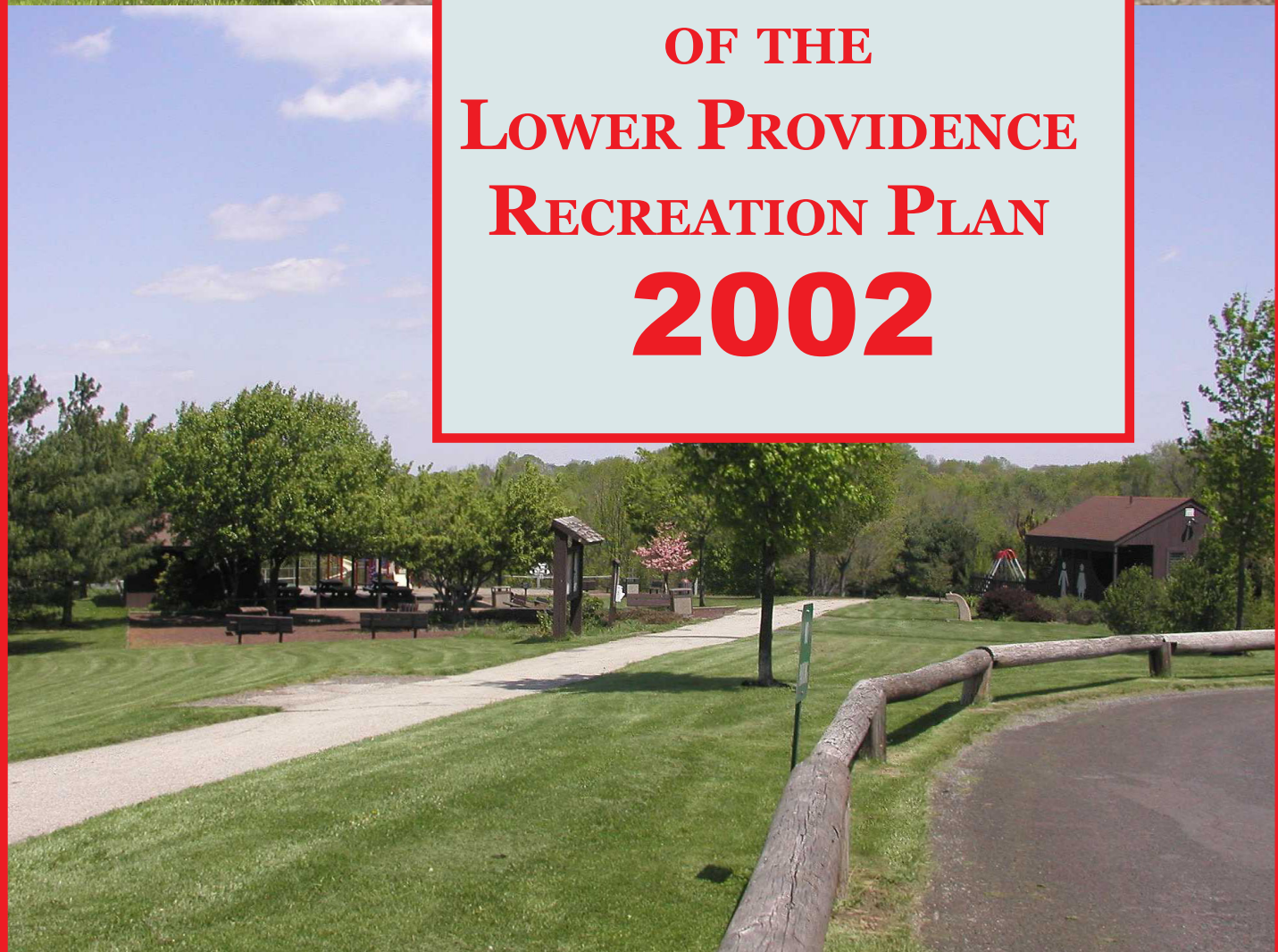




**SELECTIVE UPDATE
OF THE
LOWER PROVIDENCE
RECREATION PLAN
2002**



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**SELECTIVE UPDATE
OF THE
LOWER PROVIDENCE
RECREATION PLAN**

2002

PREPARED BY THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

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INTRODUCTION

This is a selective update of the 1993 Lower Providence Recreation Plan. This plan was drafted by the township's Parks and Recreation Board, with the assistance of the Montgomery County Planning Commission, and was approved by the township's Board of Supervisors in January 1993. Periodically, however, it becomes necessary to update planning documents. Changing conditions, new development trends or revised demographic projections can cause plans to become outdated or inadequate. The township, recognizing that its current Recreation Plan is almost 10 years old, has contracted with the Montgomery County Planning Commission to update and revise the earlier document.

This plan should not be reviewed as supplementing the earlier document. The 1993 Plan was comprehensive in its scope and much of it, particularly in its analysis and recommendations, remains valid. Rather, this document updates sections of the earlier plan, namely parkland inventory and needs, and, where appropriate, amends the original recommendations. The update also considers the township's 1995 Open Space Plan, written for the County's Open Space Grant Program. While this plan contained many of the recommendations of the 1993 Recreation Plan, its primary focus was on open space preservation and creating a trail system throughout Lower Providence. Therefore, where relevant, the recommendations of the Open Space Plan have been incorporated into this document.

CHAPTER ONE: SELECTIVE UPDATE CRITERIA

While almost redundant to state, the primary intent of any selective update is to determine what needs to be revised. Therefore, the first step was to review the six chapters contained in the 1993 Plan:

- **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**
(Rationale for the Plan)
- **CHAPTER TWO: STANDARDS ANALYSIS**
(Description of the methodology used to analyze parkland and the amount of it needed in relation to a community's population.)
- **CHAPTER THREE: SUPPLY ANALYSIS**
(An inventory of existing township parks and their recreational features and other significant public/private open space/recreational facilities.)
- **CHAPTER FOUR: POPULATION & NEEDS ANALYSIS**
(A description of the characteristics of the township's existing population [1990 Census data] and a population projection based upon a buildout analysis of all residentially zoned land. Future parkland and recreational needs required/necessary to meet the projected population.)
- **CHAPTER FIVE: RECOMMENDATIONS**
(Proposed land acquisitions and policies to address the future park and recreational needs of the township.)

From this review it was determined not to revise the earlier plan's methodology for determining future park and recreational needs, rather what was needed was revising the population and building projections that were outmoded by decisions that had altered the township's land use patterns. To ensure the plan's continuity between what has been revised and what has not, the methodology remains generally unaltered. While the approach used in 1993 is still valid and acceptable today, various zoning changes since 1993, notably the Residential Cluster Overlay District, which allows a greater yield on a tract in exchange for preserved open space, and the rezoning of the Shannondell Farm in Audubon to allow high density age-restricted housing have changed the township's buildout projections, rendering the 1993 calculations obsolete. The exact procedure is described in a step by step process below.

CHAPTER TWO: STANDARDS ANALYSIS

In the 1993 plan, Chapter Two described two methods for measuring how much parkland will be needed to serve future population needs. Since these methodologies are referred to throughout this update, it is appropriate to reiterate them here. The primary method uses a population to total parkland ratio devised by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), a national organization of recreational professionals and the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), the regional planning agency of the seven-county Delaware Valley. This ratio, when originally refined for the township in 1993, recommended that for every 1,000 residents, 10 acres of parkland is needed. However this update now recommends 10.5 per 1,000. This revision is necessary to satisfactorily address revised population projections. The second, also devised by the above organizations, also uses a population to parkland ratio. Parkland is characterized as either serving community or neighborhood needs, with a designated percentage of this parkland being allocated for both. Neighborhood parks are defined as serving a local area and generally range in size from 5 to 20 acres. Seventy-six percent (76%) of the township's total parkland should be devoted to neighborhood parks and the parks should be equally distributed throughout the township. Community parks serve the entire community. They should be centrally located and over 20 acres. Twenty-four percent (24%) of a township's total parkland should be for community parks. In relation to the township's primary methodology of 10.5 acres of parkland per every 1,000 residents, neighborhood and community parkland needs become 8 acres and 2.5 acres respectively. Lower Providence has only one community park, Eagleville Park, which surrounds the township complex. All other parks are classified as neighborhood parks.

Chapter Two also established a methodology for determining recreation facility needs. Similar to those above, it also uses a population ratio based on every 1,000 residents. For example, the standards suggest that sixty-six hundredths ($\frac{2}{3}$) of the tennis courts should be provided for every 1,000 residents. This methodology will not be dwelt upon in this update. Not only was the methodology found to be still valid, the recommendations derived from it are still pertinent. However, as will be discussed below, the need for the township to provide active recreational facilities throughout Lower Providence is a primary focus of the recommendations.

CHAPTER THREE: SUPPLY ANALYSIS

Chapter Three served two purposes. First, it divided the township in five different park ZONES. For the update, it was determined that there was no reason to change these boundaries. They are described in Figure 1 below and delineated in Figure 2. The second part of the chapter provided an inventory of all township parkland and significant open space and all private and public open space or recreational facilities. The inventory has been updated and is shown in Figure 3. This inventory is not exhaustive. Only properties, either township or otherwise owned, that are suitable as parkland are listed. For example, small out parcels owned by the township are not included, nor is most of the open space preserved in cluster development, much of which is visual open space and not usable as parkland.

