Worcester Township








COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2008

Worcester Comprehensive Plan Update

Draft

June 2, 2008

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Abstract

Worcester Township has produced this Comprehensive Plan Update in order to present its goals, the factors from its past and present it has considered, and its vision for the future. The vision is realistically based on its current general development pattern: a rural landscape with three villages, two hamlets, and two suburban areas. The township's rural character is to be strengthened by enhancing the development of the villages and hamlets. Meanwhile, the farms and natural portions of the rural landscape areas are to be preserved where possible and all parts of the township connected with rural roads and trails.

After spelling out the Township's goals in Chapter 1, special attention is paid (in Chapters 2 – 6) to the township's history, natural features, demographics, sewage disposal, water supply, transportation, parks, open space, historic preservation, scenic resources, farmland preservation, and overall existing land use. Then, in Chapter 7, the future is explored. First, current trends are identified and then they are projected into the future to discover what might happen if these trends continue. Once this is determined, a vision is presented which will guide the Township toward a better future; one which achieves the goals set forth in Chapter 1; one which will provide for an improved future; one which builds on the township's strengths, maintains and enhances its rural character, and improves the quality of life for its residents.

To achieve this vision may require much hard work, some difficult decisions, and great understanding by the residents. However, if accomplished, Worcester will stand out as community with great rural character that will be a fantastic place to live, work, learn, and play.

Chapter 1
Goals and Objectives

The goals and objectives identified in this chapter provide the basic framework for this update of Worcester's 1995 Comprehensive Plan. These goals are intended to guide Township decision-making on rural preservation, growth, development, environmental protection, parkland, and infrastructure to the year 2020. This update is the result of a review of the 1995 Comprehensive Plan to determine any revisions that may be appropriate as a result of changing conditions. The Township recognizes that these goals and other parts of the plan should be reviewed again in the future to remain relevant.

These goals and objectives summarize the desires and vision of the Township and spell out the goals contained throughout this comprehensive plan. The goals are explained briefly and followed by a set of objectives and action steps to help the township achieve these goals.

Rural Preservation Goals

Maintain the Rural Character of the majority of the Township:

For social, economic, and environmental benefits that come from remaining a rural community near a metropolitan area.

Preserve Farmland:

To provide areas for growing produce and raising farm animals close to the greater Philadelphia market while contributing to the diversity of the township's economic base and employment. Also, to preserve soils that are suitable for farming instead of paving them over, and to help protect environmentally sensitive areas.

Preserve Scenic Views and Roads:

To help define and preserve the township's rural character, history, and property values.

Preserve Historic Sites and Landscapes:

To help people understand the township's heritage as part of the history of the United States.

Rural Preservation Ojectives

Achieve Rural Preservation Goals through the following objectives:

- Classify rural preservation areas for low density development and direct growth by concentrating higher density zoning in specific areas provided with sewers.
- Consider enacting a transfer of development rights ordinance to allow development rights to be transferred from rural and farm areas to growth areas.
- Consider establishing a regional planning effort in order to reduce development pressures in inappropriate areas.
- Encourage farmers to join the Township's agricultural security district and sell their development rights to the County, State or conservation organizations.
- Encourage cluster development to help preserve critical natural and farmland resources and to move homes away from roads or behind ridgelines and woodlands to preserve views.
- Continue to use conservation subdivision techniques to ensure new residential development contributes positively to the character of the township and preserves rural resources.
- Encourage historic cluster development to preserve historic buildings within their context, instead of demolishing them or surrounding historic homes, farm buildings, or mills with suburban subdivision.
- Use landscaping, buffering, and tree preservation to screen and protect views of historic sites, to maintain, restore, or expand scenic roads and views, and to retain Worcester's unique rural character.
- Consider new ordinance provisions to preserve scenic views and scenic roads.
- Enact village commercial zoning in commercial areas that still have a historic character and in areas where a village character is desired.
- Consider hamlet-style zoning provisions for appropriate rural areas.
- Enact natural resource protection ordinances and require tree protection, buffers between uses, and installation of street trees with new development.
- Encourage the County to continue acquiring land around Peter Wentz farmstead, so that this grouping of historic farm buildings continues to evoke Worcester as it existed 200 years ago.
- Encourage donations of land, development rights, and scenic easements to the Township or to land conservation groups.
- Preserve open space and farmland by purchasing development rights and/or easements and by facilitating preservation through land trusts, conservancies, or similar organizations.

Growth and Development Goals

Develop the Villages:

To reduce conflicts between agricultural uses and suburban development, to facilitate provision of infrastructure to concentrated development, to create a sense of place and community where shopping, recreation, institutions, and housing are close by, to maintain the rural character of the township, and to reduce development pressures on the rural and the preservation areas of the township. Almost all new development should occur in the villages and not in the rural or preservation areas.

Provide a Range of Housing Types and Densities:

To provide a balanced housing stock that meets the needs of residents with different incomes, housing preferences, and ages, and to meet its fair share of housing types and densities.

Encourage Housing that Fits the Township's Character:

To help preserve the township's history, preserve its aesthetic beauty and character, to protect property values, and to foster a sense of community.

Allow Neighborhood and Convenience Commercial Facilities:

To meet the shopping needs of the township's residents for food, and other items. To diminish the potential for increased traffic, environmental, aesthetic, and safety problems that often arise with extensive commercial development, no community or regional shopping facilities are proposed. Instead, residents will continue to be served within the trade areas of the eight community shopping centers, five town centers, and three regional malls outside the township.

Discourage Strip Commercial Uses:

To reduce potential problems that occur where relatively small commercial buildings are strung out along a road, each with its own access, and avoid: traffic congestion caused by numerous turning points and the need to drive, not walk, between neighboring or nearby businesses; the proliferation of competing signs; increased vehicular accidents and conflicts between pedestrians and cars; additional noise, pollution, light, and unsightliness, stretched out along roads and affecting a larger number of adjacent properties.

Permit a Limited Amount of Office and Industrial Development:

To provide local job opportunities for township residents while reducing the distance they have to drive to work and meet the Township's fair share obligations for these uses. To limit potential negative impacts on traffic congestion, farmland, rural character, and the environment, the Township should not become a major industrial and office employment center, but will continue to rely on nearby major industrial and office employment centers.

Consider Regional Planning Options:

To better control land uses, to better coordinate development and preservation with one or more neighboring municipalities, and to provide new planning opportunities.

Growth and Development Objectives

Achieve Residential Growth and Development Goals through the following objectives:

- Direct more intense development into, and provide public sewers for, the township's four growth areas, as follows: high-density residential, medium-density residential, and commercial uses in Fairview Village and Center Point; high- and medium-density residential uses in Cold Spring; and only medium-density residential uses in Locust Corner.
- Allow a variety of housing types in the high-density areas to help create a village character and encourage uses and development that will maintain and enhance the historic character of existing village centers.
- Do not provide public sewers to rural preservation areas within the time frame of this plan, unless necessary for specific cluster projects.
- Locate high- and medium-density housing in the township's growth areas, with access to public sewers and water, major roads, and community facilities.
- Allow a range of housing types in the high-density areas and a range of single-family detached lot sizes in the medium-density areas.
- In the township's rural preservation areas: limit housing to the lowest permitted density; encourage location of new homes in less visible wooded areas at the edges of farm fields or below ridgelines and prominent hilltops, especially when using a cluster plan; preserve scenic and roadside views, especially for scenic roads; consider rural character for new roads; preserve as much viable agricultural and natural resource land as possible; provide for trail connections to the township's destinations such as parks, other trails, and villages.

Achieve Nonresidential Growth and Development Goals through the following objectives:

- Limit commercial zoning to be sufficient for neighborhood and convenience shopping needs.
- Minimize the amount of commercial zoning strung out

along roads, but encourage common driveways and interconnected parking lots for abutting commercial uses where permitted.

- Limit the amount of industrial and office zoning in the township and encourage small-scale offices and small "satellite" office locations.

Environmental Goals

Preserve Steep Slope Areas:

To prevent or diminish potential problems on sloped areas that are more susceptible to erosion and mass movement, including increased runoff and sedimentation from disturbed slopes. Also, to reduce potential for unnecessary public expenditures for flood control, water quality, and stormwater management, and to protect habitats for important species of plants and wildlife.

Preserve Stream Corridors and Floodplains:

To carry floodwaters, minimize erosion, protect water quality, provide plant and animal habitats, and provide recreation opportunities, including trail linkages.

Preserve Wetlands:

To purify water, retain stormwater runoff, limit erosion, reduce flood flows, provide food and shelter for a wide array of animals and plants, facilitate groundwater recharge, and to help maintain the base flows of area streams.

Preserve Woodlands:

To provide habitat for many animal and plant species, control erosion, clean the air, protect privacy, provide windbreaks, cool the air in the summer, reduce the impact of rainfall, muffle noise, absorb odors, and to improve the appearance of an area.

Preserve High-Priority Open Space Lands:

To protect natural resources, to preserve important agricultural lands and working farms, to conserve historic and heritage resources, to buffer important historic and natural resource areas, to protect scenic views and roads, and to provide high-quality passive recreation opportunities.

Environmental Objectives

Achieve Environmental Goals through the following objectives:

- Continue to enforce the Township's steep slope ordinance to prohibit development on slopes that are 25% or more, minimize development or regrading on slopes of 15% to 25%, and continue to subtract steep slopes from the calculation of lot area.
- Establish a setback from stream corridors to protect the riparian corridor and woodlands along the stream.
- Continue to enforce the Township's floodplain ordinance to prohibit development in the floodplain and consider a twenty-five foot building setback from the floodplain edge.
- Use cluster standards, conservation subdivision procedures, and/or the transfer of development rights to keep steep slopes, stream corridors, wetlands, and floodplains undeveloped, and to reduce the amount of woodlands removed from development sites.
- Require wetlands to be shown on subdivision and land development plans, prohibit development of wetlands, require a 25-foot setback from wetlands, and subtract wetlands from the township's definition of lot area.
- Revise the Township's landscaping ordinance, to more strongly encourage tree preservation and require a larger number of new trees to replace mature trees that are destroyed.
- Encourage the State to expand Evansburg State Park into wooded areas and valuable natural resource areas that adjoin the park.
- Acquire land or easements to provide additional park and recreation facilities.

Parkland and Recreation Goals

Provide Community Level Parks:

To provide all Township residents with a place to play a variety of sports.

Meet the Township's Neighborhood Park Needs:

To provide parks close to people's homes, where they are more accessible, especially for young children.

Provide a Trail Along Zacharias Creek:

To extend from the County's Peter Wentz Farmstead to Evansburg State Park, with additional connections to the Township Building, through Heebner Park, and through passive parkland along Zacharias Creek, and to give township residents easy access to various trails in Evansburg State Park.

Develop a Network of Parks and Trails Throughout the Township:

To provide bicycle, hiking, jogging, equestrian and walking recreation opportunities for township residents by ensuring that trails of various types are constructed that: connect multiple destinations in the township; provide a variety of recreation experiences; connect to trail networks outside the township, and extend the county-wide, multi-municipal trail network.

Create Passive Parkland Sites:

To provide places for township residents to hike, picnic, fish, and enjoy nature in general.

Parkland and Recreation Objectives

Achieve Parkland and Recreation Goals through the following objectives:

- Develop Nike Park for public park uses,
- Develop the former Army Reserve property for public park uses.
- Require developments to provide open space or pay a fee in lieu of such open space.
- Require developments to provide trails and public access easements when the trail network is proposed to traverse the development or a link to the network is desired, or to provide a public access easement and pay a fee in lieu of such trail construction to allow future construction of the trail.
- Provide neighborhood parks in the Cold Spring and Fairview Village growth areas.
- Acquire land or easements to provide additional park and recreation facilities.

Sewage Disposal and Water Supply Goals

Provide public sewers for intense land uses:

To serve more intensive residential, and non-residential uses, for health reasons and serve less intense land uses by on-lot sewage facilities. Also, to provide public sewers to the suburban growth areas, for high-density residential, medium density residential, and commercial land uses; to reduce pressure for development of rural preservation areas by not extending sewers beyond the growth areas, unless necessary for a cluster development.

Provide Public Water Wherever Public Sewers Are Proposed:

To prevent depletion of groundwater where homes use wells for water and public sewers for wastewater. In order to help preserve areas outside growth areas, public water should not be extended beyond the growth boundaries or sewer areas. Where on-lot wells and on-lot sewage disposal are used, filtered wastewater can percolate back into the groundwater table and replenish water that was removed by the well.

Sewage Disposal and Water Supply Objectives

Achieve Sewage Disposal and Water Supply Goals through the following objectives:

- Provide public sewers for the Fairview Village, Center Point, Locust Corner, and Cold Spring growth areas and encourage the North Penn Water Authority to provide public water to the Center Point, Locust Corner, and Cold Spring growth areas and the Pennsylvania American Water Company to the Fairview Village growth area.
- Prohibit extension of public sewers into rural preservation areas during the time frame of this plan.

Transportation Goals

Reduce traffic congestion and improve traffic safety:

To reduce costs to residents in money and time and reduce additional air pollution, thereby enhancing the health and welfare of township residents.

Provide Transportation Alternatives:

To encourage alternatives to the automobile, such as walking, bicycling, or public transportation, and provide a means of traveling for those who cannot drive, such as children and some elderly.

Preserve Scenic Roads:

To help define and preserve the township's rural character, history, and property values.

Develop Rural Road Standards:

To help preserve the township's unique rural character, history, and property values.

Transportation Objectives

Achieve Transportation Goals through the following objectives:

- Encourage context-sensitive solutions for transportation planning in cooperation with the State and County governments to improve the roads in Worcester to the Township's standards.
- Reserve rights-of-way needed for realigning roads and intersections where appropriate.
- Reserve road ultimate right-of-way widths that will be adequate for future road widening and/or other transportation improvements.

- Consider using various traffic-calming techniques on roads with inappropriate vehicle speeds.
- Discourage individual driveways to strip commercial uses and encourage abutting commercial uses to use common drive-ways and interconnected parking areas.
- Limit new development in the township to reduce new traffic generation.
- Require sidewalks and/or trails throughout the Center Point, Fairview Village, Locust Corner, and Cold Spring growth areas, so that people can walk to commercial, civic, and residential uses.
- Develop special road and streetscape standards unique to Worcester for its villages, hamlets, and rural roads.
- Require sidewalks and/or trails within developments built in other portions of the township.
- Support future plans to provide bus service to Worcester Township.
- Create a trail network to connect Township, County and State Park lands and trails.

Chapter 2
Community Background

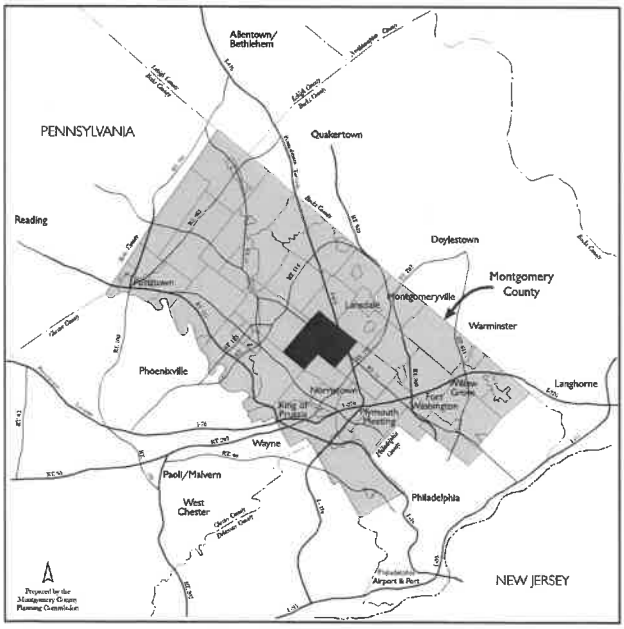
Comprehensive plans are not created from a clean slate. Instead, they reflect existing conditions and past planning. This chapter provides a regional, historical, and environmental context for the comprehensive plan that describes the Township's regional setting, history, and natural features. Other existing conditions, such as roads, land use, water and sewage facilities, and parks and open space are described in other chapters that deal with these specific topics.

Regional Setting

Growth and Development

Worcester has been described as "on the edge of development" around the Norristown and North Penn areas of the county. However, suburban growth rapidly surrounded the Township and has been occurring in the Township's four "growth areas" during the past decade. While the Township has retained its predominantly rural and undeveloped character, growth pressures have increased along its borders and have taken aim at the geographical center of Montgomery County in the Village of Center Point.

Figure 2-1
Regional Setting



Access to Employment Centers

Worcester is served by Routes 73, 363, and Germantown Pike with access through nearby growing communities to a number of employment centers including North Penn, Blue Bell, Fort Washington, Plymouth Meeting, and King of Prussia. Connections with Route 422, the Pennsylvania Turnpike, and I-476 allow access to more distant employment centers in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lehigh, and Northampton Counties, and the City of Philadelphia.

The Visteon Corporation's automotive parts plant is the largest employer in the Township, located at the boundary with Upper Gwynedd Township. Major nearby employers include the Merck, Sharp, and Dohme pharmaceutical facilities in Upper Gwynedd and the group of pharmaceutical facilities at the intersection of Routes 29 and 422 in Upper Providence Township.

Growth Corridors

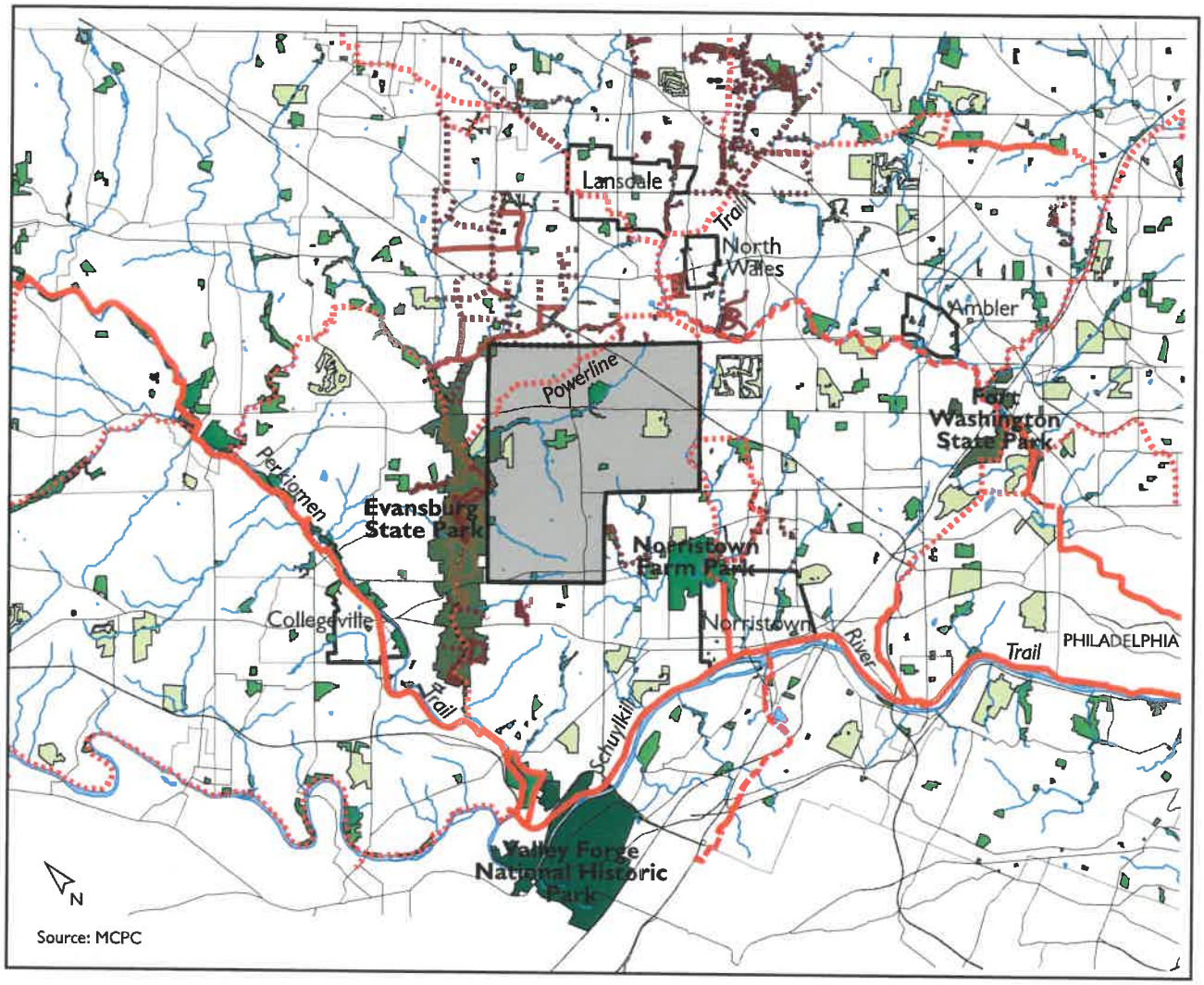
Figure 2 - 1, Regional Setting, shows Worcester relative to employment centers and the residential growth that has occurred around these centers. Worcester falls outside of the direct influence of Philadelphia, but is strongly influenced by development along several growth corridors that extend outward from the city.

One prominent corridor grew along the Main Line of the Pennsylvania Railroad, and became more accessible via Routes 30 and 76 heading west through King of Prussia and Paoli. Another, younger corridor grew along the Doylestown train line and Route 309 through the Lansdale area and Montgomery Township, into Bucks County toward Allentown and Bethlehem. A newer development corridor has recently been growing along Route 422 toward Pottstown and Reading. Worcester Township falls between two of these corridors, on the western edge of the Doylestown train line/Route 309 corridor.

Regional Parks and Recreation

Access to regional park and recreation facilities is convenient for Worcester residents (see Figure 2 – 2). Evansburg State Park hugs the western Township boundary almost all the way from Skippack Pike to Germantown Pike, with small parts of the park extending into Worcester. The county's historic Peter Wentz farmstead is just outside the Village of Center Point, still surrounded by agricultural uses. The county-operated Norristown Farm Park is a short distance outside the Township and the Fort Washington State Park and Valley Forge National Historic Park are further away, but readily accessible. The county's Mill Grove Audubon Center and Lower Perkiomen Valley Park are a short drive from Worcester. The recently completed Perkiomen Trail leads up the Perkiomen Creek Valley from the Lower Perkiomen Park and connects with the Schuylkill Valley Trail that leads along the river to Philadelphia.

Figure 2-2
Parks, Recreation and Trails in the Region



History

Origins of the Township.

Before the establishment of Worcester Township in 1734, the locality was designated on maps as New Bristol Township. The name "Worcester" came from a city and county in England, and it is supposed to be derived from the Saxon word "caester," signifying a station or camp. The present Township boundaries resulted from limits of the private properties of 25 landholders who banded together in 1734 to petition the court for the formation of Worcester Township.

Worcester's earliest land grants were acquired from William Penn by individuals of English, Welsh, German, and Dutch origin. The Free Society of Traders bought much of the southwestern portion of the Township from William Penn in 1724. In that same year, the society sold a portion of 1,000 acres to James Steel of Philadelphia who, in turn, sold smaller tracts to such Worcester settlers as Henry Rittenhouse, Adam Van Vosen, and Thomas Shute. Other large tracts acquired from William Penn included the John and Michael Jones tract of 1,000 acres in 1681, the Bridget Jenet tract of 292 acres in 1705, the John Reel tract of 300 acres in 1716, and the Anthony Morris tract of 558 acres in 1716.

The Revolutionary War Period

It was from the Methacton Hill area that General Washington's advance guard was able to observe the movement of the British Army on its march to Philadelphia for the winter of 1777. Washington broke camp at Pennypacker's Mill near Schwenksville on October 8, 1777 and the army proceeded to march down the Skippack Pike. On the 16th, Washington established his headquarters at the house of Peter Wentz, which is now a county historic site located east of Center Point. The army proceeded from its encampment at Wentz Church to make the attack at Germantown, where they were defeated. After the defeat, they retreated to the Methacton hills, maintained a strong position there for several days, and then marched to Whitemarsh Township.

Transportation History

Germantown Pike, formerly called Reading Pike and also Germantown and Perkiomen Turnpike (Figure 2 – 3), was probably the first road to be built in Montgomery County. In 1687, a group of Quaker settlers in Plymouth Township petitioned for a cartroad from Philadelphia to Plymouth. In the 18th century, Germantown Pike was extended from Plymouth through Worcester. The many turns on the road can be attributed to the fact that the roadbed follows the old Manatawny Indian trail. Since Germantown Pike provided for the transportation of commodities to the interior and connected with a system of turnpike roads leading to the Ohio River and settlements on the frontier, it was considered a road of state interest.

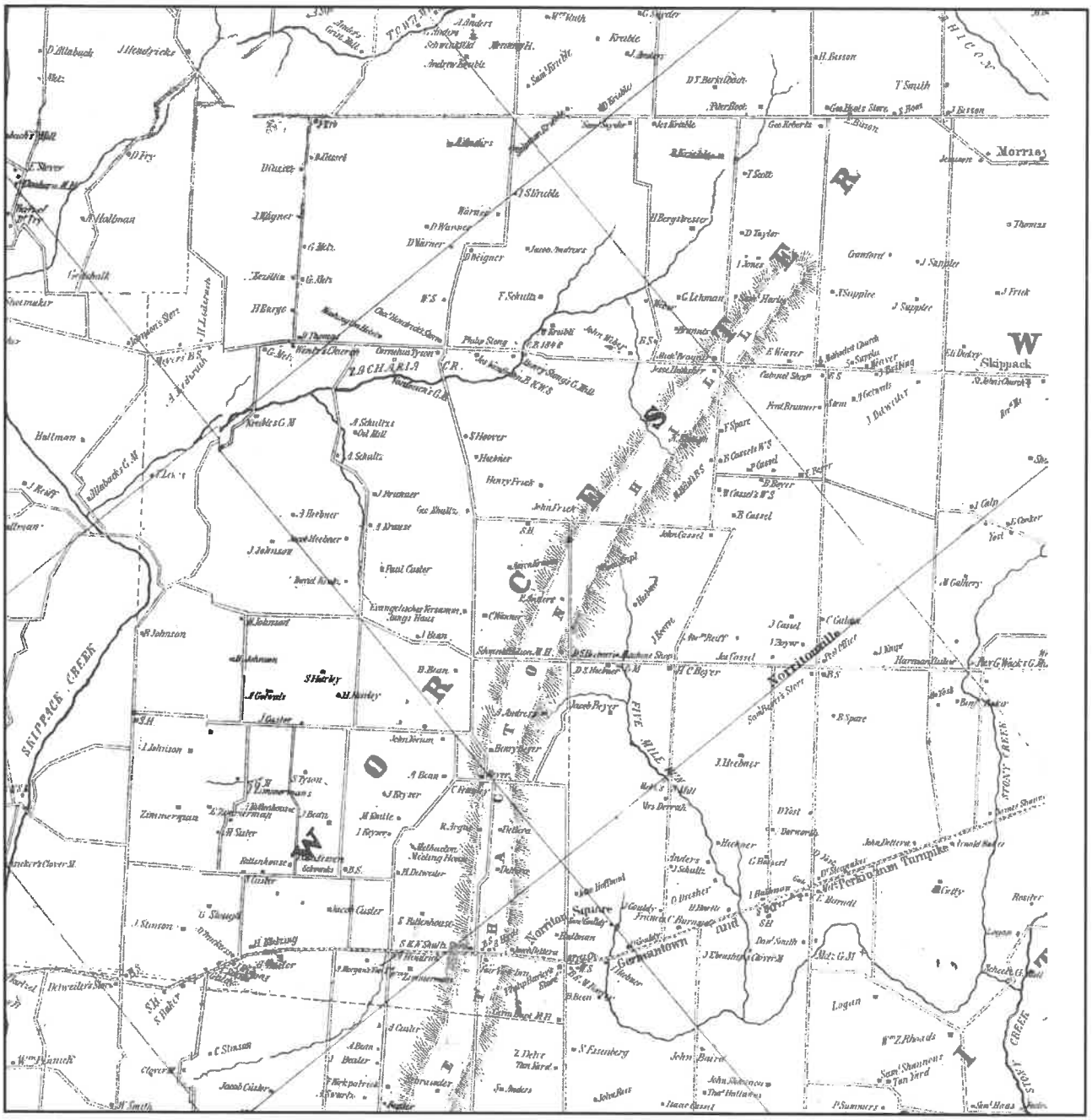
Skippack Pike is one of the county's oldest east-west highways. In 1713, 29 settlers living in the Skippack Creek watershed petitioned the court for a road from the Skippack region down to Edward Farmar's mill on the Wissahickon Creek in Whitemarsh. Similarly, Morris Road resulted from a petition, in 1714, for a road from Garret Clemens' mill in Lower Salford Township to Morris' mill on the Wissahickon in Whitemarsh.

The Northeast Extension of the Pennsylvania Turnpike was completed in 1956. Although it cuts through Worcester, it has no access in Worcester Township. Proposals to build

Peter Wentz Farmstead.

Bill Bourne

Fig 2 - 3
Excerpt from Montgomery County Map by Wm. E. Morris 1848



access to Morris Road have been opposed by local residents and the future of such access is uncertain. The nearest access is the Lansdale interchange at Kulpsville, within two miles of the township limits. Following completion of the "Blue Route" (I-476) from I-95 to the Pennsylvania Turnpike at Plymouth Meeting, the Northeast Extension was also designated as I-476.

For several decades, increased traffic has required improvements to a number of Worcester's roads and intersections for safety and efficiency. Skippack Pike was widened with shoulders. A new traffic light was added at the intersection of Skippack Pike with Bethel Hill and Whitehall Roads. The existing traffic light at Valley Forge Road and Skippack Pike was upgraded, and turning lanes were added.

With the construction of the Ford plant (recently Visteon), new traffic lights were added to Morris Road. Bethel Road was realigned to directly connect with West Point Pike in Upper Gwynedd Township. Traffic lights were added to Valley Forge Road at Stump Hall and Morris Roads, and to Germantown Pike at Mount Kirk Avenue and Trooper Road.

Worcester has seen only one serious attempt to serve the township with public transportation. The Skippack and Perkiomen Transit Company built a trolley line up Valley Forge Road between Trooper and Center Point in 1902. Later, the route was extended along Skippack Pike and to Harleysville. This line was replaced in 1925 by bus service that ran for only a year.

The rural taverns were the centers for military training, for political meetings, for social gatherings, balls, parties, for sleighing frolics; some served as polling places for annual elections. In Worcester, there were some six tavern licenses issued between 1762 and 1774.

Though Worcester has been rural and without villages of any considerable size, its central situation in the county gave it favor as a place for holding political meetings and militia musters. Important political conventions were held in the township in the 1790s. In 1795, a meeting of the electors of Montgomery County was held at Joseph Tyson's Tavern to name candidates for the Congress. The presiding officer at this meeting was General Andrew Porter of Worcester.

Fairview Village. *Bill Bourne*

Cedars. *Bill Bourne*

Commercial History

Gristmills and sawmills were among the early businesses in the Township, located mainly along the Zacharias Creek. This creek may have been named for Zachariah Whitpain, an early resident of the adjoining township. A sawmill was located where the Zacharias Creek crosses Skippack Pike near Center Point and a gristmill was located on a branch of the Skippack Creek near the western boundary of the township. Zacharias Creek is the prominent stream of Worcester Township and has a course of about four miles across its northern area.

It was calculated that before the Revolution, an annual flow of from 5,000 to 6,000 teams of horses passed down the great highways of Montgomery County to haul farm products to Philadelphia. The farmers and teamsters spent little for food. They were so thrifty that they carried most of their victuals with them; some carried their horse feed as well. They spent money only for liquor at the wayside taverns and for lodging at the farmer's hotels in the city. There were, however, many stage lines that carried passengers who had more money and spent it for food, as well as for beverages.

In 1801, a meeting of the Montgomery County Republican Committee was held at John Winter's Tavern in Worcester. Benjamin Rittenhouse presided and two delegates were present from each township. The meeting resulted in the appointment of five citizens to represent the county in a meeting of representatives of five counties composing the congressional district, to name a candidate for Congress.

In 1785, within the township limits there were two taverns, two gristmills, and one sawmill. In 1884, the following licenses were granted according to the mercantile appraiser's list: Beyer and Swartley, livestock; William H. and W.R. Baker, merchandise; Daniel Cassel, merchandise; Daniel Cassel, hardware; S.L. Frank, livestock; M. J. Harley, merchandise; Kriebel and Son, flour and feed; and Frank Swartley, livestock.

In the 1890s, the progressive farmers of the township organized the Worcester Farmers' Union which attained a membership of 600 in Montgomery, Chester, and Bucks Counties. It concerned itself mainly with buying supplies for members at wholesale rates and did not tackle the problem of marketing. The union furthered progressive movements

Farmers' Union Hall, built in 1895, now preserved as the Worcester Historical Society Museum, Still stands in the Village of Center Point. Susan Caughlan

in various lines, including the building of better highways and the establishment of a rural telephone line in 1902. A two-story hall was erected at Center Point where public meetings and entertainments were held. Some years later, the union ceased activity, though it had a vigorous successor in the Tri-County Producers' Cooperative Association. This association was formed in 1936. One of its achievements was to open a building near Center Point for the sale of eggs and poultry. This organization is also now defunct.

Most of Worcester's residents shop in centers located outside of the township. However, a small strip center in Center Point has a convenience store and Fairview Village has a drug store. Fairview Village and Center Point also have other small office and retail businesses, including gas stations and post offices. The Merrymead Farm store, which was started in 1971, has grown into a large dairy and country store and has become now a destination for school trips. The Cedars general store has been transformed into a restaurant, antique shop, flea market, and craft store, and additional shops have been added in recent years.

Village History

Center Point received its name because it was believed to be at the geographical center of the county. However, the post office at Center Point is called Worcester because of the existence of another Center Point. The former Center Point Hotel was the third such hotel in succession in the Center Point village. Peter Wentz is thought to have established the first hotel near the Kriebel Mill site. The second hotel stood close to Wentz's Church on the south side of Skippack Pike.

Fairview Village is at the crossroads of Germantown Pike and Valley Forge Road. The Farmers' Union Company, originally established for the recovery of stolen horses, had its headquarters at Fairview since its organization in 1835. The Fairview Village Assembly built a community hall there in 1919. The Community Hall is used today for official Worcester Township business meetings. The village stands near the summit of Methacton Hill, a considerable elevation that commences in Lower Providence and extends in a northeasterly direction across almost the entire southern part of Worcester, for a distance of five miles. From points on the hill, including Fairview Village, there are beautiful and extended views of the Perkiomen and Schuylkill Valleys, including the distant skyline of Philadelphia.

