

**WORCESTER TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE TASK FORCE
WORCESTER TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY HALL
WEDNESDAY, JULY 28, 2021 7:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER by Stacy Crandell at 7:01 PM

ATTENDANCE

STEPHANIE BAILEY	[X]
ART BUSTARD	[X]
WINNIE HAYES	[X]
BURT HYNES	[X]
JAY MCKEEVER	[X]
BRIAN NEWHALL	[X]
ROBERT PACE	[X]
PATRICIA QUIGLEY	[X]
TONY SHERR	[X]
CHRISTINE STEERE	[X]

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

- June 23, 2021 Meeting Minutes – Stacy Crandell called for any comments or objections to the minutes. A motion by Wini Hayes to approve the minutes and it was seconded by Art Bustard and it was passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- There were no public comments.

FOCUS AREA OF COMP PLAN FOR DISCUSSION

- Discussion on Open House in October
 - There was a brief discussion regarding the open house on October 27th. The Task Force will discuss it further at their next meeting regarding the roles of the Task Force Members and the event details.
- Draft Chapters – Community Character
 - Brian Olszak went over the draft chapter which covered Community Character. There was some discussion regarding the chapter.
 - § Brian shared a visual concept for a gateway signage at Fairview Village. There was a discussion about design. Stephanie Bailey noted that she saw similar signage in Lower Providence and thought it was a nice addition. The Task Force agreed that the signage was a good idea but felt further discussion outside of this committee was required to discuss design elements.
 - § There was a discussion about the goals. Robert Pace and Wini Hayes noted that the order of the goals should have the third goal be the first goal and the members agreed on this.

- § In addition, Wini Hayes stated that she felt both first and last goal involving the mix of housing, densities and land uses could be put into one goal and there was discussion on that. Art Bustard commented that he did not like the term types and the Task Force members agreed that it should be deleted.
- § Robert Pace suggested that this section was included earlier in the Comp Plan and that a description of sense of place should be in the beginning of the chapter. Wini Hayes added that she believes that this could be a vision statement that she had brought up in an earlier meeting. Robert also stated that it would be helpful if the principles of Universal Design chart was explained more in-depth or to reconsider the placement of that chart.
- § There was a discussion on the types of housing that was suggested in the chapter. The Task Force members were not in agreement with the co-housing example and it was suggested to remove it. It was felt it was not the right fit for the community. The other examples of housing were discussed and the group felt that the examples needed more explanation.
- § Burt Hynes asked for clarification on the Diverse and Attainable Housing Choices section. He felt it came across negativity towards the older population and felt a better explanation should be included. Wini Hayes added that the graphic below was very small in this section and asked that it be made bigger.
- § There was a discussion about signage and benches. Stacy Crandell commented that the Township already has upgraded their signage around parks and facilities recently with branding that symbolic of Worcester Township. Wini Hayes commented that the bench example for the Recreation/Trail did not really reflect the rural character of the Township and would like to see if there are other alternatives.
- § There was discussion regarding encouraging younger families to the Township. Wini Hayes stated that while the Township wants to encourage younger families to the community, it is important that the rural characteristics are maintained and that people moving from the city do not come out expecting the same amenities they have there. Art Bustard and Wini Hayes both stated that it was important that the higher densities were to be included in the villages. It was suggested that this was clearly stated.
- § As a whole, the Task Force members felt that chapter could use some more explanation so that rural and historic characteristics that the Task Force members feel is important to the Township is presented clearly.

NEXT STEPS AND NEXT MEETING

- September 22, 2021 meeting – The next meeting will cover the chapter for Parks, Open Space & Preservation; Environmental Resources & Infrastructure. There is no August meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Comprehensive Plan Update Task Force, Stacy Crandell adjourned the meeting at 8:40 PM.

Respectfully Submitted:

Stacy E. Crandell
Assistant Township Manager

DRAFT

**WORCESTER TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE TASK FORCE
WORCESTER TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY HALL
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2021 7:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER by Stacy Crandell at 7:10 PM

ATTENDANCE

STEPHANIE BAILEY	[X]
ART BUSTARD	[X]
WINNIE HAYES	[X]
BURT HYNES	[X]
PATRICIA QUIGLEY	[X]
TONY SHERR	[X]

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

- July 28, 2021 Meeting Minutes - This was tabled due to not having a quorum. Will be on the agenda for the November meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- There were no public comments.