PARK ZONES

- **PARK ZONE A** – is approximately 2,700 acres in area and bounded by the Perkiomen Creek, Skippack Township, the eastern boundary of Evansburg State Park, and Skippack Creek. The ZONE includes the neighborhoods of Palm Beach Farms, Beverly Park, Evansburg Grandview Park, Orioles Meadow, Cold Spring Crossing, Arcola Woods, and Arcola Hills. Evansburg Point Park and all of Evansburg State Park are located in this ZONE.
- **PARK ZONE B** – is approximately 1,400 acres in area and bounded by the eastern boundary of Evansburg State Park, Worcester Township, Trooper Road and Ridge Pike. The ZONE includes the neighborhoods of Longview Acres, Breckenridge, Village Green Sherwood Park, and Trooper. Eagleville Park, Charles J. Eskie Memorial Park and Sherwood Park are located in this ZONE.

- **PARK ZONE C** – is approximately 2,000 acres in area and bounded by the Skippack Creek, the eastern boundary of Evansburg State Park, Ridge Pike, Sunnyside Avenue, Pinetown Road and the Perkiomen Creek. The ZONE includes the neighborhoods of Collegeville Park, Eagleville Heights, Norristown Park, Sunnyside Farms, Birds Eye View Farm and Pinecrest.
- **PARK ZONE D** – is approximately 1,400 acres in area and bounded by Pinetown Road, Sunnyside Avenue, Ridge Pike, Trooper Road and Egypt Road. The ZONE includes the neighborhoods of Barry Heights, Audubon Hunt, Fairview Park, Nottingham Woods, Audubon Gardens and The Pines.
- **PARK ZONE E** – is approximately 2,300 acres in area and bounded by Egypt Road, Trooper Road, the Schuylkill River and the Perkiomen Creek. The ZONE includes the neighborhoods of Cassellberry Farm, Mill Grove, Colony Arms, Audubon Meadows, Audubon Close, Valley Forge Terrace and Little Farm Estates. The Valley Forge Corporate Center, General Washington Recreation Area, Mill Grove, Audubon Recreation Fields and Valley Forge National Historical Park are located in this ZONE.

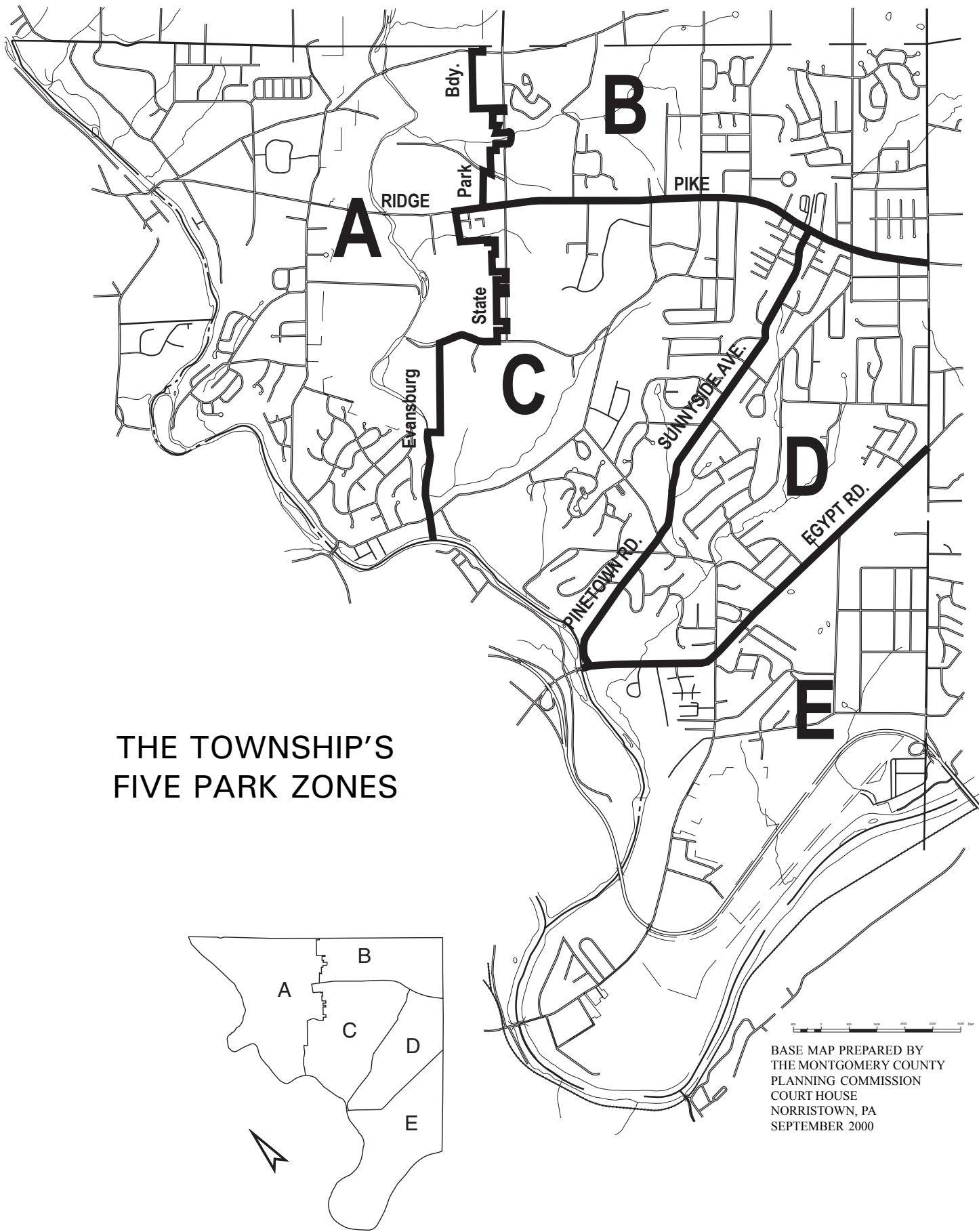
Delineation of Park Zoness

See the graphic entitled, **The Township's Five Park Zoness**.

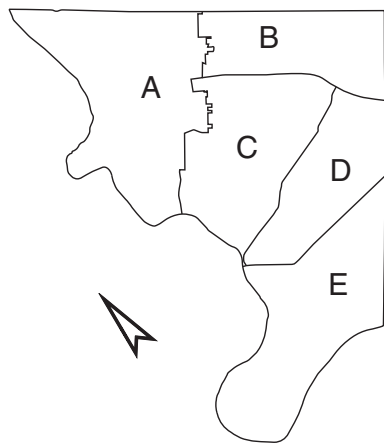
Neighborhood Needs

The following parkland deficiencies are listed for each park ZONE at buildout:

| | |
|---------------|--------------|
| ZONE A | 31.8 |
| ZONE B | 3.5 |
| ZONE C | 30.8 |
| ZONE D | 91.4 |
| ZONE E | 34.4 |
| TOTAL | 191.9 |



THE TOWNSHIP'S
FIVE PARK ZONES



0 100 200 300 400 500 600 700 800 900 1000
BASE MAP PREPARED BY
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SEPTEMBER 2000

