installed in the different zones of the riparian buffer subject to specific requirements. In both zones, they include unpaved hiking, biking or bridle trails, fishing areas, and natural resource preserves. Additional improvements are permitted in Zone Two by conditional use when authorized by the Board of Supervisors and include paved trails, sports and ball fields and courts, parklands, camps, picnic areas, golf courses and playgrounds. The Township can set a vision for greenways improvements, such as recognizing these spaces on an official map, and partner with landowners to implement these improvements. Such an arrangement can benefit both sides as landowners can be encouraged to build trails and other improvements through measures like tax incentives, and new recreational amenities that benefit Township residents can be introduced before any land development applications that may trigger the requirement of such improvements are filed.

Installation of improvements that also preserve natural resources and protect water quality may also help to address the Township’s MS4 requirements.

Recommended projects such as the Evansburg State Park Connector, should be planned to incorporate stormwater and greenway improvements to help address MS4 requirements.



Montco 2040: A Shared Vision

Montgomery County's 2015 comprehensive plan recognizes the importance of greenway and riparian conservation across the County and within Lower Providence Township.

"The county's greenways, which are primarily along its streams and rivers, connect the county's natural environment, providing important habitat preservation, wildlife corridors, and floodwater storage. With the county's park system and trail network, these greenways have also become important places for recreation, wellness, and social interaction, improving the county's overall quality of life.

Many of the county's parks are located along a greenway, and, as opportunities arise, the county will look to expand its park holdings within greenways.

However, most of the greenway corridors are not near county parkland, and local municipalities, both through their park systems and regulations, should work to preserve these environmentally sensitive corridors."

This plan identifies the following greenways in Lower Providence Township:

Primary Greenway

- Perkiomen Greenway
- Schuylkill Greenway

Secondary Greenway

- Skippack Greenway

Montgomery County is an important partner in future acquisition or preservation of properties along the Perkiomen and Skippack greenways.

Successful greenway expansion & improved water quality will requires action by both 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.

Future Greenway Opportunities

- Create municipal sponsored program for revegetation of greenway cover gaps
- Retroactive application of greenway buffer ordinance to better address MS-4 mandate

Local government can set the vision for greenway protection, secure larger parcels for greenway preservation, and encourage / incentivize private conservation efforts.

Property owners and private citizens can reduce large lawn areas and replace with native meadows and grasses, limit pesticide use, and plant native / diverse native tree species.

Stormwater Management

Projects with over 1 acre of disturbance require a Pennsylvania Chapter 102 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. These projects are required to implement BMPs. It is also recommended that BMPs be implemented for any project that requires them in accordance with the Township's stormwater ordinance. However, the standards for the MS4 program exceed those for the NPDES permit by at least 10%. Therefore it is recommended to plan ahead by over designing new projects to meet MS4 requirements and not just NPDES requirements. An example of this would be the Eskie Park proposed parking lot. By exceeding the NPDES permit requirements, the Township will avoid adding to their MS4 stream loading.

Tree plantings only provide a small amount of credit for pollution reduction. However, it should be done as much as possible and the Township should take credit for it wherever they can. It's simple to keep track of. Lineal BMPs such as bio-swales, infiltration trenches and even lineal rain gardens should be considered along trails. It is important to coordinate with Township engineer, Woodrow and Associates, so that they are located within the Township sewersheds. Maintaining records of when BMPs are installed and records of routine maintenance is crucial to the Township's MS4 program. Keeping track of maintenance of BMPs not only provides records for authorities such as PA Department of Environmental Protection (PennDEP) and the EPA but also extends the life of the BMP through regularly scheduled maintenance.

Lower Providence Township participates in the Skippack Creek Watershed Alliance, a group of municipalities that has committed to work together to address the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) set by PennDEP for the Skippack Creek. By implementing BMPs, the Alliance will collectively meet its requirements to reduce sediments and nutrients within the watershed. It is recommended that the Township continue to pursue BMPs as noted above within the Skippack Creek and coordinate those efforts with the Alliance.

Members of the Skippack Creek Watershed Alliance have teamed up with the Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy (PWC) to implement various tree plantings, riparian restoration and installation of stormwater BMPs. Massive stream restoration and afforestation plantings are in progress at Lower Salford Township's Jacob Reiff Park. Similar collaborations should be considered with Lower Providence Township & PWC.

Additional Recommendations

School District Agreement.

The Township should negotiate an agreement with the Methacton School District to secure permanent public access to the District's indoor and outdoor facilities. While reasonable restrictions on access are to be expected, such an agreement could address the need for indoor recreation facilities. School District properties contain valuable outdoor recreation facilities for organized sports and youth programs at numerous locations throughout the Township. These facilities should not be disposed of.

Indoor Recreation Facility.

The public opinion survey delineated a desire and need for indoor recreation opportunities. Currently in the Township, the only municipal indoor facility is the small Level Road Schoolhouse.

Lower Providence Township should conduct a feasibility study to determine if an indoor recreation facility is warranted or if the school buildings (such as a lease agreement with MSD at the closed Audubon Elementary) will fulfill the need adequately.



Recreation and Program Recommendations

Recommendations and comments below were formulated through discussions at public meetings, discussions with staff, survey results, and other communications. All comments were evaluated and researched to determine what may be possible for Lower Providence when considering budget constraints, staffing levels, resident expectations, and future opportunities.

Currently, Lower Providence offers scores of recreational programs for people of all ages and abilities. Programs are well received by the community. Most programs are offered during the late spring, summer, and early fall. The opportunity to augment programming is available for the fall, winter, and early spring seasons. Adding programs during these seasons will require indoor facilities to house the program.

Adding year round indoor programming can be accomplished through a variety of options. Firstly, through a capital improvement the Township can construct an indoor facility to permit indoor programming. This option will require a large capital investment and ongoing maintenance and staff investments for the Township. If this option is considered, it

is recommended that the Township perform a feasibility study to determine if an indoor facility is a viable option. A second option is the evaluation of expanding agreements with the school district to permit year-round access to school buildings. This option is a no cost, or low cost option that provides the Township indoor facilities to offer year round programs. A final option could be exploring public/private partnerships for year-round programming at facilities within Lower Providence Township. Based on the agreement type, offering programs at private facilities is also a low-cost option.

Year round or seasonal organized recreation programs instructors may include in-house instructors (current staff), seasonal Township employees, hired contracted instructors, or third-party recreation agencies. Current programs include summer camps, short term (4-8 week) educational offerings, health and wellness opportunities, sport camps, special events, to name a few. Expanding current programs, and offering new programs into the cooler months, provides additional revenues for the Township. Current staff is able to offer these additional programs; therefore, no additional full-time staff is required. Additionally, year round programming and one-day special events, if offered, help promote a sense of community. Special events may include pop-up events such as farmers markets,



Photo: Sherwood Park



Photo: Evansburg Pt. Park


community flea markets, brew pub events, holiday events, to name a few.

Additional programs will increase the budgetary expense; however, all programs should provide a positive revenue for the Township. All program expenses are recovered through registration fees and provide for a modest net profit. It should be noted, new programs offered may require a season or two before the program is established. Programs are often provided at a net loss for the first offering in order to allow the program to gain momentum. The Parks and Recreation Department has qualified staff to make determinations as to which programs should continue and which should be discontinued.

Successful departments have firm policies and procedure in place to assist the department. Such documentation provides support to the department, or director, and are necessary for decision making. Necessary policies include registration and refund policies, fees scheduling, rental procedures and policies, hiring practices, and others. These policies and procedures provide detailed documentation for the director, the administration, participants, and community groups. Lower Providence Parks

and Recreation has such policies and documents, all of which are well publicized.

Develop a mechanism to recruit and retain program instructors and third-party recreation providers. Instructors and third-party providers will play a large role in the success of the Department to offer year-round or seasonal programs. New Child Protective Services laws exist, adherence to these laws is mandatory. Develop a procedure to identify which instructors or third-party providers need clearances, and most importantly, develop a system to ensure all clearances are provided as outlined in the law.



Use the Parks and Recreation Board to review current policies used for field reservations, pavilion rentals, and other current policies and submit recommendations to the Director of Parks and Recreation. The review can address facility rental procedures, fees structures, rules and policy, maintenance issues or concerns, and who is eligible to use the facility. A well-defined set of policies provides the Director with the tools necessary to provide information to the community with the support of the Parks and Recreation Board and the Board of Supervisors.

Fees and Rentals

The fees charged for field and pavilion rental / reservation was reviewed to determine if Lower Providence Township is charging appropriate fees for services. Lower Providence Township receives minimal revenues from field and pavilion rentals. Sport fields are reserved for a fee to youth sport organizations and other groups for game, weekly, and seasonal rental fees. The fee permits those user groups exclusive use of the specific fields during the rental period. For the rental fee, Lower Providence Township provides basic park/field services including: grass cutting, weed whacking, trash and litter removal, and minor repairs which are commonly provided to all facilities. Permitted organizations are responsible for any additional needs. Such needs include: ballfield mix addition, field dragging, field lining or painting, dugout care and maintenance, restroom cleaning, snack stands, and other needs specific to the organization. This is not an uncommon practice for municipalities or Boroughs.