FOCUS AREA OF COMP PLAN FOR DISCUSSION

- Discussion on Comp Plan Schedule:
 - After receiving feedback from the group about the comp plan schedule, Stacy Crandell explained that an additional meeting with scheduled for November 10th to go over the last two chapters. The December 8th meeting will be used to go over the first full draft of the Comprehensive Plan Update before it moves through the next steps of the process to the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. Everyone at the meeting was in agreement so the Township will advertise the November meeting and take care of updating the comp plan schedule.
- Discussion on Open House in October
 - There was a brief discussion regarding the open house on October 27th. Stacy Crandell distributed committee assignments to the group. Brian Olszak and Stacy Crandell went over how the event was going to run. The task force members talked about advertising the event. Stacy will produce a one-page flyer so the group can distribute and spread the word.
- Draft Chapter - Parks, Open Space & Preservation
 - Brian Olszak went over the draft chapter which covered Parks, Open Space & Preservation. There was some discussion regarding the chapter.
 - § There was some discussion about the phrase “as appropriate” in regards to the recommendation of providing a degree of public access at properties acquired or eased for preservation purposes, as

appropriate. Wini Hayes asked that this be spelled out more because some properties like farmland may be preserved but public access may not be available or appropriate.

§ Burt Hynes asked that the abbreviations that are in a few places like EDU, ASA be defined so that everyone can understand what they mean.

§ Patricia Quigley inquired about the greenways and park priority map and felt that this would be an important element to have displayed at the Open House so the Township could receive some feedback on what may be priority areas that residents feel is needed for recreation and parks.

§ Art Bustard commented that he thought it was important to have the TDR in the plan, and also commented that he did not feel that the Township should hire consultants to advise on different things and thought that role should go to the planning commission. Patricia Quigley stated that may be a lot on the planning commission but maybe there should be subgroups under the planning commission.

§ Wini Hayes stated she felt it was important to highlight and preserve the areas near and around Evansburg State Park for natural resources and animal habitats.

· Draft Chapter – Environmental Resources & Infrastructure

○ Brian Olszak went over the draft chapter which covered Environmental Resources & Infrastructure. There was some discussion regarding the chapter.

§ There was a discussion about stormwater management and who is responsible for stormwater that may be flowing onto a public roadway or property from a private property. The members were in agreement that this matter is a big problem in the Township and should be addressed in the future and that section should be expanded.

§ Patricia Quigley stated that she felt the map titled “Worcester modelled Existing Wetlands and Potentially Restorable Wetlands” which was from the University of Vermont and WeConservePA was a little misleading and probably not really helpful map to include. She suggested that a map from NWI would be a better resource.

§ There was some discussion regarding the minimum requirements of Riparian Buffers. Burt Hynes suggested that the Riparian Buffer section be more representative of Worcester and include information about the pastures and cropland.

- § Burt Hynes discussed tree planting and tree density. He is definitely not against tree planting but felt that there should be some thought placed on tree density during the land development process so trees are placed in areas that continue to flourish instead of planting too many too close and the trees being taken down.
- § Burt Hynes discussed that he wanted to see that certain types of energy like solar were listed in promoting sustainability and noted that other municipalities has been successful with running their facilities with solar power. Brian Olszak bought about the County Program C-PACE which allows residents to finance clean energy improvements like solar panels.

NEXT STEPS AND NEXT MEETING

- October 27, 2021 Open House – The Task Force will host the Open House from 4-7PM on October 27th. The next Task Force meeting will be November 10th and will cover the chapter for Governance & Public Services; Land Use & Growth Management.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- There were no public comments.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Comprehensive Plan Update Task Force, Stacy Crandell adjourned the meeting at 8:38 PM.

Respectfully Submitted:

Stacy E. Crandell
Assistant Township Manager

**WORCESTER TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE TASK FORCE
OPEN HOUSE EVENT
WORCESTER TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY HALL
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2021 4:00 PM – 7:00PM**

OPEN HOUSE EVENT: It was open to the public at 4:00pm.

ATTENDANCE

ART BUSTARD	[X]
WINNIE HAYES	[X]
BURT HYNES	[X]
ROBERT PACE	[X]
PATRICIA QUIGLEY	[X]
TONY SHERR	[X]
CHRISTINE STEERE	[X]

OPEN HOUSE EVENT CLOSED: The event was closed at 7:00pm and at the conclusion there was about 15-20 attendees that participated in the event.

NEXT STEPS AND NEXT MEETING

- November 10, 2021 at 7PM - The next Task Force meeting will be November 10th and will cover the chapter for Governance & Public Services; Land Use & Growth Management. The final meeting will take place on December 8th to review the first draft of the complete Comp Plan Update.

OPEN HOUSE EVENT CLOSED: The event was closed at 7:00pm and at the conclusion there was about 15-20 attendees that participated in the event.