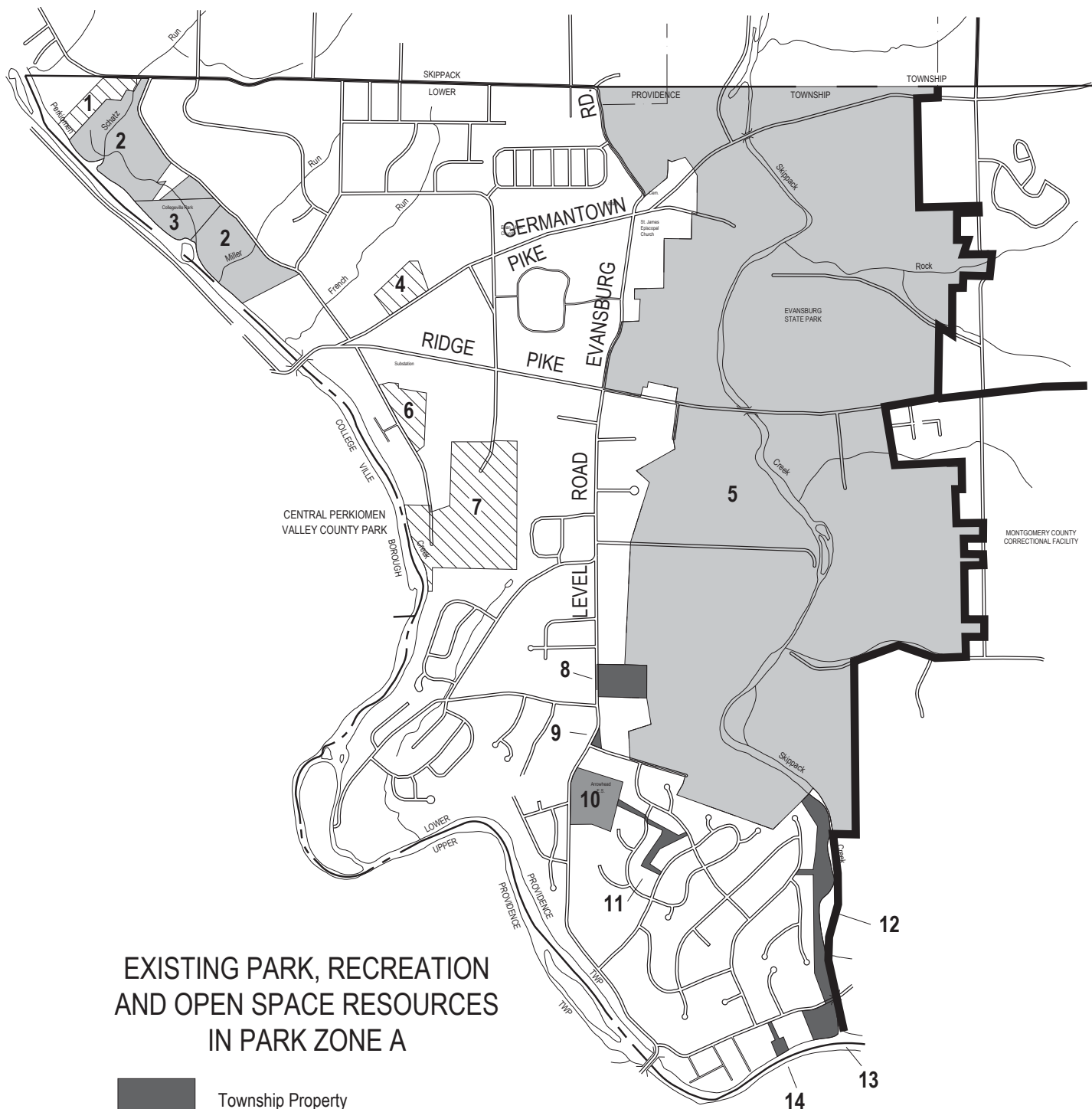
Inventory of Park, Recreation and Open Space Resources

Park Zone A





| | |
|--|---------------|
| Site #1 – Guideline Services Day Care (formerly Creek's Edge Day Care Center) (private property) 1 baseball field; basketball courts; 1 swimming pool; cabins | 9.4 ac |
| Site #2 – Perkiomen Creek Open Space (county property) None | 67.2 ac |
| Site #3 – Perkiomen Creek Open Space (Collegeville Boro. Property) None | 14.9 ac |
| Site #4 – Lower Perkiomen Indians Little League Complex (private property) Superior Tube Site (1) | |
| Site #5 – Evansburg State Park (state property) Historic/interpretive mill; picnic tables and grills; creek access for fishing; hiking/equestrian trails 1000 ac | |
| Site #6 – Perkiomen Valley Sportsman Association (private property) Practice ranges | 12.9 ac |
| Site #7 – Local 380 IBEW Facility (private property) 1 baseball field; 2 sand volleyball courts; Picnic pavilion | 46 ac |
| Site #8 – Evansburg Point Park (state property; leased by township) 1 lighted football field; storage building and press box; natural area; restroom facilities (2) | 13.6 ac |
| Site #9 – Level Road Schoolhouse (township property) Historic building for community meetings 0.2 ac | |
| Site #10 – Arrowhead Elementary School (Methacton School District property) 2 baseball fields; 1 soccer field (seasonal); 1 hockey field (seasonal); playground apparatus; hard-surface, multi-purpose play areas | 12.8 ac |
| Site #11 – Cold Spring Drive Open Space (township property) None | 3.2 ac |
| Site #12 – Skippack Creek Open Space (township property) None | 16.4 ac |
| Site #13 – Harry F. Hoy Memorial Park (township property) To be developed | 4.0 ac |
| Site #14 – Hoy Park Annex (township property) | 1.2 ac |
| Subtotals for Park Zone A: | |
| Township Property | 25.0 ac |
| County Property | 67.2 ac |
| State Property (Twp. Leases 13.6 acres) | 1013.6 ac |
| School District Property | 12.8 ac |
| Private Property | 68.3 ac |
| Collegeville Borough Property | 14.9 ac |
| TOTAL | 1201.8 |

Park Zone A Location Map on back of this chart

- (1) This site is being sold by Superior Tube. The 1993 Plan indicates that the recreation area was 10 acres. However, this was probably only the actively used land, for the 1999 Subdivision Plan lists the affected lots (8,9,10,11) as totaling 34.1 acres. As part of this subdivision, the township may take possession of Lot 12, which contains 19.0 acres.
- (2) Proposal to lease an additional 22.5 acres from the state to expand this park.

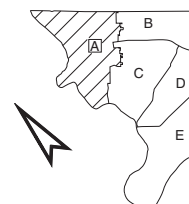


EXISTING PARK, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE RESOURCES IN PARK ZONE A

-  Township Property
-  School District Property
-  County, State and Collegeville Boro. Property
-  Private Property