Our research has provided additional information as to how other communities administer their permit process.

Option #1: Provide no services. Some smaller communities provide parks for sport organizations permitted uses; however, the local government provides no services. Grass cutting, field dragging, field lining... are all provided by the permitted organization. This creates issues for many permitted organizations. Volunteer hours, field care training, and costs of services all make it difficult to sustain the youth organization. It also provides less control of the park and field by the local government. Permitted groups may not have the knowledge necessary for field maintenance and care and can create additional work or dangerous field conditions. Insurance is also required from all user groups who obtain a permit.

Option #2: Provide field space with no rental fees. Many communities provide basic field needs for the community.

These communities provide basic services similar to what Lower Providence provides. The difference is no permit fee is charged. In this instance, most of these communities do not permit non-resident groups to reserve a field, only resident groups, defined by the local government, are permitted to apply for a permit and insurance is required. What facilities are provided vary greatly. For instance: some communities perform maintenance to a higher level which may include ballfield dragging, line painting... The belief in not charging a fee is that these communities have identified that the youth groups provide a service that the Township or Borough could not otherwise perform (little Leagues, Soccer Clubs...). Some of these local governments retain the right to close fields if conditions warrant and the decision is not left to the user groups.

Option #3: Facilities are provided for a rental fee: this is Lower Providence current policy. Fees for this service vary from community to community, but most are modest fees which permits the rental organizations the opportunity to afford the rental fee, insurance is still required. If the fee is deemed too expensive, there is the potential that these organizations may not be able to provide the service. Some youth sports are more expensive and such groups may not be able to provide this important function in the community. Maintenance provided by the local government differ from community to community, but is similar to what is stated above.

Option #4: Provide facilities and financial assistance to youth organizations. This is rare but does occur and insurance is required. In this case, the community provides field space and also supplements youth organizations with financial assistance to ensure the organization can continue to provide the youth sport program. Typically found in wealthier communities, maintenance service are provided similar to what is outlined in options #2 and #3. Adult leagues and users are not provided financial assistance in this option.

The overall belief in almost all communities is that youth sport services are an integral part of the community and these organizations are essential to the residents of the Township or Borough. If these services are not provided by the organizations, then local governments may have to provide the service and most realize that is unrealistic due to staffing and volunteer resources. It is a common belief that it is appropriate for the youth sport organizations to administer youth sport services for the community.

Pavilion fee structure should be reviewed to determine if the rental fees charged are appropriate. A review of neighboring communities reflect that Lower Providence Townships pavilion rental fee structure is lower than most communities. A new fees structure should be considered. An average of pavilion fees from neighboring communities reflect that the average fee for a pavilion rental for a half a day is just over \$75 for residents and over \$150 for non-residents (L.P.T. charges \$60 and \$120 for daily rental). Some fees; however, do exceed \$125 for residents and \$250 for non-residents. The variant is the size of the pavilion rental and the rental period. Some communities rent pavilions by the hour, by the half day, and also by the full day. The higher fees are for pavilions that can hold between 75 and 100 visitors. A modest fee increase seems justified for Lower Providence Township; however, the modest fee adjustment will not generate a large revenue increase. If pavilions fees are adjusted by \$25 and are rented three times per week during the rental season, additional revenues generated will provide between \$4,000 and \$5,000 annually.

Recreation and Program Recommendations

- Increase programs offered by expanding current programs and providing an indoor facility for year round programming through new construction or partnerships.
- Develop or enhance written agreements with the school district or private facilities to permit sustainable indoor use for programs.
- Develop a mechanism to recruit instructors to teach a variety of year round classes, camps, or other programs. This includes contracted service providers and third-party organization providers.

- Provide a policy for background checks for all participant recreation providers who offer recreational programs in the Township.
- Develop a policy for attracting recreational providers, advertising recreational programs, and program evaluation.

Maintenance Recommendations

Maintenance personnel should be augmented to include two to three dedicated seasonal parks maintenance workers to assist the Public Works Department's three full time staff dedicated to park maintenance. Dedicated workers (mid-March – October) will provide additional staff-hours required to perform the many tasks associated with park work. In 2021, the Township will be performing all grass cutting in-house and not outsourcing that service. Grass cutting requires additional staff hours. One seasonal Maintenance worker, working 40 hours per week for 25 week equals 1,000 hours. This cost could exceed \$13,000 per worker per seasonal maintenance worker; however, the cost is offset by increased in-house work performed, better maintenance practices, an enhance experienced for park patrons, and increased safety of the park facility. All of which enhance risk management measures.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) guidelines for park and playgrounds should be reviewed during daily maintenance to ensure no risk management issues. A Certified Parks Safety Inspector, through the Delaware Valley Insurance Trust, does perform an annual audit to reduce risk exposure for the Township. That playground report is used to make modifications to maintenance practices or to remove or replace play equipment pieces or structures that no longer conform to CPSC guidelines.

The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) outlines laws that govern access for all persons. Adherence to these laws is required and should be reviewed at each park location to ensure the laws are being met. This may include small items such as a bench location in proximity to a walking path or access to play equipment. Additionally, ADA requires a certain percentage of play equipment be available for persons with disabilities.

Best Management Practices should be incorporated to a greater level. While much of the maintenance work is more than adequate, there are areas for improvement. Continue to offer

maintenance staff the opportunity to attend best management practices seminars and environmental workshops. Additional worthwhile workshops include playground certification and ballfield maintenance seminars. These seminars and workshops are minimal in cost and provide a wealth of knowledge on the investment.

- Consider adding two seasonal maintenance workers dedicated to park maintenance (the Township is scheduled up to three seasonal maintenance workers in 2021).
- Develop a program and / or brochure that provides information concerning best management practices for environmental concerns, land stewardship, and sustainability that is distributed to residents.
- Supplement seminar and workshop training for all maintenance staff.
- Staff training should include arboriculture and horticulture training related to woody and herbaceous best management practices (i.e. proper pruning & tree care techniques).

Administrative / Operational Recommendations

The Lower Providence administrative offices serve as the central contact point for residents, businesses, and community groups of Lower Providence. Administration services are well received by the community and function at a high-level providing services, responsiveness, and communication with the residents.

- Utilize the Parks and Recreation Board to review policies for program resident and non-resident fees, and **report recommendations to the Director of Parks and Recreation which can be passed to Township Supervisors**. Recommendations can be enacted by the Board of Supervisors. Several models of various fees structures exist through the PA Recreation and Park Society or the National Recreation and Park Association. Policies will assist the administration when determining fees for future programs and will also provide written documentation should questions arise.
- Continue to utilize the Parks and Recreation Board to provide outreach and as serve as the eyes and ears for the Township and recreational needs, and support the initiatives of the Parks and Recreation Department.

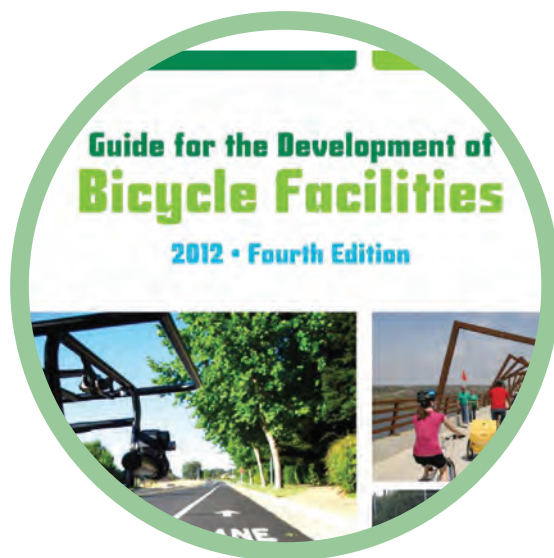
Photo: Evansburg Pt. Park



Multimodal Recommendations

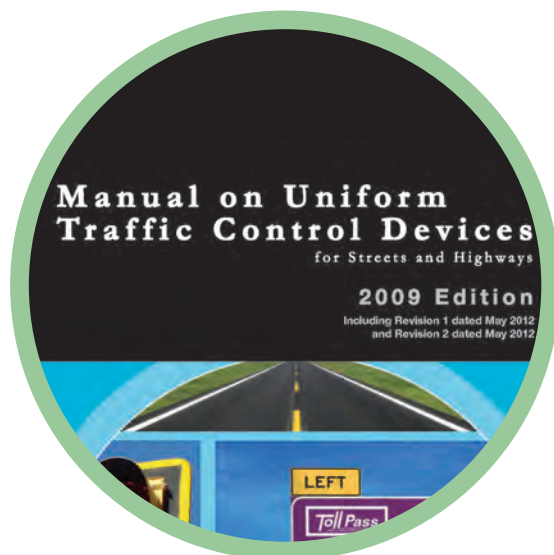
Design Guidelines

Various national and locally recognized organizations have developed bicycle and pedestrian design standards. The following guides were referenced extensively throughout the design process.



AASHTO - Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities

AASHTO provides federally accepted standards for the development of bicycle facilities including information on: Bicycle Planning, Bicycle Operation and Safety, Design of On-Road Facilities, Design of Shared Use Paths, Bicycle Parking Facilities, and Maintenance and Operations. All improvements should adhere to these standards.