Cedars is a small community on Skippack Pike near the western boundary of the township. It received its name in the 18th century because of the groves of cedar trees lining the road at the top of the hill. It has more recently evolved into a small commercial center, featuring small specialty shops.

School History

Worcester has been a leader in education among the agricultural townships of Montgomery County. In 1880, the township had seven small school districts, and each school building was numbered according to the number of its district. Building No. 1 was the Fairview School known as the Quarry Hall School. It succeeded the Methacton Mennonite Church School, the first school of which there is any record. Building No. 2 was the Water Street School dating from 1830 and now utilized as a private residence. Building No. 3 was the Stump Hall School, still standing as a residence at

Old Worcester Elementary School. Board of Assessment

Valley Forge Road and Stump Hall Road. The school gained its name from a large chestnut tree stump in the highway in front of the building. Metz's School, in District No. 4, is now a residence and is located between Cedars and Center Point. It gained its name from the contractor who built it in 1849. The remaining schools, all standing, were the Anders' School, No. 5, on Shearer Road; Bethel School, No. 6, behind Bethel Church; and Castle School, No. 7, on Potshop Road. Consolidation of the township's schools was begun in 1913 when a four-room township high school was erected at Center Point. This consolidation was one of the first such steps taken in the county. The original township high school building was later expanded and became the Worcester Elementary School.

The Worcester and Lower Providence school districts combined in 1959 to create a joint school system that later became known as the Methacton School District. The Methacton School District eventually closed the Worcester Elementary School because of enrollment issues. It later razed the historic high school building and newer additions to make way for the new Worcester Elementary School, built on the same site in the late 1990's. The Methacton School District has four other elementary schools, all of which are located in Lower Providence Township. These are the Woodland, Arrowhead, Audubon, and Eagleville Elementary Schools. The new Eagleville School was also built recently to replace the original school, built in the 1960's. The Methacton District also includes the Arcola Intermediate School in Lower Providence and the ever-expanding Methacton Senior High School, located in the Upper Fairview Village area of Worcester Township. The senior high school complex incorporated the building originally used as the junior high school as enrollments increased.

Methacton High School. Pictometry

Religious History

Wentz's United Church of Christ is located on Skippack Pike nearly a mile northwest of Center Point. The congregation existed as early as 1727, but was known as "Skippack Reformed Church," located in Lower Salford Township. The old log church building of the Skippack Reformed Church was torn down in 1760 and was never rebuilt. About this time, the congregation transferred its meeting place to the site now occupied by Wentz's Church, as the majority of the congregation resided in that neighborhood. The first church building was commenced in 1762 and completed in 1771. It was painted inside with strong colors and highly ornamented with a number of inscriptions on the walls. The congregation, at that time, numbered about 50 members. The church was an exceedingly strong and durable stone building, with joints closely cut and pointed with mortar, and the roof was high and steep, after the old Holland style.

Wentz's United Church. Donald C. Atkinson

Evangelischess Versemmlungs Haas (German Evangelical Church). MCPC

In 1851, the congregation had grown so large that it consented to erect a new church on the same ground. The second church was finished in 1852. The new church was a plain, one-story building with a gallery at the end and a seating capacity of 300 persons. By 1878, this building had also become inadequate for the size of the growing congregation. It was demolished and the third and present church on this site was completed in the same year.

The Bethel Methodist Meeting House, from whence comes the name Bethel Hill, is situated at Skippack Pike and Bethel Road. This was the first congregation of the Methodist denomination founded in Pennsylvania, outside Philadelphia. The first church, built in 1770, gave place to a new building in 1843, and in 1914, another church was erected. A tablet dedicated in 1929 announces that 30 soldiers of the American Army in the Revolution were buried in the grounds while the church served as a hospital after the Battle of Germantown.

A German Baptist (Dunker) Meeting House, located on Valley Forge Road, is now owned by the Worcester Historical Society. It is a one-story building with a seating capacity of 150 persons. The earliest gravestone bears the date 1809.

One of the earliest sects to prove influential in Worcester was the Mennonite. The southern half of Worcester, and part of Lower Providence and the Norriton townships were formerly called the Methacton region

or the Methacton Hills. To these heights, a number of Mennonite settlers came about the middle of the 18th century. Apparently, these Mennonite settlers cooperated with other Germans in the region. They established the first Worcester school in 1739 and opened their meetinghouse to other denominations. The first meetinghouse was built of stone and was used as a hospital during the Revolution. The present Worcester Mennonite Church was erected in 1873 on the same site. Members of the Reformed Mennonite Church (the Herrites) established their church on Berks Road near Bean Road.

The Worcester Mennonite Church is located at the intersection of Quarry Hall Road and Mill Road. The plain, one-story stone structure with white plaster walls was built in 1873. Sheds for horse teams were located on both sides. The lot on which it is built was deeded by Henry Rittenhouse to the Dutch Anabaptist Society in 1739. The first meetinghouse was built between 1739 and 1771. There is a tradition that when the Revolutionary Army was encamped in the area in October 1777, soldiers who died from sickness or from wounds received in the Battle of Germantown were buried under a large oak tree just outside the grounds of the church.

Among the earliest settlers of the township were the Schwenkfelder families who migrated from Silesia between 1733 and 1737. Two families came to Pennsylvania, arriving in Philadelphia in 1733. Their report back to Holland encouraged about 40 families to follow. Most of the Schwenkfelders who came to America settled in what are now Chestnut Hill, and Montgomery, Berks, and Lehigh Counties.

For many years in Pennsylvania, the Schwenkfelders were without a church. Organization was not needed while the families were few and widespread. In the 18th century, Schwenkfelder services were held in the homes of members. The first Worcester Schwenkfelder church was built in 1836 and replaced in 1882. It was torn down, but the existing cemetery at Township Line and Trooper Roads marks the original site and a memorial identifies the spot where the pulpit of the old church stood. The Central Schwenkfelder Church on Valley Forge Road was built in 1951, and is one of the five congregations in the United States.

Other denominations have established churches in Worcester more recently. These include the Seventh Day Adventist Church built in 1977 on Germantown Pike; the Church of the Nazarene of Fairview Village, also located on Germantown Pike; the non-denominational Faith Church of Worcester, built in 1979 on Water Street; the independent Grace Baptist Church, built on Quarry Hall Road in 1950; the charismatic Family Bible Fellowship church, located on Adair Drive; and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Trinity, built in 1994 on Valley Forge Road.

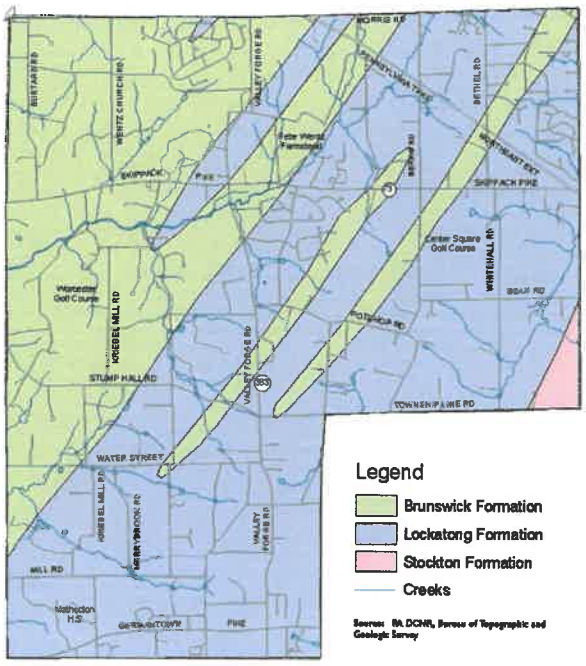
Central Schwenkfelder Church. MCPC

Historic and Cultural Resources

George Washington really did sleep in Worcester Township, along with some of the Revolutionary Army. Washington planned the Battle of Germantown in 1777 while staying at Peter Wentz farmstead, which is now a County historic site and on the National Register of Historic Places. The army encamped at the Worcester Mennonite Church and cemetery near Fairview Village.

Worcester has a large number of historic properties and sites, including Lenni-Lenape Indian sites, mills, inns, churches, farms, schools, homes, villages, creameries, cemeteries, and stores. Some of the more notable historic sites, besides the two mentioned above, are the Old Mill Farm, the Wentz United Church of Christ, the Bean House, the Rittenhouse farm, and the Anthony Morris house, the second nationally registered historic site in the township. A comprehensive history of the township, as well as its buildings and landscapes, is provided in **Worcester**, a book published by the Worcester Historical Society in 1976. A number of significant historic sites are shown in figure 2 and listed in Figure 3.

Figure 2-4
Worcester Geology



Natural Features

Geology

Three types of rock strata are found in Worcester—Brunswick, Lockatong, and Stockton. The Lockatong underlies the largest area and consists of dark gray to black, dense, hard shale (argillite) interfingered with beds of impure limestone and other types of shale. These rocks are hard and resist weathering.

The Brunswick formation underlies the second largest area in Worcester. It typically consists of reddish-brown shale, mudstone, and siltstone. The topography of the formation is usually characterized by rolling hills.

The Stockton formation is present in the southeastern corner of the township and is a good water producer. It is composed chiefly of very fine to coarse-grained arkosic sandstone and conglomerates, interbedded with red shale and siltstone.

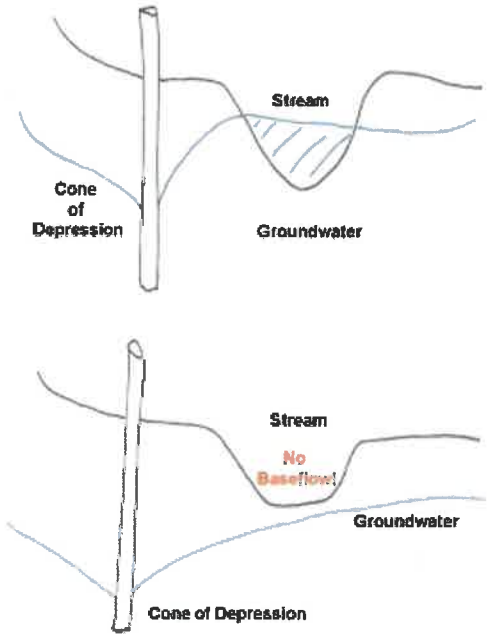
Figure 2 - 4 shows that Worcester is underlain mostly by an extremely poor water producer, the Lockatong formation. Most of the remainder of the township is underlain by the Brunswick formation, which has limited water supply qualities.

Because of their limitations on groundwater withdrawal, these rock strata affect the minimum lot size that should be permitted in areas without public water. Residential areas that depend upon groundwater from individual wells are drawing on a limited supply of groundwater, which comes from the portion of rainfall that percolates through the soil into the underlying bedrock to the water table. Baseflow is the amount of water that flows out of the ground to replenish surface water and, in a natural state, can be viewed as excess groundwater that can be consumed by people.

In the Skippack Creek drainage area, which is made up of Triassic Shale formations (Lockatong and Brunswick), most of the rainfall in an average year either runs off the land during and after a storm (27.8%) or is lost to the atmosphere through evapotranspiration (60.3%). Only about 12% of the rainwater is available as excess groundwater that will provide baseflow to local streams. The baseflow contribution per acre is approximately 344 gallons per day for an average year; however, during a drought year with a one-year in ten probability of recurrence, the baseflow contribution per acre is approximately 82.8 gallons per day. For long term planning or as a basis of zoning density, using 83 gallons of water per net acre as an estimate of water supply is reasonable.

With one home per two acres, there will be about 166 gallons of baseflow water per home. However, the average suburban household can use up to 300 gallons per day of water. Fortunately, with on-lot sewage disposal, some of the household's water will make it back into the groundwater. Approximately 10% of the water is consumed for cooking, plant watering, and other uses. The remaining 270 gallons per day are sent out of the house as sewage. In most homes with on-lot sand mound septic systems, up to 50% of the wastewater that is discharged into the sand mound is lost

Figure 2-5
Effects of Wells on Groundwater and Baseflow



through evapotranspiration. The other half of the treated effluent, or 135 gallons, provides effective recharge to the groundwater. The total water available, 166 gallons per day from rainfall during a drought year and 135 gallons from sewage disposal recharge, matches the 300 gallons per day that most families will withdraw.

If homes withdraw more water than is being recharged, then the water table will go down, which may dry up some wells and cause people to have to drill new, deeper wells (see Figure 2 – 5). In addition, it will hurt the ecology of the area by eliminating water that plants and animals need.

Topography

The township is comprised mostly of 3 to 8 percent slopes. This degree of slope presents a gently rolling effect. The second most common degree of slope is from 0 to 3 percent slopes. These slopes are usually found in the bottom of stream valleys and top of ridgelines. Eight to 15 percent slopes are scattered throughout the township. A large percentage of these slopes are associated with stream valleys.

The 15 to 25 percent slopes are scattered throughout the township, and the largest area containing this degree of slope is the northwest section of Worcester. The 25 percent and higher slopes are found in three small areas of Worcester. These areas are located in the southwestern portion, and one area in the southeastern sector of the township. All of these areas are associated with steep stream banks.

Generally, the 0 to 8 percent slopes are suited for institutional, industrial, commercial, and residential development. Residential development is also suited for 8 to 15 percent slopes. On 15 to 25 percent slopes large-lot residential development is more suitable, as the large lot size allows flexibility in siting the building and minimizing erosion problems. Any slope above 25 percent should be maintained in its natural state, preferably preserved as parks or other open space. Areas with slopes over 15 percent are shown in Figure 2 - 5. Development of steep slope areas should be avoided, because it often leads to soil erosion and reduced water quality in local streams.

Associated with slope is elevation and relief. The three highest areas in the township are in the Methacton Hills which are 495 feet above sea level and run roughly parallel to Valley Forge Road. The lowest area in the township is where the Skippack Creek exits from the township and is 135 feet above sea level. The range between the highest and lowest points in Worcester, called the relief, is 360 feet. Since the horizontal distance between the high

Figure 2-5
Steep Slopes

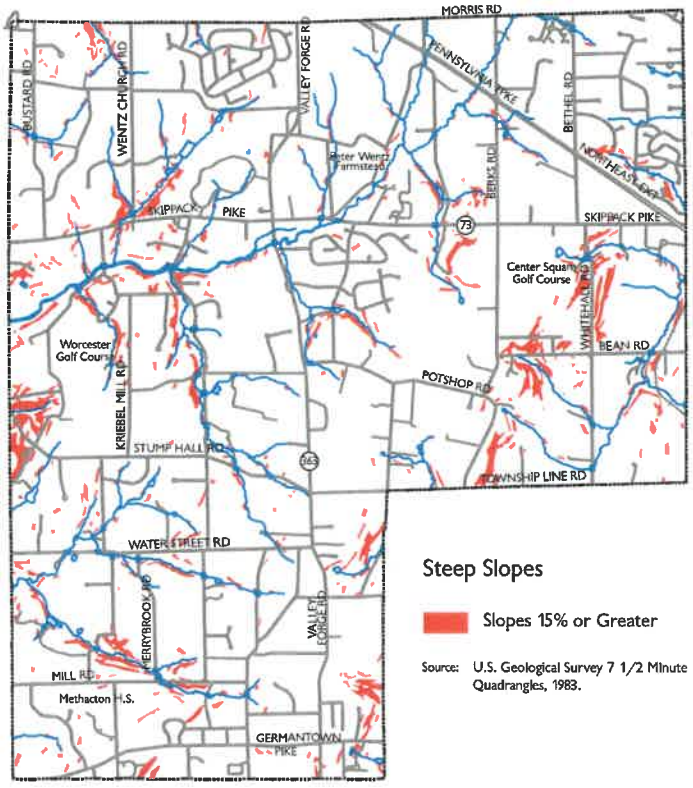
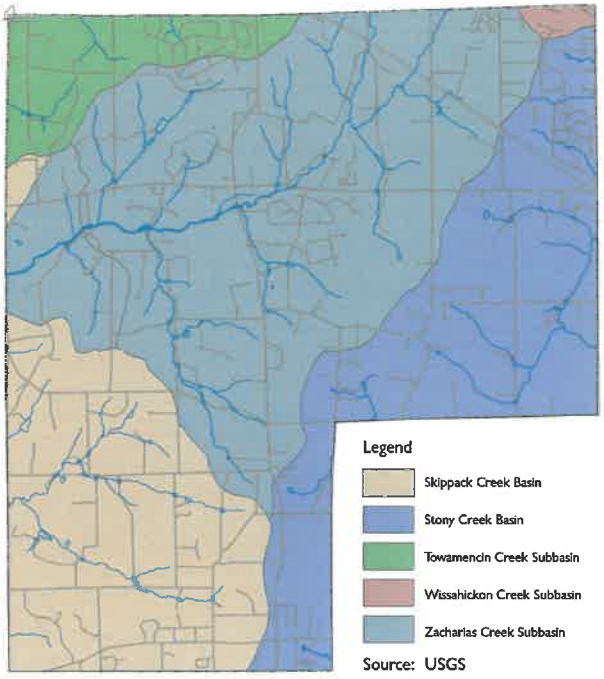


Figure 2-6
Watershed



and low points in Worcester is fairly extensive, the relief in the township is not significant.

The drainage basins in Worcester form different watershed areas, as shown in Figure 2 – 5, that provide a valuable source of ground water. Portions of three major basins are present in Worcester. The Skippack, Stony, and Wissahickon Creeks basins drain into the Schuylkill River, which is a part of the Delaware River basin.

The Skippack Creek basin drains into Skippack Township from the greater portion of Worcester, primarily by way of the Zacharias Creek and its tributaries. The southern boundary of the Skippack basin's major ridgeline falls in Worcester, and this line enters the township in the Methacton Hills and runs in a northeasterly direction. The largest minor basin in Worcester is the Zacharias, which drains from east to west across the northern portion of the township.

The Stony Creek basin, in the southeastern portion of Worcester, drains into Whitpain and East Norriton Townships, then to Norristown and the Schuylkill River. The Wissahickon basin drains a small portion of the eastern section of Worcester into Upper Gwynedd and the Wissahickon Creek.

The delineation of drainage patterns and drainage basins is important for the formulation of public sewer systems, since their collection systems usually take advantage of topography for gravity flow. In addition, solutions to storm drainage problems can be influenced greatly by drainage patterns.

Scenic Resources

Worcester has many scenic rural roads, including Bean Road near Stony Creek, Frog Hollow Road, Kriebel Mill Road, Green Hill Road, Weber Road near the turnpike, and Grange Avenue. Each of these is surrounded by open farmland or rows of trees, and each has very few, if any, new subdivided lots strung out along the road. In addition, these roads are off the beaten track and tend to have little traffic. Figure 2 - 7 shows the location of these scenic roads.

Because the Central County Ridge runs through Worcester, the township has a number of scenic, long-range views. These include a long view past Methacton High School, looking towards the north and the Skippack Creek Valley; long views from Valley Forge Road towards Evansburg State Park and the Skippack valley; a view from Potshop Road towards the east and Stony Creek; a view towards the north from Skippack Pike where the Central County Ridge crosses the road; a view to the south from Valley Forge Road, looking over Peter Wentz farmstead, and views to the southeast from Fairview Village toward Philadelphia. Because of the township's gently rolling landscape, there are also a number of medium and short-range views, shown in figure 2 - 7.

Soils

Detailed information pertaining to soil capabilities for agriculture and building purposes is available in the Montgomery County Soil Survey, which was completed for the county by the Soil Conservation Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture and published in 1967. Worcester contains all of the soil groups listed in the county survey.

Few areas in the township are well suited for on-lot sewage disposal, and even the suitable areas are made up of variable as well as satisfactory soils. Whenever on-lot sewage disposal is proposed, the soil's ability to handle this disposal must be fully investigated through the use of soil probes and percolation tests. Since much of the township has severe soil limitations for on-lot disposal, these investigations must be done carefully and comprehensively. One of the limits for on-lot sewage disposal is a high water table. Figure 2 - 8 shows portions of the township that have a high water table, which means the water table is from 0 to 3 feet below ground level.

On the other hand, most of the township's soils are suitable for agriculture. The best areas for agriculture in the township, those with prime farmland soils, are located in the stream valleys and scattered around the township, with major concentrations near Morris Road, Valley Forge Road, and Berks Road. The least productive areas, those with neither prime farmland soils or soils of statewide importance, are also scattered around the township, although the largest

Figure 2-7
Scenic Resources

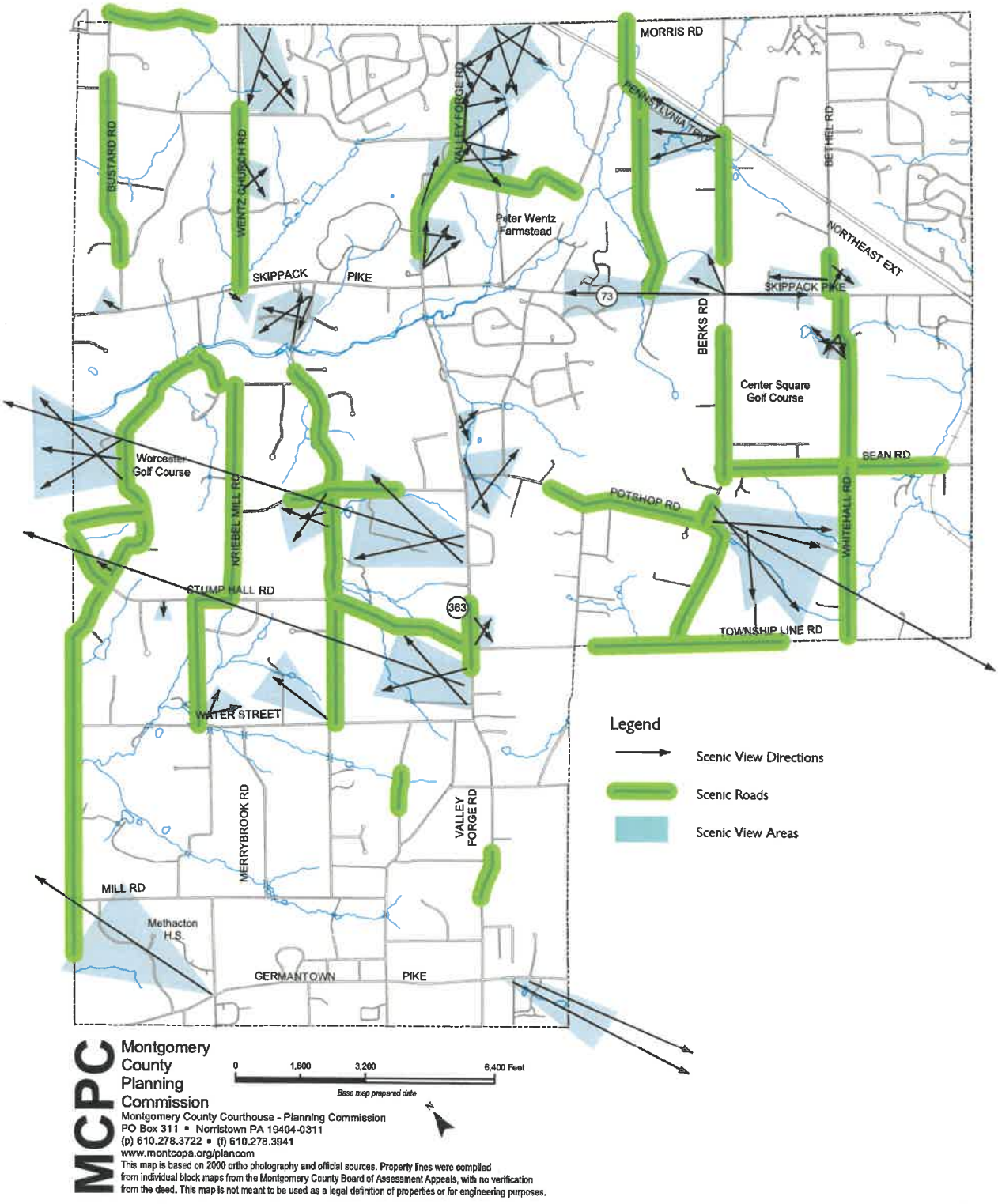


Figure 2-8
Alluvial and Hydric Soils

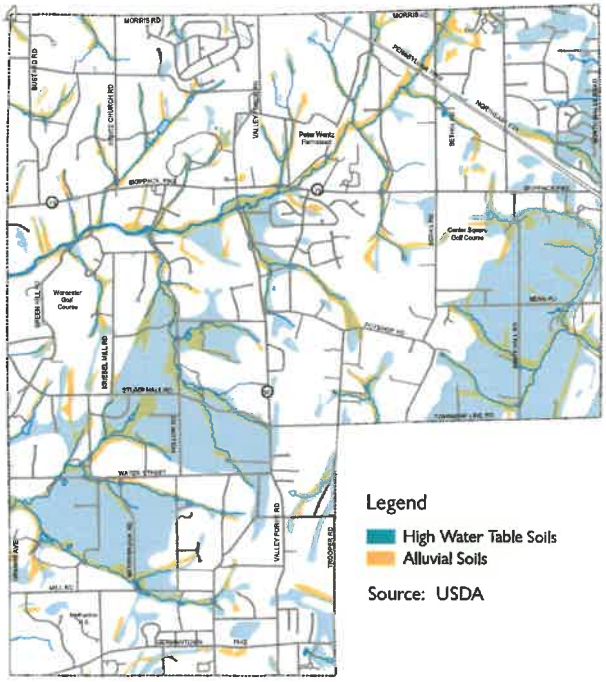
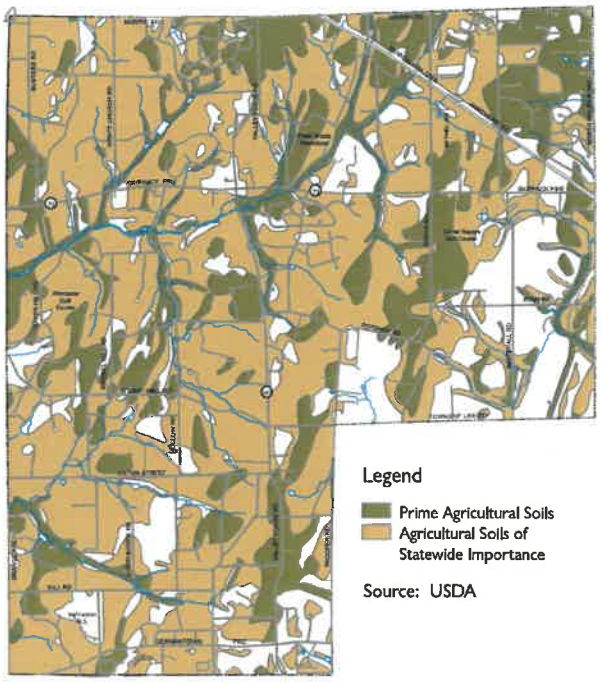


Figure 2-9
Agricultural Soils



concentration is located around Whitehall Road, south of Skippack Pike. Figure 2 - 9 shows Worcester's soil suitability for agriculture.

Surface Waters

Figure 2 - 8 shows the alluvial soil areas and Figure 2-10 shows the 100-year floodplains in Worcester. Alluvial soils are usually found in association with stream valleys and are unsuitable for development because of flooding during normal high-water periods, which may occur from two or three times a year to once in several years. However, these areas can be used as open space for passive recreational purposes.

Looking at Figure 2 – 10, one can see that the largest floodplain traverses the township from east to west along the Zacharias Creek. A substantial floodplain also is present along the Stony Creek in the southeastern part of Worcester.

Floodplains provide storage for excess stormwater during periods of flooding and are an important part of a natural drainage system. When development is allowed in floodplains, flooding increases, and life and property are threatened. Because of this, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has strict regulations on floodplain development related directly to the national flood insurance program.

Because the aesthetic value of stream valleys is considerable, these areas are usually attractive and worth setting aside for passive recreation. If this is not done, development in these stream valleys will destroy vegetation, disrupt wildlife by removing habitat and disturbing the water supply, and reduce the amount of groundwater recharge that normally takes place within floodplains.

With development in floodplains, the absorption capacity of the watershed is decreased. Rooftops, parking lots, and street pavement all contribute to increased surface drainage and flooding. Stream valley preservation and detention basins should be used to control storm water and decrease floodplain drainage. For the Stony Creek drainage basin, all stormwater facilities should be designed in accordance with the standards in the Stony Creek/Sawmill Run Stormwater Management Plan done under Act 167.

Floodplains and stream corridors serve important functions beyond the conveyance of storm water. Trees and vegetation along stream corridors absorb precipitation and control snow and ice flow into the stream. If stream corridors are developed, the vegetation that would control the flow of precipitation into the stream is absent and stream flows become irregular. Irregular flow means that the stream highs and lows will also be altered. If impervious coverage is increased, this cycle is exacerbated as the rate of runoff is increased and snow and ice melts faster. In effect, the

Figure 2-10
Floodplains and Wetlands

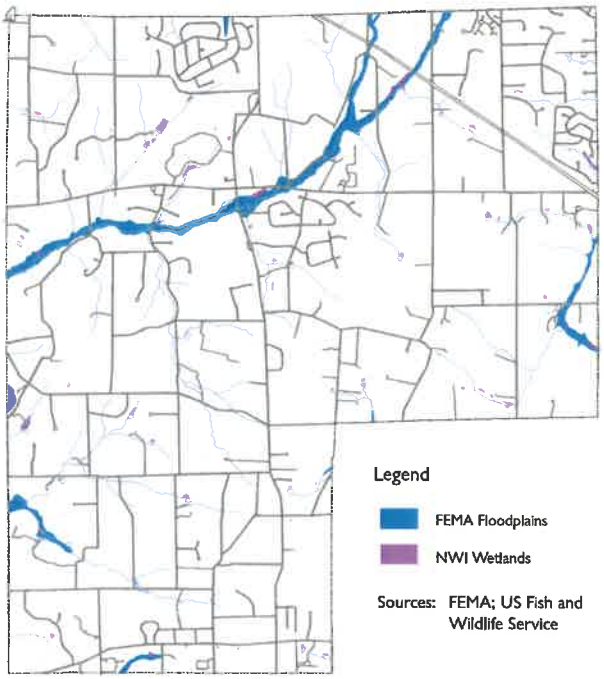
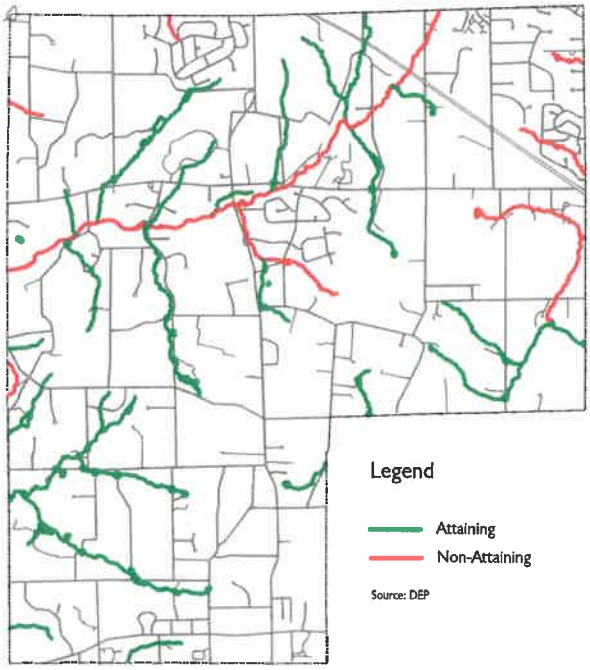


Figure 2-11
Stream Water Quality



developed surfaces and the increased runoff that they cause result in a greater propensity for streams to flood due to their inability to absorb the additional water.

In addition to flooding, runoff often results in sedimentation. Therefore, where stream corridors lack vegetation, sediments are carried into the streambeds where they deposit on the stream floor and make the stream increasingly shallow and warm. Typically, high water quality streams are those that are deep and cold.

Sediments carried into streams through runoff and groundwater discharge often include pollutants. These pollutants can be generated by a variety of sources, involving industrial, residential and farming land uses. For example, fertilizers used on residential lawns and on farms enter the streams via groundwater or surface runoff and cause algae and other plant life in the streams to grow too rapidly. The fertilized plants and algae take over and, in effect, strangle the stream. Other pollutants, such as bacteria from farm animal refuse and failing on-lot sewage disposal systems, are also carried into streams via surface and ground water. In fact, fecal bacteria go directly into streams when farm animals are permitted to roam unrestrained into the streambeds. The bacteria lead to contamination and degradation of the streams.

The condition of the stream corridor itself is important in minimizing erosion and water pollution, protecting water quality (temperature and velocity), providing animal habitat, and providing recreation opportunities. Well-vegetated corridors will reduce pollutant loads to streams, shade the stream, and provide habitat for wildlife. Riparian wetlands filter and impede stormwater and provide a habitat for aquatic life and often fringe the stream corridor. Unconsolidated gravel and stone deposits along the corridor allow for groundwater recharge. People benefit from stream corridors, as they also provide opportunities for trails and other forms of recreation.

Worcester is situated at the headwaters of three watersheds, Skippack Creek, Stony Creek and Wissahickon Creek. Zacharias Creek is the main tributary of the Skippack which crosses through the heart of the Township toward the southwest. Stony Creek drains the southeastern portion of the Township while a very small part of the upper headwaters of the Wissahickon drains the eastern corner. According to the PA Code Chapter 93 "Water Quality Standards," the protected use designation for all of these streams is for aquatic habitat. The streams are considered warm water fish habitat but also suitable for seasonal trout stocking and therefore listed as "TSF" or trout stocked fishery.

Figure 2 – 11 shows the location of the streams in Worcester that were evaluated by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) as to whether they have "attained" the water quality standards appropriate for their "designated uses" or not. In Worcester,

for example, the Zacharias Creek is shown as non-attaining. In 2001 it was determined that due to the water quality at the time of measurement, the Zacharias Creek did not meet the standards for aquatic life and therefore was assigned the "non-attaining" status. With few exceptions, most of the streams in Worcester were determined to attain the water quality standards appropriate for their designated uses.

The township's wetlands have many benefits, including purifying water and retaining stormwater runoff, thereby limiting erosion and reducing flood flows, providing food and shelter for a wide array of animals and plants, facilitating groundwater recharge, and helping maintain the base flows of area streams. Developers must carefully and comprehensively identify wetland areas when they prepare a development plan by examining the soils, hydrology, and vegetation of the land. Often, wetland areas are found in or near streams and swales.

Figure 2 - 10 shows where wetlands might be located in Worcester, based on hydric soils, wet spots, and marshes identified in the Montgomery County Soil Survey; however, this map is only a general guide of where wetlands might exist. Specific, comprehensive wetlands studies must be done for individual parcels before any development occurs.