800 0 800 1600 2400 3200 4000 Feet

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SEPTEMBER 2000

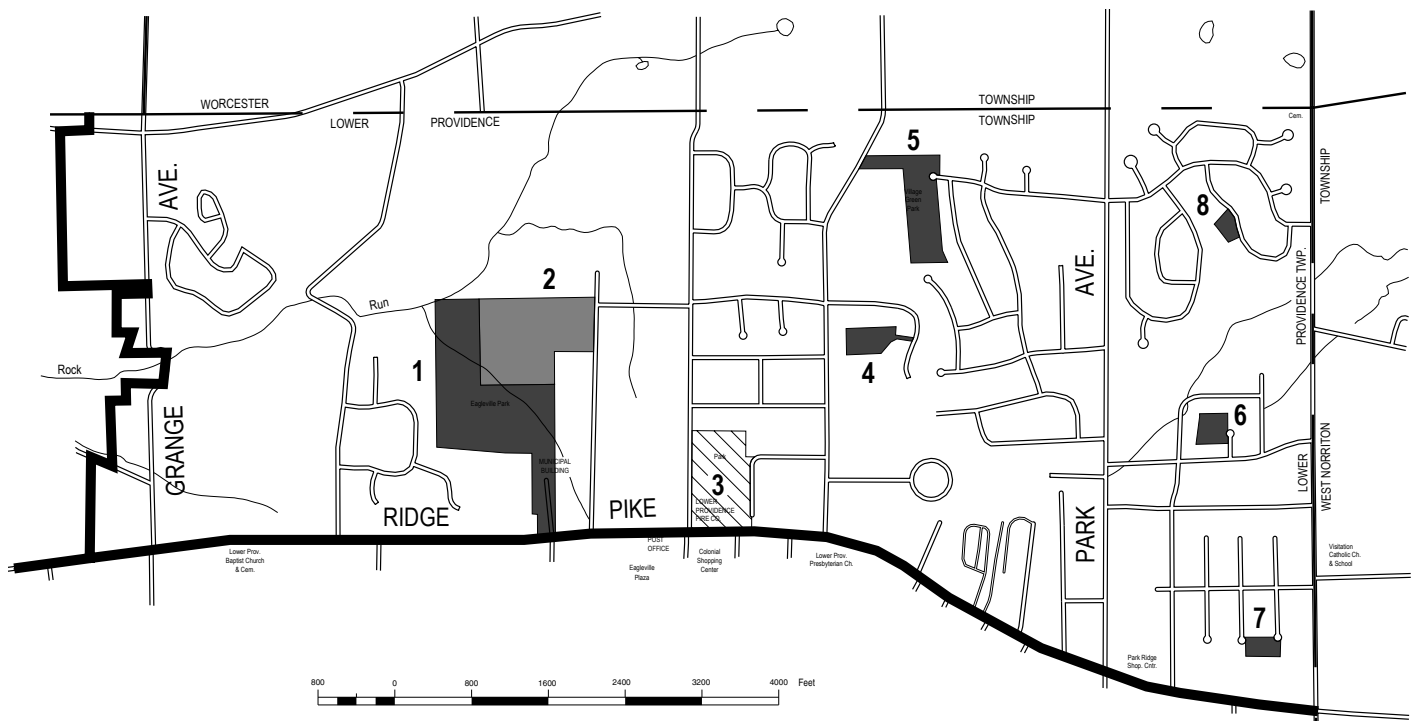


Inventory of Park, Recreation and Open Space Resources

Park Zone B

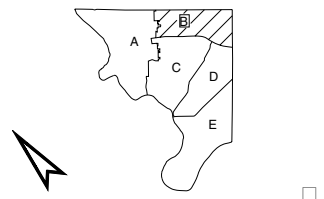
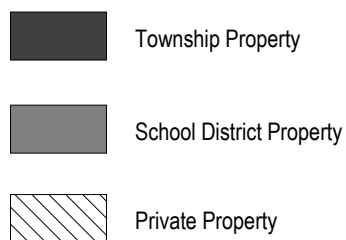
| Site | Description | Acres |
|---|---|--------------|
| Site #1 – Eagleville Park ⁽¹⁾ | (township property) 1 baseball field; 1 basketball court; 4 tennis courts; 2 shuffleboard courts; 2 horseshoe pits; playground apparatus; picnic pavilion, tables and grills; biking/walking path; amphitheater; nature trail | 63.6 |
| Site #2 – Eagleville Elementary School | (Methacton School District property) 2 baseball fields (1 baseball field lighted); 1 soccer field (seasonal); 1 hockey field (seasonal); playground apparatus; hard-surface, multi-purpose play areas | 18.6 |
| Site #3 – Lower Providence Twp. Volunteer Fire Company | (private property) Picnic pavilion | 15.0 |
| Site #4 – Walker Lane Open Space | (township property) None | 2.9 |
| Site #5 – Charles J. Eskie Memorial Park | (township property) 1 softball field; 1 basketball court; walking path; playground apparatus | 10.8 |
| Site #6 – Sherwood Park | (township property) Tot lot play apparatus | 1.0 |
| Site #7 – Brant Park | (township property) To be developed as a neighborhood tot lot | 1.5 |
| Site #8 – Windswept Park | (township property) To be developed as a neighborhood tot lot | 1.0 |
| Subtotals for Park Zone B: | | |
| Township Property | | 80.8 |
| School District Property | | 18.6 |
| Private Property | | 15.0 |
| TOTAL | | 114.4 |

(1) Township records for this park are only 24 acres. It appears that 63.6 acres is the whole site. This total includes the recently acquired Cotteta and Wooded Glen properties. In the 1993 Plan, 30 acres was used for the total active parkland. For this update, 41 acres will be used. This includes the 30 acres and the Cotteta and Wooded properties (rounded).



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EXISTING PARK, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE RESOURCES IN PARK ZONE B






Inventory of Park, Recreation and Open Space Resources
Park Zone C

| Site | Description | Acres |
|--|--|--------------|
| Site #1 – Hideaway Day Camp ⁽¹⁾ | (private property) Swimming pool; picnic pavilion; basketball court | 75.0 |
| Site #2 – Eagleville Hospital | (private property) 1 basketball court; 1 tennis court | 3.0 |
| Site #3 – Eaglestream Apartments | (private property) 1 swimming pool; playground apparatus | 1.0 |
| Site #4 – Arcola Intermediate School | (Methacton School District property) 7 tennis courts; 1 multi-purpose, hard surface court; 1 baseball field; 3 football fields; 4 soccer field/hockey fields; natural area | 68.0 |
| Site #5 – Pond View Drive Open Space | (township property) None | 5.3 |
| Site #6 – Featherbed Lane Open Space | (township property) None | 14.3 |
| Site #7 – Highley Road Park | (to be developed as active recreation. Total includes 1.5 acres from Sunnyside Development) | 10.5 |
| Subtotals for Park Zone C: | | |
| Township Property | | 30.1 |
| School District Property | | 68.0 |
| Private Property | | 79.0 |
| TOTAL | | 177.1 |

Park Zone C Locational Map on back of this chart

(1) There is a plan to subdivide 67 acres from this site by the Gambone Corporation for the development of houses.

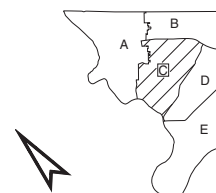
EXISTING PARK, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE RESOURCES IN PARK ZONE C

-  Township Property
-  School District Property
-  Private Property



800 0 800 1600 2400 3200 4000 Feet

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
Inventory of Park, Recreation and Open Space Resources
Park Zone D

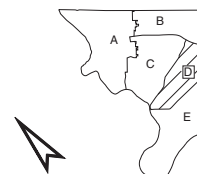
| Site | Description | Acres |
|---|---|--------------|
| Site #1 – Upper Mine Run Open Space | (township property) None | 20.0 |
| Site #2 – Woodland Elementary School | (Methacton School District property) 2 baseball fields; 1 soccer field (seasonal); playground apparatus; 2 basketball courts; hard-surface, multi-purpose play area | 21.4 |
| Site #3 – Sunnyside Avenue Open Space | (township property) None | 16.4 |
| Site #4 – Jode Road Open Space | (township property) None | 5.2 |
| Site #5 – Pinetown Road Open Space – East | (township property) None | 2.0 |
| Site #6 – Pinetown Road Open Space – West | (township property) None | 4.3 |
| Site #7 – Shearwater Drive Open Space | (township property) None | 9.5 |
| Site #8 – Lower Providence Rod and Gun Club | (private property) Practice ranges | 47.7 |
| Site #9 – Audubon Elementary Property | (Methacton School District property) Indoor facilities – YMCA; 1 baseball field; 1 multi-use playfield; 1 basketball court; playground apparatus; hard-surface, multi-purpose play area | 14.0 |
| Subtotals for Park Zone D: | | |
| Township Property | | 57.4 |
| School District Property | | 14.0 |
| Private Property | | 69.1 |
| TOTAL | | 140.5 |

Park Zone D Locational Map on back of this chart



EXISTING PARK, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE RESOURCES IN PARK ZONE D

-  Township Property
-  School District Property
-  Private Property



Inventory of Park, Recreation and Open Space Resources

Park Zone E

| Site | Description | Acres |
|---|--|----------------|
| Site #1 – Mill Grove Apartments | (private property) 1 tennis court; 1 swimming pool; playground apparatus; hard-surface, multi-purpose play area | 1.0 |
| Site #2 – Audubon Court Apartments | (private property) Playground apparatus; 1 swimming pool | 1.0 |
| Site #3 – Mill Grove | (county property) Historic home of John James Audubon; hiking/walking trails; nature study areas | 170.2 |
| Site #4 – Audubon Recreation Field | (county property; leased by township) 7 baseball fields; playground apparatus; picnic tables and grills; snack stand | 17.0 |
| Site #5 – General Washington Recreation Area ⁽¹⁾ | (township property – specialized public access) 18-hole golf course; 1 swimming pool | (106.6) 4.2 |
| Site #6 – St. Gabriel's Hall | (private property) 1 swimming pool; 3 basketball courts; 2 baseball fields | 253.0 |
| Site #7 – Schuylkill River Open Space | (county property) None | 5.2 |
| Site #8 – Valley Forge National Historic Park | (federal property) | 560.0 |
| Subtotals for Park Zone E: | | |
| Township Property ⁽¹⁾ | | (4.2) 106.6 |
| County Property (Twp. Leases 17.0) | | 192.4 |
| Federal Property | | 560.0 |
| Private Property | | 361.3 |
| TOTAL | | 1117.9 |

| Township-Wide Totals: | | |
|------------------------------------|------------|---------------|
| Township Property ⁽²⁾ | Parkland | 197.5 |
| | Twp. Owned | 304.1 |
| County Property (Twp. Leases 17.0) | | 259.6 |
| State Property (Twp. Leases 13.6) | | 1013.6 |
| Federal Property | | 560.0 |
| School District Property | | 113.4 |
| Private Property ⁽³⁾ | | 92.7 |
| Collegeville Borough Property | | 14.9 |
| TOTAL | | 2555.8 |