MUTCD - Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices

The Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices provides standards for the design and implementation of traffic control devices that provide for safe and efficient transportation. Part 9 of the manual includes traffic control for bicycle facilities. The section includes signs, pavement markings and highway traffic signals for both on-road and off-road trail facilities. All guidance in this document should be adhered to when implementing the alignment alternatives.

NACTO - Urban Bikeway Design Guide

The NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide provides cities with state-of-the-practice solutions that can help create complete streets that are safe and enjoyable for bicyclists. Bike Lanes, intersection treatments, bicycle signals, bikeway signage & marking, and the practice of designing for all ages & abilities are all covered within this guide.



NACTO - Urban Street Design Guide

The NACTO Urban Street Design Guide provides innovative solutions to design for and around the special characteristics of the urban environment. Street Design Elements, Interim Design Strategies, Intersections Improvements & Design Elements and Design Controls are all discussed in detail.



FHWA - Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks

The FHWA - Small town and Rural Multimodal Networks provides design guidance for pedestrian and bicycle safety in areas of smaller scale. This document focuses on establishing safe multi-modal connections within and automobile-dominated landscape. Illustrations, technical diagrams, and photographs detail proposed improvements to roadways, sidewalks, intersections, and more.





Bike Lanes

Connectivity Improvements

Bicycle Lanes

Bicyclists operate within a designated portion of the roadway that is separate from motor vehicle traffic:

Bike lanes should be provided on both sides of two-way streets.

Bike Lane Widths without Parking: 4' minimum (not adjacent to curb) and 5' minimum (adjacent to curb or another obstacle).

Bike Lane Widths with Parallel Parking: 5' minimum to 7' (wider bike lanes are recommended adjacent to parking areas to reduce conflict with opening vehicle doors) Bike lanes should be placed between the parking lane and travel lane (this applies to diagonal and parallel parking).

Storm Drains and Utility Covers: Bike lanes should be wide enough to accommodate bicyclists swerving to avoid obstructions.

Bike Lane Striping: 4" to 6" solid white line (dotted lines are optional at major driveways and intersections, solid lines should be continued at all minor driveways).

Pavement Marking: Bike Lane Symbols (MUTCD 9C - 3).

Bike Lane Signage: Bike Lane (R3-17) placed at periodic intervals with either Ahead (R3-17aP) or Ends (R3-17bP) where appropriate.



Shared Use Paths

Shared Use Paths

Shared use paths are bikeways that are physically separated from the vehicular cartway by a physical barrier or open space. Shared use paths also include side paths. Design of these facilities should comply with current ADA requirements. Path users include:

- Bicyclists of all types
- Inline & roller skaters, and skateboarders
- Kick scooter users
- Pedestrians

Design Requirements

Trail width: 10' minimum to 14' (8' is permitted under rare circumstances) Trail Shoulder width: 2' minimum shoulder free of vertical obstructions (fence, sign, wall, etc.), 3' to 5' is preferred.

Trail Shoulder slope: 1 vertical to 6 horizontal (1:6) maximum

Adjacent to a body of water or slope: 1 vertical to 3 horizontal (1:3) or greater vertical distance between the trail and nuisance should be minimum 5' (physical barrier or rail is recommended and may be placed at a minimum 1' from the edge of trail)

Vertical Clearance: 8' minimum, 10' preferred.

Separation between Trail and roadway: 5' minimum from edge of pavement (if less than 5' a physical barrier is needed)

Trail cross slope: Not to exceed 2%, 1% is recommended.

Trail grade slope: Maximum grade should be 5% or match that of the adjacent roadway. For an off-road trail grade may go up to 8% for not more than 200 lineal feet.

Connectivity Improvements

Signage - Signage can be provided along the road with no cartway (pavement) improvements. Signage informs motorists to watch out for bicyclists on the roadway.

MUTCD standards: Share the Road (W11- and W16-1P) signs and Bicyclist May Use Full Lane (R4-11) signs; Place signs at the beginning of the bike route, roadway intersections, and throughout the segment where deemed required, and at the end of the bike route.



Marked Shared Lanes - Bicyclists operate on the roadways with motor vehicles (Not to be used on roads with posted speed limits in excess of 25 mph):

Shared-Lane Striping: (MUTCD 9C - 9) placed at intersections and at intervals not greater than 250'

Striping position on cartway with Parallel Parking: Place center of sharrow 11' from face of curb or edge of travel way

Striping position on cartway with no Parking: 4' from face of curb or edge of travel way

Signage (noted previously) is still required



Image from: Flickr

Paved Shoulders - Bicyclists operate on the shoulders of roadways, typically on rural roadways:

Paved Shoulders should be located on both sides of the road

Shoulder width with no vertical obstruction: 4' shoulder width minimum

Shoulder width with vertical obstruction (curb, guide rail, etc.): 5' shoulder width minimum



Trail Surface Types



Image from: Pexels

Asphalt Surfaces

Asphalt surfaces provide for the widest variety of trail users including bicyclist, walkers, joggers, wheelchair users, and in-line skaters. Initial installation costs are relatively high (lower than Portland cement concrete however) compared to other trail surface types. However, long term maintenance costs will remain lower than others if properly installed and maintained. Asphalt trails are preferred in flood prone areas. Porous asphalt can also be used in situations where stormwater infiltration or a pervious surface is required. Porous asphalt should not be used in flood prone areas where silt will clog the voids in the pavement.



Concrete Surfaces

Portland cement concrete pavement is the most durable material for trail surfaces but is the costliest. Concrete trails are commonly used in urban environments. Advantages of concrete include longer service life, reduced susceptibility to cracking and deformation from roots and weeds, and a more consistent riding surface after years of use and exposure to the elements. The joints in concrete trail treads can degrade the experience of using the path for some wheeled users. In addition, users can see pavement markings more easily on asphalt than on concrete, particularly at night. Concrete's light color on a trail reflects the sunlight.



Image from: WikimediaCommons

Compacted Aggregate Surfaces

Compacted aggregate surfaces, or stone dust trails, can accommodate all trail user types except for in-line skaters. Initial installation costs for this trail surface are relatively low, however long-term maintenance costs increase due to this surface's higher susceptibility to erosion, especially if not properly installed with swales and cross drains. Crushed limestone or sandstone or "Trail Surface Aggregate (TSA) Mix" are typical aggregates used in this situation. A compacted aggregate surface can also serve as base material for an asphalt surface if trail use increases or funds become available for a surfacing upgrade. Compacted aggregate surfaces should be avoided in flood prone areas or on slopes over 3%.



Pavers

Pavers composed of clay or concrete may be a suitable pavement material where the context is of a historic nature. This material is highly aesthetically pleasing and durable. However, this material is the most expensive type of trail or sidewalk surface and is typically used only in areas of high visibility or in areas of historic significance.