Respectfully Submitted:

Stacy E. Crandell
Assistant Township Manager

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

VALERIE A. ARKOOSH, MD, MPH, CHAIR
KENNETH E. LAWRENCE, JR., VICE CHAIR
JOSEPH C. GALE, COMMISSIONER



**MONTGOMERY COUNTY
PLANNING COMMISSION**

MONTGOMERY COUNTY COURTHOUSE • PO Box 311
NORRISTOWN, PA 19404-0311
610-278-3722
FAX: 610-278-3941 • TDD: 610-631-1211
WWW.MONTCOPA.ORG

SCOTT FRANCE, AICP
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**SUBJECT: Land Use + Growth Management Chapter and Governance + Public Services
Chapter Cover Memo**

TO: Worcester Comprehensive Plan Task Force

**CC: Tommy Ryan, Township Manager
Stacy Crandell, Asst. Township Manager**

FROM: Brian J. Olszak, Senior Planner, MCPC

DATE: November 10, 2021

Please find attached for your review the proposed Land Use + Growth Management Chapter and Governance + Public Services Chapter of the Comp Plan Update.

As always, I wanted to remind you that, in the final version of these chapters as with all others, MCPC will either cite the source of graphics utilized or create our own graphics illustrating the same underlying concept as is shown in these Chapters. Additional photos will be placed throughout the plan.

Please consider these additional notes regarding the *Land Use + Growth Management Chapter*:

- There are two photosimulations for which there are placeholders in the "A Closer Look at the Villages" section: one for Fairview Village and one for Cedars. The one for Fairview Village will be based on the graphic shown to the Task Force previously, which will have been updated based on prior feedback. The one for Cedars will be new to the Task Force. In order to contextualize them and potential improvements, I will be able to show these to you at our meeting on November 10th,
- There is at present a placeholder for the "Future Land Use / Place Type" map. I fully expect the Future Land Use Map, because of its importance to the plan, will be revised several times based on the Task Force's and the Township's input--because of this I hope to bring a large-format map of this to the meeting so it can be physically marked up at the meeting with your comments. A digital form of the Map will be sent to the Task Force after the main packet is sent but before the meeting.
- The Cost of Community Services (COCS) ratio discussed on page 5 is based on real calculations based on real numbers I performed based on the Township and School District budgets, as well as Board of Assessment records. I did not include them in the chapter since it would get too "in the weeds" for the average reader, although they may prove to be useful in an appendix to the plan. However, if should you have any questions about the methodology employed, I will be able to show the spreadsheets used at the meeting.

Governance + Public Services

Serving the community

POLICY STATEMENT

Worcester will provide efficient services to its constituents in a manner which can be sustained for the long-term and which is resilient to economic challenges.

GOALS



Enable the Township to sustainably and equitably provide necessary services and resources to all residents



Support partnerships between governments and other organizations to achieve the Township's planning and development objectives.

When planning for municipal and public services, potential population growth can alter the existing governance and services currently offered. This section of the plan addresses Township services and strategies that will ensure we have personnel and resources to provide the best service possible to residents and businesses in Worcester into the future.

Public Safety

Fire and Ambulance Service

The quality of both fire protection and ambulance services in the Township are some of the most highly-regarded of any available services in the community. Worcester is served by the Worcester Volunteer Fire Department which, as the name suggests, employs an all-volunteer force, and is supported by Township operating and capital fund contributions. Recently, due to demonstrated declines in volunteer fire company participation across the state, the General Assembly permitted municipalities to offer income tax credits to volunteer firefighters; Worcester participates in this benefit. Additionally, monthly stipends are offered by the Township to municipal employees who participate in volunteer firefighter activities.

Ambulance services are provided by several area organizations, each of which cover a specific territory in the community. These companies include:

- Lower Providence Community Center Ambulance
- Plymouth Community Ambulance Association
- Volunteer Medical Service Corps of Lansdale
- Skippack Emergency Medical Services (which maintains a station at Meadowood in the Township)