Park Zone E Locational Map on back of this chart

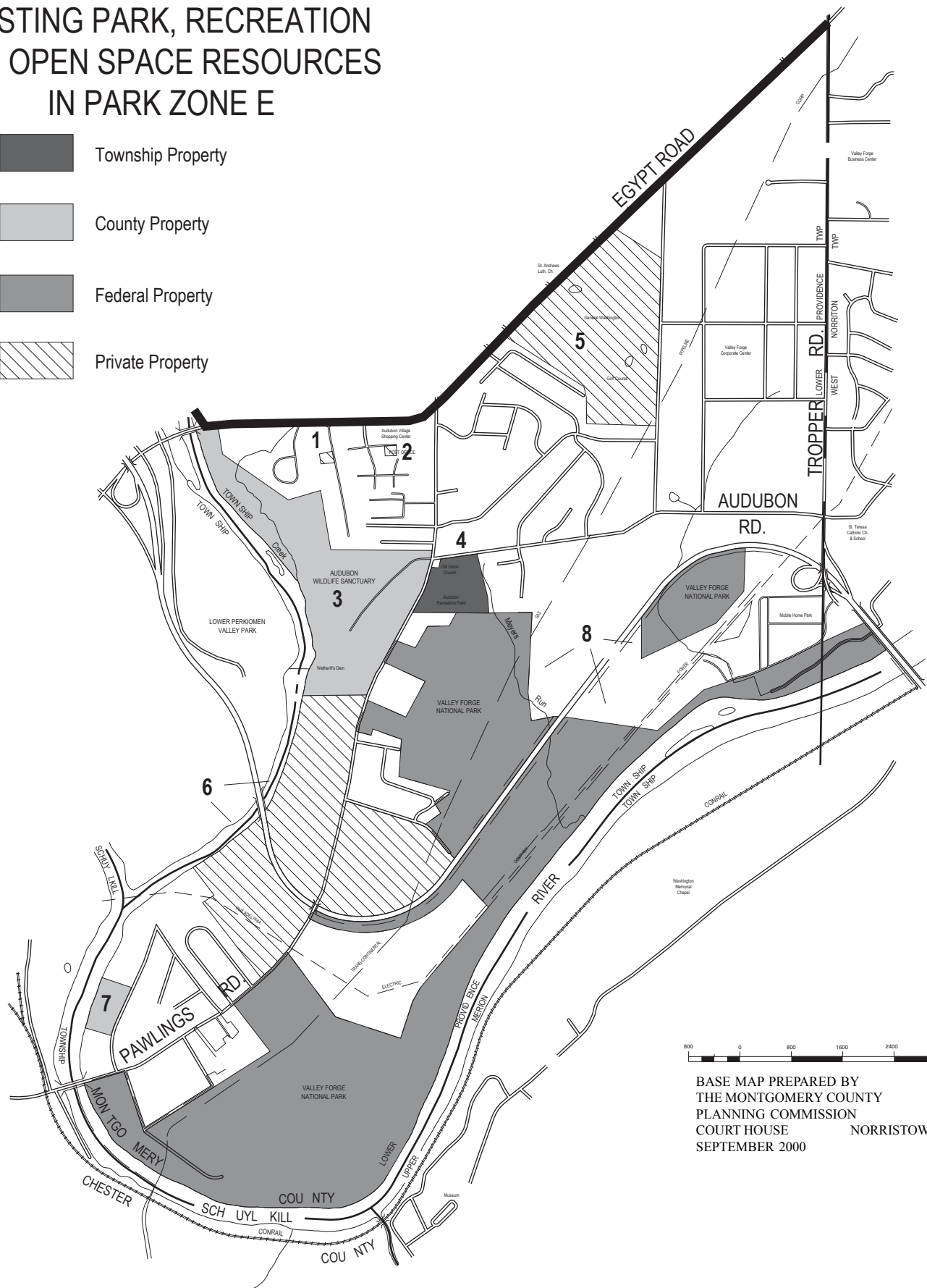
(1) Only 4.2 acres contain unrestricted public access. Therefore only this acreage is counted as parkland for this inventory.

(2) Township owned includes all of the General Washington Recreation Center.

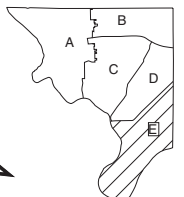
(3) Deleted 10 acres from the Superior Tube site

EXISTING PARK, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE RESOURCES IN PARK ZONE E

-  Township Property
-  County Property
-  Federal Property
-  Private Property



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CHAPTER FOUR: POPULATION & NEEDS ANALYSIS

For this update, it is appropriate to combine these two chapters. The revised population projections generated for this chapter are used to determine the parkland needs discussed later throughout the text. The calculations used in one are so dependent upon the other that the two chapters are really intertwined.

Explanation of the Numbers Used in the Calculations

The following numbers were used to generate the parkland needs analysis below:

- **Average Household Size:** 2.75 as determined by the U.S. Census in 2000.
- **2000 Population:** 22,390 as determined by the U.S. Census.
- **Parkland Supply for Each ZONE:** As was done in 1993, the parkland totals used in the supply column were based only upon usable land for recreational purposes. Therefore, while ZONE A currently (2000) has 25 acres,

For the results of the calculations, see the table on Page 20.

| | Total | Usuable |
|--------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Zone A | 25.0 | 15.0 |
| Zone B | 80.8 | 32.0 (1) |
| Zone C | 30.1 | 10.5 |
| Zone D | 57.4 | 0.0 |
| Zone E | --- | 17.0 (2) |
| | Total Usable Acreage | 74.5 |

- (1) Includes 20 acres of the Eagleville Community Park, which is counted as a neighborhood park. This was also done in the 1993 Plan.
- (2) All of this land is leased from Montgomery County. For a full explanation of township land in ZONE E, see the Park ZONE E total land breakdown chart on page 17.

Significance of the Needs Analysis Calculations

• Township Wide

-Currently (2000) the township has approximately 8,314 housing units (based on 1990 Census data and County Planning Commission records of approved plans, 1999-2000. Note: some of these approved units may not yet be constructed.)

-At buildout, the township will have 12,744 housing units and an estimated population of 32,966 residents.

-From the population total, it can be determined that at buildout Lower Providence will need 346 acres of parkland (10.5 acres per 1,000 residents). Of this total, 262.9 acres should be for neighborhood parkland, while 83.1 acres is needed for community parkland, using the 76-percent/24 percent criteria.

- **Neighborhood Needs**

The following parkland deficiencies are listed for each park ZONE at buildout:

| | |
|--------------|--------------|
| Zone A | 31.8 |
| Zone B | 3.5 |
| Zone C | 30.8 |
| Zone D | 91.4 |
| Zone E | 34.4 |
| Total | 191.9 |

Therefore at buildout, the township should have at least 191.9 additional acres of neighborhood parkland to satisfy the residents' recreational needs

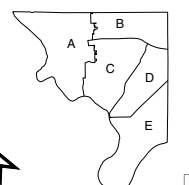
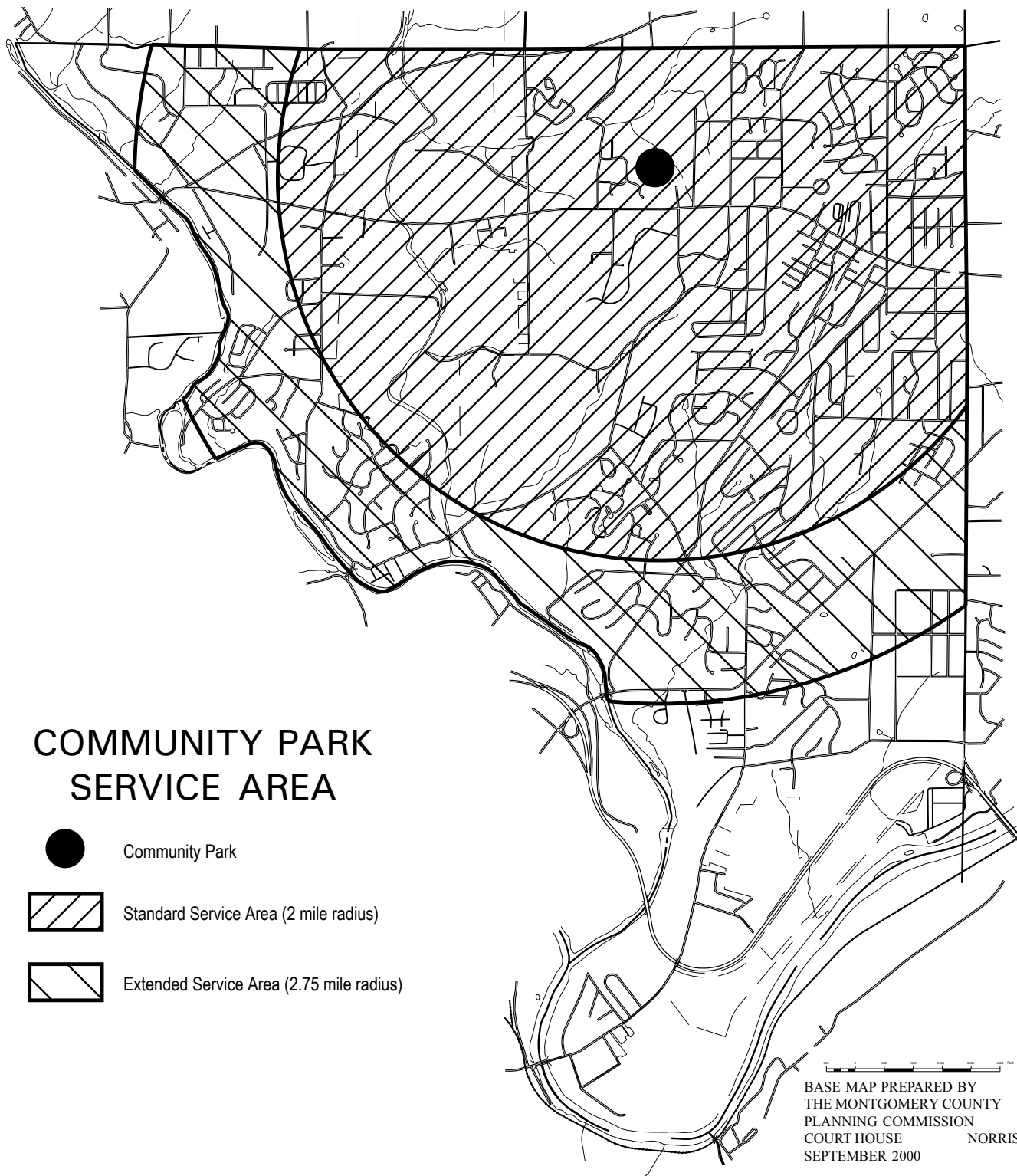
Community Parkland

Lower Providence has one community park, Eagleville Park, which also contains the township's administrative building, the township library, and an old farmhouse and barn. Because of these buildings and several large parking lots, only 30 acres of a 52-acre site was considered usable for recreational purposes in the 1993 Plan. Since that plan, the park has acquired slightly over 11 acres of adjacent land, which is currently being developed for active and passive recreation. Because of this, for the update, 41 acres of the site are now considered available for recreation. An analysis similar to the one performed for neighborhood park needs was done for community park needs.