Photo: Dell Angelo Park

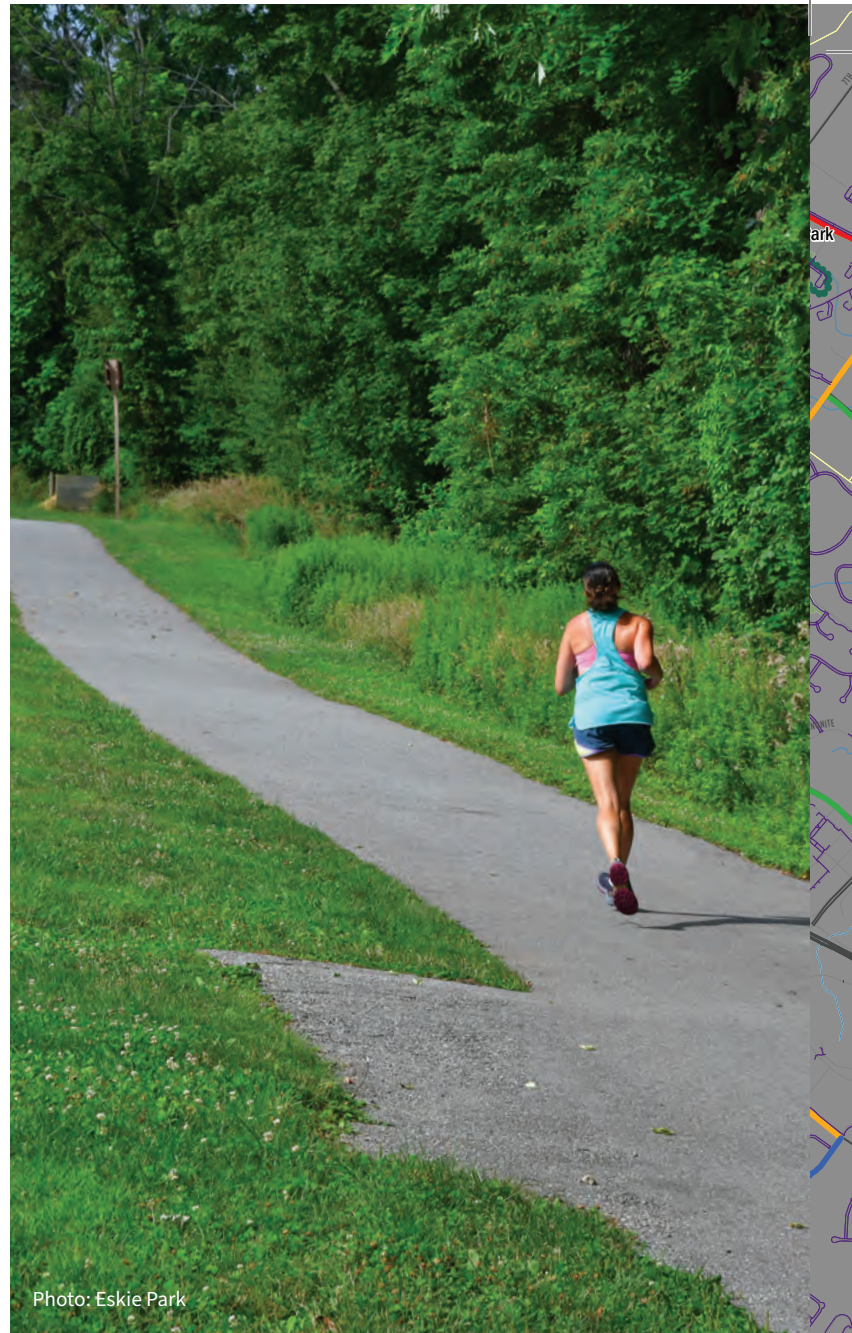


Photo: Eskie Park

Proposed Connectivity Improvements

(Map of all improvements on the opposite page)

The proposed improvements plan on the opposite page note's approximate locations of pedestrian and bicycle improvements in Lower Providence Township. Based upon site analysis, field reconnaissance, and information gathered at committee meetings, several guiding principles were established.

- Connect to parks and open space of Lower Providence and the surrounding area.
- Connect to local and regional trails via on-road infrastructure and multi-use trails.
- Establish safe connections across barriers such as high-volume roadways.
- Connect to the amenities and services of Lower Providence as well as adjacent municipalities.
- Establish cross-Township connections (north/south & east/west) on low-stress or low-traffic volume routes.

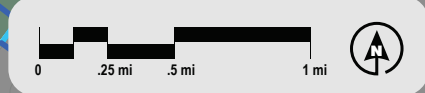
LOWER PROVIDENCE TOWNSHIP,
PARKS AND RECREATION OPEN SPACE PLAN

Existing Conditions

- Project Area
- Municipal Boundaries
- Parcels
- Water Body
- Streams
- Local Road
- State Road
- Highway

Open Space & Recreation

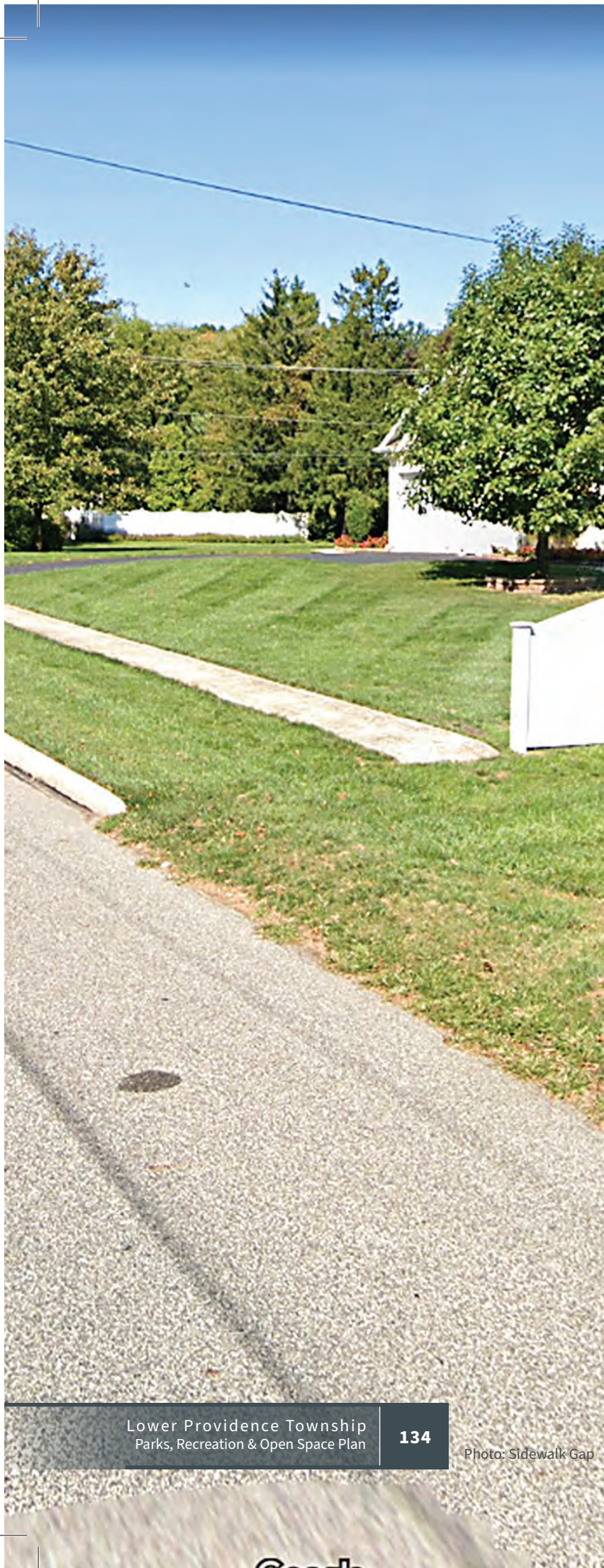
- Municipal
- County
- State
- Federal



- Sidewalk Gap (Priority)
- Sidewalk Gap (from others)
- Proposed off road trail
- Proposed Bridge
- Proposed Small Boat Launch

- Existing Sidewalk
- Existing Trail
- Existing Water Trail
- Existing Boat Launch

- Bike Montco (MCPC - 2018)
- Local Rural/Scenic
 - Local Urban
 - Collector Rural/Scenic
 - Collector Urban
 - Minor Arterial
 - Principal Arterial



Sidewalk Inventory & Gaps

Sidewalks are basic transportation infrastructure in any village or town. Sidewalks allow pedestrians to safely move between destinations, from home to work, to places of worship and to parks, to trails and civic spaces. Sidewalks are clustered in residential developments and are lacking connectivity to local destinations within Lower Providence Township.

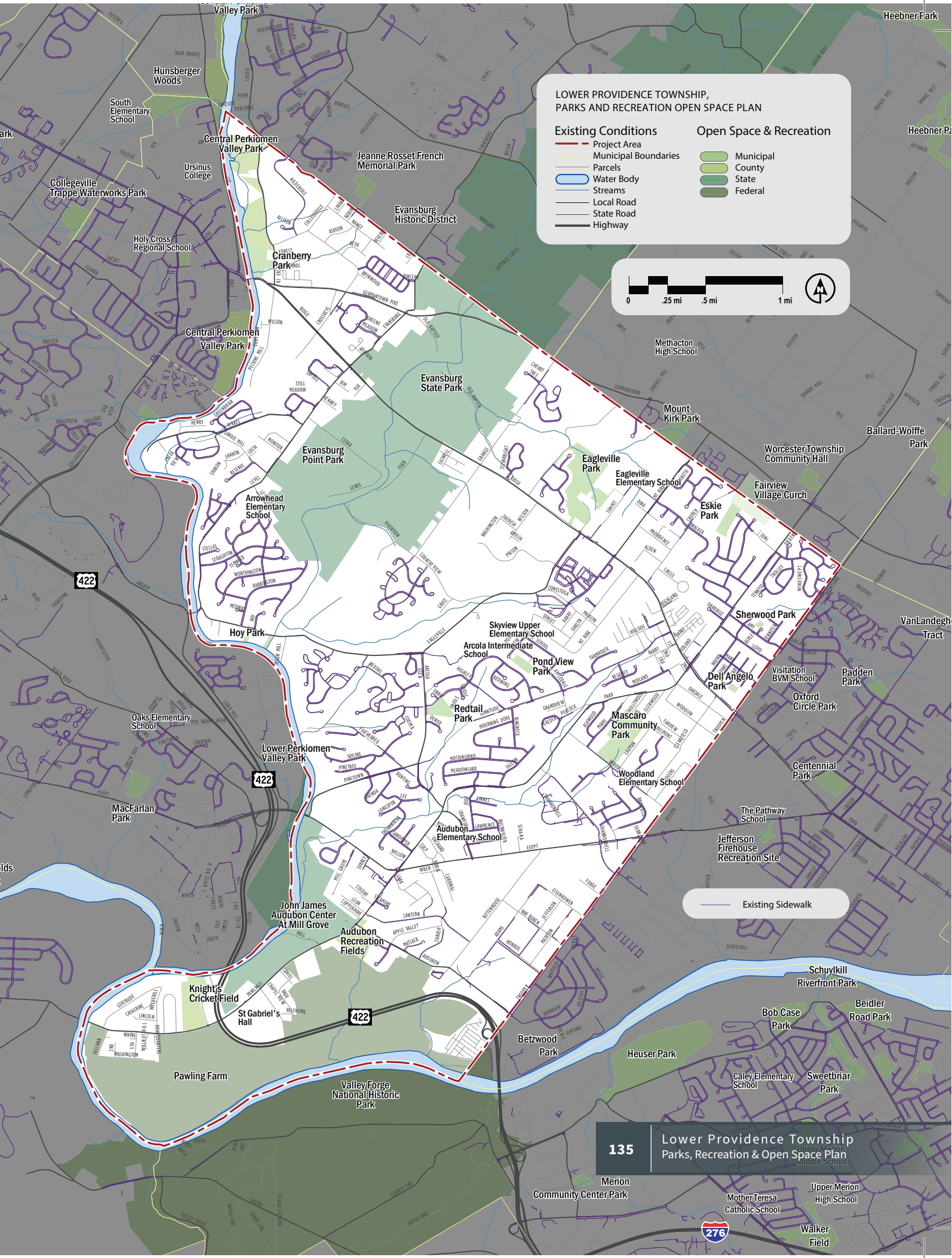
Sidewalk and pedestrian improvement priorities identified in the Greater Valley Forge (GVF) 2009 Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure Improvement Plan have been incorporated into this plan, including:

- Sidewalks along Ridge Pike between Hillside and Trooper.
- Connections to the Valley Forge Corporate Center.