Vegetation and Wildlife

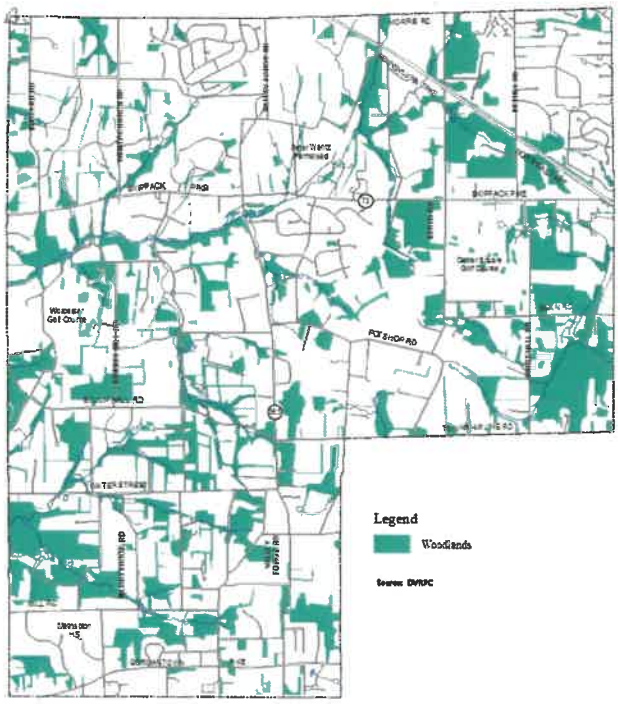
Worcester has a wide variety of wildlife habitats, including the four habitats normally found in this portion of the Piedmont region. These include deep woodlands, riparian woodland corridors, upland fields, and wetlands.

Wetlands were discussed above. Upland fields, generally, are farms or on the edge of farmfields and fallow fields. Figure 2 - 12 shows deep woodlands, which are woodlands at least 300 feet from open land, and riparian woodlands, which follow streams, along with all other wooded land and hedgerows.

Woodlands and hedgerows are scattered throughout the township. These areas provide habitat for many animal and plant species; control erosion; clean the air; protect privacy; provide windbreaks; cool the air in the summer; reduce the impact of rainfall; muffle noise; absorb odors; and improve the appearance of an area. Because of all of these benefits, woodlands and hedgerows improve the quality of life of a community and usually increase property values. Worcester has some significant areas of woodlands, especially near Whitehall Road, Bethel Road, and Evansburg State Park. Woodlands and hedgerows are shown in Figure 2 - 12.

There are significant natural areas in Pennsylvania that provide benefits to the residents of the state by purifying groundwater, controlling erosion, maintaining plant and animal diversity, providing educational opportunities, and containing scenic vistas. In order to plan for the wise use

Figure 2-12
Woodlands



of these natural areas and the important resources they contain, the Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI) was established in 1982 as a joint venture of The Nature Conservancy, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources, and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy. The PNDI has become Pennsylvania's chief storehouse of information on outstanding natural habitat types, sensitive plant and animal species, and other noteworthy natural features.

Currently, Worcester does not contain any sites on the PNDI. However, the current PNDI information for Montgomery County is scattershot and limited. A complete survey is being conducted, and this survey will probably show sites in Worcester Township when it is completed. These sites will consist of four categories: endangered plant locations, endangered animal locations, unique natural communities, and geologically significant locations.

Community Demographic Analysis

The Community Demographic Analysis consists of information relating to population, housing, existing land uses, and economics. With few exceptions, the source of the

information is the decennial U.S. Census and other reports of the Census Bureau.

Demographic characteristics provide insight when planning for open space preservation and recreational development. They can assist in determining not only how much land should be preserved but also where. This information can also be used in determining what type of recreational facilities, if any, should be planned and developed.

The size and nature of Worcester's population has changed considerably during the past decades. Nevertheless, the township has experienced many of the same trends that have been seen regionally and nationally, such as a declining average household size, an increase in the number and percent of elderly, a mini baby boom, and fewer family households. These and other trends are discussed in detail below.

Population

The rate of municipal population change (relative population increase or decrease) is an important measure of the magnitude of population change that has occurred over time. Figure 2 - 13 shows population trends in the township.

During the 1950s and 1960s, Worcester Township experienced a significant amount of growth, which resulted in a 1970 population of approximately 4,243 residents. During the next two decades, Worcester had less dramatic growth at 10% and 1%, resulting in a total of 4,686 persons in 1990. The 1% growth was less than that for Montgomery County, the Philadelphia region, and Worcester's neighboring townships at the time.

More recently, Worcester's population increased dramatically between 1990 (4,686) and 2000 (7,789). The population grew more in this decade than in the 40 years between 1950 and 1990 (3,103 versus 2,747). This significant increase of 66.2% was extremely high when compared to Montgomery County (10.6%), the Philadelphia region (10.9%), and the United States (12.7%). Worcester's increase of approximately 3,103 persons was slightly less than Towamencin's 3,430, but more than Lower Providence's growth figure of 3,039. This large increase in population was due to a boom in residential development in the township in the 1990's.

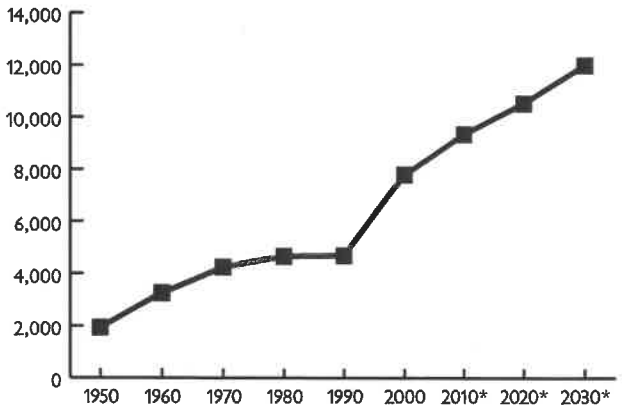
Population Projections

Based on Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) and Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) forecasts, the population of Worcester Township is projected to reach 12,000 by 2030 (see Figure 1 - 4). Although substantially less drastic than the 1990s, this is still a significant increase in population over the next 20 years (58%, or 4,211 more people than in 2000). At an average of 2.5 to 2.7 persons per household (see below), that means 1,500 to 1,700 new homes would be needed in Worcester between 2000 and 2030. These projections, however, are based on certain assumptions about the area in and around the township, such as current growth trends, job creation, the pressure for new housing, the existence or absence of buildable land, and transportation conditions.

This projection poses a considerable challenge to a township that would like to retain its rural character and open space as much as possible.

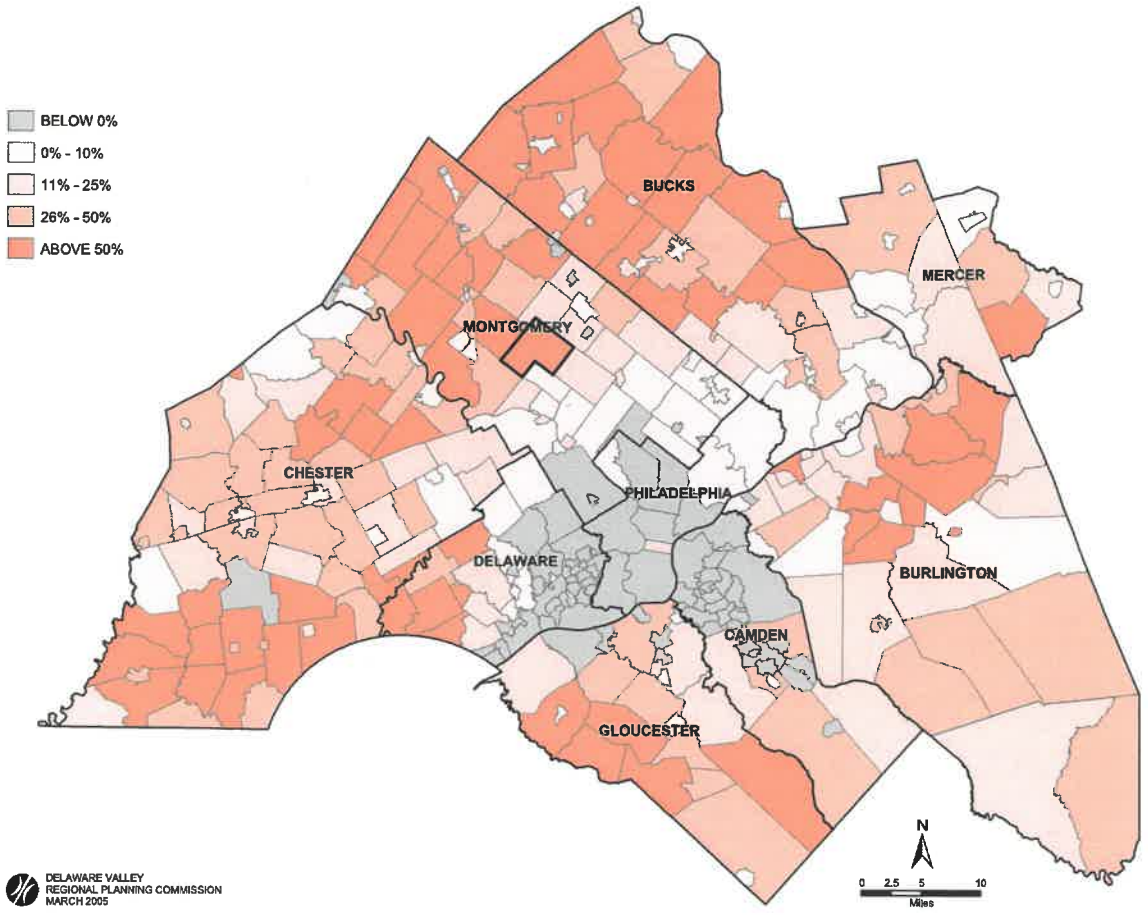
Figure 2-13
Population Projection

Year	Population	% Change
1950	1,939	
1960	3,250	68%
1970	4,243	31%
1980	4,661	10%
1990	4,686	1%
2000	7,789	66%
2010*	9,340	20%
2020*	10,530	13%
2030*	12,000	14%



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 2000; DVRPC projections.
** Projected Population*

Figure 2-14
Regional Population Projections: Percent Change from 2000 to 2030



Because Worcester is underdeveloped relative to its neighbors yet close to growth centers around Norristown and Lansdale, the township has high residential development potential.

In comparison, the surrounding townships to the south and west are also expected to have similar growth rates: Lower Providence, 32%; Skippack, 60%; Lower Salford, 49%. The other surrounding townships are mostly built out and so have less opportunity to expand their populations: Towamencin, 19%; Upper Gwynedd, 16%; Whitpain, 13%; and West Norriton, 12%, see Figure 2 - 14.

Montgomery County and the Philadelphia region are projected to have a slower growth rate by 2030, averaging about 17% for the county and 12% for the whole Philadelphia region.

The following demographics of the township, such as household types, education, age, and income, will shed more light on current and future open space needs.

Household Types

A household profile is defined by the Census Bureau as a person or persons occupying a single housing unit. A household can be broken down into two categories: family and nonfamily households. A family household is two or more related persons living in a single housing unit, and a nonfamily household is occupied by a single person or a group of unrelated persons. Nationally, as well as locally, households are changing. There has been an overall increase in nonfamily and single-person households since the 1970s. Fragmentation of the family unit through divorce, death of a spouse, or children leaving home to form their own households has contributed to an increase in the number of households and a decrease in the size of households. The average household size is the number of persons living in all households, divided by the number of occupied housing units. This too has seen a national decline as households continue to diversify.

Montgomery County children at play. MCPC

www.pedbikeimages.org/Dan Burden

The household profile, Figure 2 - 15, shows that Worcester has experienced a stable household size. Looking at the individual household categories, however, the real growth can be detected as primarily married couples with children, which increased by 431 households, and married couples with no children, which increased by 300 households. Out of the 1,161 new households, married couples accounted for 731, or 63%.

The other big jump was in single-person households, which increased by 276. The Meadowood senior housing development may account for most of this increase.

There is one other group of people who are not represented in this profile — the people who do not live in households, such as those living in prisons, dorms or group quarters. In 2000, only 0.1% of Worcester's population lived in group quarters, primarily in institutional residences.

Education

Worcester has a higher than average proportion of residents with high educational attainment. As represented in Figure 2 - 16, in 2000, 70.2 % of the township's population had gone on to attend college or obtain a college degree, compared to 61.2 % for the county. In fact, Worcester's higher educational attainment becomes more apparent when looking at the number of people 25 and older with college degrees (57.9%, versus 44.7% for the county as a whole).

Figure 2-15
Household Types

Household Types	1990		2000		% Change
	Number	%Total	Number	% Total	1990 to 2000
Married Couples with Children	499	28.8%	930	32.1%	86.4%
Married Couples with No Children	676	39.0%	976	33.7%	44.4%
Single Parent	43	2.5%	115	4.0%	167.4%
Other Family	77	4.4%	124	4.3%	61.0%
1 Person Nonfamily Households	393	22.7%	669	23.1%	70.2%
2+ Person Nonfamily Household	47	2.7%	82	2.8%	74.5%
Total No. of Households	**1,735**	**100%**	**2,896**	**100%**	**66.9%**
Average People per Household	**2.67**		**2.69**		**0.9%**

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 1990, 2000.

Figure 2-16
Regional Population Projections: Percent Change from 2000 to 2030

Educational Level, Worcester	1990		2000		% Change 1990 - 2000
	Number	% Total	Number	% Total	
Less than 9th Grade	134	4.0%	124	2.5%	-7.5%
9th through 12th Grade, no diploma	278	8.3%	214	4.3%	-23.0%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	966	29.0%	1,151	23.0%	19.2%
Some college, no degree	547	16.4%	614	12.3%	12.2%
Associate degree	240	7.2%	317	6.3%	32.1%
Bachelor's degree	817	24.5%	1,618	32.4%	98.0%
Graduate or Professional degree	352	10.6%	957	19.2%	171.9%
Total Pop. 25 years and older	**3.334**	**100%**	**4,995**	**100%**	**49.8%**

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 1990, 2000.

Educational Level, 2000	County		Worcester		% Difference
	Number	% Total	Number	% Total	
Less than 9th Grade	15,649	3.0%	124	2.5%	-0.6%
9th through 12th Grade, no diploma	43,658	8.5%	214	4.3%	-4.2%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	140,839	27.3%	1,151	23.0%	-4.3%
Some college, no degree	85,342	16.5%	614	12.3%	-4.3%
Associate degree	30,596	5.9%	317	6.3%	0.4%
Bachelor's degree	118,910	23.1%	1,618	32.4%	9.3%
Graduate or Professional degree	80,877	15.7%	957	19.2%	3.5%
Total Pop. 25 years and older	**515,871**	**100%**	**4,995**	**100%**	

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, 2000.

Age

The age profile shown in Figure 2 - 17, reveals that in 2000 over 45% of Worcester's population consisted of 30- to 60-year-olds. The most notable changes since 1990 are the 40-49 and the 10-19 age groups, each of which doubled or more than doubled. Also notable are the increases in the 0-9, the 50-59, and the 30-39-year-olds. These five age groups generally represent families with children.

The other age groups, while increasing in absolute numbers, actually became smaller segments of the overall population, further indicating a shift to more families with children.

The 20-29 age group actually declined slightly in the 1990s. Meanwhile, the slowest growing group was the 60-69 age group. The younger of these groups perhaps had difficulty locating in this township due to the high housing prices and the distance to college-level education. The slow growth of the 60-69 age group is somewhat more perplexing. It may reflect an age at which people are less mobile and are not moving into newer, larger homes in Worcester or are downsizing and moving out of Worcester after their children have left home.

Interestingly, the 70-79 and the over-80 population groups grew, but slower than the township average of 66%. These groups had been gradually taking a larger proportion of the population since 1970, but now they have lost about 15% of their former share of the population, down to 11.5%

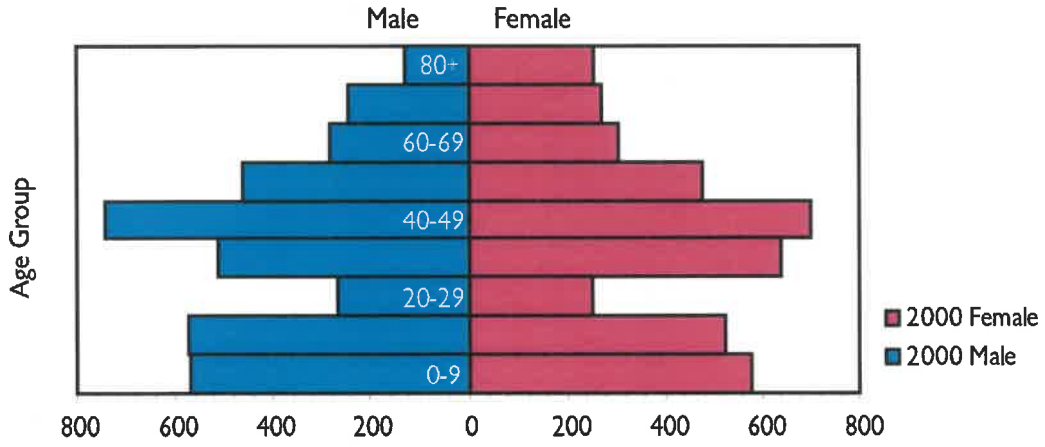
While it seems that an increasing number of families with children and a decreasing number of those over 70 would produce a younger average age, the median age shows the opposite. An older median age with these characteristics could indicate that the families with children might have older parents than previous decades, which might also help explain why the 40-49 age group showed the largest increase.

The age pyramid is used to show the distribution of the population by gender and age. The pyramid for Worcester is not entirely pyramidal in shape. It is almost symmetrical, but the large deficit of 20-29 year-olds and the overabundance of 40-49 year-olds skew the pyramid. This is actually typical for an affluent suburb.

In this pyramid the age groups can be easily compared since they all have 10-year spreads. Except for the 20-29 and the 40-49 age groups, they all conform relatively closely to the pyramid shape.

Figure 2-17
Age Profile and Age Pyramid

Age	1990		2000		% Change 1990 - 2000
	Number	% Total	Number	% Total	
0-9	606	12.9%	1,149	14.8%	89.6%
10-19	504	10.8%	1,097	14.1%	117.7%
20-29	532	11.4%	519	6.7%	-2.4%
30-39	728	15.5%	1,153	14.8%	58.4%
40-49	652	13.9%	1,442	18.5%	121.2%
50-59	519	11.1%	943	12.1%	81.7%
60-69	510	10.9%	589	7.6%	15.5%
70-79	369	7.9%	513	6.6%	39.0%
80+	266	5.7%	384	4.9%	44.4%
Total	**4,686**	**100%**	**7,789**	**100%**	**66.2%**
Median Age	**42.3**		**43.9**		



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, 1990, 2000.

Median Household & Per Capita Income

Figure 2 - 18 shows median household and per capita income. Worcester's median household income (stated in 1999 dollars for both 1989 and 1999) grew 21.8 % between 1989 and 1999, rising from $63,377 to $77,200. Worcester's median income exceeds that for both the county and the state. Compared to its neighbors, only Whitpain had a higher median household income level — almost $89,000.

Worcester's 1999 per capita income of $34,264 also exceeded that of the surrounding municipalities, the county and the state, with the exception again of Whitpain Township. Lower Salford, Skippack, and Towamencin increased their per capita incomes faster than Worcester.

Building on the previous demographic information, the township's population is becoming increasingly comprised of families with and without children and of residents who have attained higher education, are slightly older than the previous average, and have some of the highest incomes in the area.

Family. NIDA

Figure 2-18
Income Levels (in 1999 $)

Income	1989	1999	% Change
Per Capita	$30,386	$34,264	12.8%
Median Household	$63,377	$77,200	21.8%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 1990, 2000.

Special Needs Groups

Special needs can be defined in many ways. One way is to look at age. Both the young and the elderly may have special needs, especially concerning transportation, recreation, and exercise. These are relevant factors to consider when making decisions about the kinds and locations of open space in the township. In 2000 there were 2,127 children under the age of 18 in Worcester. These children comprised 27.3% of the township's population. In addition, there were 1,191 people 65 and older in 2000, making up 15.3% of the population.

Special needs also can include those with disabilities. In 2000 there were approximately 328 people in Worcester aged 16 to 64 years old who had a disability due to physical, mental, sensory, mobility or self-care conditions and did not live in an institution. About 88 of these individuals were disabled due to mobility or self-care limitations, which means they could not move around the community without assistance or they needed assistance with tasks such as bathing, cooking, or dressing.

Numbers for these groups are shown together in Figure 2 - 19, but these numbers cannot be compared to each other because the Census Bureau combined these groups so that some of them overlap, and a direct comparison should not be made. The numbers from decade to decade and the individual numbers themselves, however, are still meaningful.

The age-defined special needs groups and the working-age disabled comprise almost half of the township's population.

Finally, special needs groups may include the poor. In 2000, the income of 130 Worcester residents fell below the poverty level. This represents 1.7% of the township's population. Poverty level was determined by the Census Bureau based on national figures for food costs, food purchases as a percentage of total income, number of persons in a household, and number of children in a household. The weighted-average poverty threshold for a family of four was $17,029 in 1999. For a single elderly person, or any adult living alone, it was $8,501 in 1999. In this case, Worcester had a slight increase in the number of people under the poverty level, but that increase did not keep pace with the overall increase in population, so while there were more people in Worcester below the poverty level, there was proportionately less poverty in the township in early 2000 than there was in early 1990.

These groups as a whole have needs for special access and facilities which must be considered in locating and developing public spaces.

Implications Of Resident Demographics

The major implication of these demographics is that Worcester's population is expected to continue to increase considerably through 2030. These new people will move into new homes and will add to the township's open space needs. These needs will tend more toward families with or without children and toward higher income and higher education lifestyles. The demographics also show that a large segment of the existing population, primarily the children and elderly (together, 42.6% of the population), have special needs. The type, size, and location of new open space should consider all these needs.

Figure 2-19
Special Needs Groups

Special Needs Group	1990		2000		% Change 1990 - 2000
	Number	% Total	Number	% Total	
Persons 16-64 with Disabilities*	107	2.3%	328	4.2%	*
Persons 16-64 with Mobility and Self Care Limitiations**	35	0.7%	88	1.1%	**
Over 65 Years of Age	844	18.0%	1,191	15.3%	41.1%
Under 18 Years of Age	1,029	22.0%	2,127	27.3%	106.7%
Income Below Poverty Line	115	2.5%	130	1.7%	13.0%
Total Population	**4,686**		**4,995**		**66.2%**

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 1990, 2000.
** 1990 figure includes work, mobility and self-care disabilities; 2000 figure also includes physical, sensory and mental disabilities.*
*** 2000 figure includes some persons with multiple mobility and employment disabilities, not mobility combined with other disabilities.*

A Worcester Farm. MCPC

This new population will also likely require a large amount of land. If the projection of 1,500 to 1,700 new homes between 2000 and 2030 is accurate, 2-acre lotting means that these homes will use up more than 3,000 to 3,400 acres. Currently only about 3,700 acres are either undeveloped or are farms. This indicates a great urgency to preserve farmland and natural, scenic and historic resources and to acquire parkland before it is gone. As space begins to get tighter, the township may also need to consider more compact and efficient forms of open space, such as trails and stream corridors, which can make use of areas that are often overlooked for open space. Perhaps more importantly, the township needs to look at development options that preserve open space as land is developed.

Employment

As used here, employment figures refer to the number of jobs in a given area, not the number of workers, and can serve a variety of purposes. The figures inform the public of current and anticipated future economic conditions and may serve as decision-making input for current and potential employers and investors in the region. Because an area's growth and activity are related to its economy, employment data can also be tied to land use and transportation planning.

In recent years, Montgomery County has experienced a significant change as it has gone from being principally a bedroom suburb for Philadelphia commuters to an area that is a major source of jobs. The county's central location in the region and its major road network that permits direct access from surrounding counties are major reasons for this transformation.

Jobs Located In Worcester

According to Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) estimates, Worcester Township had 4,468 employees in 2000. This is relatively small for municipalities in the area. Among its neighbors, only Skippack Township had fewer employees. Worcester is not a major commuter destination, which means it is often used as a residence for workers and as a through-route for commuters. This contributes to development pressure and increases open space needs in Worcester.

According to the estimates shown in Figure 2 - 20, Worcester has almost doubled the number of jobs since 1990. One new major employer, Ford Electronics (now Visteon), accounted for about 1,500 new jobs created in the early 1990s. Construction and expansion of the Meadowood senior housing development and expansions to the high school created additional jobs.

In 2005 the Township's tax collector, Berkheimer Associates, indicated that 5,939 individuals were reported by employers located in Worcester Township. However, some of these individuals do not work in the township but are reported because their company's main office is located

in Worcester. This number also includes part-time and seasonal workers, further reducing the number of workers in Worcester at any one time.

Major Employers In Worcester

Worcester has two or three major employers and many medium and small employers (see Figure 2 - 21). The "largest" employer in the township, American Infrastructure, is a construction company, so almost all of the employees work outside the township at various construction sites. For human resources and payroll purposes they may count as Worcester jobs, but for traffic, housing and recreation purposes, many of them might not count. Methacton School District and Visteon account for at least 1,200 jobs in the township. The school district has been expanding its buildings and adding jobs as the population of its district continues to grow. The jobs listed for the Visteon plant, Meadowood, Techni-Tool, Variety Club, Kinetix, Merrymead Farm, and the Nazarene church are all likely to be located in Worcester.

As of the time of the writing of this plan, the Township administration is not aware of plans for any new major places of employment, nor of any major expansions to existing employers.

Employment Forecast

DVRPC develops employment forecasts based on census data, past trends, the job market, and available land. These are shown in Figure 2 - 20. Employment opportunities in the township are expected to increase almost 12% from 2000 to 2030, reaching a total of 5,000 jobs located in Worcester. This is due in large part to the general regional economic

Figure 2-20
Employment Forecast

Year	Total Employment
1990	2,649
2000	4,468
2005*	4,517
2010*	4,705
2015*	4,782
2020*	4,854
2025*	4,928
2030*	5,000

**Source: DVRPC Forecasts*

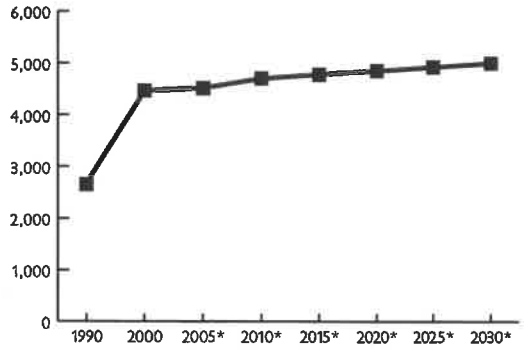


Figure 2-21
Major Employers in 2005

	Employer	Industry	Employees
1	American Infrastructure (Alan Myers)	Construction	1,396*
2	Visteon Systems, LLC	Electronics Manufacturing	746
3	Methacton School District	Education	465***
4	Meadowood Corporation	Healthcare Facilities	320** ***
5	Techni-Tool	Tool Manufacturing	167
6	Philadelphia Variety Club Camp	Education/Recreation	164**
7	Worcester Racquet & Fitness (Kinetix)	Recreation	78
8	Merrymead Farm, Inc.	Farming and Retail	69**
9	Fairview Village Church of the Nazarene	Religious Institution	50** ***

** Many of these employees may not work in the township, but Worcester is the location of their employer.*
*** Some of these employees may be seasonal or part-time workers.*
**** Jobs located in Worcester, from employer.*
Sources: Berkheimer Associates, 2005; employers

pressure of a large portion of the younger workforce moving into large suburban employment complexes, and industrial parks and office campuses making use of less expensive land in communities with large areas of undeveloped land. The ease of access to transportation amenities, new residential developments, and new nonresidential redevelopment in Worcester all enable this trend of projected employment growth. The township is able to control the type, location and size of this growth with zoning and other land use policies, whereas the timing of such development is often a result of the cycles of the economy and land development opportunities.

Occupation

Of the working people who lived in the township in 2000, almost 27% of them were working in jobs that are categorized by the Census Bureau as professionals (see Figure 2 - 22). This is a dramatic increase (131%) since 1990 and puts this category ahead of the previously dominant category of workers in management jobs. Meanwhile, the most drastic decreases in jobs held by Worcester residents were in farming (58%) and construction (12%). The other occupations with major increases were sales, clerical and office, and service jobs.

Status Of Relevant Plans

The update of the Township's Comprehensive Plan is complete except for the addition of information from this Open Space Plan. Until the update is complete and adopted by the Township Supervisors, the 1995 Comprehensive Plan remains the primary planning document for the Township.

This Comprehensive Plan, when adopted, will replace the 1995 Comprehensive Plan, adopted by the Township Supervisors in 1995.

The 2006 Open Space Plan was adopted in June, 2006. The Community Greenway Plan, adopted in 2004, outlines the potentials for greenways throughout the township.

The County Comprehensive Plan was adopted by the County Commissioners in 2005 and includes sections on open space planning which are generally consistent with Worcester's plans.

Statement of Compatibility

Existing and proposed development in Worcester Township and this Comprehensive Plan are generally compatible with existing and proposed development or plans for proposed development along adjacent portions of contiguous municipalities.

Summary

This analysis of land use and demographics shows that under the current trends, Worcester is becoming a more typical suburban residential community, with farming declining and population, especially families with children, increasing rapidly.

Figure 2-22
Labor Force by Occupation

Occupation	1990		2000		% Change 1990-2000
	Number	% Total	Number	% Total	
Management	479	21.3%	873	23.1%	82.3%
Professional	439	19.5%	1,015	26.9%	131.2%
Sales	300	13.3%	529	14.0%	76.3%
Clerical/Office	362	16.1%	579	15.3%	59.9%
Construction	276	12.3%	242	6.4%	-12.3%
Production/Transportation	154	6.8%	201	5.3%	30.5%
Farming	76	3.4%	32	0.8%	-57.9%
Services	165	7.3%	302	8.0%	83.0%
Total	**2,251**	**100.0%**	**3,773**	**100%**	**67.6%**

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 2000.

Chapter 3
Sewage Disposal and Water Supply

Development cannot occur unless adequate sewage disposal and water supply facilities are available. For land use planning, it is important to determine where centralized facilities exist or are planned and where development must use individual on-lot facilities. Centralized facilities allow more intense development while individual on-lot facilities can accommodate only lower intensity development. Therefore, the Township can guide the intensities of development by carefully planning and limiting the locations where centralized sewer and water facilities are located or proposed. In Worcester Township, with only two exceptions, the centralized sewer systems that serve existing developments are all municipally owned and operated public systems. The two exceptions are privately owned and operated "package plants" for two developments with more than 80 residential units. Private companies regulated by the Public Utilities Commission provide centralized water supplies. This chapter describes Worcester's existing and proposed centralized sewage and water facilities and provides recommendations for future purposes.

Public Sewage Facilities

Existing or planned public sewage facilities provide an incentive for growth when there is sufficient capacity for new development. Conversely, there is a disincentive for growth where public sewage facilities and capacity are not available. Therefore, the Township's sewage facilities and land use plans should be closely coordinated and sewer growth areas should be provided where the Township wants to direct growth of intensive land uses. These intensive land uses should be grouped together to provide economical sewage treatment service and to control suburban sprawl. This section identifies the existing public sewage facilities available in the Township and summarizes guidelines in the Township's official Sewage Facilities Plan.