The analysis indicates that the township will be deficient 43.1 acres of community-oriented parkland at buildout. Since most of the land surrounding the existing park is either developed or not suitable for recreational activities, it is reasonable for the township to begin planning for another community park. The 1993 Plan recommended that the township's community park needs would be satisfied by purchasing land adjacent to Eagleville, while acknowledging that much of the township's southern portion was outside of the 2-mile service radius for a community park. However, recent developments have made additional purchases no longer possible. Optimally, a new community park would be created and located in the southern portion of Lower Providence. It also should be large enough to rectify some of the neighborhood park deficiencies in this area. Specific ideas regarding this are discussed in the Recommendations section. (See graphic entitled, Community Park Service Area.)

Recreational Needs Analysis

Since the 1993 Plan, while the township has purchased land for parks, very little recreational development has occurred. Therefore the specific recommendations made by the Park and Recreation Board, in the earlier plan, are still valid and are reiterated in the Recommendations section of this document. However, as this update recognizes, much of the township's future residential growth will be from the proposed age-restricted Shannondell community in Audubon. As this plan is being written, phase one of this development is seeking final plan approval. Therefore, it is not too early for the township to begin planning a specific recreation programs for this age group.



LOWER PROVIDENCE TOWNSHIP
Neighborhood Parkland – Needs Analysis

| | Housing Units | Housing Population (1) | Supply | Need | Deficit |
|---------------|---------------|------------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| ZONE A | | | | | |
| 1990 | 986 | 2,983 | 11.0 | 22.7 | 11.7 |
| 2000 | 1,555 | 4,276 | 15.0 (1) | 32.5 | 17.5 |
| BUILDOUT | 2,239 | 6,157 | 15.0 | 46.8 | 31.8 |
| ZONE B | | | | | |
| 1990 | 1,075 | 3,002 | 29.5 | 22.8 | -6.7 |
| 2000 | 1,451 | 3,990 | 32.0 (2) | 30.3 | -1.7 (5) |
| BUILDOUT | 1,697 | 4,667 | 32.0 | 35.5 | 3.5 |
| ZONE C | | | | | |
| 1990 | 1,508 | 3,922 | 0.0 | 29.8 | 29.8 |
| 2000 | 1,928 | 5,302 | 10.5 (3) | 40.3 | 29.8 |
| BUILDOUT | 1,976 | 5,434 | 10.5 | 41.3 | 30.8 |
| ZONE D | | | | | |
| 1990 | 1,598 | 4,819 | 1.1 | 36.6 | 36.6 |
| 2000 | 1,630 | 4,483 | 0.0 | 34.1 | 34.1 |
| BUILDOUT | 4,373 | 12,026 | 0.0 | 91.6 | 91.4 |
| ZONE E | | | | | |
| 1990 | 1,659 | 3,363 | 15.0 | 25.6 | 10.6 |
| 2000 | 1,750 | 4,813 | 17.0 (4) | 36.6 | 19.6 |
| BUILDOUT | 2,459 | 6,762 | 17.0 | 51.4 | 34.4 |
| TOTALS | 12,744 | 35,046 | 74.5 | 266.6 | 191.9 |

Community Parkland – Needs Analysis

| Township-Wide | Housing Units | Housing Units Population (1) | Supply | Need | Deficit |
|---------------|---------------|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1990 | 6,826 | 18,089 | 30.0 | 43.4 | 13.4 |
| 2000 | 8,314 | 22,865 | 41.1 | 54.9 | 13.9 |
| BUILDOUT | 1,274 | 35,046 | 41.0 | 84.1 | 43.1 |

NOTES:

Below is an explanation of the parkland acreage since 1993:

(1) Four (4.0) acres were acquired for Hoy Park. The annex was excluded

(2) One and one-half (1.5) acres were acquired for Brant Park, one (1.0) acre was acquired on Windswept Lane, and 11 acres were acquired as an expansion to Eagleville Park; however, still only twenty (20.0) acres of Eagleville Park is counted toward satisfying the neighborhood parkland needs.

(3) Ten and one-half (10.5) acres were acquired for Highley Park.

(4) It is estimated that two (2) acres of the public space at General Washington are available.

(5) The negative value in this space indicates a SURPLUS of acreage.

CHAPTER FIVE: RECOMMENDATIONS

This update concludes with a series of recommendations designed to alleviate the parkland deficiencies discussed in Part Two. It also includes recommended policy decisions designed to increase township recreational opportunities, preserve open space and natural amenities, and ensure that future land developments contribute to township park and recreation needs. Also where appropriate, recommendations from the 1993 Open Space Plan are included.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS

The 1993 Plan contained several ideas whose implementation is still desirable. They are briefly described.

- **School District Agreement.** The township should negotiate an agreement with the Methacton School District to secure permanent public access to their indoor and outdoor facilities. While reasonable restrictions on access are to be expected, such an agreement could address the stated need by residents for indoor recreation facilities. *(1)*
- **Indoor Recreation Facility.** Notwithstanding the ability to use school facilities, the township should conduct a feasibility study to see if such a center is warranted or if the school buildings will fulfill the need.
- **Official Map.** A useful planning tool that delineates on a map land that the township wishes to purchase for public purposes. Once adopted, the township can withhold building permits or sale agreements on designated land for one year, while arrangements are made for the township to acquire the land. Not legal unless the township has an adopted comprehensive plan, it is recommended that the township formulate and adopt such a map once the proposed comprehensive plan is completed.
- **Mandatory Land Dedication.** As was the intention in 1993, this update was formulated to provide the township with a legally-defensible basis for amending the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance to allow mandatory land dedication or fees-in-lieu-of dedicated land for all land developments. For this update, the township has hired a consultant to draft such an ordinance. While in 1993 it was recommended that this ordinance would only apply to residential land developments, the township has now decided to assess all land developments. Through adopting this ordinance, the township can make dramatic strides to address the parkland deficiencies documented in this plan.

PARKLAND NEEDS RECOMMENDATIONS

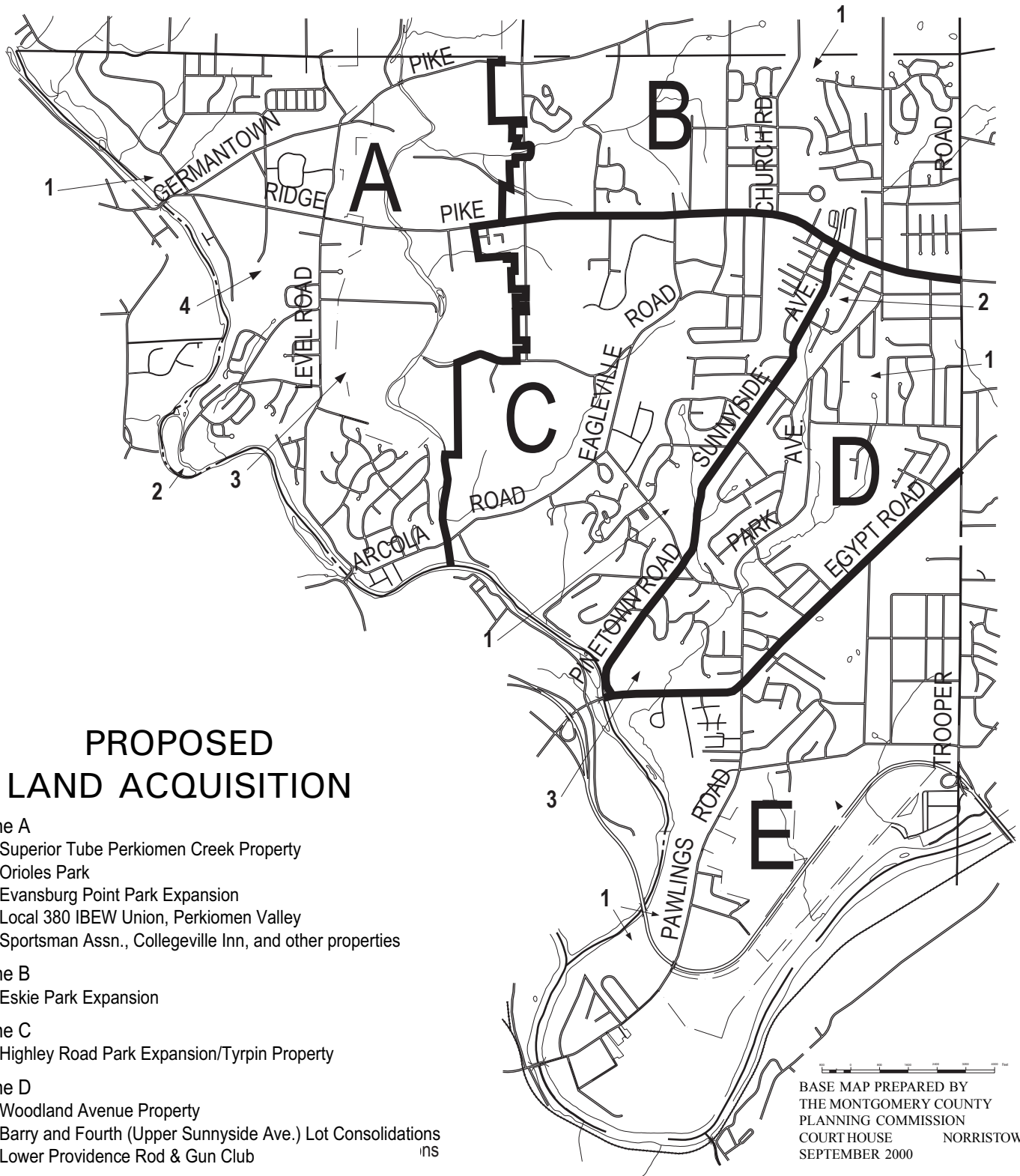
This section describes specific ways to address neighborhood and community parkland deficiencies.