While not financially feasible to propose sidewalks in all gaps, this plan takes a critical look at filling priority sidewalk gaps. Priority sidewalk gaps were determined by the following criteria:

Can the sidewalk gap provide:

- Connection to existing sidewalk infrastructure
- Connection to MSD school facility
- Connection to Township park and recreation facilities
- Connection to local commercial and civic destinations

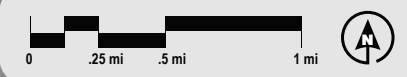


LOWER PROVIDENCE TOWNSHIP,
PARKS AND RECREATION OPEN SPACE PLAN

- Existing Conditions**

 - Project Area
 - Municipal Boundaries
 - Parcels
 - Water Body
 - Streams
 - Local Road
 - State Road
 - Highway
- Open Space & Recreation**

 - Municipal
 - County
 - State
 - Federal





Proposed Sidewalks (Along Priority Sidewalk Gaps)

Sidewalks are proposed along routes that will serve the largest number of Township residents and improve accessibility to Town destinations such as parks, trails, open space, and commercial areas. Approximate locations of new sidewalks are based on site reconnaissance, a Township sidewalk inventory (completed with data from DVRPC, GVFTMA, committee members) and input from Township staff and the steering committee.

The backbone of the sidewalk recommendations plan contains 59,000 linear feet (LF) of sidewalks in priority gap locations.

Priority sidewalks are delineated on the map on the opposite page and include the following:

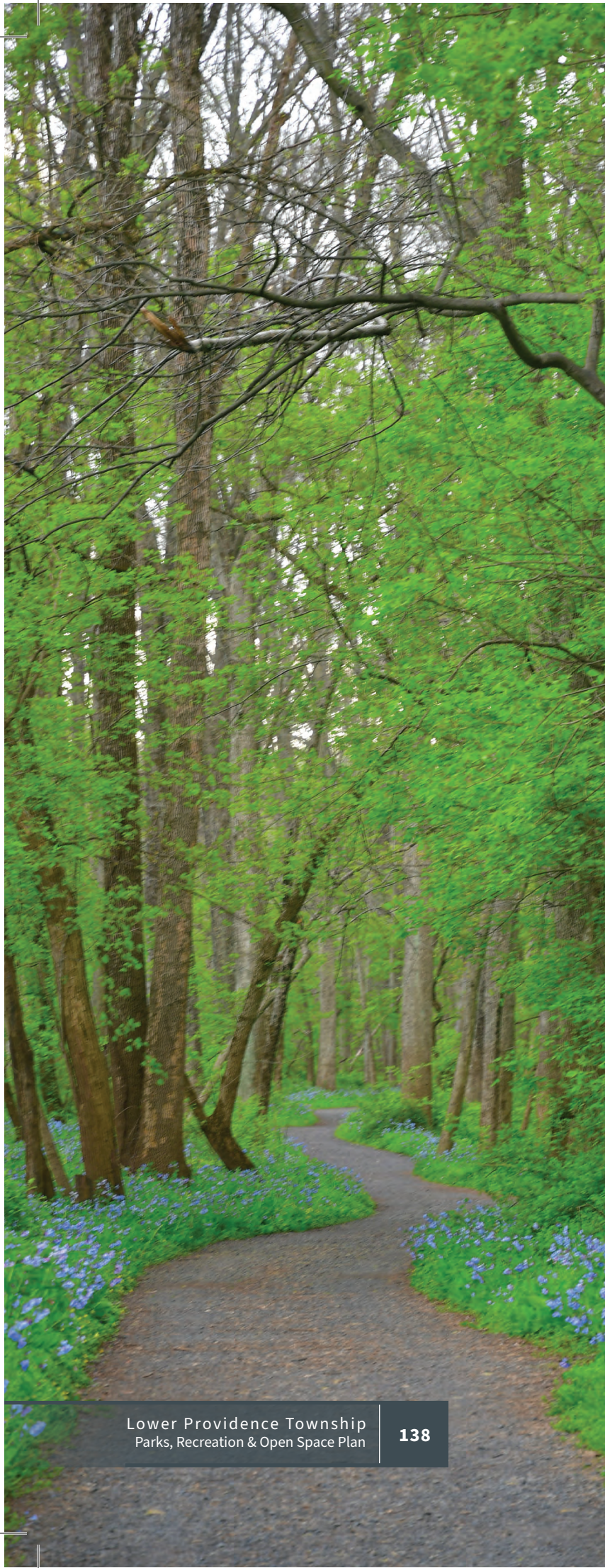
Audubon Road	3,050 LF
Pawlings Road (Between Audubon Rd & Egypt Rd)	985 LF
Thrush Lane	400 LF
Egypt Road	5,735 LF
Wedgewood Way	400 LF
Crawford Road	5,100 LF
Pinetown Road	1,900 LF
Arcola Road	7,000 LF
Level Road	5,730 LF
Ridge Pike	7,180 LF
Eagleville Road	2,300 LF
Visitation Road	3,300 LF
Marilyn Avenue	900 LF
Clearfield Avenue	4,100 LF
Appledale Road	1,400 LF
Miami Avenue	300 LF
N Park Avenue	860 LF
Church Road	2,700 LF
Summit Avenue	1,200 LF
Evansburg Road	2,500 LF
Germantown Pike	910 LF
River Road	600 LF
Collegeville Road	1,150 LF

Additional sidewalk gaps to be assessed for new sidewalk have been proposed by Montgomery County in previous planning studies along Ridge Pike and Germantown Pike:

Additional Ridge Pike (Per Montco Comp Plan)	11,300 LF
Additional Germantown Pike (Per Montco Comp Plan)	8,600 LF

The map on the opposite page identifies priority sidewalk gaps that can serve the greatest number of Township residents. Not all gaps depicted here.

This plan recommends the Township conduct a walk & bike connectivity plan based on these recommendations. Sidewalk gap prioritization based on cost and need recommended as a part of this process.