Figure 3-1
Plant Capacities

Name	Upper Gwynedd	Upper Gwynedd/ Towamencin	Berwick Place	Valley Green
1992 EDU Flow by Worcester*	81,000 gallons per day	45,000 gallons per day	(built 1994)	62,000 gallons per day
1995 Average Annual Plant Capacity*	2,500,000 gallons per day	6,500,000 gallons per day	60,000 gallons per day	90,000 gallons per day
1995 EDU Flow by Worcester**	98,300 gallons per day	86,800 gallons per day	0 gallons per day	61,300 gallons per day
1995 Projected Total Future EDU Flow by Worcester**	241,700 gallons per day	120,960 gallons per day	150,000 gallons per day	220,000 gallons per day
1998 Average Annual Plant Capacity***	4,500,000 gallons per day	6,500,000 gallons per day	150,000 gallons per day	230,000 gallons per day
1998 EDU Flow by Worcester	98,000 gallons per day			74,000 gallons per day
2001 Measured Flow by Worcester****			52,000 gallons per day	
2002 EDU Flow by Worcester****			70,400 gallons per day	
2002 Projected Total Future EDU Flow by Worcester****			149,900 gallons per day	
2005 Average Annual Plant Capacity*****	4,500,000 gallons per day	6,500,000 gallons per day	150,000 gallons per day	220,000 gallons per day
2005 EDU Flow by Worcester*****	173,100 gallons per day	92,400 gallons per day	80,000 gallons per day	100,000 gallons per day

* From 1995 Worcester Comprehensive Plan
** From 1995 Worcester Township 537 Plan
*** From 1998 Montgomery County Planning Commission Sewage Treatment Facilities Status Report
**** From 2002 Worcester Township 537 Plan Update
***** From 2005 Montgomery County Planning Commission Sewage Treatment Facilities Status Report

Figure 3-2
Existing Sewage Facilities

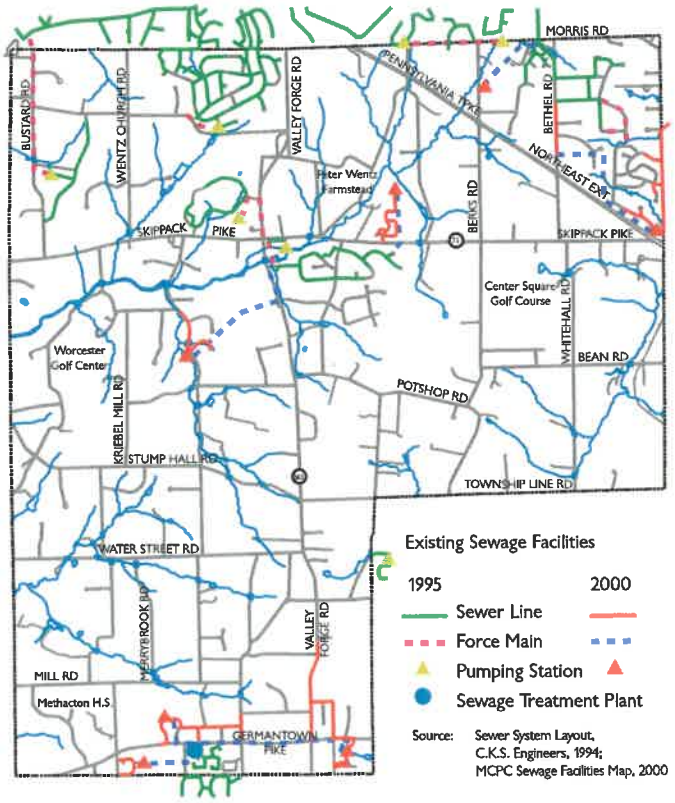
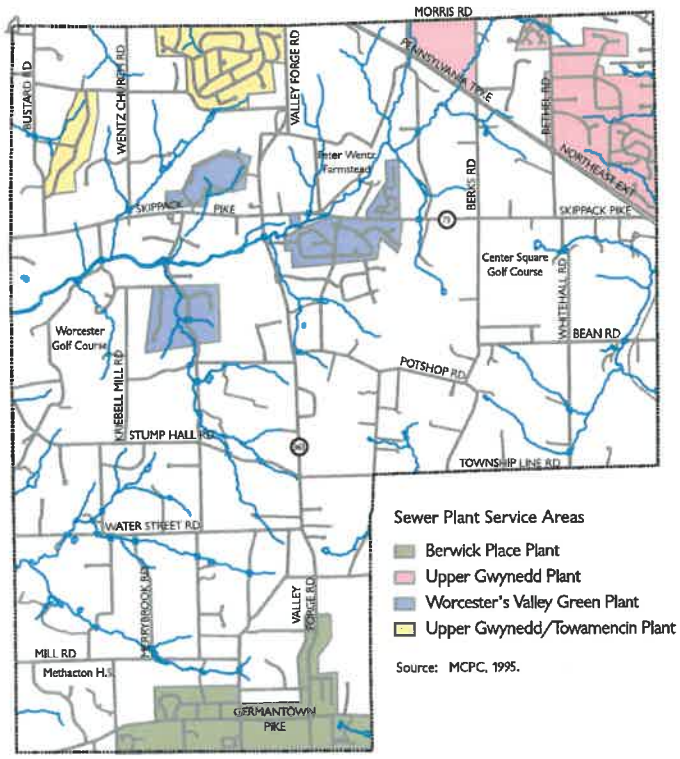


Figure 3-3
Sewer Plant Services



Existing Sewage Facilities

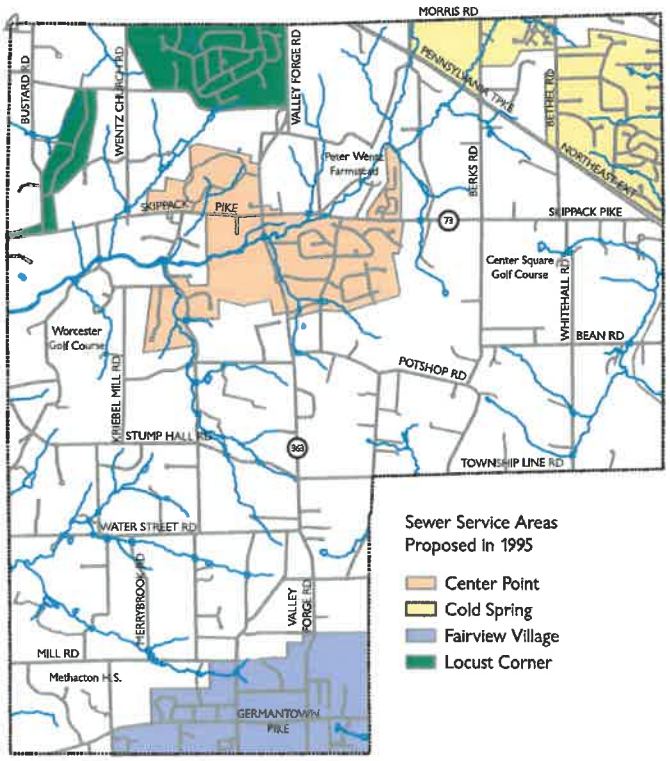
Worcester Township is currently served by four municipally owned and operated sewage treatment plants: the Upper Gwynedd and the Upper Gwynedd/Towamencin plants, and Worcester Township's Valley Green and Berwick Place plants. Plant capacities are shown in the table in Figure 3 - 1. Figure 3 - 2 shows the location of existing sewer lines, pumping stations, and treatment plants. Figure 3 - 3 shows areas that are currently served by public sewers.

Sewage Facilities Planning

In 1966, the Pennsylvania Legislature passed Act 537, the Sewage Facilities Act. This required local governments to provide for sewage needs within their borders and required these governments to prepare sewage facilities plans and amend them as needed. The following list summarizes additional relevant sewer planning for Worcester Township:

- 1974: Act 537 was amended by Act 208, which provided additional standards for the administration of on-site sewage systems and for revising local sewage facilities plans in a coordinated manner.
- 1972: Worcester and all but two Montgomery County municipalities adopted a countywide sewage facilities plan.
- 1976: The Township prepared a revision to its part of the county base plan.
- 1985: The Township revised the plan for the Center Point area only.
- 1995: To reflect the land use plan in the 1995 Comprehensive Plan, the Township prepared an Act 537 plan update. This update was used as a guide for the sewer growth plan described in the 1995 Comprehensive Plan.
- 2002: The Township revised the plan for the Fairview Village area.
- 2006: The Township revised the plan for the Hollow Road/Zacharias Creek area.

Figure 3-4
Proposed Sewer Service Areas in 1995



1995 Sewer Growth Plan

Figure 3 - 4 shows the parts of the Township that were proposed as sewer growth areas in the 1995 Comprehensive Plan. These growth areas include proposed medium-density and high-density residential, commercial, and village commercial land uses. Unserved low-density areas near Center Point and Cedars were also included, since these areas were already approved for sewers. This sewer growth plan was intended to serve the Township's sewage needs until the year 2020, although the Township anticipated a need to review the sewer growth plan sooner. The 1995 Comprehensive Plan anticipated these sewer service areas would accommodate nearly all of the Township's expected residential growth until 2020 (1,800 units).

The areas outside the sewer growth areas were designated rural preservation/low-density residential on the 1995 Land Use Plan, and comprise the majority of the township. The 1995 Plan anticipated growth in these areas to occur slowly and at very low densities to protect rural character and limit suburban sprawl. Public sewers should extend into these areas only to serve low-density cluster development (density of one dwelling unit per two acres with over 70% open space). Figure 3 - 4 also shows areas where possible cluster development might be served by public sewers.

Public Sewer System Capacities

Figure 3 - 5 shows the 1995 numbers for sewage generated by existing development, sewage capacity set aside, and sewage projected to be generated by new development on vacant land.

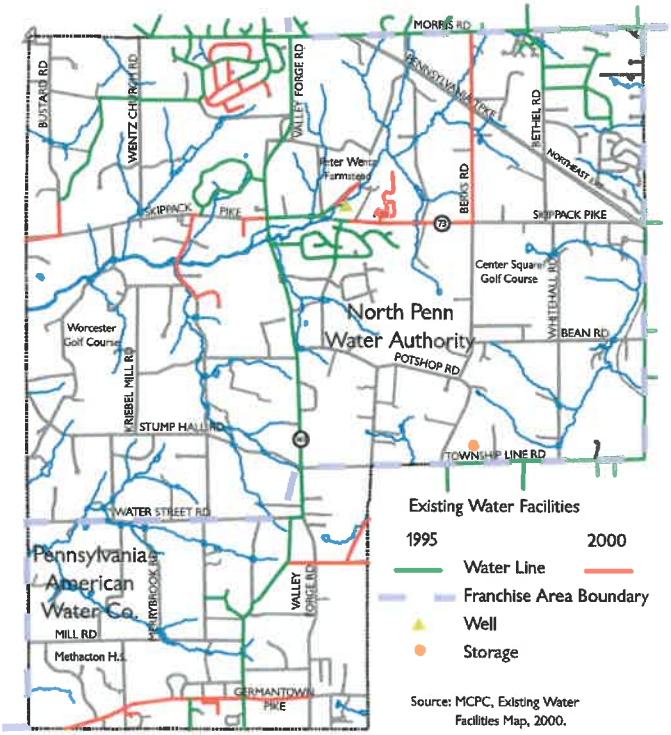
Figure 3-5
Projected Sewage Flows in Gallons Per Day (1995 Comprehensive Plan)

	Center Point Sewer Service Area	Fairview Village Sewer Service Area	Cold Spring Sewer Service Area	Locust Corner Sewer Service Area
1992 Sewage Flows plus Reserved Sewage Flows	90,000	89,750	98,300	86,800
Additional Sewage Flows from Residential Buildout of Vacant Tracts	91,400	46,250	143,400	34,160
Additional Sewage Flows from Build-out on Non-Residential Vacant Tracts	12,000	14,000	0	0
Possible Sewage Flows from Cluster Development Outside of Growth Area	26,000	0	3,900	43,680
Total Future Sewage Flows	**220,000**	**150,000**	**245,600**	**164,640**
Existing Sewage Capacity	90,000	60,000	Net Set	100,000

- Valley Greene Plant: To accommodate projected growth in the Center Point area, this plant was expanded to 230,000 gallons per day of sewer capacity. Four pumping stations serve the area.
- Berwick Place Plant: At 150,000 gallons per day, the capacity of the plant is projected to be adequate to meet the future sewage needs of the Fairview Village area. Three pumping stations serve the area.
- Upper Gwynedd Plant: This plant's expanded capacity can easily accommodate the Cold Spring area's projected 230,000 gallons per day. Four pumping stations in Worcester serve the area.
- Upper Gwynedd/Towamencin Plant: This plant has the capacity to handle the 121,000 gallons per day projected in the 1995 Plan for the Locust Corner growth area. If future cluster development requires additional capacity, the Township will have to work with the Upper Gwynedd/Towamencin sewer authority to assure that capacity. Two pumping stations in Worcester serve the area.

Overall, the proposed sewer growth areas provide room for the township's growth while limiting this growth to specific growth areas. The Township's 1995 Act 537 plan recommended how sewers will serve these areas.

Figure 3-6
Existing Water Facilities



Centralized Water Facilities

Water service is another important determinant of the amount and location of growth in a township. Centralized water supply is necessary for higher-density residential growth, which also needs public sewers. Therefore, the water facilities plan should be closely coordinated with the sewage and land use plans. This section examines the township's existing public water facilities and proposes a water supply plan.

Existing Water Suppliers

Most of Worcester is within the franchise area of the North Penn Water Authority. The rest of the township falls within the franchise area of the Pennsylvania American Water Company, except for the Center Point Farms development near Center Point, which is a service area of the Superior Water Company. Within these franchise areas, only a small portion of the township is served by public water. Figure 3 - 6 shows the franchise areas and the extent of water lines.

The North Penn Water Authority draws water from two general sources: groundwater via wells located throughout its franchise area and surface water that is pumped from the Delaware River through the Point Pleasant pumping station. 1998 data indicated the North Penn Water Authority was permitted to withdraw nearly 20 million gallons per day but its average daily withdrawal was less than 10 million gallons per day. Therefore, it appears the Authority will have capacity to serve Worcester's water needs for many years, although its excess capacity will be distributed throughout the eleven communities that comprise its service area.

The Pennsylvania American Water Company uses two wells and the Schuylkill River for its primary water supply. In 1998, the company was permitted to withdraw and treat 18 million gallons per day from the river, but actually used only 8.8 million gallons per day of this capacity. Its two wells are permitted for an additional 150,000 gallons per day. This leaves the company with a large excess capacity, some of which can be used to serve new customers within its service area in Worcester, and the remainder throughout the ten communities that comprise its service area.

Water Plan

Although the State does not require water planning by local governments, in 1979 the Montgomery County Planning Commission published a Water Service Plan that proposed water service growth areas and outlined criteria for identifying these areas.

These criteria include population estimates, proposed land use and growth areas, sewage facility growth areas,

proximity to existing water lines, physical constraints, location of problem water areas, and water supply. The county Water Service Plan stresses that water plans should be correlated closely with sewage facility plans and that residential areas zoned for two or more acre lots are rarely justified for public water service.

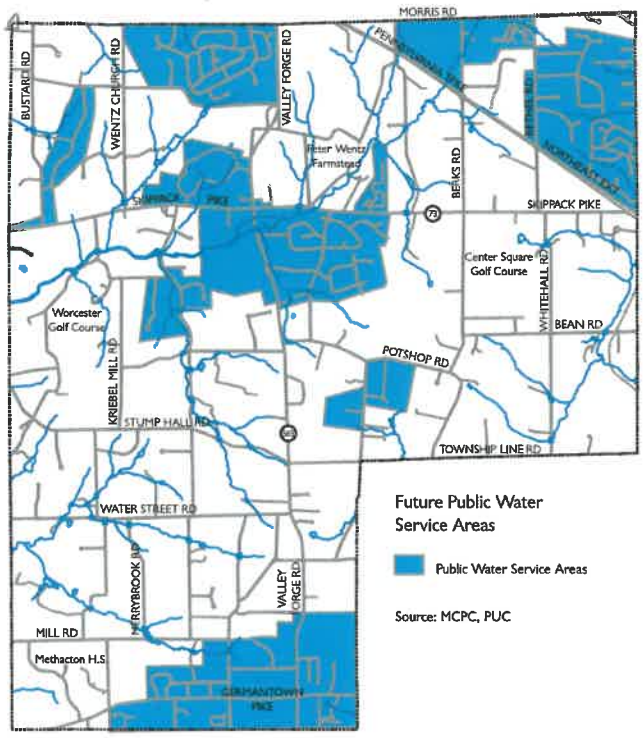
When these criteria are applied to Worcester, the proposed water service area closely corresponds with the proposed sewage facilities areas, except that the industrial area on Potshop Road, which is near water lines, has been included in the wa-ter service area while a sewered development on Hollow Road is not proposed for water service. The Township's proposed water service area is shown in Figure 3 - 7 and includes all non-residential areas and residential areas with more than one dwelling unit per acre. The water service areas support growth near Fairview Village, Center Point, Locust Corner, and Cold Spring.

In addition, secondary water service areas are shown for potential low-density cluster development sites. If public sewers are provided for these sites, public water supply should also be provided. Cluster developments can also be served by on-site centralized water supply and sewage disposal owned and operated by a homeowners association or by the Township. The Future Land Use chapter explains how low-density cluster principles can be used to preserve major elements of rural character throughout the township while allowing reasonable amounts of new residential development.

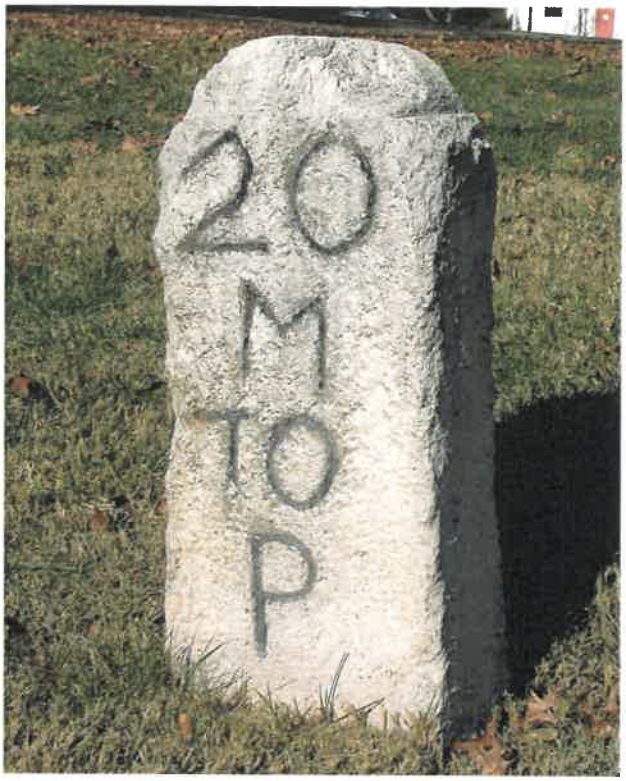
As shown in Figure 3 - 7, much of the Township is not proposed to be served by public water lines. Instead, these areas of the Township will continue to be served by private, on-lot wells that depend on groundwater sources.

To help protect the groundwater supply for wells, homeowners and businesses should conserve water by changing water-use habits and using water saving devices. Contamination can be avoided by properly storing and handling hazardous materials, by limiting the amount of chemicals used outdoors, and by properly installing, using, and maintaining private on-lot sewage systems.

Figure 3-7
Future Public Water Service Areas



Chapter 4
Transportation



Milestone on Skippack Pike (indicating 20 miles to Philadelphia).
Susan Caughlan

Township residents and employees of local businesses rely on the public road network for access and circulation. Therefore, the Township must consider the adequacy of existing roads to handle traffic generated by existing and future residential and non-residential development within the Township. In addition, the Township must consider the large volumes of traffic that routinely pass through the community from other areas.

This chapter considers the adequacy of the existing road network and improvement concepts that would maintain or enhance the road network's functioning. It considers traffic circulation issues that need to be addressed and coordinated at the regional or sub-regional level, and focuses on issues that can be addressed at the local level. While it advocates safe and efficient traffic flow, it encourages concepts intended to preserve the desirable historic and cultural characteristics of the township. It also considers sidewalks, trails, and public transportation.

The information and recommendations in the adopted Worcester Township Comprehensive Plan of 1995 form the basis for the recommendations in this chapter. However, it is not acceptable to simply add lanes and improve traffic signals to make roads and intersections operate more efficiently. Therefore, this chapter strongly recommends that implementation of road and intersection improvements should be tempered by a commitment to protecting the township's historic, cultural, and rural qualities. Adding lanes and widening pavements should be a last resort that follows exploration of more context sensitive alternatives.

Traffic and Circulation Planning

Historical development patterns and traffic routes were not established according to a carefully thought-out comprehensive plan, but they form the basis on which the Township's transportation planning decisions must be made. As the township and surrounding areas continue to grow, increased volumes of traffic will travel mainly on existing major roads. Although these roads must be improved to increase their capacities to accommodate increased volumes of traffic, especially during peak hours, such improvements must be sensitive to the context in which they will be installed so that the historic and cultural character and values of Worcester Township can be retained.

Recommended improvements may include additional travel lanes, shoulders, turning lanes or other intersection improvements, including signalization and coordination of traffic signals. One of the main reasons for concentrating new development in the township's four growth areas is so that these types of road improvements may be more efficiently targeted for selected major existing roads. Road and intersection improvements should be prioritized in accord with the functional classifications explained further in this chapter and the characters and intensities of areas and land uses they will serve.

The limited number of dollars available from developers, county, state, or federal sources should be concentrated on those roads considered most important to serve the growth areas and maintain intercommunity traffic flow on major roads. Improvements to the many local roads throughout the township should improve safety and efficiency, but should not encourage intercommunity traffic flow or significantly alter the existing rural character. In addition, policies and methods should be considered that further the provision of future bikeways, and pedestrian systems to supplement conventional vehicular circulation systems.

Traffic and Circulation Planning Factors

Planning for traffic and circulation must consider the following factors as they relate to Worcester Township and

surrounding communities:

- Jurisdiction
- Land Use
- Functional Classification
- Existing Character and Conditions
- Volumes and Capacity
- Safety

The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PADOT) use these factors, which are accepted by traffic planners and engineers. Traffic planners use these factors as guidelines, while traffic engineers use them to engineer solutions to traffic problems.

Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction over roads refers to ownership and responsibility for maintenance and installation of improvements. Figure 4 - 1 shows that public roads in the township are under the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Montgomery County, or the Township.

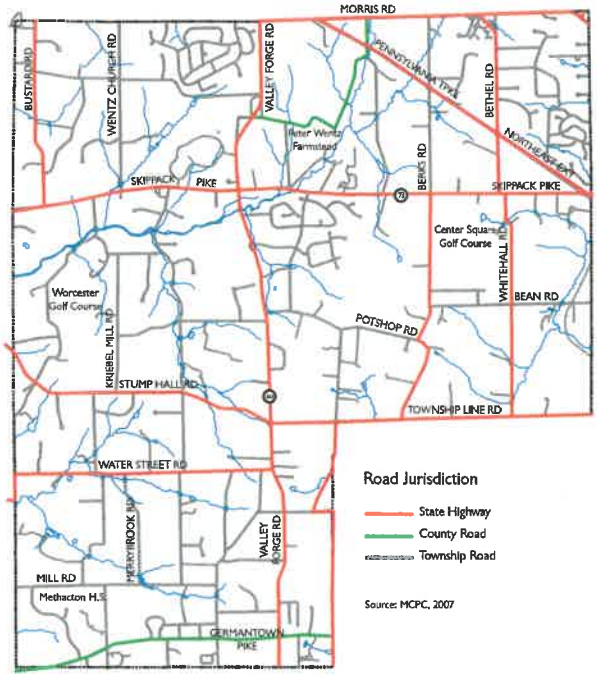
Although the Township must coordinate with PennDOT and the Montgomery County Department of Roads and Bridges regarding state and county roads, it has control over Township-owned roads. For planning purposes, the Township has the re-sponsibility for designating all the roads under an appropriate functional classification relative to the purposes they are intended to serve.

Functional Classification of Roads

Functional classification categorizes roads according to their function, service, and traffic capacity levels, based on standards of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). The system provides design guidelines and allows coordination of road functions and highway improvements among neighboring municipalities, the county, and the state. This system classifies roads in Worcester as Expressways, Principal and Minor Arterials, Major and Minor Collectors, and Local Roads.

The Township's 1995 Comprehensive Plan uses similar terminology to classify roads as Primary, Collector, Feeder, and Local Streets. This Comprehensive Plan Update encourages use of the AASHTO-based system to allow better coordination with the county-wide system used in the current Transportation Plan component of the Montgomery County Comprehensive Plan. Figure 4 - 2 identifies roads in Worcester by Functional Classification as shown in the County's plan. Figure 4 - 3 identifies the roads as shown in the Township's 1995 plan. The following descriptions provide more details:

Figure 4-1
Road Jurisdiction



Expressways. These roads enable traffic to move at high speeds at a high level of efficiency over long distances. The Northeast Extension of the Pennsylvania Turnpike is the expressway that passes through Worcester. It was not included in the classifications in the Township's 1995 plan and it has little impact within the township because its interchanges do not provide direct access to roads within the Township.

Principal and Minor Arterials. The primary function of arterials is to move traffic efficiently at the highest speeds other than expressway speeds. Their secondary function is to allow access from lower classified streets and driveways. However, the number of intersections with Arterials should be limited for reasons of safety and efficient traffic flow. Principal Arterials generally carry larger volumes of traffic for longer distances than Minor Arterials.

- Principal Arterials: Skippack Pike (Route 73); Germantown Pike; Valley Forge Road (Route 363).
- Minor Arterials: Morris Road from North Wales Road to Valley Forge Road; Township Line Road; North Wales Road; Whitehall Road; Bethel Road; Trooper Road from Lower Providence to Germantown Pike.

Major and Minor Collectors. Collectors provide a mix of efficient traffic movement and more frequent access to lower classified streets and driveways. They generally serve shorter trips with more localized purposes and at lower

Figure 4-2
Functional Classifications

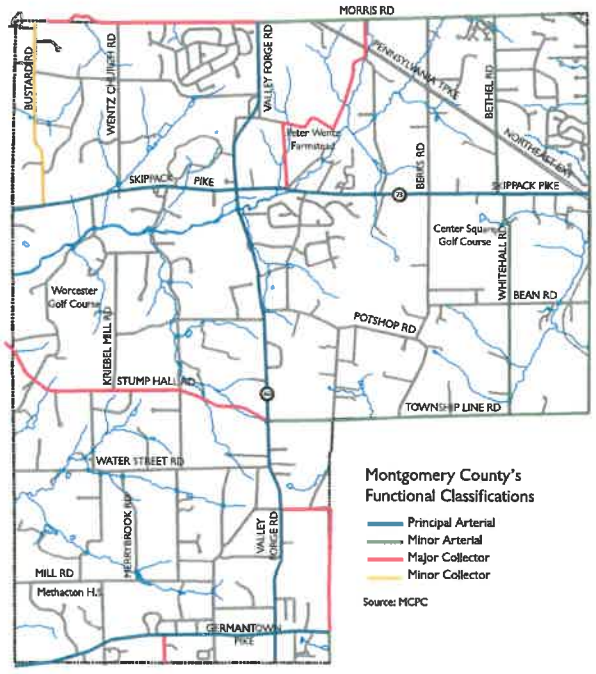
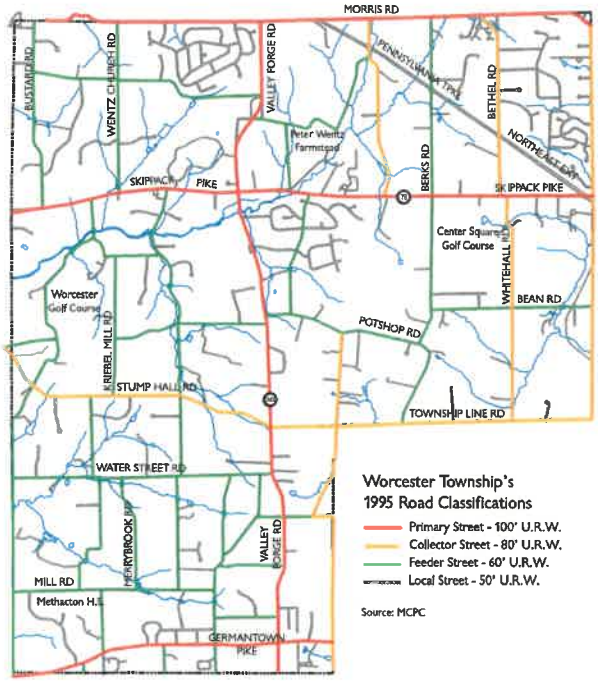


Figure 4-3
1995 Road Classifications



speeds than arterials. Major collectors should allow more efficient traffic flow with fewer driveway intersections than Minor Collectors. Minor collectors should allow efficient traffic flow for short trips within the Township and permit more individual driveway access than major collectors.

- Major Collectors: Morris Road from Valley Forge Road to Bustard Road; Quarry Hall Road; East Mt. Kirk Avenue; Trooper Road from Germantown Pike to Woodlyn Avenue; Woodlyn Avenue from Trooper Road to Valley Forge Road; Shearer and Shultz Roads between Skippack Pike and Morris Road.
- Minor Collectors: Only Bustard Road is classified as a Minor Collector. This classification is similar to the 1995 Plan's "Feeder" street. Most through streets that were not higher classifications were classified as "Feeder" streets in the 1995 Plan.

Local Roads. All roads not classified as arterials or collectors comprise the local roads classification. These roads primarily provide access to adjacent properties, with the lowest operating speeds over the shortest distances. New roads within subdivisions or land developments are almost always local roads.

Volume and Capacity

Volume and capacity are two measures of traffic flow used for current analysis and future planning for roads, with these terms and their relationships to planning briefly explained as follows:

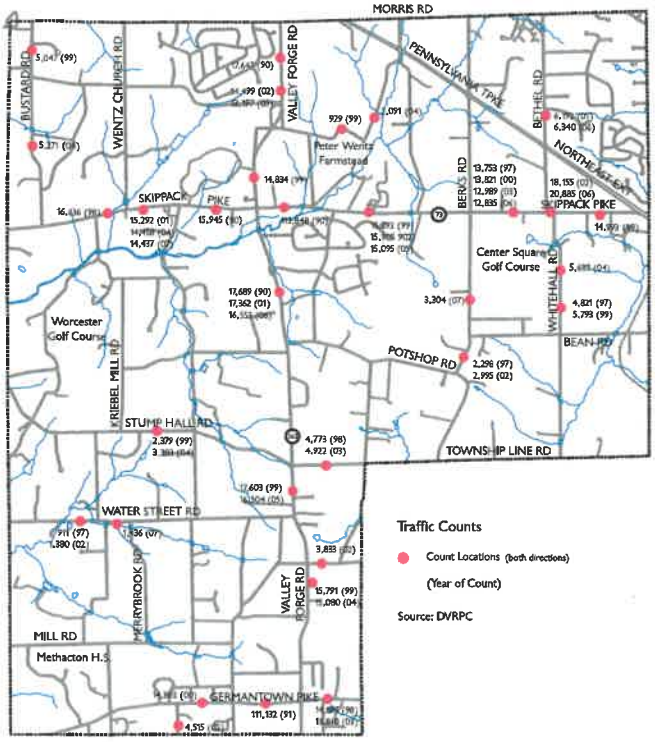
Traffic Volume:

Volume is the number of vehicle trips that occur on a road during a given time period, generally measured as average daily traffic (ADT) and as morning and evening peak-hour traffic. A vehicle trip is one vehicle traveling from point A to point B. Its return from point B to point A is another vehicle trip. Traffic volumes are generally measured by traffic counting devices placed at strategic locations in the road system, and these traffic counts are then mapped for convenient reference, as seen in Figure 4 - 4 and listed in the table in Figure 4 - 5.

Capacity:

Capacity is the maximum number of vehicles a road or intersection can accommodate during a given time period, expressed as a number of vehicles per hour. For example, if a road with an ADT of 5,000 vehicle trips per day has morning and evening peak hour volumes of 1,400 and 1,200 vehicle trips respectively, the remaining 2,400 trips occur throughout the remaining 22 hours of the day. The morning and evening peaks can be accommodated adequately if the road has a capacity of 2,000 vehicles per hour. However, if its capacity is only 1,000 vehicles per hour, then that same road would be congested during the peak hours by the 1,400 and 1,200 am and pm peak-hour traffic volumes.

Figure 4-4
Traffic Counts, 1997 - 2007



Volume/Capacity Relationships:

Average Daily Traffic identifies which roads carry the largest volumes of traffic. Peak-hour volumes and capacity relate more directly to how efficiently a road may carry its heaviest traffic flows. Many existing roads have sufficient capacity for their current volumes, but may become overburdened with additional traffic generated by new development. Road improvements would then be needed to return sufficient capacity to those roads. Therefore, it is important not only to consider existing traffic volumes and road capacities, but also to consider future increases in volumes and road improvements needed to accommodate the increased traffic. Projections of future traffic increases depend heavily on the types of land use served by the roads being evaluated.

Land Use

There is frequently a direct relationship between a road's functional classification and the variety of land use types that abut it. With the exception of expressways, roads that carry the most traffic generally have the widest variety of uses, while roads with less traffic have less variety among abutting land uses. In Worcester Township, a wide variety of land use characters exist, including the following:

- Older, traditional village character.
- Older, roadside residential development.
- Newer, suburbanized development.
- Village and convenience shopping areas.
- A selection of older and newer industries and institutions.
- Extensive areas of farmlands, woodlands, parklands, and homes on larger lots.

The principal arterials: Germantown Pike, Skippack Pike, and Valley Forge Road, have abutting land use characters in most of those categories. The minor arterials and major collectors generally abut several categories. Minor collectors and local roads are generally characterized by one predominant category, or by a combination of less intensive uses including residential, undeveloped, and farmland characters.

Existing Road Character and Conditions

The number and spacing of intersections, severity of curves and grades, and width and condition of paving affect the ability of a road to function safely and efficiently. Narrow rural roads with sharp curves and steep hills cannot carry traffic as safely and efficiently as roads with wide travel lanes and shoulders, and long, sweeping curves, with gentle grades. Safety is a primary consideration in traffic planning.

Roads that are seriously constrained by existing features also limit access to abutting properties. These roads will not

Scenic Bean Road. *Susan Caughlan*

be suitable for access to higher intensities of development unless major improvements are made. Therefore, by limiting improvements to minor rural roads, the Township would be discouraging proposals that would significantly alter the existing land use character. Roads that are least constrained are generally more suitable for access to all intensities of development, and can generally be improved more efficiently.

Efficient Investment of Available Funding

New development will occur in the township and that development will be required to provide or contribute toward some road and intersection improvements. However, even with Transportation Impact Fees, it is not realistic to expect new development to offset the costs of improving all the major roads and intersections in the township. Therefore, major road improvements must be allocated primarily to those areas with highest traffic volumes and serious congestion. However, the Township must ensure that major roads will be upgraded and improved appropriately. Bridge replacements and improvements strictly intended for safety may provide some locational exceptions. Some road, intersection, and bridge improvements have already been programmed for locations important to serve the township and surrounding areas.

In rural areas, the retention of farmland, woodlands, large lots, and rural character, and the restriction of new development to low intensities, is intended to minimize increases in traffic volumes on the many rural-character roads. Therefore, a more reasonable balance can be maintained between traffic generation and road capacity in the rural areas.

In addition, "rural-character" roads should be able to retain their rural character because major "suburbanizing" improvements will not be needed where traffic volumes will remain relatively low. Safety-related improvements of low volume rural roads should be provided, however, including those that improve limited sight distances, ease tight curves, or improve substandard shoulder areas and/or drainage.

Funding for Road Improvements

Within growth areas, and on adjacent roads needed to serve those areas, road improvements can be planned to accommodate existing traffic and new traffic generated by the concentrations of new development. The Township has already enacted traffic impact fees to help offset the costs of off-site road improvements needed to handle traffic increases from new development. Even with transportation impact fees, the most significant funding for road, intersection, and bridge improvements must still be sought through traditional state and federal funding sources.

Transportation Plan

Most of the traffic in Worcester neither originates in nor terminates in the township; but generally uses state roads to pass through the township. Worcester recognizes that it has limited ability to affect these traffic flows and volumes and that most of the traffic improvements that are needed will have to be made by the State. Nevertheless, the Township can take a number of steps that will help reduce traffic problems. These include: reserving right-of-way to realign roads, insuring proper right-of-way width for future improvements, requiring sidewalks or trails, requiring bike lanes, wide shoulders or travel lanes, and limiting the amount of development that can generate local traffic. In addition, the Township can support proposals to serve the community with public transportation. Each of these is discussed below.

Proposed Realignments (1995)

The 1995 Comprehensive Plan recommended reserving the right-of-way for a limited number of realignments and/or road extensions that were intended to improve safety conditions or traffic flow. The Township should consider the feasibility of implementing these proposals as part of its overall transportation plan.

- Realign North Wales Road at Morris Road. Realign the offset legs of North Wales Road to eliminate the jog along Morris Road. (# 6 in 1995)

Trails and Sidewalks

Trails will serve significant transportation and recreational purposes in the Township, as recommended in the Township's Greenway Plan and the 2006 Open Space Plan (See Figure 5 - 5). Sidewalks are currently found only in the four growth areas where they serve as interconnections within and among medium and high-density residential developments. Outside the growth areas, there is little need for sidewalks among the larger residential properties, farmlands, woodlands, and other rural features. Rural areas would be better served by trails and pathways that do not detract from the rural character by being setback inconspicuously from the edges of rural roads and located in clustered residential developments' open space.