Neighborhood

Zone A

Buildout acreage need: **31.5**

(1) In the most recent park and recreation survey conducted for township residents, over 75% expressed a desire for this type of facility.



To resolve this:

- The 1993 Plan recommends a park for the area between Germantown Pike and Skippack Township. It is recommended that the township accept the 19 acres being offered by Superior Tube along the Perkiomen Creek for development as a park. While in a floodplain, much of the site is developable for active recreation. However, to provide a more centrally located park in this area, the township should work with the state to add some facilities in Evansburg Park in the vicinity of the Evansburg Crossing Open Space—which includes the township-owned Cassellberry House. When Evansburg Road is relocated, this house and much of the open space will be adjacent to the park.
- Obtain the already recommended Orioles Park (12 acres).
- Continue efforts to lease 25 additional acres from the state for the proposed expansion of Evansburg Point Park. The 1993 Plan has a development plan for the site. Also, consideration should be given to leasing all of the usable land between Lewis and Level Roads and Cedar Lane.
- Begin discussions with the Local 380 IBEW Union, Perkiomen Valley Sportsman Association, Collegeville Inn, and several private parties about obtaining land to create a park with numerous playing fields and active recreation to mitigate the loss of the facilities at Superior Tube.

Total Acreage – about 65 acres.

While it would exceed the zones' buildout deficiency if all of this land was obtained, this area, if developed to the level of the existing Superior Tube playing fields, could be leased out to numerous local leagues and generate revenue for the township.

While securing all of these recommended sites would exceed the needs of this zone, not all the sites—such as Orioles Park—are available for recreation. However, the potential development of the union's property and adjacent sites could provide easily accessible playing fields for all township residents.

Zone B

Buildout Acreage Need: **3.5**

To resolve this:

- Expand Eskie Park by adding a 15-acre vacant parcel that borders Worcester Township. Owned by the Markley family, it is formally known as Block 2 Unit 68.
- Improve access to Eagleville Park from the surrounding neighborhoods, specifically by installing a walking path along the Rock Run from Evansburg Park to Eagleville Park, with access points at Grange and Smith Roads, and then continue through the school's property to the sidewalk on Walker Lane.
- Development neighborhood tot lots at Brant Road and at the Windswept Lane site.

Securing the property adjacent to Eskie Park would create a large (25-acre) neighborhood park with significant recreation potential. Installing trails to Eagleville Park would make the existing facilities more accessible. Developing neighborhood tot lots would serve young families in areas in this zone.

Zone C

Buildout acreage needed: **30.8**

To resolve this:

- Develop Highley Road Park and obtain the adjacent 5-acre Tyrpin property to expand this park to 15 acres. Also, adjacent to these two sites is 11.30 acres of open space dedicated to the township as part of the Audubon Ridge Development. Extending from Highley Road to Sunnyside Avenue, its sloping terrain precludes its use for active recreation. However, it would be possible to develop a trail through the site that could connect both roads to the park, creating more access points to the park and increasing the recreational opportunities for pedestrians in this area.
- Given the limited opportunities for other park purchases in this zone, securing permanent access to school property would, in particular, increase recreational opportunities in this zone.
- See the Recommendations for Zone D.

While park opportunities are limited in this zone, an agreement with the school would help as would improving access to Zone D and Eagleville Park through trails and sidewalks.

Zone D

Buildout acreage need: **91.4**

To resolve this:

- Obtain the recommended 28.5-acre Woodland Avenue site. The 1993 Plan has a development plan for the site.
- In the vicinity of Barry Avenue and Fourth Street, numerous vacant movie lots could be combined to create a neighborhood park about 3 acres in size.
- Begin discussion with the Lower Providence Rod and Gun Club to obtain some or all of their site if they ever leave the township. Given its close proximity to Zone C, it could provide a portion of that zone with convenient parkland.

Obtaining the Woodland Avenue property would create a significant park with numerous recreational opportunities in a zone that has no parkland. Other recommendations would help to alleviate the overall park deficiencies in this zone.

ZONE E

Buildout acreage needs: **34.4**

To resolve this:

- Begin discussions with St. Gabriel's to obtain some of their land. The vacant land east of Pawlings Road is wanted by the federal government to expand Valley Forge National Park, but west of Pawlings Road are two vacant parcels of 59 acres (south of 422) and 25 acres (north of 422).
- Work with the county and federal governments to obtain the 100-acre Schwobel tract.
- While not counted as parkland because of its specialized use and restricted access, the General Washington Complex is a significant amenity in this district. Through working with St. Gabriel's, a significant park could be created that would alleviate both the neighborhood and community parkland deficiencies in this zone

Community

As was stated above, under the recommendations for Zone E, St. Gabriel's owns significant vacant parcels along Pawlings Road and Route 422. Either of the parcels could be developed as a community park. Also, such a park could be connected, via walking paths, with the Mill Grove Park or Valley Forge National Park.

RECREATION NEEDS

The following needs for each zone are as follows:

ZONE A

Recreation Needs (from 1993 Plan):

- Biking/walking/hiking trails
- Two playgrounds
- One softball field
- Two multipurpose playfields
- Two basketball courts
- One multipurpose court
- Two volleyball courts
- Two picnic groves and two picnic pavilions
- Infrastructure and miscellaneous site furnishings to compliment park development and serve park users (i.e., utilities installation, vehicular parking, restrooms, benches, trash receptables, water fountains, signs, bicycle racks, landscaping, etc.).

ZONE B

Recreation Needs (from 1993 Plan)

- Biking/walking/hiking trails
- One softball field
- One multipurpose playfield
- One volleyball court
- Two horseshoe courts
- One picnic grove and one picnic pavilion
- Infrastructure and miscellaneous site furnishings to complement park development and serve park users (i.e., utilities installation, vehicular parking, restrooms, benches, trash receptacles, water fountains, signs, bicycle racks, landscaping, etc.).

ZONE C

Recreation Needs (from 1993 Plan)

- Biking/walking/hiking trails
- Fitness trail
- One playground
- One softball field
- One soccer field
- One basketball court
- Two horseshoe courts
- One picnic grove and one picnic pavilion
- Restrooms at new park

ZONE D

Recreation Needs (from 1993 Plan)

- Biking/walking/hiking trails
- Fitness trail
- One playground
- One softball field
- One multipurpose playfield
- Two tennis courts
- One multipurpose court
- Infrastructure and miscellaneous site furnishings to complement park development and serve park users (i.e., utilities installation, vehicular parking, restrooms, benches, trash receptacles, water fountains, signs, bicycle racks, landscaping, etc.).

ZONE E

Recreation Needs (from 1993 Plan)

- Biking/walking/hiking trails
- One softball field
- Two multipurpose playfields
- Two horseshoe courts
- One picnic grove and one picnic pavilion
- Infrastructure and miscellaneous site furnishings to complement park development and serve park users (i.e., utilities installation, vehicular parking, restrooms, benches, trash receptacles, water fountains, signs, bicycle racks, landscaping, etc.).

For this update, some specific improvements and recommendations for existing and proposed parks were made by the township recreation director. They are as follows:

ZONE A

- Biking/walking/hiking trails: Evansburg Point Park, Evansburg Point Park Annex, Hoy Park
- Three playground apparatus: Evansburg Point Park, Evansburg Point Park Annex, proposed park at the Local 380 et al site
- Three swing sets: Evansburg Point Park, Evansburg Point Park Annex, Local 380
- Five soccer fields: Local 380
- Two football fields: Local 380
- Eight ballfields (baseball/softball): Evansburg Point Park Annex, Orioles Meadows, Local 380
- Three picnic pavilions: Evansburg Point Park
- Two horseshoe courts: Evansburg Point Park
- Two shuffleboard courts: Evansburg Point Park
- Infrastructure and miscellaneous site furnishings to complement park development and serve park users (i.e., utilities installation, vehicular parking, restroom facilities, snack buildings, benches, trash receptacles, water fountains, nature identification signs, landscaping and much more).