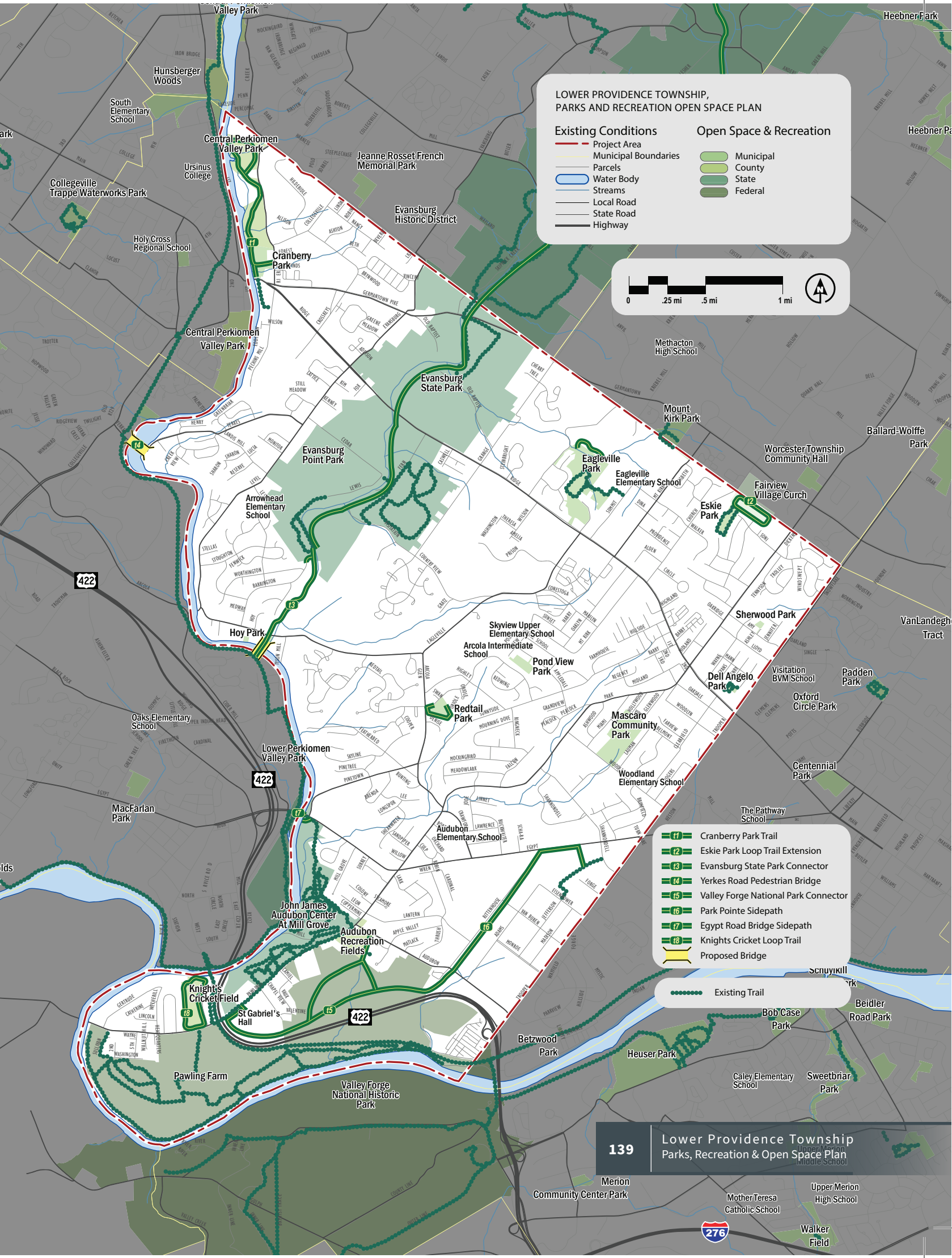
Multi-Use Trails

Multi-Use Trails are generally a minimum of 10 feet in width and may be designed at widths of up to 14 feet for high-volume trails. In rare instances where space is limited, trails may be installed at an 8-foot width. Such trails can be paved with asphalt or stone dust / stone screenings. Users include cyclists, roller-bladers, skateboarders, runners, joggers, and pedestrians. Motorized wheelchairs for handicapped users are also permitted.

Where possible, trails have been proposed to connect to existing trails in order to close any trail gaps and create a uniform local multi-modal network.

Multi-use trails provide a convenient means for different user types to enjoy a common amenity and shared infrastructure. The width of these trails allows walkers, joggers, cyclists and other users the ability to recreate safely from one another. Multi-use trails also allow these different user groups a chance to interact with each and foster a sense of community in a space they share and may want to help maintain. Multi-use trails also require less resources and expenses than single use trails as they require fewer signs and less staff to maintain.

Photo: Valley Forge River Trail

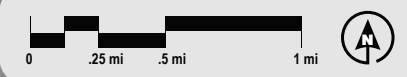


LOWER PROVIDENCE TOWNSHIP,
PARKS AND RECREATION OPEN SPACE PLAN

- Existing Conditions**

 - Project Area
 - Municipal Boundaries
 - Parcels
 - Water Body
 - Streams
 - Local Road
 - State Road
 - Highway
- Open Space & Recreation**

 - Municipal
 - County
 - State
 - Federal



- 11 Cranberry Park Trail
- 12 Eskie Park Loop Trail Extension
- 13 Evansburg State Park Connector
- 14 Yerkes Road Pedestrian Bridge
- 15 Valley Forge National Park Connector
- 16 Park Pointe Sidepath
- 17 Egypt Road Bridge Sidepath
- 18 Knights Cricket Loop Trail
- Proposed Bridge

Existing Trail



Cranberry Park / Central Perkiomen Park Trail

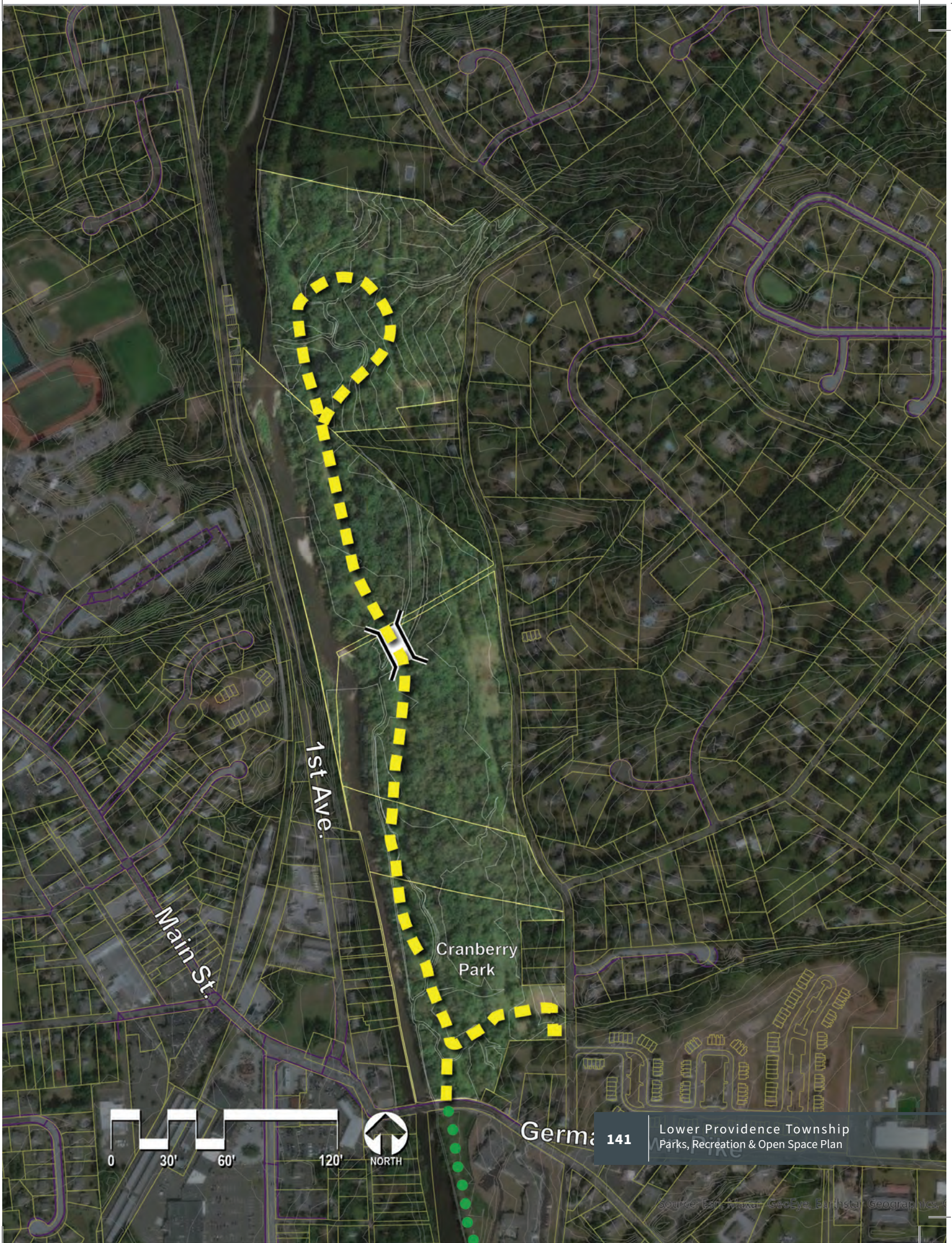
Cranberry Park and the Central Perkiomen Park are both located within the 100-year floodplain in lowland areas at times inundated by floodwaters if the Perkiomen Creek.

Due to this context, it is recommended that the proposed 1.30-mile trail at this location be an earthen and mown trail to drastically reduce maintenance that would result from flooding damage.

A trail in this location can provide views of and access to the unique lowland habitats along the Perkiomen Creek. This trail can also connect to the new multi-use trail south of Ridge Pike which runs along Perkiomen Creek and connects to Providence Place Senior Living.

Lower Providence Township should continue to parter with the Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy to plant additional trees to increase the overall riparian canopy in this area.





Eskie Park Loop Trail Extension

Eskie Park is a well-used community park which includes a loop trail, ballfield, basketball court, and playground area. As described in previous sections, the Township should consider whether to acquire the agricultural parcel(s) north of Eskie Park currently owned by KeyBank.

If the 15-acre parcel north of Eskie Park is acquired, regardless of its future use (Option A: Agriculture, Option B: Develop for Active Recreation) a 0.65-miles asphalt loop trail should be implemented around the perimeter of the parcel. This would connect to the existing Eskie Park trail loop to create a trail with a new total distance of 1.15 miles.