Bike Lanes, Wide Shoulders or Wide Travel Lanes

Bicycling on roads is often necessary or desired by many people including children, recreational cyclists, and bicycle

commuters. Ensuring they can do this safely is imperative for the Township, County, and State.

The County has prepared a Bicycle Mobility Plan that indicates the bicycle routes throughout the county and the types of improvements recommended for each of these routes based on their function to the overall bicycle mobility network. Worcester, being so centrally located in the county, has several of these routes traversing the township (see Figure 5 – 5). Valley Forge Road and Skippack Pike are classified as "Primary Bicycle Routes." Several other roads are shown as "Secondary Bicycle Routes."

In addition to the County's system, there is a State Bicycle Trail that traverses the township, too, Route "S" which connects Ohio to New Jersey, roughly paralleling the Pennsylvania Turnpike. In Worcester it uses portions of Valley Forge Road, Potshop Road, Berks Road and Skippack Pike.

All of these bike routes and perhaps others should be reviewed to determine their safety and convenience for bicycle users. Appropriate improvements such as simple striping, gravel cleaning, minimal shoulder widening, or full bike lanes or separated trails should be considered in order to increase the safety and convenience of bicycling in Worcester.

Public Transportation

Generally, Worcester is not served by public transportation, which is typical for a rural township. However, the number 94 bus, which goes from Chestnut Hill through Ambler and Lansdale to the Montgomery Mall, touches the edge of Worcester, traveling along Morris Road to West Point Pike, where it turns away from Worcester and towards Lansdale. SEPTA's R-5 rail line to Philadelphia comes near the township, stopping in North Wales Borough, but it does not pass through Worcester Township.

Public transportation is another key element in a community's transportation system because it can reduce the number of vehicles on the roads and improve roadway operation. But public transportation works efficiently where larger populations are concentrated, ruling out extensive areas of Worcester Township.

Chapter 5
Parklands and other Open Space

This chapter of the Worcester Township Comprehensive Plan identifies the Township's intentions for parklands and a variety of other valuable open space and natural resource features. It provides a summary of recommendations contained in the 2006 Worcester Township Open Space Plan with an emphasis on Township parklands. The Township's Open Space Plan proposes a variety of recommendations aimed at preservation of agriculture and rural character, protection of natural resources, and provision of sufficient parklands to serve the needs of residents.

Existing Public Parklands

The variety of existing public parklands in Worcester Township includes parts of Evansburg State Park, Montgomery County's Peter Wentz Historic Farmstead, Worcester Township's parklands, and a large part of Towamencin Township's Fischer Park. These lands are shown and identified in Figure 5 - 1 and the table in Figure 5 - 2.

Figure 5-1
Public Parklands

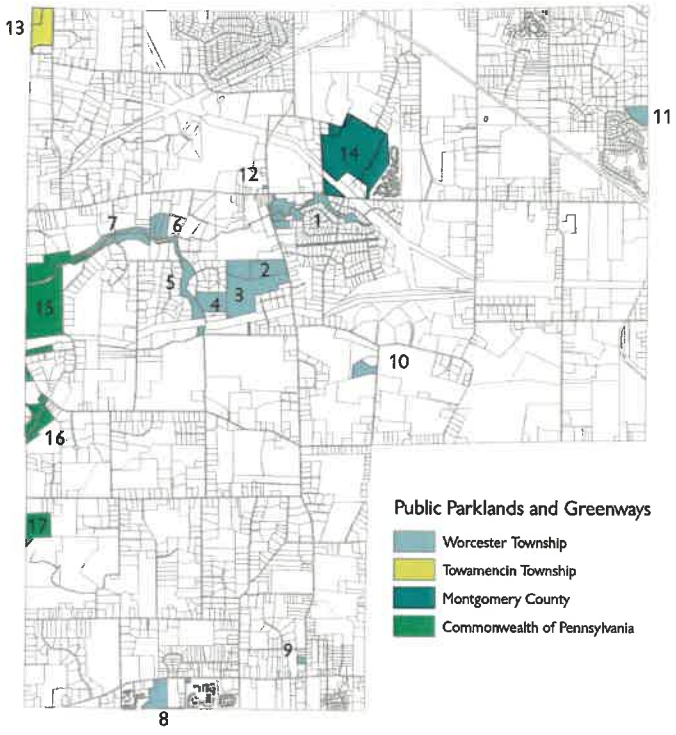


Figure 5-2
Public Park Lands

Map#	Identity	Owner	Acres	Features
1	Valley Green OS	Worcester Township	27.8	Zacharias Creek
2, 3	Heebner Park	Worcester Township	88.6	Active & Passive Recreation and Township Building
4	Lenhart Tract	Worcester Township	14.0	Undeveloped
5	Fawn Creek OS	Worcester Township	22.0	Tributary to Zacharias Creek
6	Hollow Road OS	Worcester Township	17.7	Zacharias Creek
7	Markel Tract OS	Worcester Township	22.4	Zacharias Creek
8	Mt. Kirk Park	Worcester Township	17.6	Neighborhood Park
9	Community Hall	Worcester Township	2.0	Historic Meeting Hall
10	Nike Park	Worcester Township	9.2	Undeveloped
11	Sunnybrook Estates	Worcester Township	9.1	Active Recreation
12	Farmers Union Hall	Worcester Township	0.5	Historic Meeting Hall
13	Fisher Park	Towamencin Township	27.0	Active & Passive Recreation
14	Peter Wentz Farmstead	Montgomery County	88.0	Historic Farmstead
15, 16, 17	Evansburg State Park	Commonwealth of PA	143.6	Passive Recreation and Zacharias Creek

Total Publicly Owned Land = 470.5 acres
Total Owned by Worcester Township = 230.8 acres

Future Public Parkland Needs

Evaluating open space needs

Since the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), published its **Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines** in 1983, many communities in Montgomery County have used those standards to calculate parkland needs. Those standards suggest that a municipal park system have 6.25 to 10.5 acres of park and recreation land per 1,000 residents.

In 1996, the NRPA and the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration published **Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines**. The publication provides guidance to help individual communities determine the amount of each type of open space they need. It uses a systems approach to park, recreation, open space, and greenway planning that focuses on local values and needs rather than strict formulas.

The systems approach looks at the level of service provided to the users of the facilities rather than the size of the facilities based upon population. It reflects the dual function of municipal parkland for recreation and protection of important natural features. Under these guidelines, a fully developed five-acre municipal park with few significant natural features may provide the same level of service as a 35-acre park that has active recreation and also protects woodlands, wetlands, and other natural amenities. The difference hinges upon the individual goals of the municipality and not a per capita acreage figure.

However, to conduct a meaningful level of service analysis, the Township would need to compile detailed user surveys and facilities inventories. While this detailed study would be a key element for a township recreation plan, it is not necessary to evaluate the general recreation opportunities within Worcester Township. Therefore, the 2006 Worcester Township Open Space Plan used the per capita acreage figures of the 1983 guidelines simply to confirm whether the Township has at least the minimum acreage needed for active parkland. Both the low and high ratios were used to create a range for evaluating existing conditions.

Under the per capita standards, Worcester should have between 56 and 93 acres of parkland that is not intended primarily for natural resource protection. The Township currently has 72 acres of such active and passive recreation parkland (Heebner, 46 acres; Nike, 9.2 acres; Mt Kirk, 7.6 acres; Sunnybrook Estates, 9.1 acres).

In addition to considering acreage amounts, the Township should consider if the parks are sufficient for their intended purposes and if they are in appropriate locations. Some parks may need to be expanded, or new parks might be needed in underserved areas of the township. In some areas, valuable natural resources should be protected and corridors should be created for trails and wildlife benefits. Since there are no formulas to determine the size of these kinds of parks, the 2006 Open Space Plan has identified natural resources and trail linkages to guide preservation activities.

Park Types

The 2006 Open Space Plan classifies the Township's parks and open space in three generally accepted categories based upon the acreage, recreation potential, and natural resources of each park.

Neighborhood Parks

- Generally include recreation lands between 1 and 15 acres with a service area up to ½ mile.
- Usually provide playground equipment, basketball courts, or tot lots, but may also contain a larger area for athletic fields to allow for both informal and organized recreation.
- Primarily serve nearby residents for spontaneous or daily recreation.
- Convenient pedestrian and bicycle access are perhaps more important than parking facilities.
- Organized leagues are not commonly users of these parks.

Mount Kirk Park, with 7.6 acres, most closely fits in this classification. While this property does not yet contain a full range of neighborhood park facilities, its location and size are suitable for neighborhood park purposes. The 9.2-acre Nike Park is not developed for use by sports leagues and is not well located or well connected for use by nearby residents. The property currently contains remnants of the former Nike Missile installation, with some lawn areas and trees. Therefore, it is neither a neighborhood park nor a natural preserve, but its location along the proposed cross-township trail would make it a good location as a trail head. In addition, it could include historical educational information about the former missile installation. The 9.1-acre area in Sunnybrook Estates has been developed with active recreation facilities and would be considered a good neighborhood park, although it is located less than optimally on the edge of the neighborhood and could be better connected to the rest of the neighborhood.

Community Parks

- Generally include parks of 5 acres or more in size that serve multiple neighborhoods within a two-mile service area.

- Generally contain numerous athletic fields or hard courts for a variety of sports, serve as a center of active recreation in the community, and provide a central gathering place for special events.
- Parking facilities are needed for users from distant parts of the parks' service areas.

The 46-acre Heebner Park is significantly larger than most community parks. It contains all the necessary active recreation facilities and adjacent land includes the Township's office building and maintenance facilities. It abuts a recently acquired 14-acre parcel to the northwest (Lenhart) that could at some future time be used for additional active recreation and/or for trail connections.

Passive Recreation and Protection of Natural Resources

- Generally intended to protect valuable natural resources and serve as nodes and corridors of passive open space within the township-wide and county-wide greenway system.
- Other uses may include passive recreation such as hiking, bird watching, or kite flying.

These lands total more than 150 acres and include the Zacharias Creek lands, other Township-owned lands, and State Park lands.

Recreation Land Needs

The 2006 Open Space Plan uses the 1983 NRPA acreage standards to determine a minimum acreage standard for active recreation land, as listed in Figure 5 - 3. Using the Township's estimated 2005 population of 8,900, the Township is currently below the middle of the range of recommended acreage for active recreation with its 72 acres at Heebner, Mt. Kirk, Nike, and Sunnybrook Parks (NRPA recommended acreage of 56 to 93 acres). Looking ahead 25 years to 2030, the projected population of 15,000 would require 94 to 157 total acres of recreation parkland. The Township may need from 22 to 85 additional acres of active recreation land for that population.

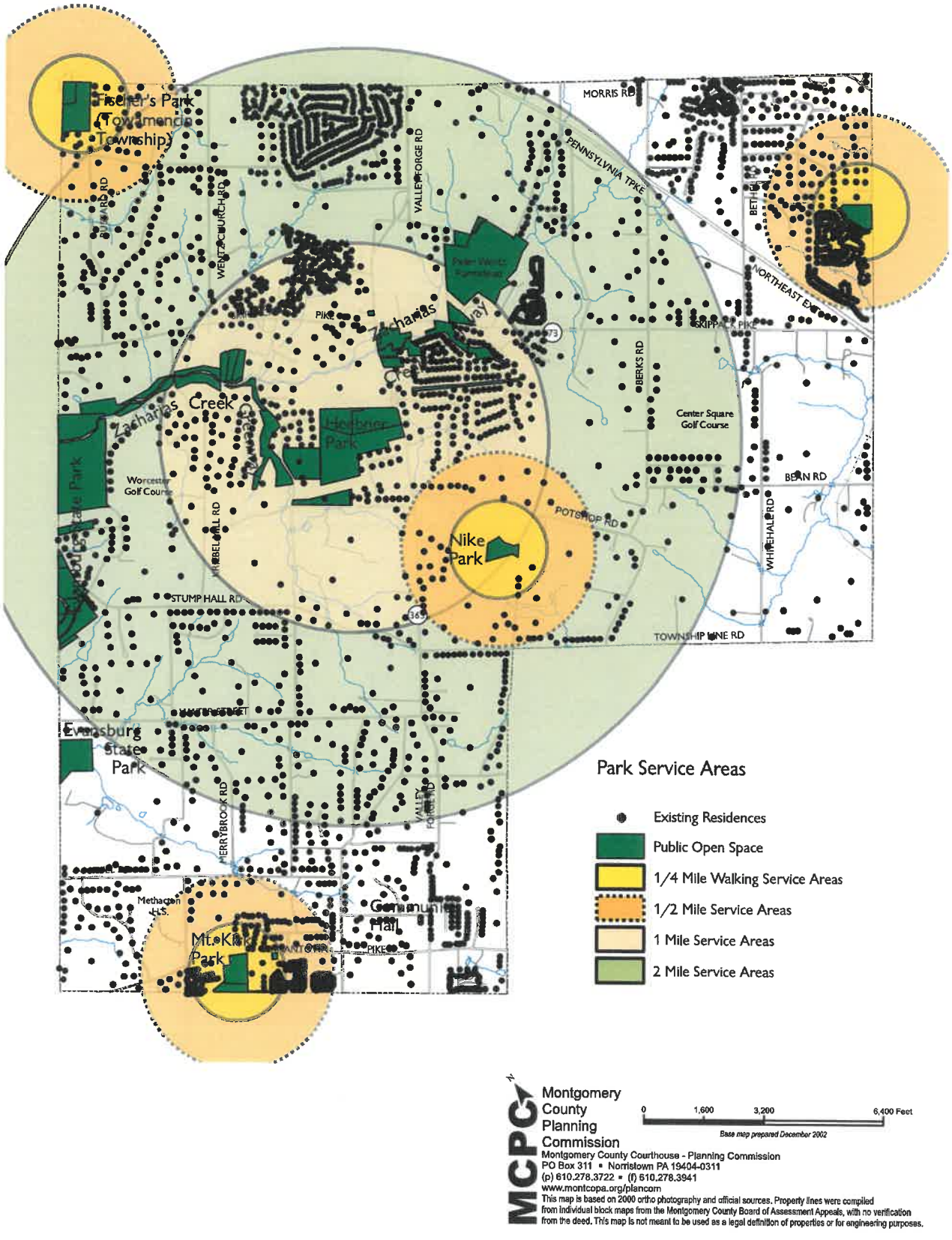
With only 7.6 acres at Mt. Kirk Park, the Township appears to be about 3 to 11 acres short on current minimum neighborhood parkland (11 to 19 acres recommended). The need for 2030 (19 to 31 total acres) would require adding almost 7 to 24 more acres of neighborhood parkland. There may also be a need for additional neighborhood parkland at locations that are currently not served by nearby facilities. Additional neighborhood parks could be acquired and developed via the development process as new residential development takes place. The 9.1 acres in the Sunnybrook Estates development would reduce this potential deficit.

The suggested minimum standards are not a guarantee that the Township will have sufficient recreation lands. The

Figure 5-3
1983 NRPA Standards Calculations for Minimum Recreation Acreage

Total Recreation Parkland				
	Population	Range of recommended total recreation park area	Current total recreation parkland area	Needed amount of total recreation parkland area
2005 2030	8,900 15,000	56 to 93 acres 94 to 157 acres	72 acres (Heebner, Nike, Mt. Kirk, Sunnybrook)	0 to 21 acres 22 to 85 acres
Neighborhood Parks (1 to 10 acres in size)				
	Population	Minimum recommended neighborhood recreation park area	Current total neighborhood recreation parkland area	Needed amount of total neighborhood recreation parkland area
2005 2030	8,900 15,000	11 to 19 acres 19 to 31 acres	16.7 acres (Mt. Kirk, Sunnybrook)	0 to 2.3 acres 2.3 to 14.3 acres
Community Parks (over 5 acres)				
	Population	Minimum recommended total recreation park area	Current total recreation parkland area	Needed amount of total recreation parkland area
2005 2030	8,900 15,000	44 to 74 acres 75 to 126 acres	46 acres (Heebner)	0 to 28 acres 29 to 80 acres
Natural Preservation Lands				
	Population	Potential natural preservation area	Current natural preservation area	Potential additional natural preservation area
2005	N/A	500 arces	150 acres	350 acres

Figure 5-4
Park Service Areas



Township should continue to look for opportunities to create new parks and expand existing parks with a diversity of recreation opportunities. For example, new park land along the creek corridors and other areas may not provide active recreation facilities, but will provide pedestrian and/or bike trails through important areas of the township, as recommended in the Township's Open Space Plan.

Locational needs

Both the 1983 and 1996 guidelines recognize the need to provide open space within a recommended proximity of all residents. The map in Figure 5 - 4 identifies those areas of the township within and outside the basic service areas of existing park land. This map may help to identify areas that are underserved in terms of access to open space, particularly for active recreation.

Overall, the service area analysis indicates that most residents are not within a reasonable proximity to neighborhood parks. However, many residents live within the 2-mile radius service area for the community park and the remainder are not far outside that radius. Since most trips to Heebner Park will be made by car, the additional travel distance is not a major deterrent. As the Township's trail system expands, alternative access to Heebner Park will become available as well.

Given the township's current population, it is not unreasonable for the Township to have a single centrally located community park. However, the Township should consider potential opportunities for creation of a community park for the underserved areas in the eastern and southwestern areas of the township, especially as the population in those areas increases.

Towamencin Township's Fischer's Park is located in the northern corner of Worcester where it serves Worcester's residents. This interdependent relationship could perhaps be the basis for a partnership between the two Townships for service to residents of both townships.

Greenways, Trails and Natural Resources

Worcester has previously identified preservation of sensitive natural features, open space, and farmland as overall Township goals. Related goals include the preservation of unique natural resources, conservation and protection of surface and sub-surface water resources, protection of floodplains and other sensitive natural areas, and interconnection, through greenway development, of regional open space and habitat areas. These goals were identified in the Township's 1995 Comprehensive Plan, the 1994 Open Space Plan, the 2004 Greenway Plan, and the 2006 Open Space Plan.

Maintaining rural character is a quality of life concept that enables residents to: continue to farm large areas of land; to raise large animals on their property; to enjoy scenic views of farms, country roads, historic buildings and few other buildings, and much vegetation; and to enjoy informal passive and active recreational activities in quiet, undisturbed woodlands and other natural areas. Although the Township cannot expect to protect all of its sensitive natural features and open space, it would be desirable to protect as much as of its environmental, cultural, and heritage resources as possible.

Park and recreation guidelines do not provide acreage standards for greenways that provide passive recreation or for protection of sensitive natural resources, such as wildlife or riparian corridors. The physical characteristics of communities can vary greatly, as can the quality of environmental resources. Consequently, resource protection goals are very difficult to quantify.

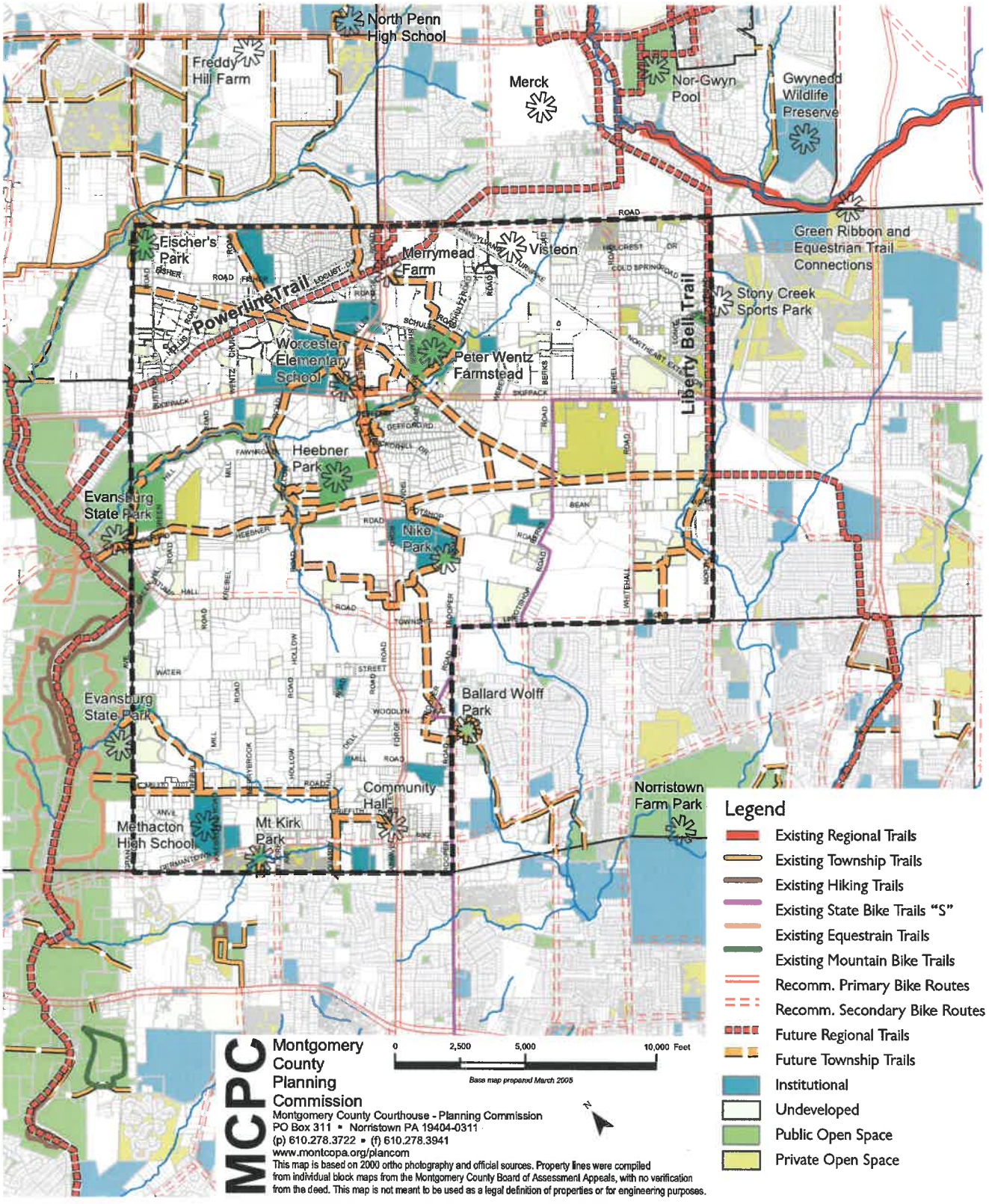
Greenways should ultimately connect regional natural resources and recreational sites, such as Evansburg State Park, Heebner Park, Peter Wentz Farmstead, Fischer's Park, regional trails and other natural resource preserves and recreation sites. Greenways can also provide movement corridors essential for the life cycle and survival of many species. Coordination with adjoining municipalities and regional plans is important for both resource protection and greenway design. The Township's Zacharias Creek lands protect an important stream corridor. This and the County's Powerline and Liberty Bell Trails, and the PECO lands that crisscross the township, can become the central features of the township's greenway network linking the township's residents to a multitude of regional resources.

Parkland, Greenways, and Trail Additions

The following sections identify parkland, greenway, and trail linkages and expansion priorities proposed in the Worcester Township Open Space Plan (see Figure 5 - 5):

- The Fairview Village area, which has a significant concentration of the township's population, has no centrally located, pedestrian-accessible parkland. The Township would like to acquire and develop one or more new parks in this area.
- Nike Park has been underused and could serve as the basis of a larger Township park and as an important link in cross-township trails. The Township would like to acquire land or rights to lands to the north and west of the property that have not only the potential to provide for passive and active recreation opportunities within the Township, but might be valuable for future pathway connections.

Figure 5-5
Parkland, Greenways and Trail Additions



- The Township will continue to accept land offered for donation and to be used for public active or passive recreation. These donations may often be offered by developers as part of the land development process, which makes sense since in larger developments there is usually a need for neighborhood park facilities.
- Existing Township parkland might have some expansion opportunities. If such expansion were to occur, this would provide additional lands for active recreation and natural resource protection.
- The Cold Spring area needs new parkland and the Township would like to satisfy that need with one or more new parks in this area.
- The Township would like to provide one or two new park areas accessible to the Milestone subdivision along Morris Road and the nearby area.
- The Township would like to pursue the trails and greenway land acquisitions recommended in the Greenways study and the 2006 Open Space Plan.
- Any remaining easements or land purchases necessary to complete the pedestrian and equestrian route from the Evansburg Trail in Evansburg State Park to Heebner Park.
- Any remaining easements or land purchases necessary to complete the pedestrian and equestrian route from Heebner Park to Nike Park.
- Upon completion of a feasibility study of a trail from Heebner Park to Peter Wentz Farmstead, acquire any easements or land necessary to complete the trail as recommended in the feasibility study.
- Pursuit of license agreements for trail use and construction on PECO lands that coincide with the trail network shown in Figure 5 - 5, followed by construction of various segments of the pathway network on PECO lands.

A multi/equestrian combination trail in Washington.
Piercecountytrails.org

- Accepting donations of land or easements for use as part of the trail network. These donations might often be offered by developers to connect their new subdivision to the Township—or county-wide network.
- After working with local landowners and the County, to determine the best location for the Liberty Bell and Powerline Trails and to acquire the necessary easements or land, which would then be followed by construction of the trails.
- Providing public improvements to facilitate equestrian activities in the township.
- Any remaining easements or land purchases necessary to complete the following portions of the pedestrian and equestrian routes:
  - From Ballard Wolff Park in East Norriton to Nike Park,
  - From Township Line Road to the Liberty Bell Trail, and
  - From Fairview Village to Evansburg State Park.
- Any remaining easements or land purchases necessary to complete the remaining portions of the pedestrian and equestrian routes throughout the township.

Historic Preservation

Many properties in Worcester are valuable for historic preservation. It is important to note that many of the properties with identified historic resources are also important natural resource and agricultural lands. There are a variety of methods to preserve a historic resource, and the method of preservation will vary based on the owners goals and resources available. Preservation for historic value can often best be done via land use controls or acquisition if the parcel serves multiple purposes.

Considering overall value and immediate threat, and remembering that acquisition can include easements or other methods, the most immediate acquisition actions by the Township or others should be the following:

- Properties adjacent to other existing historic properties, especially those which would expand or buffer those historic properties.
- Any of the resources shown on the map of historic resources in the Township's Open Space Plan that are threatened by demolition or collapse.
- Any resource listed on or eligible for the National Register.
- Any of the resources shown on the map of historic resources in the Township's Open Space Plan that cannot be preserved by a non-acquisition method.

- Any historic resources, especially any of the resources shown on the map of historic resources in the Township's Open Space Plan that are located on a property being considered for preservation for other purposes (i.e. a farm, a natural preserve).
- As more specific information becomes available about certain properties and their potential historic value, the Township or others may decide that preservation is desired for a resource that is not already mentioned here.

Kriebel Mill barn is along the Zacharias Creek greenway and trail corridor as well as being one of the largest stone barns in the area.
Laura Caughlan

Scenic Resources

Figure 2 - 7 in Chapter 2 of this comprehensive plan highlights some of the most scenic resources in the township. The Township would like to use non-acquisition methods as well as acquisitions to protect these resources:

- View easements over land along the view to downtown Philadelphia.
- View easements over land along the view to the Skippack Creek valley and the Perkiomen Creek valley.
- Scenic easements on properties along scenic roads in the township.
- Acquire land or development rights to preserve scenic resources.

Natural Resource Protection

Preserving ecologically important lands protects waterways and stream quality, conserves plant and animal habitat, and provides areas for groundwater recharge. It also helps preserve the township's rural character. Worcester Township intends to protect all of these lands via land use controls, similar to the current riparian corridor protection

Willison Smith farmhouse. Susan Caughlan

ordinances. In addition, larger blocks of natural resource-rich lands should be preserved for public access and greater control over land management wherever possible. The Township's Open Space Plan identifies its acquisition strategy for natural resource protection to focus upon the areas shown in Chapter 6 of the Open Space Plan.

These areas are intended to be preserved as much as possible using a combination of methods including, acquisition of these key resource areas. Other non-acquisition methods the Township intends to investigate and/or use are outlined in the Open Space Plan.

Agricultural Preservation

From its earliest days, Worcester has been a community dominated by farming. A combination of excellent agricultural soils, stable family-run farms, and preservation-minded local officials resulted in Worcester entering the 21st century with many of its large farms still intact. In addition, many smaller farm parcels (5 to 50 acres) have become horse farms.

The public meeting held in November 2004 identified at least one dozen large farms (greater than 50 acres) and almost 50 smaller ones. However, the pressure of development is daily taking its toll on these farms. Worcester has about 350 acres of preserved farmland, but hundreds of additional acres could be preserved if funding were available. With this background in mind, Worcester is focusing on agricultural resources as one of the significant preservation goals of its open space program. In fact, as this plan is being written, over 250 additional acres of agricultural land have either been added to this total or are in the process of being preserved.

Land preserved for agricultural purposes should continue to be farmed and most often will remain in private ownership. The following are the Township's recommendations for farmland preservation easements or other acquisitions:

The Smith pioneer house was acquired by the Township.
Laura Caughlan

- All farmland shown on the map in the Township's Open Space Plan, Figure 10 - 3.
- In order to spread the Township's resources as far as possible, County and State money should be used as often as possible to preserve properties that qualify and rank highly in the State and County programs. Worcester has a history of successful partnerships with the state and county to preserve such farms.
- When preserving a farm, whether with or without state and county funds, unfarmed portions of the farm should be evaluated for their potential to meet other Township goals such as natural preservation, historic preservation, scenic views, or trail and greenway connections. Even portions of farmed land could, in some instances, be evaluated and preserved for those other purposes.

The Township has, since 1999, had a volunteer Open Space Coordinator who works with the County and/or land preservation organizations to ensure land owners understand the acquisition opportunities for land preservation and the Township intends to keep someone in this capacity.

Chapter 6
Existing Land use

As development spread across the region during the past several hundred years, it established the framework on which zoning and land use planning are applied. As development continues, it changes that framework. Therefore, it is critical to classify the types and identify the amounts and locations of existing land uses within the community. This chapter provides this "snapshot" of existing characteristics. It will be used as the basis for future land use goals and objectives. Examination of existing land use, therefore, forms the basis for planning future development and preservation of desirable natural features, farmlands, and rural character.

This chapter provides a picture of the current developed and undeveloped situation in Worcester Township. It does not represent current opportunities or restrictions to development.

Categories of Existing Land Use

This chapter identifies categories of existing land use in the township and the amounts of land con-sumed by each category in April 2007. The data for these categories are listed in the table in Figure 6 - 1, Summary of Existing Land Use Data. The map in Figure 6 - 2, Existing Land Use, shows the land areas covered by these categories. These categories are as follows:

- Multifamily
- Single-family Attached
- Twin/Duplex
- Mobile Home Park
- Single-family Detached (lots smaller than five acres)
- Single-family Detached (lots from five to twenty acres)
- Mixed Use
- Retail
- Office
- Institutional
- Industrial
- Utilities
- Undeveloped
- Public Open Space
- Private Open Space
- Agriculture

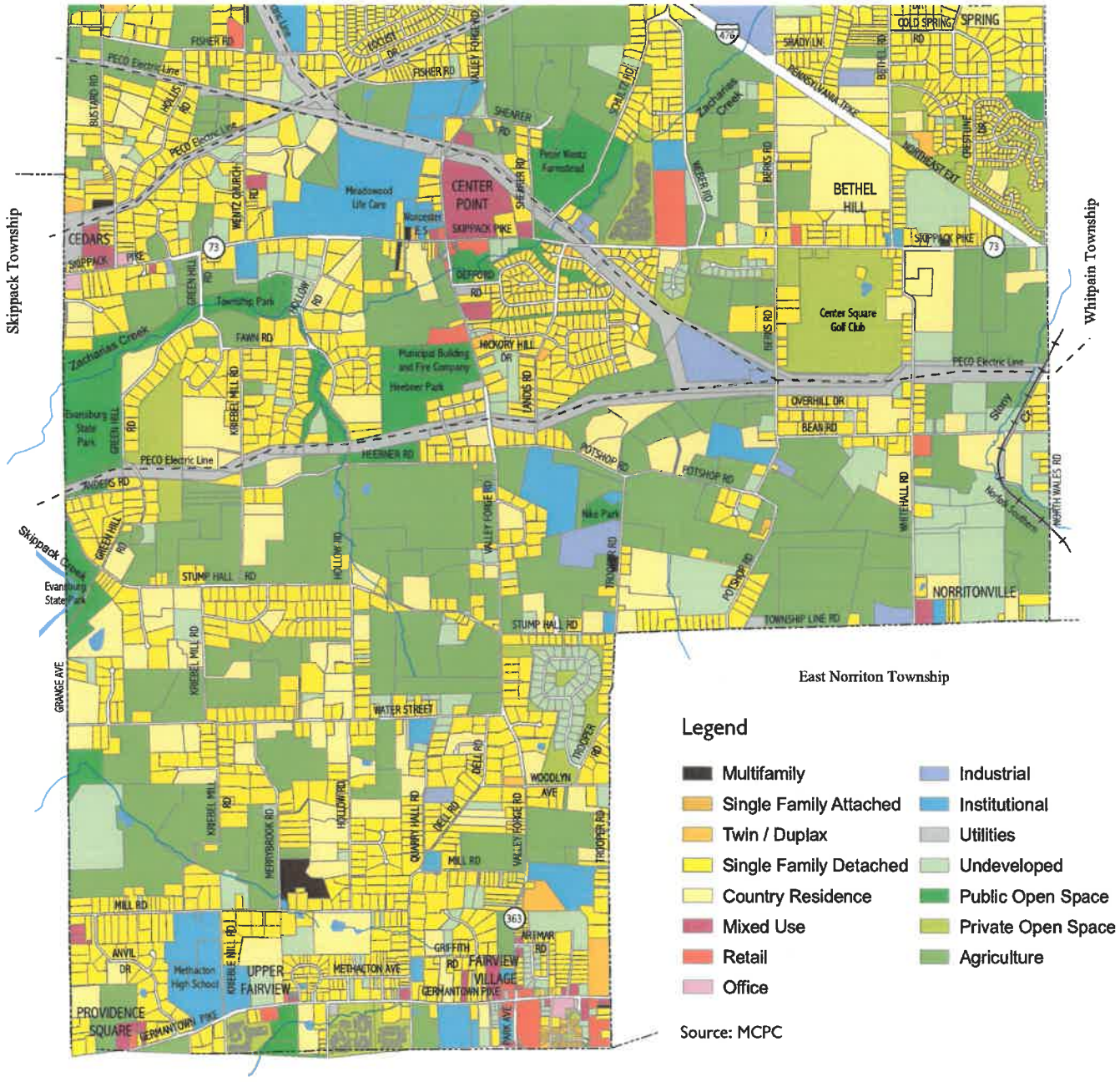
The data, charts, and mapping do not provide precise measurements, and have been modified within reason to reduce inaccuracies with a margin of error small enough for the purposes of this chapter and for use as the basis for future land use considerations.