ZONE B

- Two playground apparatus: proposed Windswept Park, Brant Park
- Two swing sets: proposed Windswept Park, Brant Park
- Two multipurpose fields: Walker Lane property, Eagleville Park
- One basketball court: Brant Park
- Two volleyball courts: Sherwood Park
- Infrastructure and miscellaneous site furnishings to complement park development and serve park users (i.e., utilities installation, vehicular parking, restrooms, benches, trash receptacles, water fountains, signs, landscaping, and much more).

ZONE C

- Biking/walking/hiking trails: Highley Road Park
- Two multipurpose fields: Highley Road Park
- Two ballfields (baseball/softball): Typrin property (proposed purchase)
- One playground apparatus: Highley Road Park
- One swing set: Highley Road Park
- Infrastructure and miscellaneous site furnishings to complement park development and serve park users (i.e., vehicular parking, benches, trash receptacles, signs, landscaping, and much more).

ZONE D

- Fitness trail: Woodland Avenue property (proposed purchase)
- Two playground apparatus: Woodland Avenue property (proposed purchase), Movie lots (proposed purchase)
- Two swing sets: Woodland Avenue property (proposed purchase), Movie lots (proposed purchase)
- One ballfield: Woodland Avenue property (proposed purchase)
- One multipurpose field: Woodland Avenue property (proposed purchase)
- Two tennis courts: Woodland Avenue property (proposed purchase)
- One multipurpose court: Woodland Avenue property (proposed purchase)
- One picnic shelter: Woodland Avenue property (proposed purchase)
- Infrastructure and miscellaneous site furnishings to complement park development and serve park users (i.e., utilities installation, vehicular parking, restrooms, benches, trash receptacles, water fountains, signs, fitness stations, landscaping and much more).

ZONE E

- Biking/walking/hiking trails: Schwobel property (proposed purchase), St. Gabriel's land (proposed purchase)
- Fitness trail: ARA Fields
- Three playground apparatus: ARA Fields, St. Gabriel's land (proposed purchase), Schwobel property (proposed purchase)
- Three picnic pavilions: ARA Fields, St. Gabriel's land (proposed purchase), Schwobel property (proposed purchase)
- Five soccer fields: St. Gabriel's land (proposed purchase)
- Three football fields: St. Gabriel's land (proposed purchase)
- Five ballfields (baseball/softball): Schwobel property (proposed purchase)
- Two picnic pavilions: Schwobel property (proposed purchase), ARA Fields
- Four tennis Courts: Schwobel property (proposed purchase)
- One multipurpose court: Schwobel property (proposed purchase)

- Infrastructure and miscellaneous site furnishings to complement park development and serve park users (i.e., utilities installation, vehicular parking, restrooms, benches, trash receptacles, water fountains, signs, fitness stations, landscaping and much more).

PROPOSED TRAILS AND SIDEWALK CONNECTIONS

A system of trails and interconnected sidewalks can provide recreational opportunities for pedestrians and bicyclists, while also allowing safe access to township parks. The following recommendations, by park zone, are designed to accomplish both.

ZONE A

- **Trails.** For this zone, the most important recommendation is to work with the state to create a trail that would extend the length of Evansburg State Park from the proposed park in the Evansburg Crossing open space to the township land along the Skippack Creek in Arcola. Along this trail, connections would be provided to Evansburg Point Park and various neighborhoods that border the park. Once on the township land it would continue to Hoy Park at the confluence of the Skippack and Perkiomen Creeks. Such a trail would provide residents access to various Zone A neighborhoods and one of the region's most significant parks.
- **Sidewalks.** To improve accessibility to existing or proposed Zone A parks, and neighborhoods, the following sidewalks are recommended:
 - *Along Cross Keys Road from Beth Road to its end at the Local 380 property.* This would provide access for most of the neighborhoods surrounding Evansburg access to the proposed park at the Local 380 property.
 - *Along Germantown Pike from Cross Keys Road to River Road to the proposed park along the Perkiomen Creek (Superior Tube property).* This connection would provide the Evansburg area access to the proposed park and the Perkiomen Creek. Consideration should also be given to a safe connection to the Perkiomen Creek Bridge.
 - *Connect Evansburg Point Park to the Local 380 site.* Using Level Road a sidewalk or improved shoulder could connect these two important parks.

ZONE B

- **Trails.** The Rock Run Trail, recommended in the 1995 Open Space Plan and in the above Parkland Needs Recommendations should be implemented, from Eagleville Park to Evansburg Park. This would connect these two important parks. Most of this trail would run on preserved open space from the Wooded Glen and Howe-Holt developments.
- **Sidewalks.** Although most of this zone is well connected by sidewalks, the following recommendations would fill-in several notable gaps.

- *Provide a sidewalk through the township open space between the Walker Lane cul-de-sac and the Village Green Lane cul-de-sac.* This would connect the Fairview section of the township with Walker Lane and via the sidewalk on Walker Lane with Eagleville School, Eagleville Park, and Evansburg Park.
- *Install a sidewalk along Church Road and East Mount Kirk Avenue.* Sidewalks along these important streets would provide connections for all of the zones to Eskie Park and the Eagleville Shopping Center.

ZONE C

- **Trails.** A walking path, connecting Highley Road and Sunnyside Avenue with Highley Park.
- **Sidewalks.** The following are recommended:
 - *Connect all of the missing segments along Sunnyside Avenue to provide a connection, via Highley Road and Red Tail Road, to Highley Road Park.* This would provide safe access for much of this zone to the park.
 - *Install a sidewalk along Eagleville Road from Marilyn Avenue to the entrance of the Eagleville Park at the intersection of Parklane Drive and Ridge Pike.* This would provide safe access from these neighborhoods to Eagleville Park.

ZONE D

- **Trails.** A walking path, from the proposed extension of the Boulevard of the Generals to the proposed Woodland Avenue Park. This trail should be constructed on the property of the Woodland School. This would provide an important connection from this proposed road to the most significant park proposed for this zone.
- **Sidewalks.** The following are recommended:
 - *Connect the missing segments of sidewalks along Eagleville Road from Sunnyside Avenue to Park Avenue, and along Crawford Avenue from Egypt Road to Park Avenue.* (This should be done with the recommended intersection improvements of these two roads with Park Avenue). This would provide a connection to General Washington Recreation Center from both Zones C and D.
 - *Connect sidewalk segments (existing and proposed for recent developments) along Egypt Road from the Audubon Square Shopping Center to the Audubon Shopping Center.* This would create a major linkage between two important commercial areas in this zone and link them both with the General Washington Recreation Center.

ZONE E

- **Trails.** None.
- **Sidewalks.** The following are recommended:
 - *Provide a sidewalk or improve shoulder along Pawlings Road from Audubon to the proposed county trail at Mill Grove.* This would allow the village and much of the township access to a proposed county trail which will connect Mill Grove with the Schuylkill River Trail.
 - *Expanding on the above idea, install a sidewalk or improved shoulder along all of Audubon Road.* Provide more neighborhoods in this zone with a connection to Mill Grove and the Schuylkill River Trail.

- *Expanding on the above idea install a sidewalk along the existing and proposed extension of Adams Avenue.* This would provide the Valley Forge Corporate Center with access to the shopping Center and Schuylkill River Trail, and would create a connected loop for this zone with the sidewalks along Egypt, Pawlings, and Audubon Roads.

The proposed trails and sidewalks are delineated in the following graphic entitled, “Trail and Sidewalk Plan.”

RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are included to improve recreational needs in private developments in the township or because they would preserve or enhance open space:

- Amend Article VII of the Lower Providence Zoning Code, OSR Open Space Residential Overlay District to require at least 10 percent (1 acre in R-1 slightly less in R-2) of the open space be usable (slope less than 3%, generally open and be accessible to all residents). It could be designed as one parcel or include several throughout the site.
- Office Park/Light Industrial Districts. Regulations would be added to these districts which would provide incentives for preserving significant natural features and promote walking paths and open space areas.
- Riparian Buffer Ordinance. This recommended ordinance establishes setbacks from stream corridors and wetlands, and is important in promoting surface water quality and protecting important aquifer recharge areas. It will also help to preserve open space. Also recommended for adoption in the 1995 Open Space Plan, such an ordinance would be in the Zoning Code.
- Best Management Practices for Stormwater Detention. A series of proposals regarding stormwater management drafted by the Commonwealth’s Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to promote cleaner streams and promote aquifer recharge. Working with the township engineer, the township would tailor these to the specifics of the township and include them in the Subdivision and Land development Ordinance. They would also include requirements for naturalized detention basins (landscaped). This would promote wildlife, provide wooded buffers and improve streetscapes.
- Begin a dialogue with all landowners of large parcels in Lower Providence. This would include the county, state and federal governments as well as private clubs, institutions, etc.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE UPDATES

As was recommended in 1993, this plan should be periodically updated to reflect continually changing resident recreational needs. Township residents should, at least every five years, be surveyed to assess overall community recreation interests. If there are major differences between the survey findings and the recommendations of this update, then it should be updated to reflect the most recent data regarding interest and need. Future revisions may also be warranted if it becomes apparent that implementation of a major recommendation is unlikely and alternative strategies for satisfying needs should be formulated.