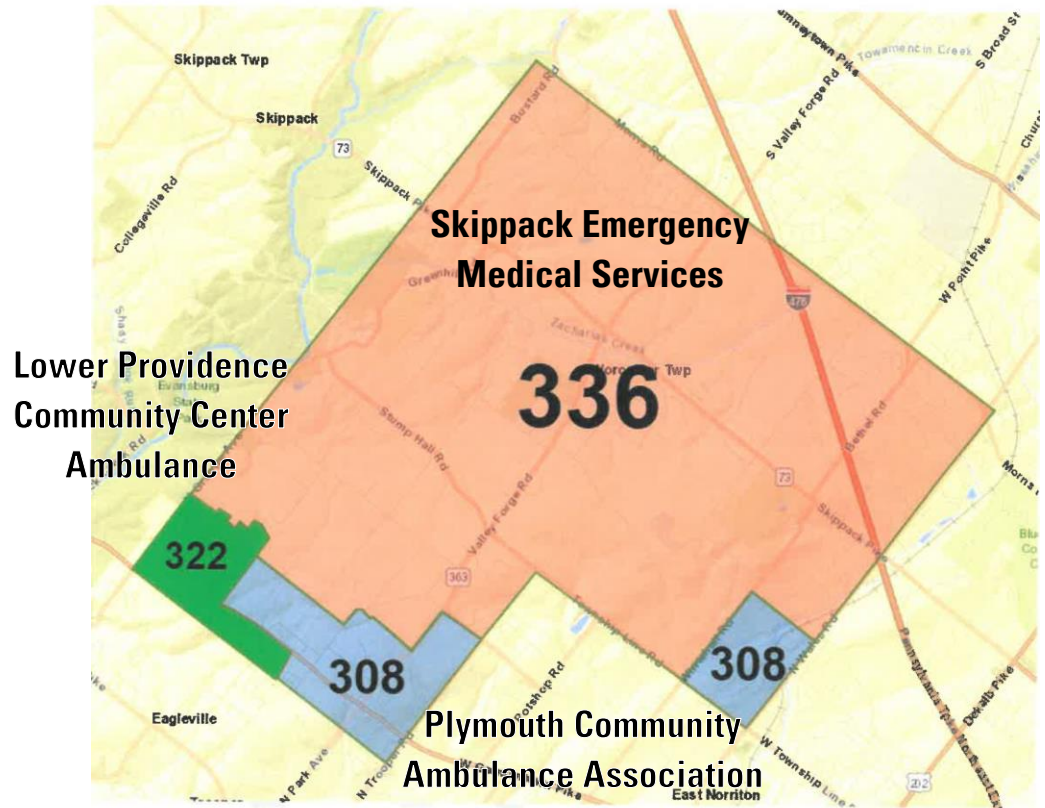
The challenges involved with maintaining fire protection services include: the costs of new equipment and maintaining existing apparatuses; the complexities of fire service in larger or growing communities; and the pursuit of recruiting and retaining volunteers, especially younger participants. Recently, the Township has been investigating other ways to recruit younger volunteers, such as establishing housing for younger fire company volunteers who may have trouble finding adequate housing in the Township.

Several volunteer fire companies in the county within the last 10 years have closed or consolidated with other companies, due to both increasing costs as well as the lack of volunteers to adequately run them. Some communities have partially or completely professionalized their fire protection services, which have come with increased costs. The National Fire Protection Association in a 2013 report concluded that of the total 31.9 million calls routed to U.S. fire departments, only 1.2 million (4%) were fire-related. The other 96% of calls were in response to medical emergencies, vehicle incidents and other situations that did not require a full-size fire truck. While public safety concerns are obviously paramount, the Township can always remain vigilant to cost increases associated with equipment.

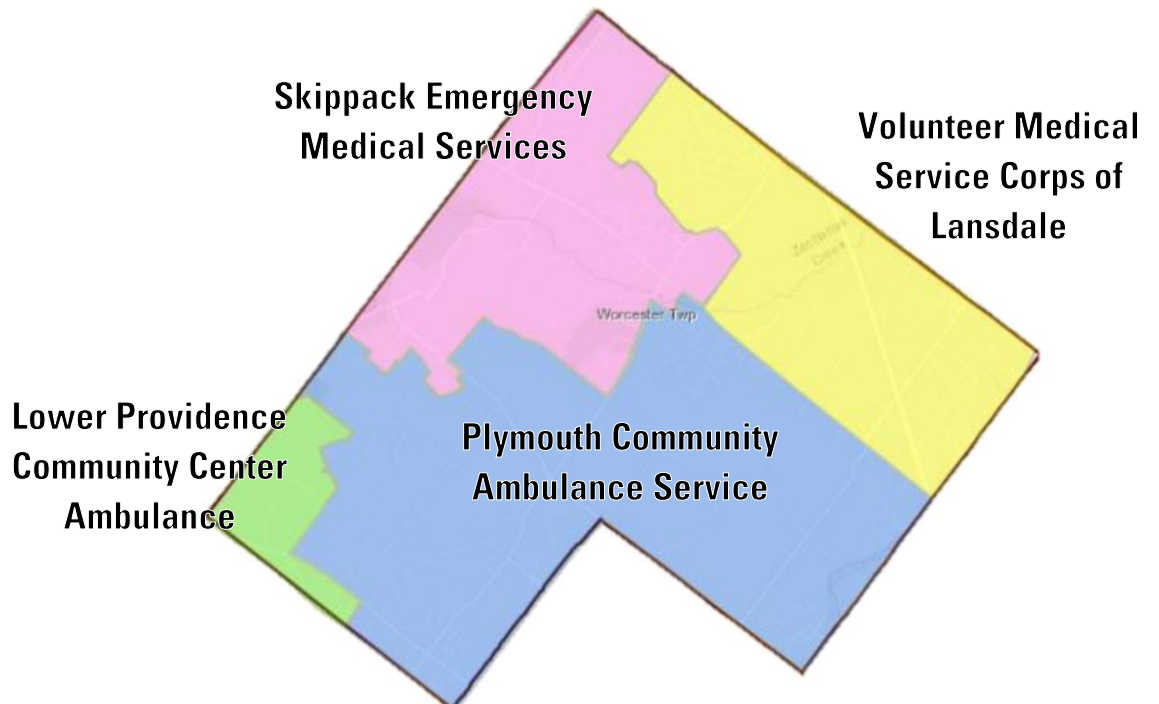
Worcester residents rated the quality of their Fire Service the highest of any aspect of the Township.