Figure 6–1
Summary of Existing Land Use Data

Land Use Categories	2007	
	units/sf/acres	% total
Multifamily	314 du	6.0%
Single-family Attached	717 du	13.7%
Twin/Duplex	incl in SFA	
Mobile Home Park	16 du	0.3%
Single-family Detached < 5 acres	2,216 du	61.9%
Single-family Detached > 5 acres	126 du	18.2%
Total Residential Units	**3,389 du**	**100.0%**
Mixed Use	incl in Retail	
Retail	313,200 sf	14.5%
Office	44,000 sf	2.0%
Industrial	900,000 sf	41.6%
Institutional	905,300 sf	41.9%
Total Building Floor Area	**2,162,500 sf**	**100.0%**
Utilities	380 ac	2.2%
Undeveloped	835 ac	7.0%
Public Open Space	477 ac	4.4%
Private Open Space	488 ac	4.3%
Agriculture	2,897 ac	27.1%
Total Township Acreage	**10,240 ac**	**100.0%**

The Existing Land Use map in Figure 6 - 2 provides a picture of the geographical distribution of existing land uses throughout the township. It is not surprising to see that the large concentrations of higher density residential and nonresidential uses occur along major roads, generally at or near major intersections. The geographical distribution of existing land uses, road network, extent of public sewer and water systems, and planning for open space, recreation, and preservation of natural features are all important elements for determining a reasonable Future Land Use Plan for the township, as proposed in Chapter 7 of this comprehensive plan update. When existing land use data and charts are updated in the future, the existing land use map should also be updated to show where the changes in the township's land use have occurred.

Figure 6-2
Existing Land Use



Descriptions and Comparisons of Categories of Existing Land Use

This section describes the land use categories used in the current evaluation of existing land use. The designation given to each property was based initially on land use classifications used by the Montgomery County Board of Assessments (BOA), which assigns categories for taxing purposes. However, we adapted the BOA categories to be more meaningful for land use planning purposes. For example, private golf courses are commercial land use for taxing purposes, but are private open space for land use planning.

Residential Categories:

Residential types are defined according to the number and arrangement of dwelling units. A dwelling unit is generally defined as one or more rooms intended to be occupied as separate living quarters, with cooking, sleeping, and sanitary facilities in the unit for the exclusive use of a single family maintaining a household. Residential categories include all parcels that have been developed for only residential purposes. Parcels with both residential and non-residential uses are included in the "mixed use" category.

Multifamily

Description: Multifamily dwelling units are those located in a detached residential building containing three or more dwelling units, usually referred to as apartments. Multifamily development is usually under one operating unit, as a rental or condominium property, and may include garden, mid-rise and high-rise apartment buildings, and conversions from single-family detached dwellings or other buildings. Multifamily dwellings are generally located entirely above or below one another, may share outside access and/or internal hallways, lobbies, and similar facilities, and share the lot on which their building is located.

Comments: Five properties and a portion of a larger property are currently developed with multifamily dwelling units, with a total area of about 31 acres containing a total of 314 dwelling units.

Meadowood Multifamily units in Worcester. Pictometry

Twin/Duplex

Description: Two dwelling units in one building that is not attached to any other building. Twins have two dwelling units placed side-by-side, joined to each other by a vertical common party wall. Duplexes have one dwelling unit placed above the other and share a common horizontal partition (floor/ceiling).

Comments: Worcester currently has about 60 acres developed with twin duplex units. The number of twin and duplex units is included in the total number for single-family attached units.

Twins in Worcester. Pictometry

Single-family Attached

Description: Single-family attached dwellings typically include townhouses, rowhouses, triplexes, and quadruplexes. These are commonly defined as a dwelling unit with independent outside access, no other dwelling units located directly and totally above or below it, having party walls in common with at least one but not more than three adjacent similar dwelling units, and located in a building that contains at least three dwelling units.

Comments: This category currently includes "townhouse" developments and developments of "triplex" units on a total area of about 19 acres in Worcester. There are, including the twins and duplexes, 717 single-family attached dwelling units in Worcester.

Townhouses in Worcester. Pictometry

Mobile Home Park

Description and Comment: Mobile Home Park is a distinct classification identified in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code as a parcel of land that contains lots rented under one operating unit for the placement of mobile homes. Typically, the residents own the mobile homes. When mobile homes are placed on lots owned by the mobile home owners, they are considered single-family detached dwellings. There is a 16-unit mobile home park in Fairview Village on about ¾ of an acre of a larger property with other uses.

Mobile Homes in Worcester. Pictometry

Single-Family Detached (SFD)

Description: A building designed for and occupied exclusively as a residence for only one family and not attached to any other building or dwelling units.

Comments: The current data uses two categories of single-family detached dwellings based on lot size. SFD lots less than five acres are considered unlikely to be further subdivided. SFD lots more than five, but less than twenty acres ("country residence") are presumed to be large enough that there is a probability that they will eventually be subdivided into additional lots. Lots larger than twenty acres that contain single-family detached residences are included in the "Agriculture" category (presuming agriculture as the dominant use).

In April 2007, there are currently about 3,222 acres of land area occupied by 2,216 SFD lots of less than five acres, and about 954 acres occupied by 126 "country residence" lots.

Undeveloped, Public and Private Open Space, and Agriculture

Descriptions:

Undeveloped. Undeveloped parcels are designated as vacant land under the Board of Assessments' land use classifications. They all have individual tax parcel numbers and are capable of being transferred to new owners as vacant lots.

Public Open Space. Park, recreation, and open space parcels, owned by the township, Montgomery County or the state.

Private Open Space. This includes golf courses, sportsmen's or gun clubs, and open space within residential land developments. Some of the private open space, such as golf courses, can be sold by its private owners and/or be used for development otherwise permitted by the zoning districts in which these parcels are located. Some of the private open space is permanently preserved.

Agriculture. Parcels larger than 20 acres that are covenanted under Act 319, lands whose development rights were sold to Montgomery County under the Farmland Preservation Program, and other farmlands identified from aerial photography and input from municipal officials. Many parcels contain a house, but agriculture is the dominant use.

Comments: Overall, the amount of undeveloped, open space, and agricultural land amounts to 4,381 acres, which is about 43% of the total area of Worcester.

A horse in a home's front yard pasture along Kriebel Mill Road in Worcester. MCPC

A view across the Smith Farm on Fisher Road in Worcester. Susan Caughlan

Office

Description. This includes properties that are developed exclusively for office purposes, as well as some miscellaneous uses including animal hospitals, funeral homes, and banks. Some office businesses are included in the mixed use category because they share a building with retail uses or dwelling units.

Comments: In April 2007, the amount of land classified in this category was about 12 acres, containing about 44,000 square feet of building space.

Offices at Germantown Pike and Heritage Drive in Worcester.
Pictometry

Mixed Use and Retail

Descriptions:

Mixed Use. This category identifies individual properties that have more than one land use on them, generally including a residential component and one or more nonresidential uses. Mixed uses are often combinations of stores and dwellings or stores and offices.

Retail. Stores, restaurants, repair shops and garages, and a variety of other commercial uses frequented by the general public. Retail businesses that share a building with offices or dwelling units are included in the mixed use category.

The Palmer Farm in Worcester has multiple use on one property.
Pictometry

Comments: In April 2007, the amount of land occupied by mixed and retail was about 126 acres, containing about 313,200 square feet of building space.

Industrial

Description and Comments: Industrial uses in the township include manufacturing uses and contractors' shops. In April 2007, the land categorized as industry was about 177 acres, containing about 900,000 square feet of building space.

Worcester Industry. MCPC

Institutional

Description and Comments: Schools, churches, cemeteries, and fire companies are the most common and noticeable institutional uses. Meadowood and the two tennis clubs are also included in this category. In April 2007, there was about 517 acres of land developed with institutional uses containing about 905,300 square feet of building space.

Old Bethel Hill United Methodist Church in Worcester.
Susan Caughlan

Figure 6-3
General Land Use Categories

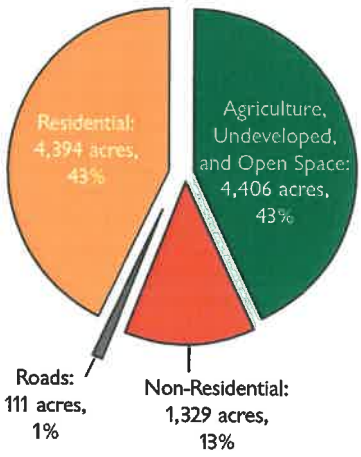
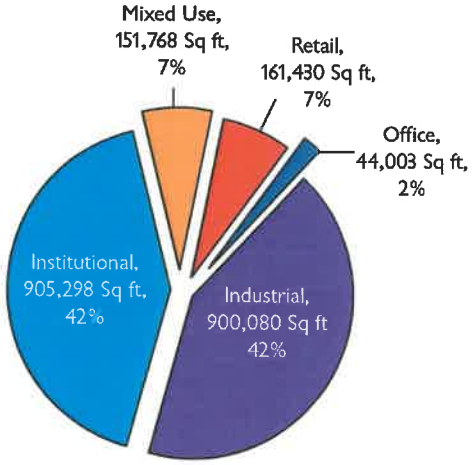


Figure 6-4
Mixed Use and Non-Residential Building Area



Utilities

Description and Comments: Primarily sewer and water company properties, and gas and electric transmission lines. The land area for this land use category includes lands owned by these utilities and also those sections of the electric company's transmission lines that are within easements on lands in other categories. The current total of about 380 acres is that land used and owned by the utilities.

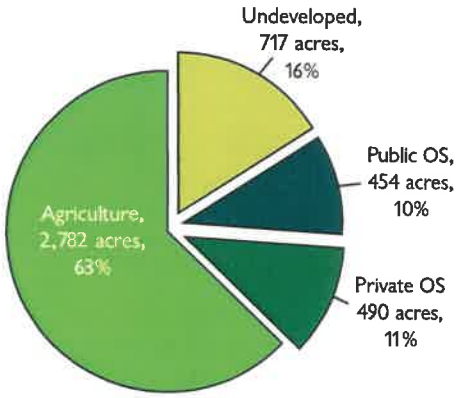
Land Use Proportions

The chart in Figure 6 - 3 divides the township's 10,240 acres into various combinations of existing land use categories. The chart identifies the acreage occupied by three groups of land use categories and the percentage of township land area in each group. In addition, the chart includes roads, which occupy over 100 acres in Worcester, and should be included when considering total township land area.

Figure 6-4 illustrates the proportions of Worcester's mixed use and non-residential building areas.

Figure 6-5 compares the unbuilt lands in the township.

Figure 6-5
Open Space, Agriculture, and Undeveloped



Chapter 7
Future Land Use

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code requires a municipal comprehensive plan to include "A plan for land use, which may include provisions for the amount, intensity, character and timing of land use proposed for residence, industry, business, agriculture, major traffic and transit facilities, utilities, community facilities, public grounds, parks and recreation, preservation of prime agricultural lands, flood plains and other areas of special hazards and other similar uses." Based on the goals and objectives of this plan, the community background, and the existing land use, this chapter presents the township's:

- Future Growth Trends,
- Vision,
- Future Land Use Map, and
- Recommendations to accomplish the Vision.

Future Growth Trends

To better understand the growth trends affecting land use into the future, the discussion will be broken into three parts: housing, non-residential, and preservation, which is land that will not be developed.

Housing Growth Trends

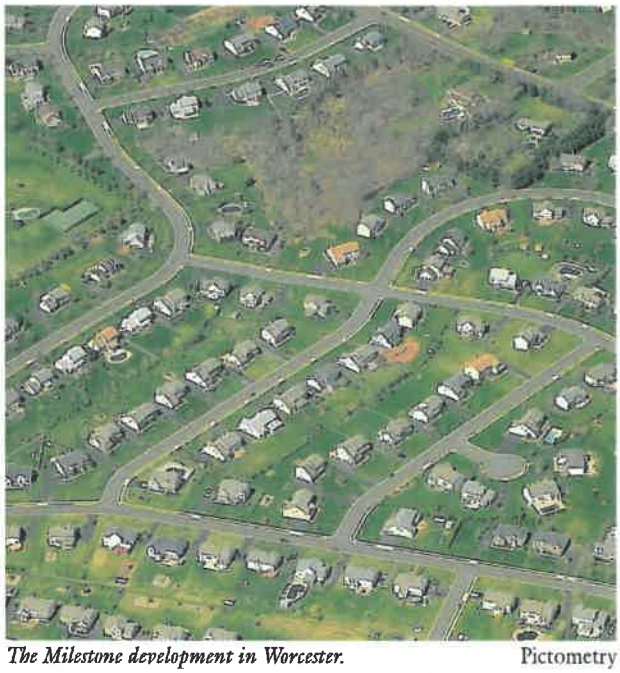
A residential "buildout" analysis based on current trends and projected future trends can provide a useful estimate of what the Township can expect in the near and distant future if the Township does nothing or adopts a "hands-off," or laissez-faire, approach. The result sought is the date at which all the land is used up and for what uses.

In 2005 three methods were used to project potential buildout: a simple projection calculation based on population projections, a construction projection method based on construction trends, and a mapped total buildout, based on land available and the amount of housing allowed by current zoning.

2005 Buildout Analysis

The Future Land Use Plan adopted as part of the 1995 Comprehensive Plan outlined the Township's desired growth patterns and Worcester's current zoning meets the minimum standards described in that plan. However, much of the growth projected in that plan has already happened. Therefore, a new look at projected growth is needed.

For example, as mentioned in Chapter 2, the population forecast predicts a population increase of 1,551 residents between 2000 and 2010. With an average of about 2.65 persons per household, that is about 583 housing units projected to be needed between 2000 and 2010. According to building permit records, 421 of these units had already been built in 5 years by the end of 2004, leaving only



The Milestone development in Worcester. Pictometry

Lederach, Lower Salford Township, PA. MCPC

162 housing units that would need to be built in the 5 years between 2005 and 2010 to house the projected population. This would indicate either a low projection or a construction boom - or a combination of both. So, if the rate of construction that existed from 2000 through 2004 continues, there could be 1,060 new units between 2000 and 2010 (Figure 7 - 2) or enough housing units to accommodate double the expected population growth rate. In early 2007 there were eight medium to large housing projects either under construction or review that proposed to provide 349 housing units on 518 acres. Ultimately, however, the total amount of growth is limited only by the zoning and the amount of available land.

Therefore, in order to compensate for either inaccurate projections or for housing booms, and to check against the physical limits of the land, three buildout analyses were performed to indicate the total amount of growth that could be expected to happen in the future: two simple projection calculations (one using projected population, the other using construction trends) and one mapped total buildout.

Simple Projection Calculations

Population Projection Method

Figure 7 - 1 shows one simplified method that uses the latest (2007) projected future population to calculate the number of homes necessary to house the projected future population. The projected populations are estimates by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (Figure 2 – 12). The future average household size is an estimate by MCPC, based on the year 2000 household size of 2.69 and national, state, regional, and county trends toward slightly smaller households. The vacancy rate is based on past and current county and township trends. The vacancy rate in 2000 was about 3.4%. The total future housing units is the resulting calculation, and the number of future units is determined by subtracting the number of homes existing in 2005 (3,483) from the total.

Vacant residential land available includes all the agricultural, unknown and undeveloped lands shown in the 2006 Open Space Plan in Figure 1 - 3, minus the 350 acres of preserved agricultural land in 2005. The acres-per-unit average is based on the following: in early 2005 there were about 3,400 housing units on about 4,200 acres of land, which is about 1.24 acres per unit. The average for 2025 and 2030 was increased from this figure because most of the remaining land available for new housing is zoned for low density. From this information the potential acres consumed and the remaining residential land are calculated.

According to these estimates, the housing demand would use all but about 1,150 acres of developable land by 2035, leaving only about 11% of the entire area of the township for housing beyond 2035 and for non-residential needs, such as agriculture, preservation, commercial uses, or recreation, up to and beyond 2035. This calculation does not consider that many of these acres may, by then, be preserved by the township, county, or state for farmland, natural or cultural features, or for recreation.

Figure 7-1
2007 Residential Buildout Estimate: Population Projection Method

Residential	2025	2030	2035
Projected Population in Households	11,196	11,703	12,171
Future Average Household Size	2.62	2.60	2.58
Vacancy Rate	2.3%	2.2%	2.1%
Total Housing Units	4,372	4,600	4,817
New Housing Projected to be Needed after Year 2005	889	1,117	1,334
Vacant Residential Land Available (in 2005)	3,481	3,481	3,481
Acres per Unit	1.75	1.75	1.75
Potential Acres Consumed (new housing x acres per unit)	1,555	1,955	2,334
Future Residential Land Remaining (acres)	1,926	1,526	1,147

Sources: DVRPC; MCPC

Construction Projection Method

Another method to project future housing and land usage is to use the current rate of construction to project housing and land usage forward either to a specific date or to total buildout. Figure 7 – 2 illustrates the figures for Worcester.

This analysis assumes that the current trends in housing development approval and construction (3.0% per year) will slow after 2010 to about 2.0% per year. The construction rate used for the period between 2006 and 2010 accounts for developments currently under construction, approved, or being reviewed and uses a 2.0% housing construction rate after 2007. Another assumption used for this analysis is that future housing will use an average of about 1.75 acres per housing unit. This reflects current zoning, existing natural constraints, and that the land that is easiest and most efficient to develop has been developed or will be developed first.

The analysis also calculates the amount of land used for housing as it is built and subtracts that amount from the land left available for development.

The result of this analysis is that at the current rate of construction and with current zoning, all developable land will be gone soon after 2025, resulting in a total of about 5,700 housing units at that time. In comparison, the

Housing construction is projected to increase over the next decades.
Strand Systemss Engineering, Inc.

population projection method indicates only 4,600 units would be needed by 2025 and leaving almost 2,000 acres undeveloped or for non-residential development up to that time.

These two analyses, when considered together, make it sound like the housing builders are projected to build more houses than will be needed for the projected population. This underlines either the inaccuracies of the projections or the driving force of the housing construction market or both. Remember, projections are based on assumptions made at the time that, due to any number of forces, may no longer be valid now or in the future. These should serve only as estimates of what could lie ahead in the future, especially if trends stay the same. What is certain, however, is that there is only so much land left in the township. As they say, "God isn't making any more land; let's make the best of what we've got."

Figure 7–2
Residential Buildout Estimate: Construction Projection Method

Year and Time Period	Housing Units	Rate of Change	Annual Rate of Change	Acres Developed for Housing	Rate of Change	Annual Rate of Change	Acres per Housing Unit	Acres Developed since 2005	Acres Agricultural Undeveloped Land Remaining
through 3/2000	3,026 *								
3/2000 to 12/2004 (4.75 years)	+ 421	13.9%	2.8%						
through 12/2004	3,447 **			4,230 (to 3/2005) **			1.23		3,481 (to 3/2005) **
2 years (2005, 2006)	+ 65 **	1.9%	0.9%	217 **	5.1%	2.6%	3.34		
through 12/2006	3,512 **			4,447 (to 4/2007) **				217	3,264
4 years (2007-2010)	+ 574 ***	16.3%	3.1%	759 ****	17.1%	3.2%	1.32		
through 12/2010	4,086			5,206				976	2,505
5 years (2011-2015)	+ 426	10.4%	2.0%	745 (417 x 1.75)	14.3%	2.8%	1.75		
through 12/2015	4,512			5,951				1,721	1,760
5 years (2016-2020)	+ 470	10.4%	2.0%	823 (460 x 1.75)	13.8%	2.7%	1.75		
through 12/2020	4,982			6,774				2,544	937
5 years (2020-2025)	+ 519	10.4%	2.0%	908 (508 x 1.75)	13.4%	2.6%	1.75		
through 12/2025	5,501			7,682				3,.452	29
5 years (2025-2030)	+ 573	10.4%	2.0%	1,003 (561 x 1.75)	13.1%	2.6%	1.75		
through 12/2030	6,074			8,685				4,455	-974

** 2000 Census data*
*** MCPC data*
**** Based on building permit and approval for 209 units plus 2% estimated future average growth*
***** 120 acres under construction plus 2% estimated future growth at 1.75 acres per unit*
Note: *A negative amount of land cannot be developed, therefore this means, under the assumptions, sometime between 2025 and 2030 there will be no more land available for development.*

Mapped Total Buildout

This method, used to determine residential buildout, is the same as that used by the County to conduct a fair-share housing analysis. This method examines undeveloped land (those parcels with land use designations of country residence, undeveloped, and agriculture), but does not consider underdeveloped land (land that has development on it, but could be further subdivided or developed more intensely). It assumes that natural features including floodplains, wetlands and steep slopes will not be built upon, and that approximately 20% of a site's area will be used for roads, driveways, and utilities. The method used here results in a map that represents potential households.

Figure 7 - 3 (next page) illustrates one potential allocation scenario of full residential buildout township-wide. This map is based on 2005 data. The number of houses possible in each zoning district has been calculated and future houses have been distributed throughout each zoning district. Red dots have been randomly placed on the map within the developable areas based on the maximum density allowed in each zoning district. These dots do not represent the actual locations of future homes. Existing homes are represented by black dots placed in the center of each residentially developed property. Some properties may have more than one residential use on it, meaning the number of black dots (3.040) would be lower than the actual number of existing residential units. Due to computer limitations, the potential houses have been scattered over entire parcels, which would not be the case with properties under the "Growing Greener" conservation subdivision cluster provisions where the same number of units would be clustered together on about half of the property.

The total number of new houses possible with current zoning is shown to be about 2,529, for a total of at least 5,569 housing units. According to the two previous analyses this buildout might occur by around 2025 (construction projection) or around 2045 or 2050 (population projection).

Sunnybrook Development - A recent single-family development in Worcester. Susan Caughlan

Montgomery Township is almost fully built-out. Pictometry

The next section will combine this buildout map with some current planning efforts to reveal where the township is most vulnerable to counterproductive housing development.

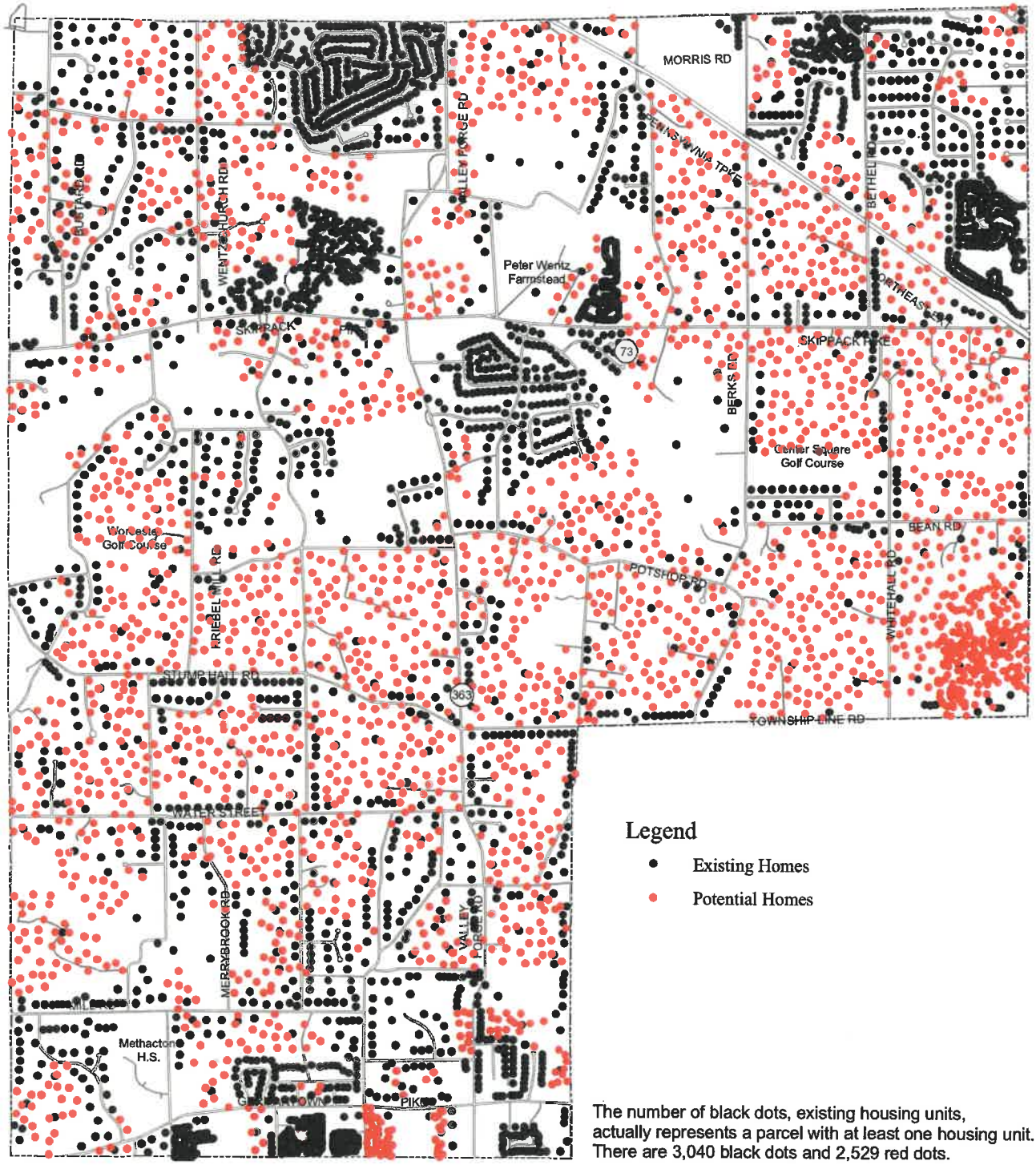
Map Comparison With Current Planning

With an understanding of where and how much housing can be expected throughout the township (Figure 7-3), a map, or in this case a series of maps, can be prepared that shows what areas of the township are most vulnerable to housing development that would deviate from the Township's goals. The Township would like to develop new policies to ensure better housing development in these areas.

To understand what actions by the Township are the most appropriate for what parts of the township, the next several pages include maps which gradually add several layers of information. In this way, the maximum effect can be achieved with the minimum amount of effort and cost to the Township and the minimum amount of regulation to achieve the community's goals.

The next maps, figures 7-4 to 7-10, help to illustrate that. With consideration of the goals to preserve rural character and direct new development into the growth centers, plus assuming that the rural character of the Growing Greener properties will be assured with good planning during development, it can be seen in these figures that the bright red dots represent the housing units that are of most concern to the Township, especially the ones located within the preservation areas. Ideally, the dots located inside the preservation areas should be moved to a growth area, removed through preservation, or planned to ensure preservation goals and rural character are maintained. The Township would like to develop and implement methods to address this significant issue.

Figure 7-3
Potential Ultimate Residential Buildout



The number of black dots, existing housing units, actually represents a parcel with at least one housing unit. There are 3,040 black dots and 2,529 red dots.

NOTE: The residential buildout calculations are the result of a simplified analysis based upon vacant land and zoning. The potential new units are randomly distributed and have no relation to specific parcels. The number of units permitted on a given parcel can only be determined following a site-specific analysis and strict conformance to the township's zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances.

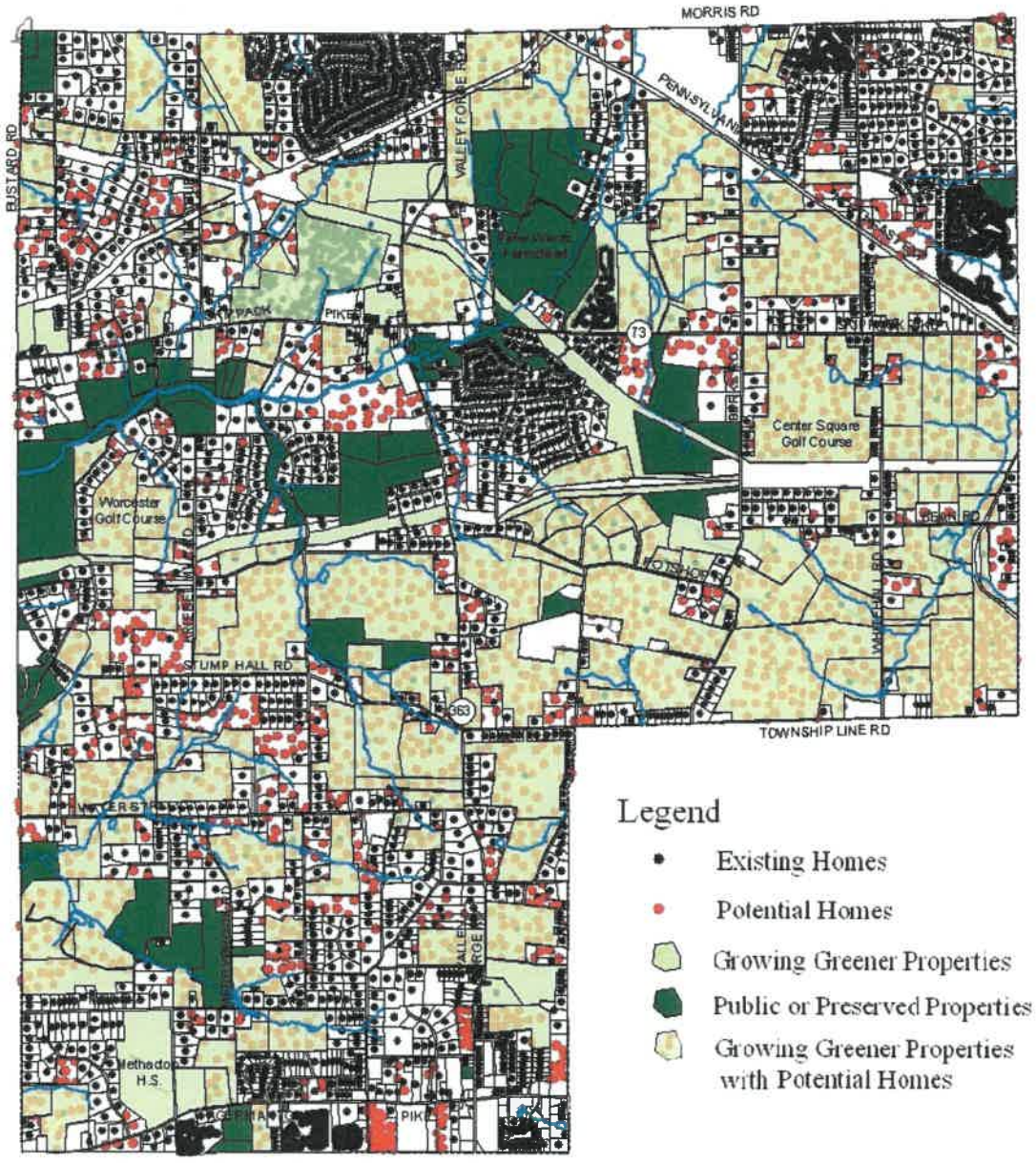
MCPC Montgomery County Planning Commission
Montgomery County Courthouse - Planning Commission
PO Box 311 ▪ Norristown PA 19404-0311
(p) 610.278.3722 ▪ (f) 610.278.3941
www.montcopa.org/plancom

0 1,600 3,200 6,400 Feet

Base map prepared date

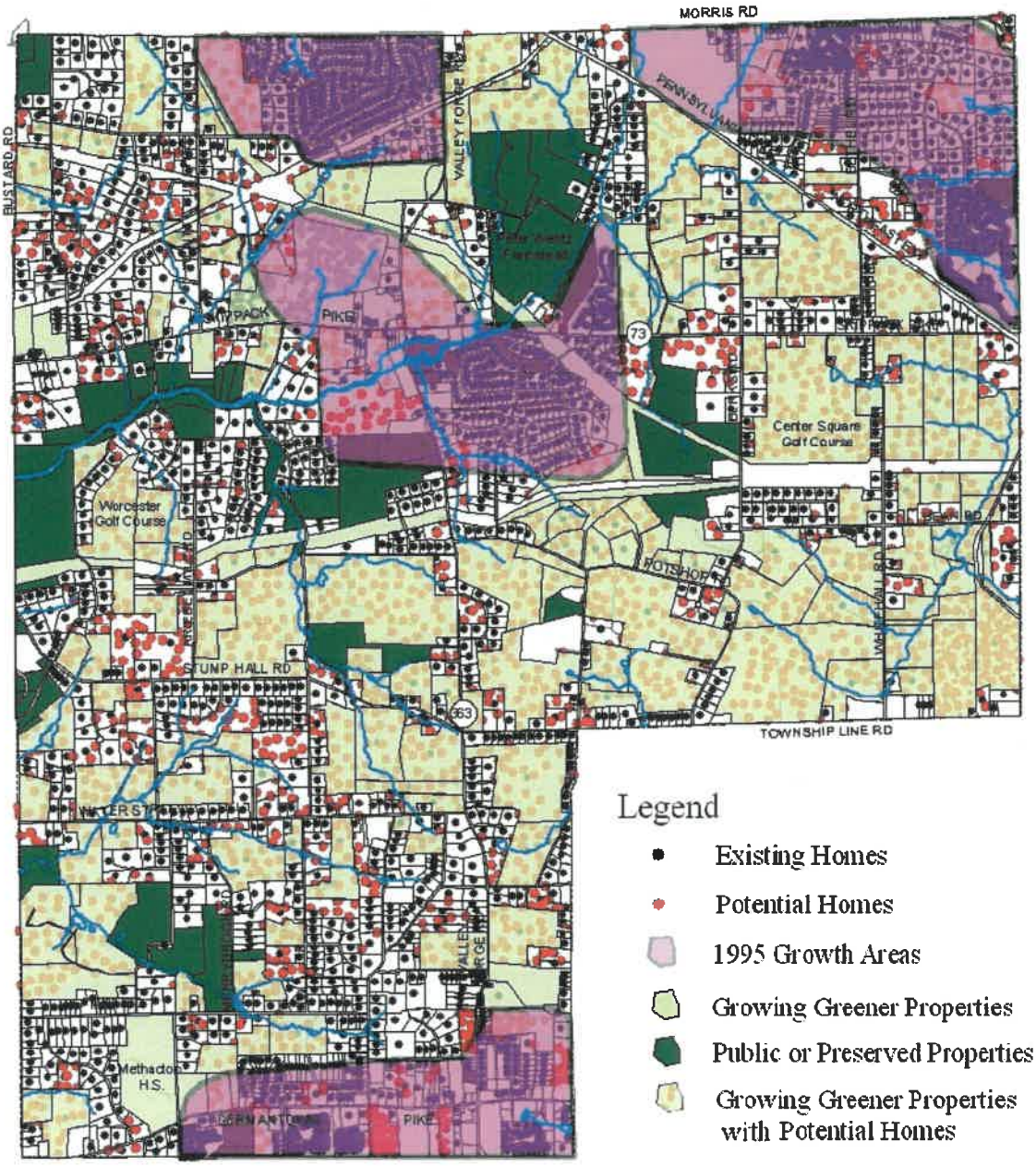
This map is based on 2000 ortho photography and official sources. Property lines were compiled from individual block maps from the Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, with no verification from the deed. This map is not meant to be used as a legal definition of properties or for engineering purposes.