Existing

Proposed

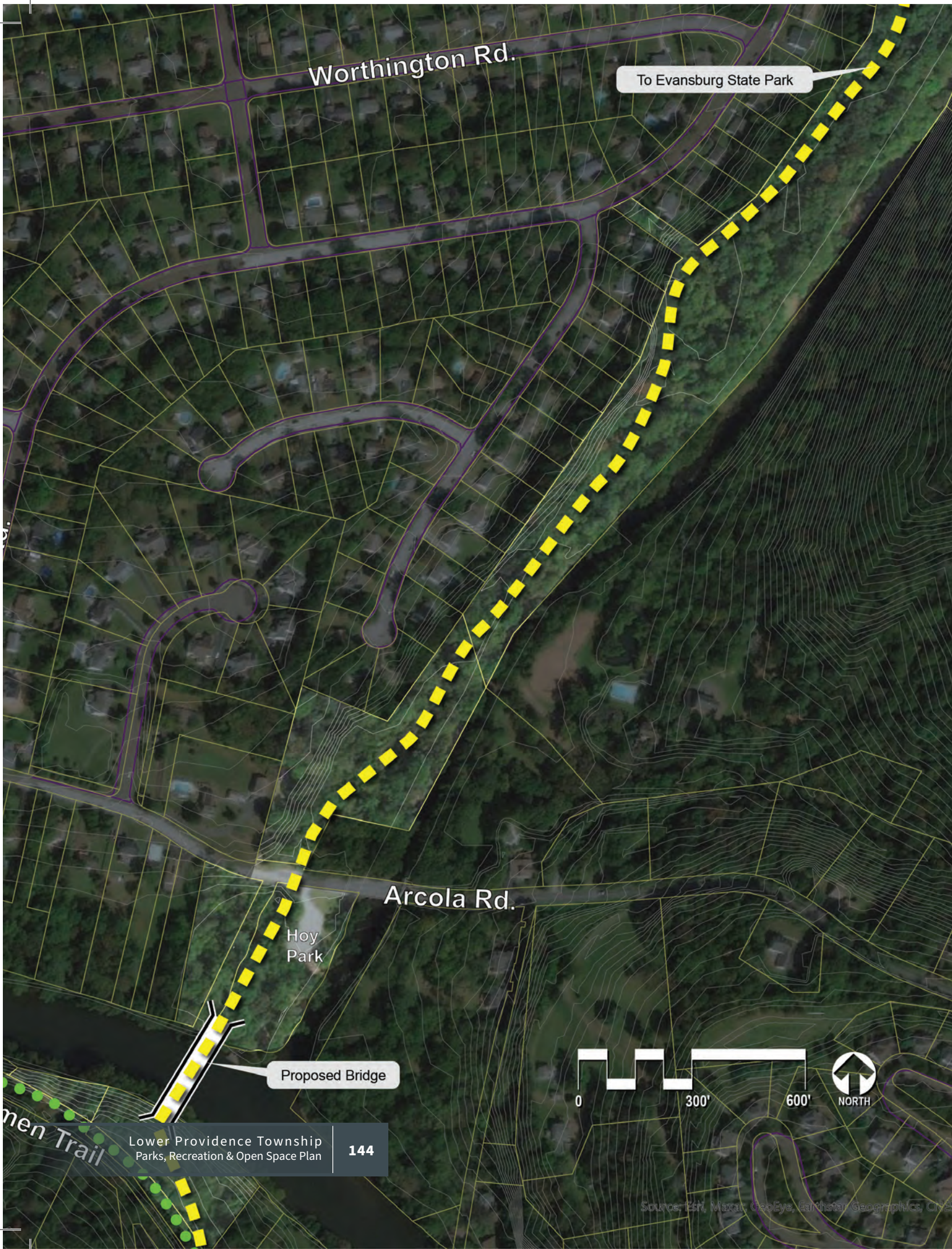


Photo: Western bank Perkiomen Creek

Evansburg State Park Connector

As previously noted in the description and facility inventory of Evansburg State Park, while this facility contains interior trails, there are limited multi-modal connections between the park's host municipalities and these interior trails.

As proposed within previously planning studies such as Bike Montco (2018), this plan recommends a multi-use trail that extends from the terminus of the Skippack Creek at Hoy Park (and subsequent pedestrian bridge crossing of the Perkiomen), northeast through Evansburg State Park. Such a trail could also provide needed multimodal access between the Perkiomen Trail and Evansburg State Park.

For this plan, a 0.66-mile multi-use trail is proposed from the southwest corner of Evansburg State Park to Hoy Park. A port of this proposed trail area is already owned by Lower Providence Township. As part of the Township's commitment to the Skippack Creek Watershed Alliance, any future trail improvements should also be combined with stormwater BMP areas. This combination of trail uses could allow the Township to pursue additional grant opportunities.

Perkiomen Pedestrian Bridge

The conceptual Perkiomen pedestrian bridge could provide a pedestrian and bicycle connection between Lower Providence Township, Evansburg State Park and the Perkiomen Trail. As previously noted, there are few access points for Township residents to reach the Perkiomen Trail on foot or safely by bike.

The Township should consider a stand-alone feasibility study for this bridge alternative. The Township should pursue this bridge concept OR the Yerkes Road pedestrian bridge.





Proposed Perkiomen Pedestrian Bridge



Perkioemen Trail

Yerkes Rd.

Yerkes Rd.

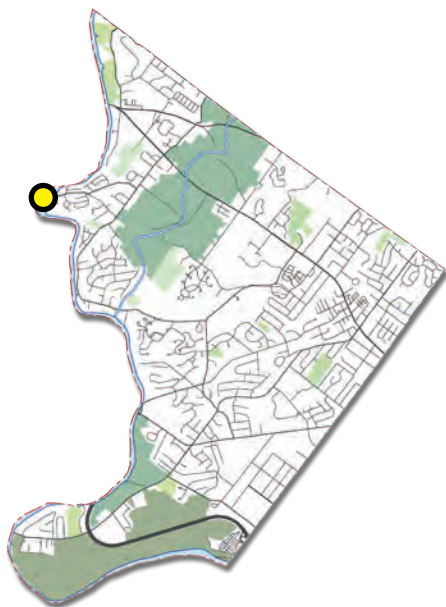
Perkioemen Trail



Yerkes Road Pedestrian Bridge

Conceptually located at the terminus of Yerkes Road, this pedestrian bridge would be located in the location of the previous Yerkes Road bridge. This pedestrian bridge could provide multi-modal access to the Perkiomen Trail for Township residents.

The Township should consider a stand-alone feasibility study for this bridge alternative. The Township should pursue this bridge concept OR the Perkiomen pedestrian bridge noted previously.



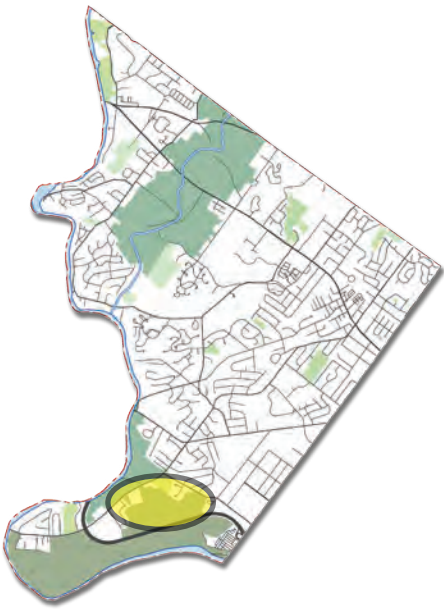


Valley Forge National Park Connector

This 2.7 mile conceptual trail establishes a pedestrian and bicycle trail that would connect the Audubon Loop Trail on Pawlings Road to the underutilized area of Valley Forge National Historical Park north of Route 422 and the MARA Baseball/ Softball Fields along Pawlings and Audubon Roads. It would also merge with the Park Pointe Sidepath (described below) which connects to residential neighborhoods off Rittenhouse Road, the Club at Shannondell and the businesses off Rittenhouse Road and Egypt Road.

This trail depends on accessing the western portion of the St. Gabriel’s Hall site either through acquisition or easement. This involves only the portion of the site which would contain the conceptual trail from the Audubon Loop Trail to Valley Forge and would not affect the building or the rest of the campus. The conceptual trail would also depend on a multi-level partnership between the Township, federal government (Valley Forge) and Montgomery County (MARA fields).

In addition to providing access to the Schuylkill River Trail and Perkiomen Trail, the development of this trail would allow users to enjoy the vistas and views from the hills of the St. Gabriel’s site and Valley Forge.





Source: Earl Marx, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community



Egypt Rd

Existing Sidepath

Lantern Ln

Rittenhouse Rd

Adams Ave

Audubon Rd

To Valley Forge
National Historic Park

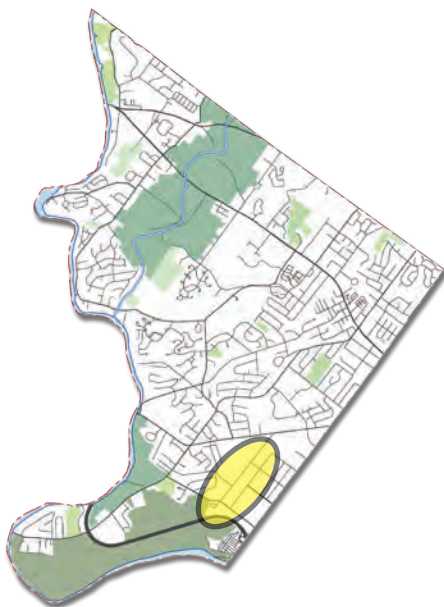


Park Pointe Sidepath

A sidepath is a bidirectional shared use path located immediately adjacent and parallel to a roadway. Sidepaths can offer a high-quality experience for users of all ages and abilities as compared to on-roadway facilities in heavy traffic environments, allow for reduced roadway crossing distances, and maintain rural and small-town community character.