QUESTION 7... Please rate the present quality of the following in Worcester Township... (select all that apply)	
Fire Service	3.67
Overall Quality of life	3.54
Natural Resources	3.37
Athletic Field & Courts	3.31
Ambulance Service	3.29
Preserved Open Spaces	3.25
Playground & Tot Lots	3.22
Internet Service	3.14
Trails	3.12
Water Systems	2.96
Housing Choices	2.94
Cellular Service	2.86
Noise Control	2.86
Housing Affordability	2.79
Stormwater	2.76
Sewer/Spetic Systems	2.76
Roadway Conditions	2.71
Police Service	2.61
Retail/Commercial	2.59
Taxes	2.45
Traffic Volume	2.23

Ambulance and EMS Companies Serving Worcester:
Monday – Friday 8am – 4pm: Source: Worcester Township.



Ambulance and EMS Companies Serving Worcester:
Outside Monday – Friday 8am – 4pm. Source: Worcester Township.



Police Service

Worcester is one of only 11 municipalities in Montgomery County that utilizes the Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) as their full-time police force; two additional municipalities utilize PSP part-time, in conjunction with a local police force. Utilizing PSP coverage currently does not incur any costs to a municipality. Worcester is the second-largest municipality by population in the county to use PSP full-time—only Skippack Township is more populous, which is where the local barracks is located. PSP currently provides responses to:

- Traffic and Vehicle Code violations and enforcement
- motor vehicle accidents
- 911 emergency response
- well-being checks (e.g. brief visits conducted on behalf of social service agencies or others when health, safety or general well-being are in question)
- criminal complaint and investigatory services, and
- limited patrol of Township streets, parks and trails.

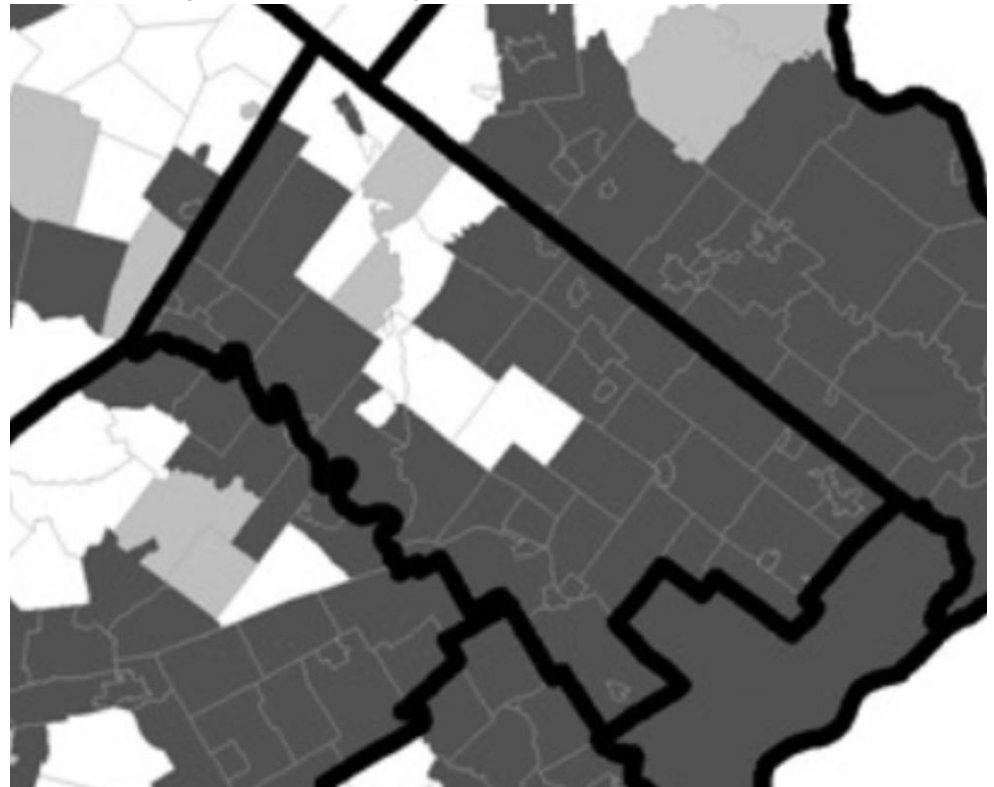
However, PSP does *not* enforce local “Quality of Life” ordinances such as noise, loitering, parking, animal, or nuisance ordinance complaints. The Township-appointed Fire Marshal enforces complaints concerning the Fire Code and open burning.