Figure 7-4
Buildout with Preserved and "Growing Greener" Parcels



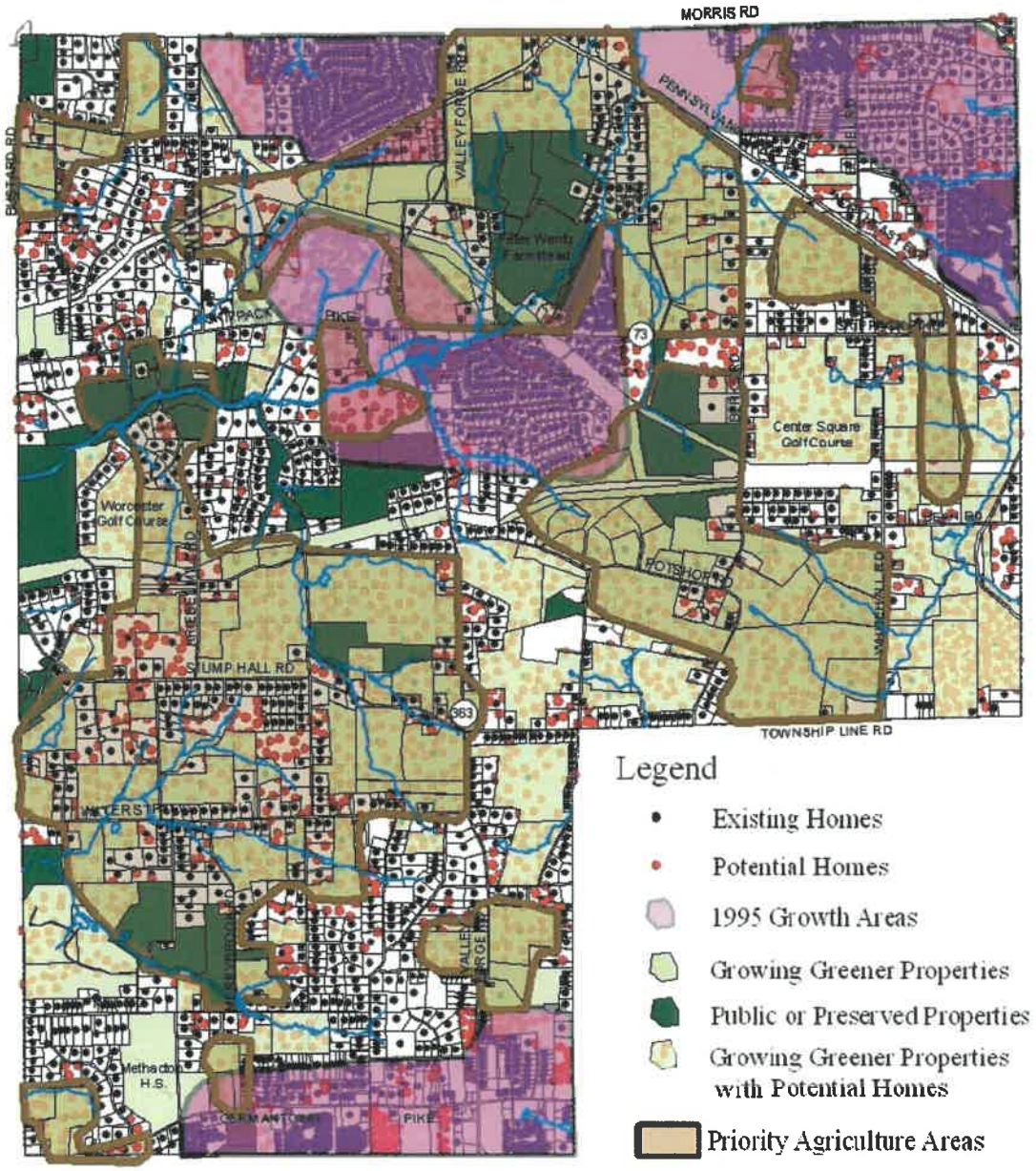
This figure overlays the black and red dots of the buildout map (Figure 7 - 3) with the parcel lines, the public or preserved properties, and the "Growing Greener" properties (the ones subject to the recently adopted conservation subdivision requirements). The Growing Greener color is shown with some transparency, so the black dots show through, but are a faint grey or green and the red dots are a faint orange or tan. The parcels with no dots are not residential properties. The Conservation Subdivision (Growing Greener) requirements, while still allowing development, hence the transparency, puts a lot of control over the location and character of the development into the hands of the Township during the development review process. Presumably, that means the Township would be certain that these developments meet the Township's goals as much as would be possible on that property. Therefore, the Township need not be particularly concerned about these properties any further. There are about 1,800 to 2,200 red dots covered in the Growing Greener areas. Figure 7 – 10 identifies some of the issues to be addressed on these properties. ***The result shown on the map is: all the red dots that are not covered by the Growing Greener layer are potential future homes that may be developed in ways that ignore the goals of the Township and are therefore of concern to the Township.***

Figure 7-5
Buildout with Preserved and "Growing Greener" Parcels and 1995 Growth Areas



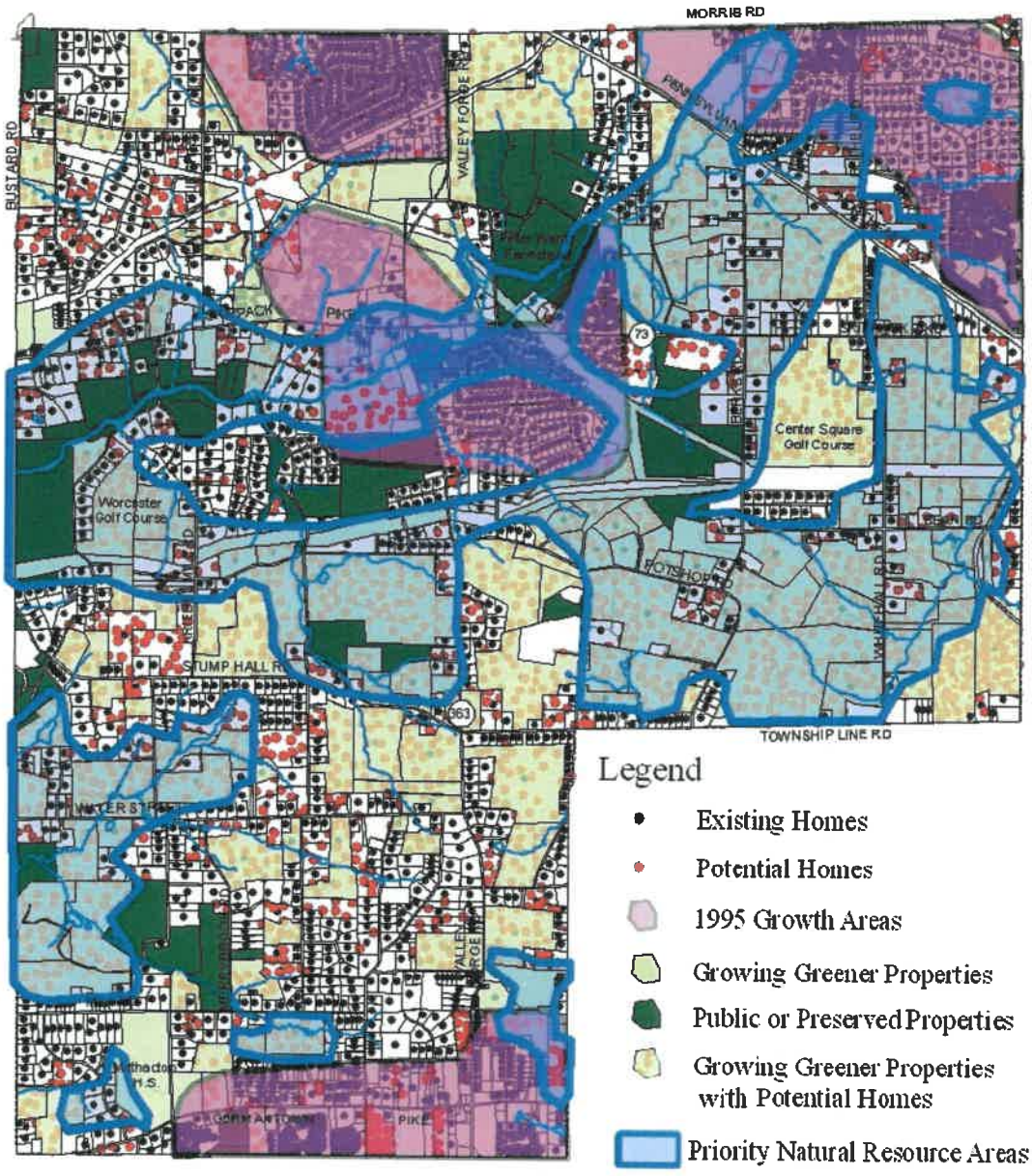
This figure overlays the previous map (Figure 7 - 4) with the Growth Areas of the 1995 Comprehensive Plan. ***Red dots covered by this layer represent potential future homes located in an area where the Township would like to direct growth to happen. There are about 80 to 90 red dots in these areas. The remaining red dots are located in areas where the Township would like little to no growth, preferring to preserve the existing rural character.*** *With just this map, to meet its goals the Township could try to buy the rights of all the homes in the rural preservation area or transfer them to the growth area; however, there are about 400 to 440 uncovered red dots in the rural preservation areas, which are too many to buy and/or transfer to the growth area, especially in the near future. Another idea would be to figure out a way to influence the location and design of these homes similar to the ways the character of the Growing Greener properties are influenced. Over time, perhaps decades, however, with appropriate diligence and priorities, many of these could be bought or transferred; but which ones first?*

Figure 7-6
Buildout with Preserved and "Growing Greener" Parcels, 1995 Growth Areas, and Priority Agriculture Areas



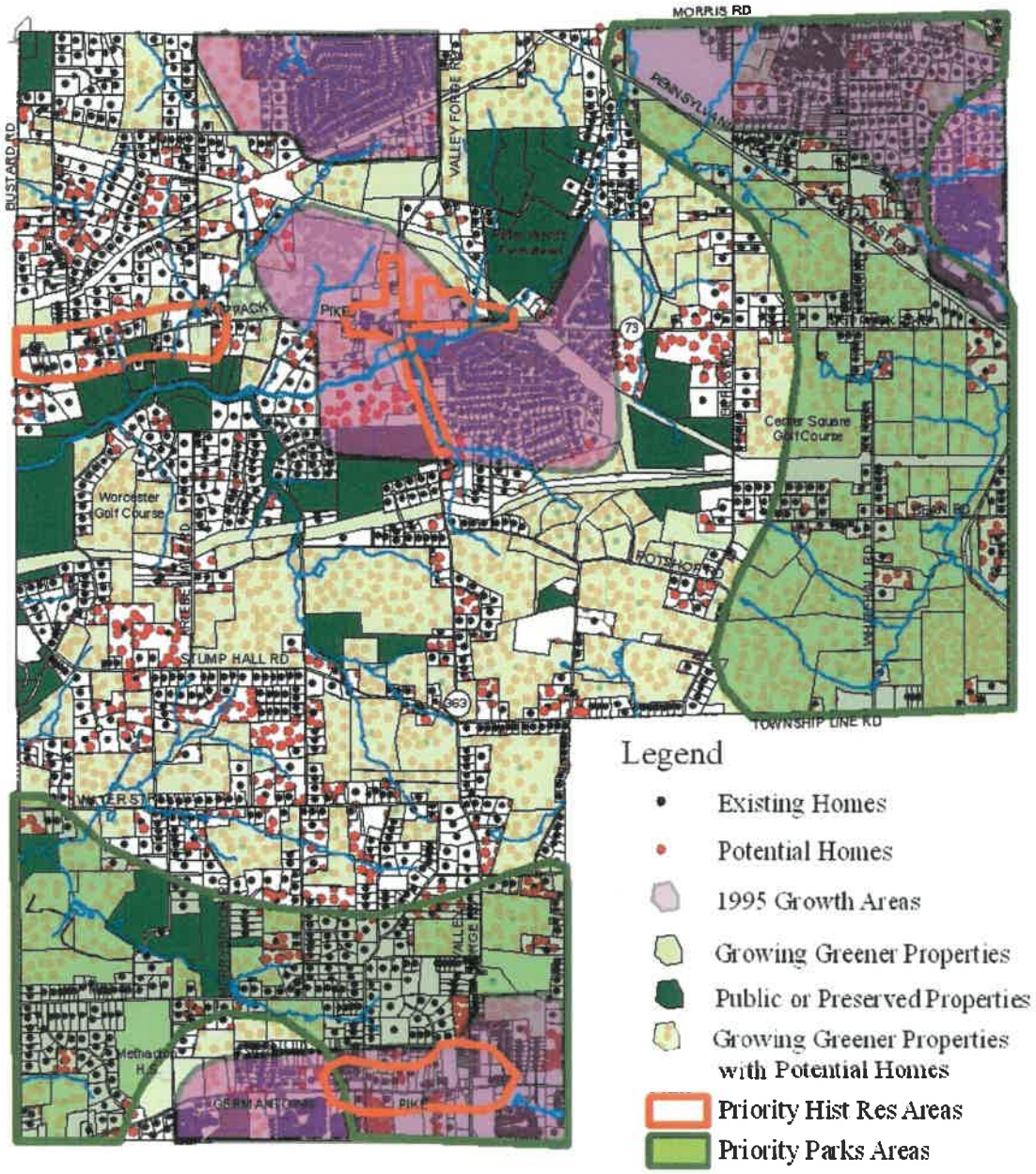
This figure overlays the previous map (Figure 7 - 5) with the Priority Agriculture Areas of the 2006 Open Space Plan. This layer now covers some of the red dots that were previously uncovered. This means these newly covered dots should be considered for their potential to contribute to agricultural preservation. Some of these properties are quite small. One Township effort (through regulatory and/or market measures) could be to attempt to put them together or attach them to a larger farm to make a more feasible agricultural property. The medium-sized properties could also be combined or if they have large adjacent fallow lands, their combined lands could be farmed by a single farmer. There are about 160 to 170 newly covered red dots in the Priority Agriculture Areas (about 20 are in a growth area), leaving about 240 to 270 still uncovered.

Figure 7-7
Buildout with Preserved and "Growing Greener" Parcels, 1995 Growth Areas, and Priority Natural Resource Areas



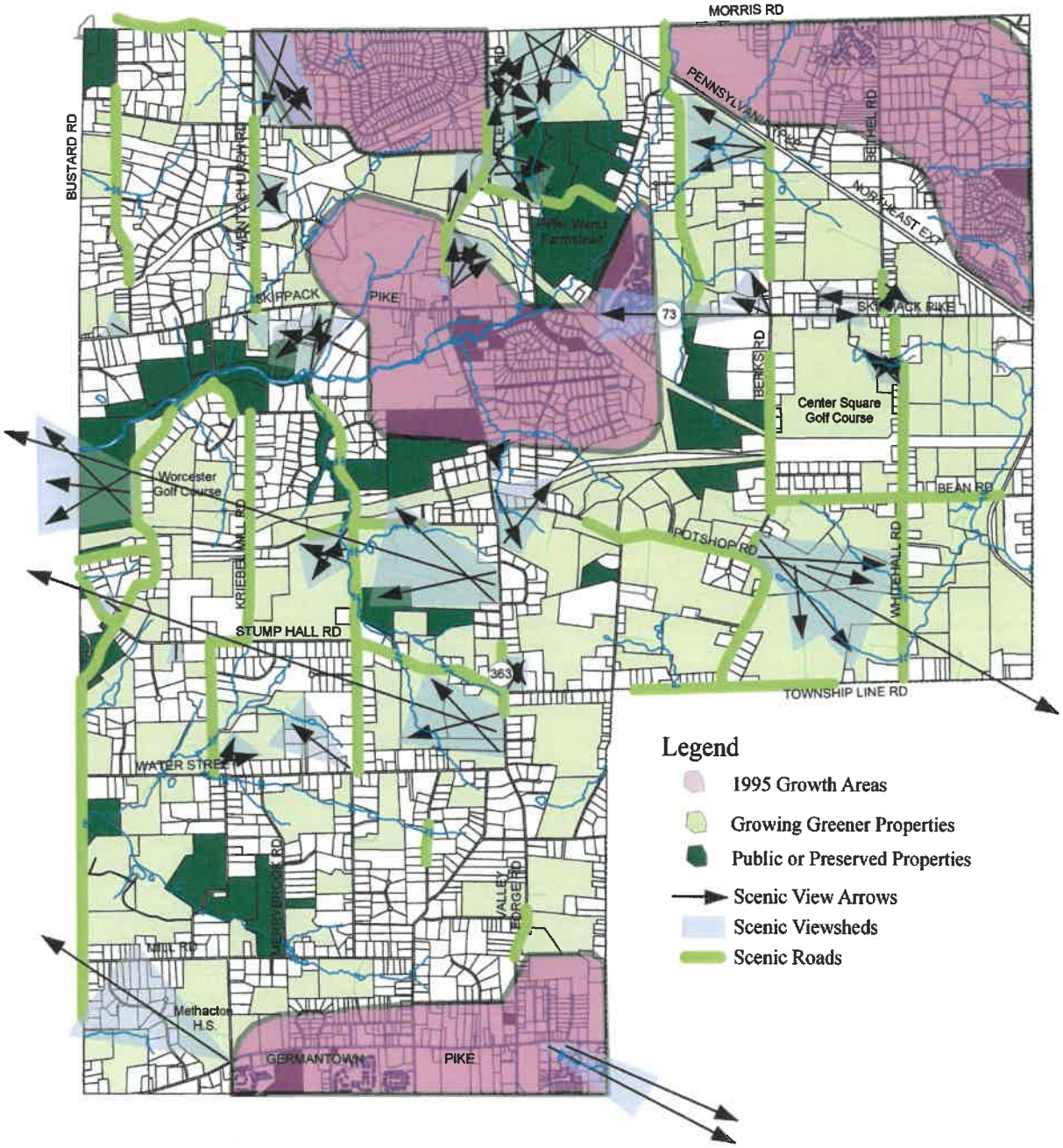
This figure overlays the second map (Figure 7 - 5) with the Priority Natural Resource Areas of the 2006 Open Space Plan. This layer now covers some of the red dots that were uncovered in that map. This means ***the bright red dots within the blue areas should be considered for their potential to contribute to the Township's natural resource priorities.*** *Acquiring the properties or the development rights or conservation easements before or during the development of these properties could help the Township achieve its goals in these locations. There may be other methods to meet these goals on these properties. There are about 130 to 140 newly covered red dots in the Priority Natural Resource Areas, leaving about 270 to 300 still uncovered.*

Figure 7-8
Buildout with Preserved and "Growing Greener" Parcels, 1995 Growth Areas, Priority Historic Resources Areas, and Priority Park Areas



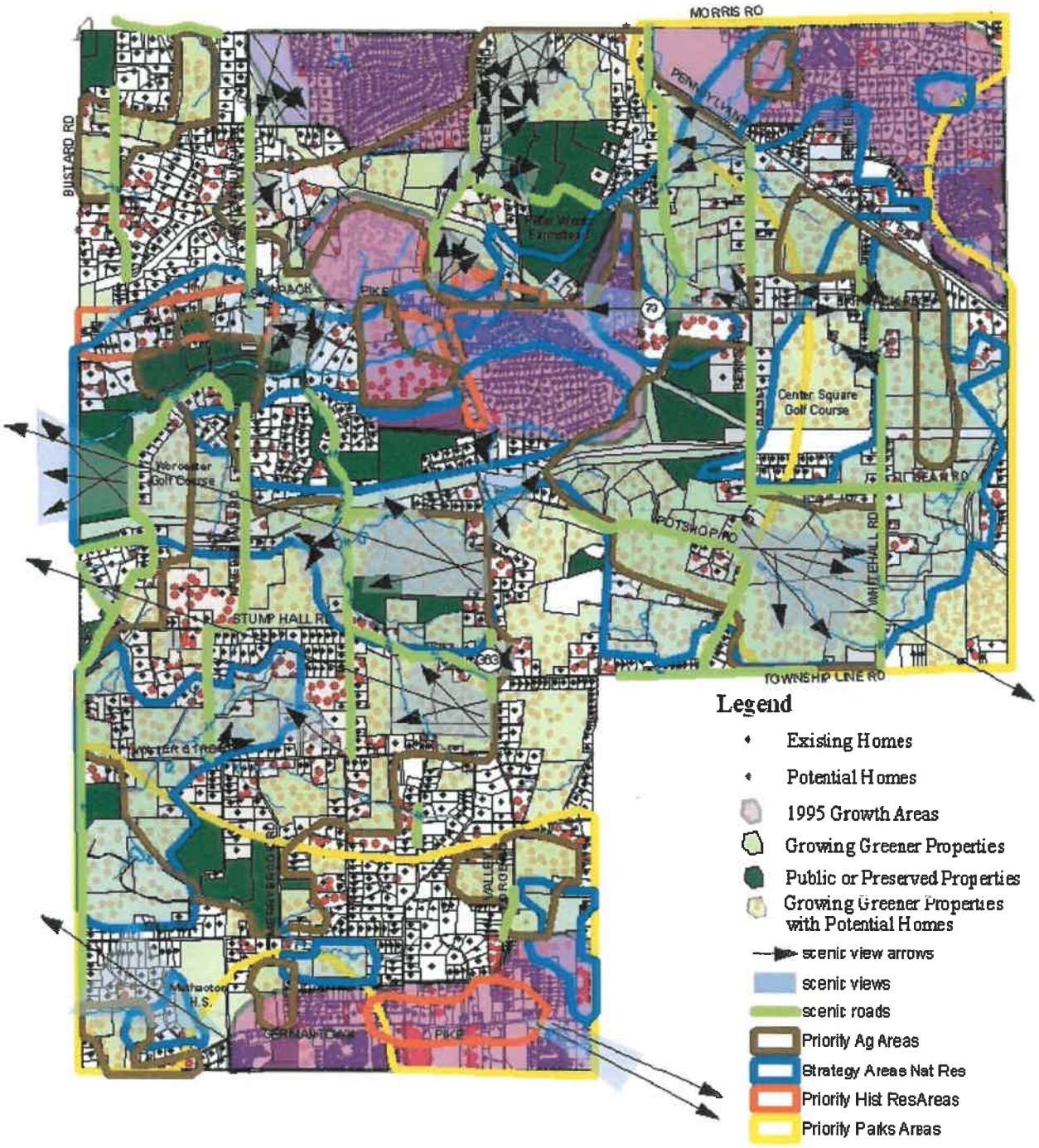
This figure overlays the second map (Figure 7 - 5) with the Priority Historic Resource Areas (red ring, but a clear "cover" area) and the Priority Park Areas of the 2006 Open Space Plan. These layers now "cover" some of the red dots that were uncovered in that map. This means these newly "covered" dots should be considered for their potential to contribute to the Township's parks and historic resource priorities. Properties in the Priority Parks Areas should be considered for new neighborhood parks. The Township should take special concern about historic buildings in the Priority Historic Resources Areas, especially if new development is happening on that property. There are about 160 to 170 newly covered red dots in the Priority Parks Areas and about 25 in the Priority Historic Resource Areas, leaving about 240 to 270 still "uncovered."

Figure 7-9
Buildout with Preserved and "Growing Greener" Parcels, 1995 Growth Areas, Scenic Views, and Scenic Roads



This figure overlays the second map (Figure 7 - 5) with the Scenic Views and Arrows, and Scenic Roads of the 2006 Open Space Plan. This layer now "covers" some of the red dots that were uncovered in that map. ***This means these newly "covered" dots should be considered for their potential to contribute to the Township's scenic views and scenic roads priorities.*** *Dots (homes) inside a scenic view area should be relocated or eliminated to preserve the view. Dots (homes) along scenic roads should be removed from view from the road and the roadside should not be altered or in the most minimal way. There are about 10 newly covered red dots in the scenic view areas and about 50 to 60 along scenic roads, leaving about 330 to 340 still "uncovered."*

Figure 7-10
Composite Strategic Map



This figure overlays the second map (Figure 7 - 5) with the outlines of the previously used Priority Areas as well as the scenic views and scenic roads of the 2006 Open Space Plan. ***This map now indicates which dots fall in which areas and which still fall in none.*** *Other than a general concern for overall additional development, there seem to be no particular concerns about the red dots with no covering that are not adjacent to a scenic road. There are about 80 to 90 of these red dots.*

Residential Buildout Conclusions

Although the mapping method indicates that 2,608 new housing units could ultimately be built in the township, according to the population projection method, by 2030 only approximately 1,710 new units (since 2000) will be required to house the projected population of 12,000. According to this model, it is not likely that buildout will be reached within the next 23 years. Beyond that time period, it may be possible that the township will reach the forecasted buildout if changes to the current zoning ordinance and other policies are not made.

On the other hand, the construction projection method indicates that complete buildout could occur sometime around 2020. In the mean time, there are certain areas of the township that are desired to be preserved and others that are desired to be the focus of future growth.

A balance between the needs and desires of the community and the needs and desires of developers is necessary to bring Worcester forward in ways that meet its goals.

The next section of this chapter will use these trends and issues to discuss the vision the Township has for its future land use. But first, we need to also understand the projected future for non-residential land uses.

Non-Residential Growth Trends

As residential development is expected to continue, albeit in ways that meet the goals of the Township, non-residential needs (and therefore non-residential land uses and land area) would also be expected to increase. However, as stated in the 1995 Comprehensive Plan, the Township still does not expect to meet all the non-residential needs of its residents within the township boundaries. International airports, landfills, regional shopping malls, prisons, deep-water ports, and other regional and sub-regional facilities are expected to be located elsewhere within reasonable distance of the township. Meanwhile, Worcester is the location of some regional and sub-regional facilities: one of the County's few living history parks, the School District's high school, two golf courses, many branches of high-tension power lines, a segment of the interstate road network, and the largest concentration of farms closest to the urbanized area of Montgomery County.

At the same time, the Township recognizes that development and preservation need not be mutually exclusive; not only striving for a balance, but in combination with the goals of concentrating development in growth areas (mostly the villages) and maintaining rural character, new development can help to restore the township's villages to the rural commercial centers they once were. If done carefully and deliberately, this can also help preserve other lands from development that does not help meet these and other goals.

Methacton High School. Pictometry

Commercial

For this section of this chapter, "commercial" will include retail/services, office, and industrial/warehousing uses. All other non-residential uses that are not open space, agriculture, or vacant will be included in the next section, "non-commercial." First, we will look at the trends, similar to what was explored in the residential section.

Population Projection Method

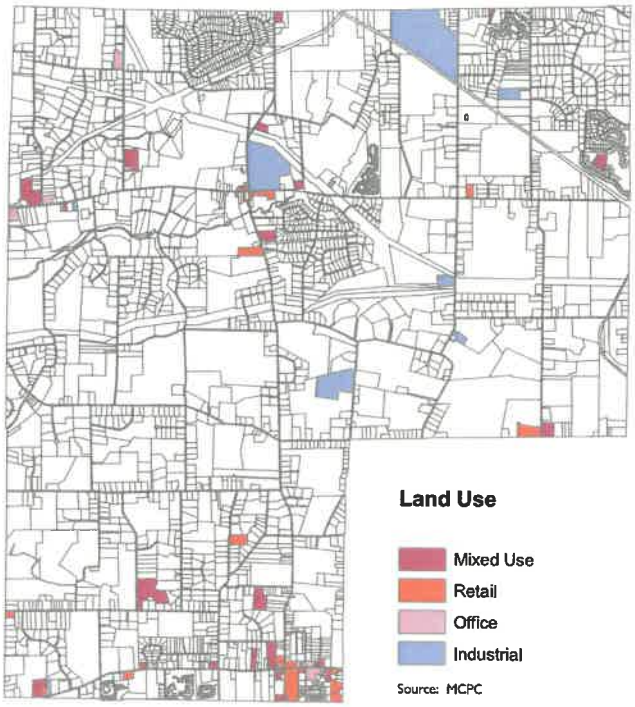
Starting with the figures in Chapter 6 of the existing commercial area and the projected population growth in Chapter 2 to the year 2030 (about 3,500 new residents or about 40%), and then projecting a similar increase in commercial needs, the amount of land or building area necessary by the year 2030 for the increased population would be:

- **Retail:** about 125,000 square feet of new building area or about 9 or 10 acres of land.
- **Office:** about 17,500 square feet of new office building area or about 1 to 3 acres, depending on whether the offices are in one or more stories.
- **Industrial:** about 360,000 square feet or about 15 to 20 acres of land.

These uses can be built on new, undeveloped land, as additions onto existing buildings and parking areas, or on the same land as other uses, including residential.

However, this calculation assumes the current level of commercial development is sufficient and desirable and should be increased as the population increases. If the current amount of any of these uses is too high or too low, the calculation to estimate future need will be even farther away from what will be needed. Also, in the

Figure 7-12
Industrial and Commerical Lands



future, especially as gasoline prices increase, the Township and its residents may want to encourage an increased level of commercial services, perhaps a larger variety of small businesses, services, and offices rather than larger ones. Therefore, these numbers are probably best used as benchmarks.

In addition, these estimates depend on an accurate population projection. However, just like with residential uses, we can use current construction trends to estimate future non-residential construction.

Construction Projection Method

Meanwhile, the current trends in commercial construction are: in the 15 years since the data was collected for the last Comprehensive Plan (from 1992 through 2006),

- 23,278 square feet of retail space,
- 15,056 square feet of office space, and
- 133,544 square feet of industrial or warehouse space was built, see Figure 7 - 13.

Since then, there have been a few proposals for new commercial development: a 250 square-foot addition to the shopping center in Center Point, a 2,500 square-foot office building in Fairview Village, and a used car lot in Fairview Village.

Using this 15-year trend implies that by 2030 about 35,500 square feet of retail space, 23,000 square feet of office, and 204,000 square feet of industrial/warehouse would be built. As can be seen, especially with the industrial uses, this method is also limited, particularly when one large building can make a large impact on the trend.

Commercial Trend Conclusions

In light of these two methods, it can be seen that there is likely to be a certain amount of commercial development over the course of the next 20 years, but it is not clear what or how much it will be. It could be a lot or a little, mostly retail or office or industrial. Therefore, the Township has the opportunity to plan for the future so that whatever is built actually contributes to meeting the Township's goals.

Eckerd drug store construction at Germantown Pike and Valley Forge Road. This was completed in 2005. Pictometry

Non-commercial

As seen in Figure 7 - 13, some of the largest amount of non-residential development in the township has been non-commercial development, amounting to over 162,000 square feet of building area since the last Comprehensive Plan, including several new churches and church additions. In addition, the school district has replaced the Worcester Elementary as well as made additions to the High School. This type of land use is the most elusive for planning. The trend is hard to judge into the future, but some increase in this type of land use can be anticipated in the next 10 to 20 years. Sometimes a large, single, new non-commercial facility, such as a new hospital, landfill, power plant or prison, can have significant impacts but still can be very hard to anticipate.

Figure 7-13
Non-Residential Construction 1992-2006

Year Built	Retail/Services	Office	Industrial/ Warehousing	Non-Commercial/ Institiutional	Description
1992				480	Fischer's Park restroom
1992				2,100	Nazarene Church maintenance garage
1994		968			Ross Myers office trailer
1994			1,500		Comfort Creators warehouse
1994				456	Fire Co. - Comcast tower
1994	5,525				Center Point Strip Center (Wawa)
1994				13,168	Lutheran Church
1994			3,100		Contractor's Warehouse (Alessandrini)
1997				4,279	Worcester Farms Golf Club clubhouse
1999				68,442	Worcester Elementary
1999	4,576				Fairview Village Car Wash
2000			115,304		Technitool warehouse and office
2000	1,198				Cedars - 2 stores
2001				7,224	Korean Presbyterian Church
2002	1,296				Building for Center Point Pond
2003		14,088			Myers office building
2004	1,243				Cedars - Curves fitness center
2004			13,640		Volpe warehouse and office
2004				44,725	Methacton High School additions
2005	9,440				Eckerd drug store
2005				21,600	Frog Hollow Tennis Club addition
2006	0	0	0	0	none in 2006
	23,278	15,056	133,544	162,474	

Meanwhile, older or underutilized non-commercial uses can sometimes be replaced by a large amount of new development in a totally unanticipated location. Golf courses are the easiest to imagine being redeveloped, but who can predict the demise of a large church or other institution?

Non-commercial Trends

Despite the aforementioned reservations, trends can be calculated. These, too, might help simply as benchmarks to understand the potential impact of non-commercial development in the township.

Over the course of 20 years or so, a 40% increase to the current 1,332,000 square feet of non-commercial/ institutional uses would result in 533,000 square feet of new non-commercial building area, possibly using 200 to 400 acres of land. This can be understood since a 40% increase in population would lead to about a 40% increase in children, which may lead to the need to construct one or more new school buildings. The new elementary school in Center Point was almost 70,000 square feet on 12 acres.