Sidepaths are typically 5'-8' in width and constructed with asphalt. A side path can encourage bicycling and walking in areas where high-volume traffic and/or high-speed traffic might otherwise discourage such activity.

A 1.40-mile sidepath is proposed along Rittenhouse Road and would connect to the proposed Valley Forge connector to the southwest. This sidepath could provide multi-modal access to the corporate and business centers along Rittenhouse Road. Additionally, this path would run along the currently undeveloped parcel at the intersection of Rittenhouse and Egypt Roads.



Egypt Road Bridge

The Egypt Road bridge is an important connection area between the Audubon Loop Trail in Lower Providence Township and the Perkiomen Trail on the other side of the Perkiomen Creek. Under current conditions this critical pedestrian and bicycle bridge connection is narrow and uncomfortable.

Recommended Improvements Include:

- A** Widen sidewalk to 8+’ in width, with protective barrier
- B** Reduce 12’ lanes to 11’ ; Reduce Shoulder width
- C** Water Trail access
- D** Small parking area

Existing Conditions



Proposed Improvements





On-Road Bicycle Infrastructure

Under existing conditions there is minimal safe bicycle infrastructure in the center of Lower Providence Township. While the municipality is bordered by two of the regions most robust trails (Perkiomen Trail & Schuylkill River Trail) – there are limited options for residents to bike to these transportation networks.

In the public opinion survey, when asked “From a traffic safety perspective, how comfortable do you feel biking or walking in Lower Providence Township?” – 96 % of respondents answered they feel Very Uncomfortable biking in the Township.

On-road bicycle routes can be substantially less expensive than dedicated off-road trails, and can provide Township residents the opportunity to reach local parks, trails, businesses and Township destinations by bike.

The 2009 GVF Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure study recommended several locations for bicycle improvements which have been incorporated into this plan:

- Bicycle infrastructure along Egypt Road.
- Bicycle infrastructure along Ridge Pike.

In 2018 the Montgomery County Planning Commission completed “Bike Montco, The Bicycle Plan for Montgomery County”. This plan identified the following important cycling goals for the County:

- Goal #1: Connect communities with a robust network that

supports bicycling as a daily transportation option.

- Goal #2: Expand bicycling opportunities for everyone.
- Goal #3: Ensure that bicycling is safe for all.
- Goal #4: Support education and enforcement efforts that increase awareness of bicycling.
- Goal #5: Promote bicycling as a healthy and environmentally sustainable way to travel.
- Goal #6: Create and nurture a county bicycling industry.

This plan delineated several key on-road bicycle routes which were organized by the following hierarchy:

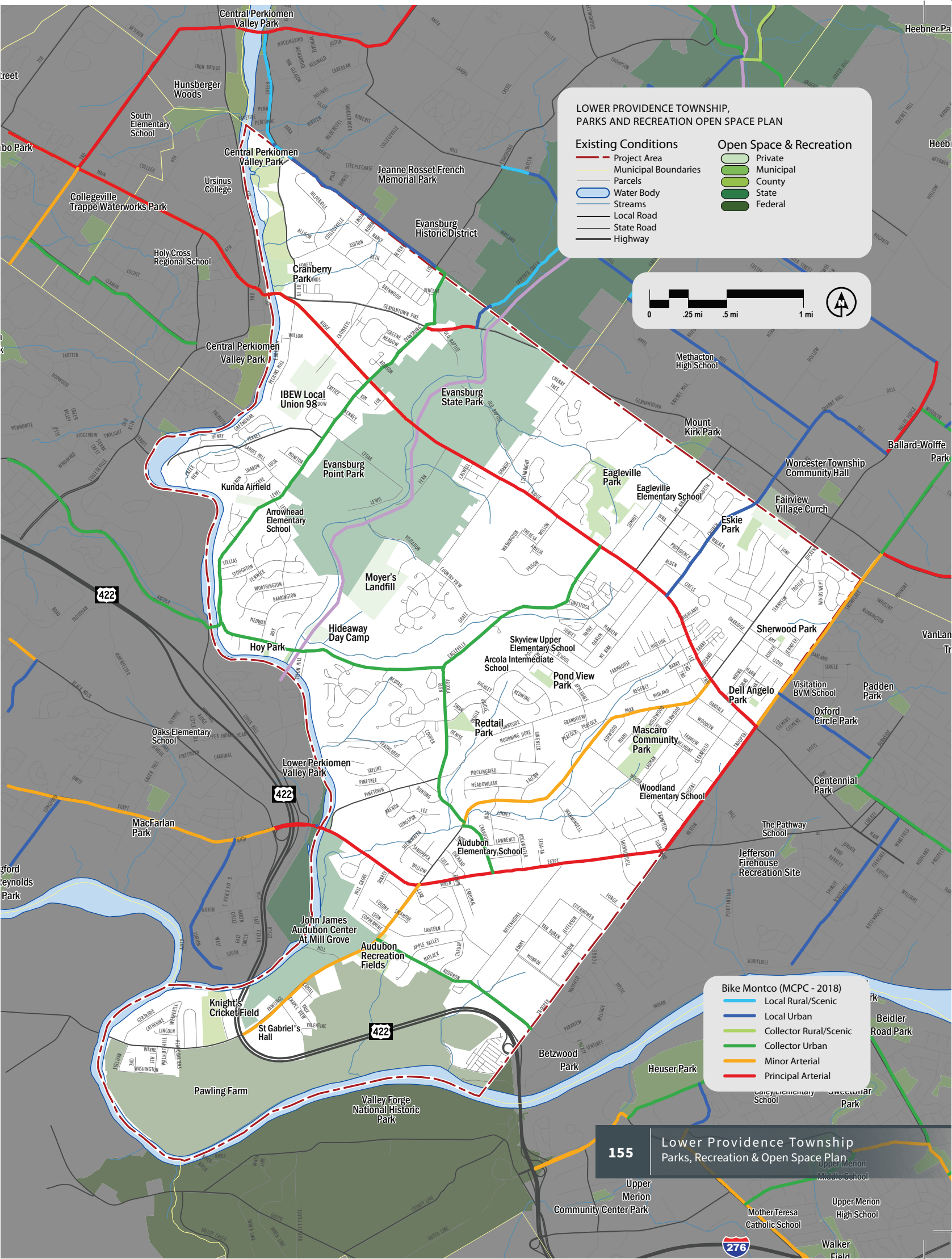
- Local Rural Scenic
- Local Urban Route
- Collector Urban
- Minor Arterial
- Principal Arterial

This plan recommends the Township pursue and advance these priority on-road bicycle connections delineated in this 2018 ‘Bike Montco’ plan. Further study will be required to determine which type of on-road infrastructure is physically and financially feasible for each location:

- Sharrows (Share the road markings)
- Bike Lanes (no buffer)
- Bike Lanes (with protected 2’ buffer)

Quantity of Recommended Bike Routes:

Local Rural Scenic	570 LF
Creek Road	570 LF
Local Urban Route	11,725 LF
Skippack Creek Road	875 LF
Township Line Road	6,230 LF
Church Road	4,620 LF
Collector Urban	44,483 LF
Evansburg Road (Ridge Pike to Germanotwn Pike)	2,610 LF
Evansburg Road (Germanotwn Pike to Township Line)	2,515 LF
Arcola Road	7,920 LF
Eagleville Road (Arcola Road to Ridge Pike)	7,235 LF
Eagleville Road (Sunnyside Ave to Arcola Road)	5,700 LF
Level Road	10,243 LF
Audubon Road	6,175 LF
Crawford Road	2,085 LF
Minor Arterial	25,030 LF
Pawlings Road	8,185 LF
S Park Avenue	10,560 LF
N Trooper Road	6,285 LF
Principal Arterial	42,230 LF
Egypt Road	12,305 LF
S Trooper Road	5,255 LF
Ridge Pike	22,810 LF
Germantown Pike	1,860 LF





Water Trails

The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) has created a 'water trails' classification for waterbodies which serve as recreational corridors across the Commonwealth. Water trails provide safe access to Pennsylvania's waterways and connections to:

- Local history
- Ecology
- Geology
- Heritage
- Wildlife

Water trails offer additional benefits to local communities like Lower Providence. These trails:

- Encourage tourism and providing economic benefits
- Increase easy access to waterways
- Encourage restoration and conservation

The Schuylkill River Water Trail which runs along the western border of Lower Providence Township is a Pennsylvania DCNR water trail and is also designated as National Recreation Trail. Through this designation, locally or regionally significant trails are part of America's national system of trails and are a testament to the high quality of water recreation opportunities in Pennsylvania.

The Perkiomen Creek Water Trail is 18 miles in length from Green Lane Park to its confluence at the Schuylkill River. Although shallower than the Schuylkill River Water Trail, the Perkiomen Creek Water Trail provides year-round activities with an existing landing at Hoy Park located at the confluence of Skippack Creek.

This plan recommends additional / improved water access at:

- Egypt Road (Perkiomen)
- Valley Forge Trailhead (Schuylkill)