The results from Public Outreach Survey indicated that existing Police Service is one of the lowest-rated services the Township, as shown at right. This desire for improvement is directly reflected in the answers to a later question, which asked respondents what the five most important issues in the Township are today. Almost one-quarter of all respondents indicated that police service was one of the most important issues to them. However, municipalities currently have very little power to influence the quality of services provided by PSP coverage. While PSP coverage is desirable for smaller or less-developed municipalities where maintaining local police forces is less feasible, such coverage is not “one size fits all” for every municipality. Therefore, strategizing on how to improve police service may need to consider options beyond PSP coverage.

QUESTION 9... From [the above list], what are the FIVE most important issues in the Township today?	
preserved open spaces	40.5%
traffic volume	38.2%
taxes	32.2%
roadway conditions	32.0%
police service	24.2%
trails	19.9%
retail/commercial services	18.2%
cellular service	15.8%
natural resources	14.5%
noise control	14.3%
sewer/septic systems	11.6%
housing affordability	9.0%
stormwater management	8.5%
overall quality of life	8.3%
ambulance service	7.2%
internet service	7.2%
housing choices	6.0%
fire service	4.6%
athletic fields & courts	4.3%
water systems	4.1%
playgrounds & tot lots	4.1%
no response (all)	15.2%

Of all issues in the Township, police service was rated the 5th-most important issue today to survey respondents.

Police Coverage Types in the Region. Source: Pennsylvania State Police

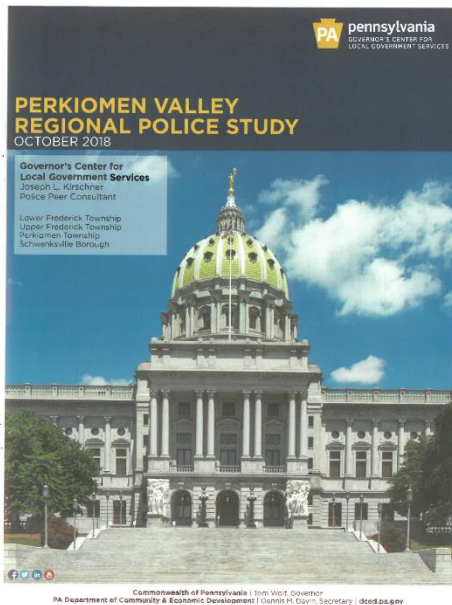


Full-time Local Police
 Part-time PSP/Local
 Full-time PSP

It is entirely conceivable that PSP coverage, at some point soon, may no longer serve the Township’s needs. There are several options available to a municipality looking to invest in their existing police service, each with its own pros and cons:

- **“Buy into” another municipality’s local police coverage.** This option could theoretically be the least-expensive method to augment existing police service. Governance of the police force would continue to be managed by the originating municipality, however, and could be either full-time or part-time coverage.
- **Collaborate on a regional police force.** As opposed to buying into another municipality’s force, a regional police force would distribute governance of the police service across all participating municipalities.
- **Maintain a local part-time police force.** Instead of eliminating PSP coverage altogether, the Township can either create or use a part-time police force. This option still uses PSP coverage on off-hours, typically in the evenings and weekends.
- **Maintain a local full-time police force.** This would likely be the most expensive option available, but also reflects the most comprehensive locally-controlled coverage available.

Deciding what course of action, if any, would not be done without thoughtful consideration and planning. The Governor’s Center for Local Government Services offers assistance to municipalities interested in planning for police services, especially if regional planning is involved.



Administration

The Township currently maintains a workforce of 13 full-time employees and 4 part-time employees, which is approximately what the staffing levels were in 2014. Administration has been successful in keeping costs low and, likewise, municipal real estate taxes low, which is in fact the lowest Montgomery County which as of this writing is at 1/20th of 1 mill.

Into the future, Township administration will continue to be looking for ways to ensure that its services are being adequately and equitably provided across all residents and businesses of the community.

School District

While not a formal organ of municipal government which makes land use decisions, the Methacton School District impacts municipal planning and land use regulation in the Township. Currently the School District teaches nearly 5,000 students, approximately 25% of whom are students from Worcester, with the rest residing in Lower Providence Township. Two schools are located in the Township: Worcester Elementary (whose entire catchment area is within the Township itself), and Methacton High School. Facilities planning for the School District is largely determined by the projected school enrollment, for which planning generally happens every five years. But, of course, the number of school children who patronize the School District is a function of the available housing in the jurisdiction and the general demographic trends of that jurisdiction.