Trinity Lutheran, Valley Force Road, was completed in 1995 on 25 acres. Pictometry

Figure 7-14
Non-Commercial Lands

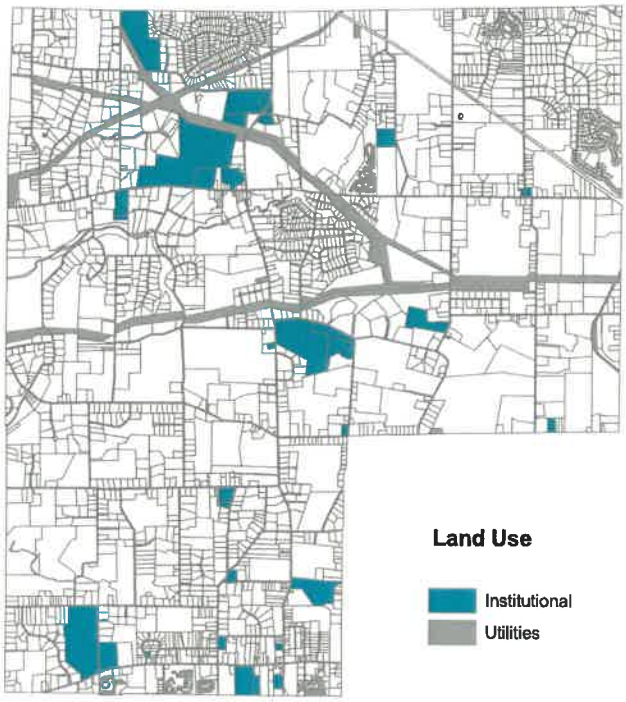
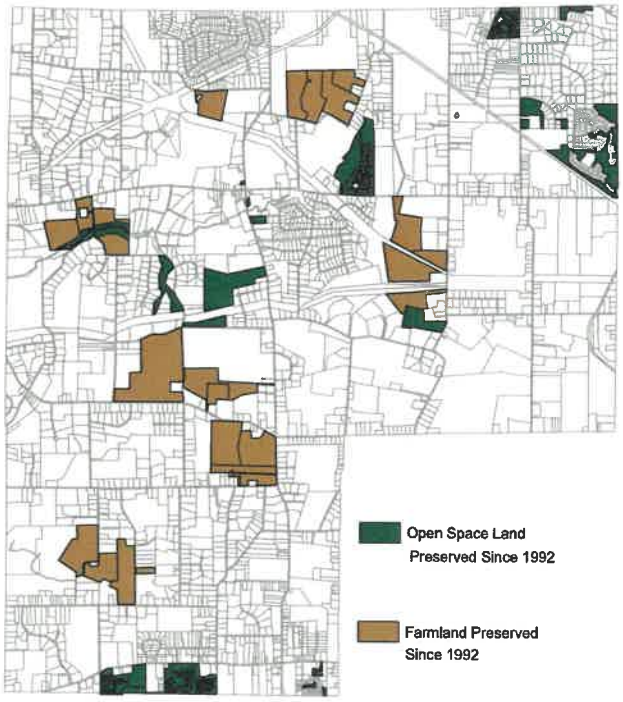


Figure 7-15
Lands Preserved Since 1992



Meanwhile, the construction trend from the last 15 years (see Figure 4 - 13) leads to a straight-line projection of about 260,000 square feet of new non-commercial building area by 2030, possibly using 100 to 200 acres of land.

Importantly, some of these uses will happen, and they will use a significant amount of land, often some of the township's larger tracts, for example for schools or for large churches. When they do happen, the goals of the Township should be kept in mind and the projects planned to meet the goals as much as possible, even if at increased cost to the developing organization. After all, they are to be part of this community, too.

Preservation

Another way that the land can be "used" is to preserve it, or to use it for public recreation. As set forth in the 1995 Comprehensive Plan, the Township has been working to preserve as much farmland, recreation land, and valuable natural resources as possible. Since that time, the Township's record is quite impressive (see Figure 4 – 8). The Township and some of its residents have preserved about 350 acres of farmland, meanwhile about 103 acres have been set aside for recreation parks, about 56 acres of other lands have been purchased by the township (mostly along creekways for natural preservation and future trailways), and over 125 acres

A view across the Smith Farm on Fisher Road. This farm was permanently preserved in 2007 using County and Township funds.
Susan Caughlan

of open space are preserved and being maintained by home-owner associations. All of this has happened since 1992. This is a total of 634 acres in 15 years, or over 42 acres per year.

In addition, several open space preservation transactions are already in progress for the near future, expecting to add another 320 acres of preserved farmland, and 27 acres of preserved recreation and natural resources land.

It should be noted, however, that preservation can indeed "overlap" with development and agriculture. The development calculations presented earlier always assume development uses all of the available land. However, housing and other development can concentrate the maximum amount of development on some of the land and preserve the rest. The 125 acres of home-owner association open space land is a case in point. Cluster developments and the recently adopted conservation subdivision method are two other ways to "overlap" land preservation and development.

Nevertheless, if the current trends for preservation continue, it can be seen that land preservation is another significant factor to be considered in the future.

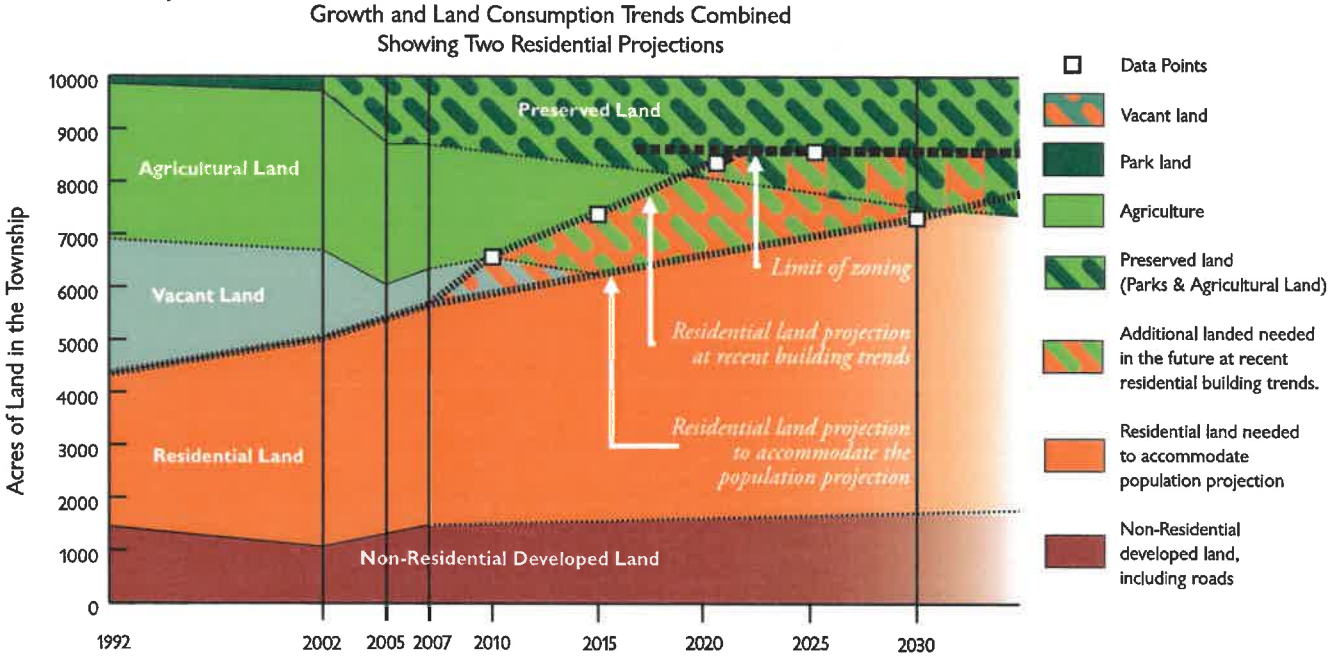
Trends Summary

As pointed out, there are several types of uses "competing" for land in Worcester. In Worcester Township there are only about 3,200 acres of land left undeveloped or being used as unpreserved farmland. At the rate of current trends and depending on the method used to determine the trend:

- At projected construction rates, by about 2025, residential uses will use almost all of the remaining land, or according to population projections, by 2030 housing will use all but 1,500 acres of the remaining land.
- Current zoning allows more dwelling units than either method projects to be needed by 2020 and possibly even beyond.
- Projections for commercial uses until 2030 indicate the possible use of between 25 to 35 acres of land.
- Non-commercial or institutional could potentially use 100 to 400 acres of land by 2030.
- A Township goal of preserving 50 acres per year, if met and not exceeded every year (or if it averaged that rate), by 2030 would amount to 1,150 acres. The Township and its residents already have been preserving land at a rate of 42 acres per year for the last 15 years and 347 acres are likely to be preserved for farmland, recreation, or natural resources within a year or two.

With only 3,200 acres left in 2007, not all of these trends can continue at their current rates. One or more things must change. What changes, by how much, and in what ways is up to the leaders of today and tomorrow. For this reason this plan presents the following vision.

Figure 7-16
Land Use Projections



Vision

Chapter 1 expressed the goals of the Township for growth, preservation and development. Chapter 2 presented the current condition of the land and resources as well as the history and current condition of the people that inhabit and work in Worcester. Chapters 3 and 4 gave us the background information about the built infrastructure – the sewers, centralized water, and road network in the township. Chapter 5 laid out the open space and historic preservation aspects of the township; and Chapter 6 presented the current use of the land. The first part of this chapter looked to the future, presenting the current trends and projecting them into the future. Some of those projections were contrary to several of the Township's goals, such as rural preservation, environmental preservation, recreation, and transportation.

For this reason, and in consideration of all the background information, Worcester puts forth, in the rest of this chapter, a vision to guide future growth, land preservation, and development. To allow growth but still achieve the goals of rural preservation, environmental preservation, recreation, and transportation, the township is envisioned to become a rural preservation landscape with three villages, two hamlet areas, and existing medium density areas, connected by a rural transportation network of roads and trails.

Village in Landscape: This village benefits from building close together and clear edges with fields around the perimeter. MCPC

Sadsbury Park, Chester County, PA: a 136-acre Traditional Neighborhood Development proposed as an expansion to Historic Sadsburyville. It includes 460 homes, 57 acres of open space, bike trails, sidewalks, a swimming pool and a community center.
Arcadia Land Company

Villages

Worcester's villages are each envisioned to be either a concentrated, walkable, mixed combination of commercial, residential, and non-residential uses or simply a walkable concentration of residential uses with few non-residential uses

Hatboro, PA: these restaurants along the main through route use the sidewalk for outdoor dining and drinks. MCPC

Skippack, PA: a historic Pennsylvania village that is commercially successful, walkable, and mixed-use. MCPC

Moorestown, NJ: Improved sidewalks, plantings, and street furnishings make this traditional village very attractive. MCPC

Collegeville, PA: a village-style home typical in Eastern Pennsylvania. The garage is in the back. MCPC

Collegeville, PA: an older home with historic character has been converted to office and other business uses. MCPC

Collegeville, PA: an attractive pathway connecting a rear parking area to the street. MCPC

Collegeville, PA: a main street with single homes on the right, homes converted to offices and service businesses on the left. Notice on-street parking, medium sized front setbacks and significant shade trees. MCPC

Community Hall in Fairview Village is owned by Worcester Township and used for public meetings. Unknown

Moorestown, NJ: Notice curb adjustment to preserve a street tree, on-street parking, crosswalk, and extensive landscaping in the "grass" strip. MCPC

Village homes: notice gable roofs, porches, small front setback, sidewalks, and on-street parking. Walkable.org

Village homes: notice gable roofs, porches, medium setback, and public walkway connecting to street above. Walkable.org

Sidewalk Fruit Stand: good mixed-use villages have a vibrant retail component. Walkable.org

Streetscape, Moorestown, NJ: bus stops can be a valuable and attractive feature in a mixed-use village. MCPC

Mixed Use Villages

Fairview Village and Center Point are envisioned to be Worcester's two walkable, mixed use villages, although Cedars and Norritonville could also develop into smaller versions of this type of village.

Mixed use villages ideally would have:

- A close, walkable, concentration of small scale, locally owned (non-chain), pedestrian-oriented retail uses at the center of the village along roads that include sidewalks, street trees, and on-street parking.
- A public green, community hall, park, school, religious buildings, and/or post offices or other public or institutional buildings.
- Non-retail or commercial uses with little or no customer traffic mixed into the retail area, but preferably not in the central shopping area unless they are above the retail uses.
- Home occupations and businesses as well as bed and breakfasts, family day cares, or small offices mixed throughout these villages. Even very small businesses with small impacts on neighbors such as a sign maker, computer repair, corner deli, artisan's shop, or antique shops would be mixed throughout these villages.
- Some existing pre-1940's homes converted into small business uses.
- All existing pre-1940's buildings retained and new additions or new buildings would also be in a compatible style using similar scale buildings, similar architectural elements, and similar other features.
- Residential uses mixed throughout the village with a variety of residential types, but no large-lot residential properties.
- Apartments or condominiums would be located closer to the center than other residential types.
- New buildings similar in character to the older existing buildings in the village.
- Alleys to allow access for private and service vehicles to the rear of the properties or driveways which provide access from the front road to the rear of the property; no vehicle access would be into the fronts of dwellings or garages in front of dwellings.
- Convenient and useful bike access and bike parking credited toward vehicle parking requirements.
- Parking in small, interconnected, landscaped parking lots.
- Signs that would be small and not electric, but could be illuminated externally.

Streetscape, Moorestown, NJ: attractive streetscapes can increase values in a mixed-use village. MCPC

Collegeville, PA: an older home with historic character has been converted to office and other business uses. MCPC

- Walkways that would interconnect among all the properties.
- Scenic roads and views preserved or enhanced.

These villages would provide the township:

- Most of its commercial and higher density residential needs.
- Non-recreation activity centers.

A few other villages are envisioned to provide a walkable, compact development, but the uses would be almost exclusively residential. These will be called hamlets.

Old Pennsylvania Hamlet in the Fall. Brian Bourne

Hamlets – Cedars, Bethel Hill, Norritonville

Hamlets are envisioned to be almost exclusively residential with the following characteristics:
Hamlets would have:

- Homes gathered closer together than in the countryside areas of the township. The homes would be mostly detached homes, but some twins and duplexes could also mix in. Some townhouses could also be included. Apartments or condominiums would not generally be allowed unless part of the conversion of a pre-1940's building.
- No, or in rare instances only one or two, large-lot residential properties in the village.
- No garages facing the street unless it is behind the rear corner of the house; they can be facing sideways or to the rear.
- Alleys would be advisable to allow access to the rear of properties, provide for utilities and services such as trash collection, and to maintain a driveway-free street frontage.
- A safe, walkable, pedestrian network that includes sidewalks, street trees, and crosswalks.
- No auto-oriented retail uses such as auto repair, auto sales, gas stations, and uses with drive-throughs would not be allowed in the village at all.
- Commercial use, if there is one at all if so, it would be only small, conveniently located and connected to the pedestrian network so that all hamlet residents could safely walk to the business. The business would be oriented to providing its services to the hamlet and not so much to the surrounding areas or to passers-by. A very small on-site parking area could be allowed for short-term customer parking and/or the few employees. Seating for restaurants, delicatessens, and ice cream or coffee shops as well as displays of books, racks of clothes, stands of flowers, and bins of fruit could be allowed to face the sidewalk. Colorful umbrellas and awnings would shelter the sun or rain from retail customers.

Hamlet residential streets are narrow, allow parking, have sidewalks, and the homes are close to the sidewalk. Walkable.org

Mellensee, Germany: the one restaurant in this hamlet is a gathering place for locals, has a few parking spaces, bike parking, outdoor dining, and a small green space in front. MCPC

- Some existing pre-1940's homes converted into small business uses like day spas, bed and breakfasts, insurance offices, or tea rooms.
- Signs that are small and located on or hanging from building facades, not free-standing. None of the signs would be electric, but they could be illuminated at night by external lights.
- The tallest buildings would be at the primary intersections, 2 to 2½ stories maximum, although bell, clock, or steeple towers could be significantly taller.
- Bicycle access that is easy and safe, possibly with bike lanes, and with places for bike parking, which would be credited toward vehicle parking requirements.
- Vehicle parking that would primarily be on-site, but visitors and others could park along the roads.
- "Granny flats," or accessory dwelling units, allowed throughout the hamlet.

Non-commercial uses such as community halls, greens, parks, schools, religious buildings, and post offices, could be:

- Centrally located in these hamlets or they could be part of the rest of the hamlet fabric. The most monumental buildings and hamlet greens would be more centrally located, while large spaces and buildings with large frontages would not be located in the retail frontage at all. Non-commercial buildings of less prominence might be located toward the ends of the hamlet or mixed into the rest of the hamlet fabric.
- A portion of the parking for these sometimes larger uses would be provided near the use, a portion farther away, and another portion shared with other uses that usually don't use their parking at the same time (i.e. in the evenings and on weekends office parking would be used for meetings and religious services).
- Home occupations and businesses as well as bed and breakfasts, family day cares, or small offices would be mixed throughout the hamlets.

Throughout the hamlets the following would also occur:

1) In order to ensure maintaining the existing character, all existing buildings built before 1940 would be retained and new additions or new buildings would also be in a compatible style using similar scale buildings, similar architectural elements, and similar other features.
2) Walkways would interconnect among all the properties.
3) Landscaping would act as a small to medium-sized buffer between the roads and the homes.
4) Scenic roads and views would be preserved or enhanced.

Village Street, Kielder, UK: this hamlet is comprised of townhouses with parking on the street and some parking at the end of the block, wide "grass" strips, asphalt sidewalks, and beautiful rear gardens. MCPC

Old Bethel Hill, United Methodist Church: this historic church is a focal point in the Bethel Hill hamlet. Susan Caughlan

Lederach, Lower Salford Township, PA: this village has elements valuable for hamlets, too: buildings close together near a major intersection, a few off-street parking spaces. MCPC

Lederach, Lower Salford Township, PA: although located at a busy intersection, homes still front all streets, and homes are located close to the center. The edges of Lederach are much better defined than most villages. MCPC

Historic Resources in Villages

All effort is to be made to preserve existing historic resources (homes, businesses, walls, etc.) in the township's mixed-use villages and hamlets. The following options will be investigated and, if found to be practical and effective, will then be pursued:

- A historic resources inventory
- Application to the State for listing as many properties on the National Register as possible
- Application to the State for listing as many historic districts on the National Register as possible
- Ordinances to protect historic resources from demolition or serious alteration
- Ordinances to provide incentives for the preservation and restoration of historic resources

Non-Village Areas (Countryside)

While most of the development would occur in the growth areas as mixed use villages and hamlets, most of the township would remain countryside with Worcester's unique rural character. Five issues will have the most effect on retaining that unique character: the roadsides, new developments, the farms, natural areas, and historic resources.

Roadsides

The country roads that best represent Worcester's rural character generally have light traffic and are: two lanes, with or without a stripe down the middle, have narrow shoulders, no curb, a shallow swale, and often have trees or shrubs close to the road. Each road is, however different from each other due to the topography, road curvature, tree types or density, views, landmarks, bridges and streams, or other features. These features should be preserved where they exist and restored where they no longer exist.

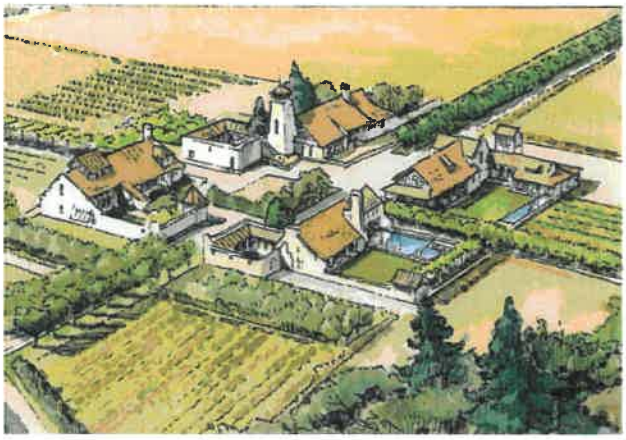
New Developments

Some of the most dramatic deteriorations to Worcester's unique rural character have been due to its most recent developments, particularly residential subdivisions. Where once there had been either a view across farmland or a roadside full of trees, now there are two-acre lawns and "McMansions." In the future this would not happen. Future subdivisions would be designed, especially in cases that will use conservation subdivision, to locate homes so they are either not so visible or are in more of a "Worcester" style and setting. Older Worcester homes are often stone farmhouses and have barns or

Lederach, Lower Salford Township, PA: Historic Building with Plaque. MCPC

Peter Wentz Farmstead, Worcester. Brian Bourne

Bean Road, Worcester: the township has many miles of scenic roads, which contribute significantly to the township's rural character. Every effort should be made to preserve them. Susan Caughlan



Sky, FL: this illustration demonstrates that rural character can be preserved while allowing for new development. Duane Plater-Zyberk

Worcester's rural landscapes are vitally valuable to the character of the township. Scott Rothenberger

Ponds at Woodward, Chester County, PA: this new development demonstrates that siting, landscaping, and the location and configuration of open space are critical to preserving rural character. MCPC

Stony Creek, Worcester: the township has many valuable natural resources in the rural areas that should be protected. Susan Caughlan

Worcester's rural landscap includes farms, roads, trees and some buildings. Scott Rothenberger

Zacharias Creek near Greenhill Road, Worcester: the Zacharias Creek is the township's primary water corridor, passing through a large portion of the rural area and through the village of Center Point. MCPC

other outbuildings located in a particular fashion. New homes could look similar and be similarly sited and thereby contribute to, rather than deteriorate, Worcester's character.

Farms

Farms have been the most important land use in Worcester since its founding. They still account for about 27% of the land area, and even though the Township is actively pursuing preserving as much farmland as possible, the amount of farmland is reducing every year. Farms also provide a large portion of the township's rural character. The vision for the future includes almost all of the current farmland remaining farmland. Perhaps some additional farmland can be "won over" from the large rear or side yards of existing homes. As further building inevitably happens, and conservation subdivision is to be used, so that the Township will preserve as much farmland as possible. The vision includes Township representative speaking personally the farm owners and working with them to ensure their farms remain, viable, and perhaps even expanded. Farms may become even more valuable as sites for small wind or solar power generators or they may become more retail-oriented, providing domestic produce directly to local residents, institutions, and restaurants. Horse farms may become more valuable as personal recreation or as businesses.

Natural Areas

The Open Space Plan identified which areas of the township were most valuable for natural resource protection and which were less valuable. The vision is that the Township and its residents will work together to preserve the most valuable and the most vulnerable areas first and continue working to preserve as many of the township's natural assets as possible.

Historic Resources Outside Villages

The Township, the Worcester Historic Society, and residents could work together to preserve existing historic resources in the township's countryside. The following options will be investigated and, if found to be practical and effective, will then be pursued:

- A historic resources inventory.
- Application to the State for listing as many properties on the National Register as possible.
- Application to the State for listing as many historic districts on the National Register as possible.
- Ordinances to protect historic resources from demolition or serious alteration.
- Ordinances to provide incentives for the preservation and restoration of historic resources.

Worcester: a prominent older home on a major thoroughfare.
Donald C. Atkinson

Willison Smith Farmhouse, Worcester:this historic home has been expanded to meet modern needs with tasteful and fitting additions.
Laura Caughlan

Meitner Family Property, Whitpain Township, PA: this historic rural farmstead was converted and expanded into offices and new residences.
MCPC

Transportation

Transportation links the villages, hamlets, and countryside together and to the rest of the world, making it the net that keeps things together. For the most part, and until recently, this has exclusively meant roads. But now other forms of transportation will be introduced to the comprehensive plan – trails and sidewalks. The roads, too, are envisioned to be somewhat different, and better, than before.

Roads

In the future, the roads will be safer, not so congested and vehicles will travel at slower speeds through the villages, hamlets and along the country roads. The Township could work with the State, the County, and neighboring communities to reduce the amount of motorized vehicle traffic passing through the township. None of the roads would need to be widened to more than one lane in each direction and none of the intersections would need to be widened to create new turning lanes for traffic lights. Crosswalks and other pedestrian and bicycle features will be added in appropriate locations. While bike lanes are not likely, they might occasionally be possible, such as along Skippack Pike or in villages. For the most part, on-road bike facilities would be shoulders wide enough for safe riding, or on less busy country roads riding in the traffic lane might be possible if it is not too unsafe, even for young or inexperienced bicyclists. Traffic calming measures would be investigated for appropriate locations. Roadside beautification and naturalization would occur on all roads. Scenic views and scenic roads would be preserved and possibly enhanced.

Trails, Sidewalks

The villages would be interconnected by a trail system and that system would spread into the residential areas like a network interconnecting as many destinations as possible. Trails would also be created for recreation purposes, sometimes traversing through or near natural areas to allow their discovery, exploration, and enjoyment by residents. Trails would link to other trails and destinations outside the township. Most of the trails would include an equestrian component. Trails would take several forms: narrow dirt path for less-traveled hiking paths, perhaps a sand or gravel mix for equestrian trails and paved multi-use trails.

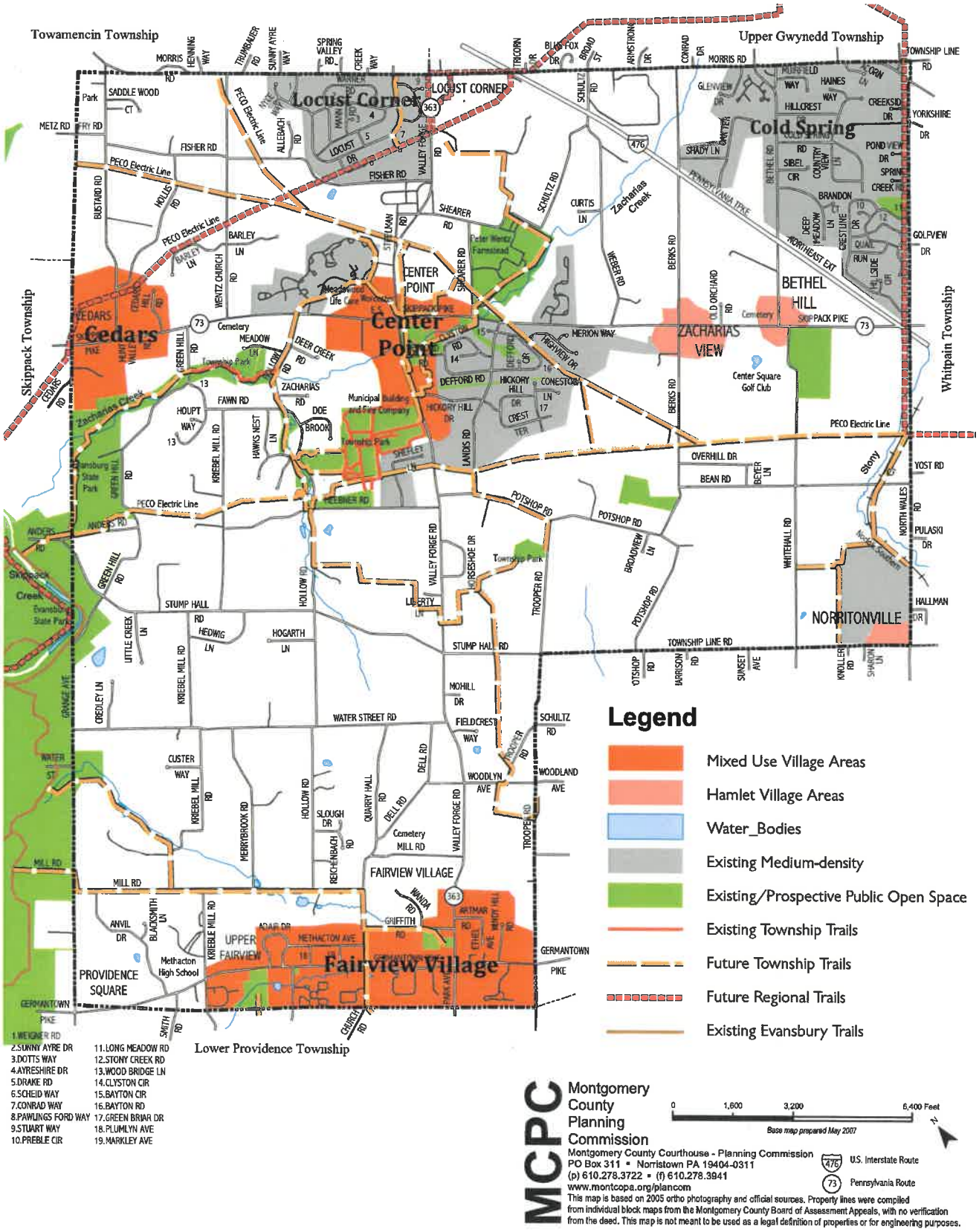
The villages and the centers of the hamlets would have sidewalks on all streets, especially on the most heavily traveled roads. However, sidewalks would give way to trails once leaving the village or the hamlet center and most low-volume roads would have neither sidewalks nor trails.

Hollow Road, Worcester: a scenic rural road with hedgerow on the left, views across fields to the right, and a one-lane bridge ahead. MCPC

Pottstown, PA: off-road trails that parallel roads can be a safe way to connect villages and other destinations, and still retain rural character. MCPC

Lansdale, PA: within villages and hamlets, sidewalks would provide safe and convenient connections between homes, business, and other destinations. MCPC

Figure 7-17
Future Land Use Map



Future Land Use Map

The Future Land Use Map, Figure 7 – 17, indicates the locations of the various parts of the vision.

Mixed Use Villages

The mixed use villages are the larger villages in the township and already have several commercial uses as well as a significant residential community around them. They are either at the intersection of two major thoroughfares or, in the case of Cedars, a major thoroughfare and a significant rural road. Two of them are served by public sewer and water, which allows for more dense development. These villages are envisioned to become more important to the township as small centers of population and commerce. They are dispersed throughout the township and, except for the Cold Spring area, few residents of the township are farther than one and half miles from one of the villages.

Medium-density Areas and Hamlets

The Growth Areas are the areas around the villages that are primarily residential and have many of the features of a hamlet except that they are larger areas and are centered on the village.

The hamlets are mostly located at current or future concentrations of housing near an intersection.

Countryside

The countryside comprises the rest of the township and is dominated by farms, horse pastures, woods, riparian corridors, and country roads winding through them. Roads and trails will cross through this area to reach the villages, hamlets and other destinations.

Worcester: cows and horses can often be seen in the rural areas of the township. MCPC

Newtown, PA: a restaurant in a historic building on a major street. MCPC

Newtown, PA: Village homes converted to offices and service business. MCPC

Newtown, PA: homes for villages and the center of hamlets. MCPC

Newtown, PA: historic homes for villages and the center of hamlets. MCPC

Recommendations

To achieve the vision, the Township would like to undertake the following actions:

Villages, Medium-density Areas and Hamlets Village Commercial Ordinance

Process: use a process that includes the public, landowners, Township leaders, and experts in one forum to devise the vision and the outcome.

Final product: Update zoning to achieve the vision. May result in one ordinance to cover village centers, villages, growth areas, and hamlets; or may result in several ordinances for these separate areas. Results may also include village master plans and official maps.

Historic Preservation

Demolition Process

New provisions can be adopted to allow more time for the Township to review the proposed demolition of a historic structure and to discuss alternatives with the property owner.

Historic Inventory

In order to know where, how many, how old, in what condition, and which are the most valuable historic structures, an inventory should be conducted. This can often be done by trained volunteers. With this knowledge, the most strategic and cost efficient approaches can be used.

Incentives for Historic Preservation

Zoning ordinances can be revised or an overlay adopted to allow for additional uses or more relaxed regulations when a historic property is preserved, restored, reused, or expanded.

Nominations for the National Register

The Township can lead, initiate, or support this effort. The historic structures most likely to be successfully listed on the National Register can be determined from the inventory and the formwork and research submitted to the State.

Land or Rights Acquisition

Township Acquisitions

The Township may want to purchase or otherwise acquire development, conservation, or public access rights to properties in order to meet the goals of this plan.

Other Acquisitions

The Township would like to work with the County, State, and conservation organizations to facilitate the acquisition for preservation purposes of park, agriculture, or natural resource land or rights in the township.

A Charette, involves the public and all stakeholders in the major initial decisions early in a process. City of San Diego

There are many alternatives to demolition of historic resources. Sometimes people just need some time to get the facts and understand options. Robert France
http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/2.0/

Blackberry Farm, Worcester: many of the township's old homes, and farmsteads are valuable not only for historic reasons, but also to continue contributing to the character of the township. Donald C. Atkinson

Natural Resources Protection

In addition to acquisitions, the Township would like to pursue the following non-acquisition methods to meet the natural preservation goals of this plan:

Conservation Easements

Easements that protect natural resources can be acquired by purchase, donation, or as required by ordinances, particularly during land development.

Environmental Programs

The Township can lead, initiate, or support efforts including those by residents.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs)

Township TDR Provisions

The Growing Greener ordinance already contains some limited TDR provisions. This ordinance and others can be revised to expand the possibilities for TDRs within the township.

Regional Planning

One of the major benefits of regional planning is the increased opportunity to transfer development rights across municipal boundaries. This could be especially valuable in that it could significantly reduce school district costs. Plus, if the development rights are converted from residential uses to commercial uses, tax revenues from non-residential sources could increase significantly, thereby allowing for increased school services and/or reduced taxes to homeowners.

Other Ordinances and Programs

Agriculture

The Township would like to investigate ordinance provisions and special programs to help faming become more viable, profitable and valuable to the township.

Horse Farms

The ordinances should be reviewed to determine if some provisions should be changed to further encourage properties to have horses. In addition, equestrian trails should be provided that connect to Evansburg Park and several other destinations as well as the areas where horse farms are located.

Scenic Views

The ordinances should be revised to protect the scenic views in the township.

Scenic Roads

The ordinances should be revised to protect the scenic roads in the township.

Merrymead farm, Worcester: this farm is valuable to the township and the county. MCPC

Zacharias Creek Corridor: this valuable, natural, greenway corridor should be preserved as much as possible, using various methods. MCPC

Gambone Horse Farm, Worcester: this farm not only is home to a family and over 100 horses, provides recreation, and several jobs, it also has fantastic scenic views. MCPC

Upper Salford Township, PA: trails provide a popular amenity to a community and can be done in a way that helps protect natural and rural settings. MCPC

Gambone Horse Farm, Worcester: a view over the surrounding landscape. MCPC

View along Green Hill Road, Worcester: one of the most scenic views in the township is across preserved land of Evansburg State Park. MCPC

Cooperation can work to the benefit of all parties.

USAID

Trails construction

Trail construction can be undertaken as a two-pronged effort: the Township would build as many trails as possible and ordinances would be revised to require new developments to provide trails and links to future or existing trails.

Other Actions

Ordinance Updates

A thorough review of the entire Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance should be done to bring them in line with achieving the goals of this plan.

Outreach

The Township can outreach to agencies or organizations of various sorts to support projects of common interest.

Summary

Worcester Township has successfully maintained much of its rural agricultural heritage in the face of mounting development pressure over the past 25 years. However, its unique historic resources, natural features, and rural character are in danger of being lost if the Township does not take action to protect them. This plan establishes ambitious but achievable goals by which the Township intends to protect and preserve its quality of life. The vision and recommendations outlined in this chapter are the framework by which these goals will be realized. As the Township moves forward, on its own and in partnership with others, to implement these actions, it will benefit all the residents of Worcester Township, now and in the future.

Worcester Horseshow Parade 1971: this took place annually in Fairview Village on Heyser's Field behind the Community Hall. Mary Walker