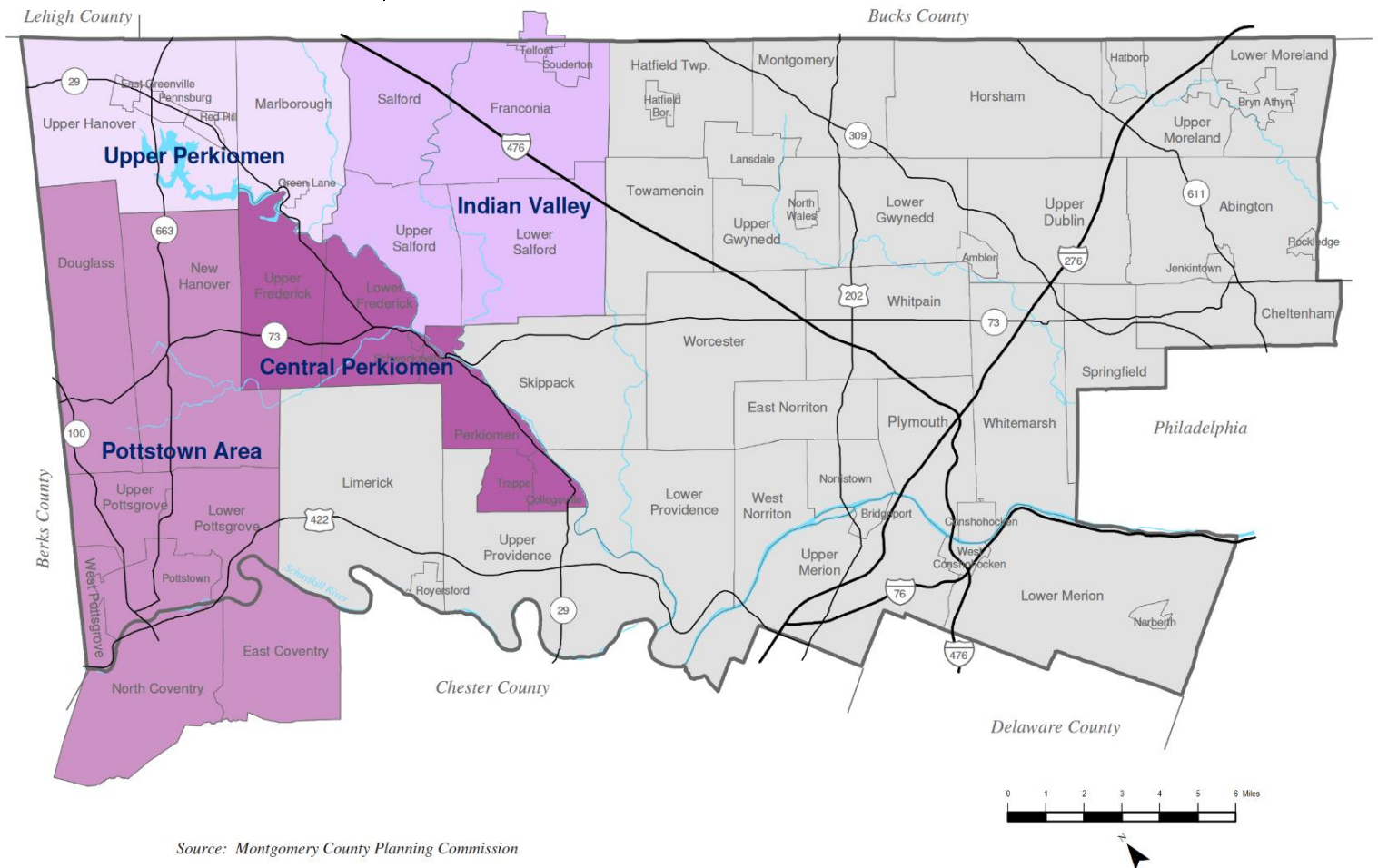
Currently the Township has no power to impact or influence the management or funding mechanisms of the District. The School District's share of a property's total real estate taxes currently stands at 88%. Without legislative action from the General Assembly, the relationship between municipal administration and school district administration cannot change significantly. However, while they are independent of each other, the Township can engage the School District on a number of issues on a more voluntary collaborative basis.

Regional Planning

Pennsylvania, despite being only the 33rd largest U.S. state by total land area, has the 3rd most local governments, behind only Illinois and Texas. With so many local governments, each with its own regulations and taxing power, planning for issues of regional significance beyond a single municipality's boundaries is especially difficult. Planning for regional amenities and assets like recreation and open space, housing, and transportation is made that much more difficult since, by law, every municipality must plan for and permit every legal and reasonable use, as well as their fair share of housing. Even beyond these issues, there are services which may not be feasible to deliver for a single municipality.

Because of these challenges, the state, through amendments to the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), have encouraged the use of multimunicipal planning between two or more municipalities. Instead of planning for uses only within municipal boundaries, municipalities can choose to collaborate on multimunicipal comprehensive plans, which can act as the governing plan for the community, or they can even enter into joint zoning or subdivision ordinances. Entering into joint zoning ordinances, which until recently was the only multimunicipal planning tool available, can certainly save on administration costs, but the fear of giving up local control of regulating land use is an ever-present and legitimate concern. But multimunicipal planning through a multimunicipal comprehensive plan, with an accompanying intergovernmental agreement, can be extremely beneficial to participating municipalities without the disadvantage of relinquishing autonomy. A multimunicipal comprehensive plan, produced in accordance with the MPC, permits municipalities to share the burden of permitting all legal and reasonable uses and jointly provide their fair share of housing by providing them in a regional manner. A fair share housing and nonresidential-use study would be commissioned on a regional basis, across all municipalities, and all municipalities would agree on how and where to provide them, which is legally assured by an adopted agreement between all municipalities, called an intergovernmental agreement. That is, individual municipalities do *not*, by themselves, have to independently provide for these requirements, but instead provide them as outlined in the multimunicipal plan and intergovernmental agreement.

Montgomery County currently has four regional planning commissions, all of which receive planning assistance from MCPC.



Beyond the realm of municipal planning, regional efforts can take many forms, especially as vehicles to share or collaborate on service provision; these can include:

- Regional recreation authorities and organizations, such as the *Pottstown Area Regional Recreation Committee (PARRC)*
- Regional police, fire or ambulance organizations
- Watershed planning partnerships (the Township is currently a member of the Skippack Watershed Alliance, a multimunicipal group)
- Stormwater management authorities
- Transportation corridor planning
- Other regional authorities, such as for water and sewer services

Recommendations

Enable the Township to sustainably and equitably provide necessary services and resources to all residents.

- Implement metrics tracking for the Comprehensive Plan's objectives.
- Establish periodic self-reviews of municipal ordinances to ensure that they are up to date and defensible in the event of legal challenges.
- Track customer or resident complaints and service requests.
- Consider purchasing property to house college-aged people who would like to work with the Volunteer Fire Company. *Such housing would be an extra benefit to those young people who would be interested in working with the fire company-- such housing would either be free or discounted.*
- Create a timeline for periodic reviews of whether a police services study may be warranted.

Support partnerships between governments and other organizations to achieve the Township's planning and development goals

- Continue practice of Township-School District liaising, to regularly meet with School District Board or administration keeping both entities "in the loop" on important issues impacting the community.
- Continue to meet with the School District to review Comprehensive Plan recommendations and discuss future land use and budgetary impacts.
- Explore available regional planning options at the Township's disposal.

Land Use + Growth Management

Balancing growth and preservation

POLICY STATEMENT

Worcester will support a balanced approach of responsible, context-sensitive development in order to preserve and enhance its existing assets, fiscal health, and community character.

GOALS

- Plan for a balanced land-use mix for fiscal sustainability, for the Township and for the residential tax base.
- Ensure context-sensitive design of development, scaled according to its environment and surroundings.
- Promote responsible development that reduces the consumption of land.
- Balance the need to accommodate growth in the Township while supporting and ensuring that land preservation is a high priority.
- Provide the physical capacity for economic growth and investment.
- Allow commercial development when it's small-scale in nature
- Support the continuing viability of agriculture in all its forms in the Township.
- Support local small business development and retention, as well as entrepreneurship.

The most valuable resource a municipality has is its land, perhaps because it is the scarcest of its resources; as they say: they aren't making any more of it. Once land is cleared, drained or built upon, it is very difficult to adapt it to an entirely different use without great cost. There is usually only an immediate financial consideration involved with the decision to develop buildings, but what is built ultimately has long-term impacts to the social life, environment, and fiscal sustainability of the community which may not be immediately evident. Therefore, decisions about when, where and how to permit development must be made practically, as well as with the long-term planning objectives of the Township in mind. This chapter is the culmination of many of the growth and development issues examined throughout this plan. We will discuss the growth outlook of the Township, the fiscal dimensions to the current land use of the Township, and a plan for the future character of land in the community, and generally how it should be prioritized (or not) for development. A closer look at the villages is also considered.

Growth Outlook and Population Forecasting

Typically, planning for the future growth needs of a municipality, and how that municipality should anticipate the future disposition of land uses, involves forecasting the Township's future population growth. This is usually performed either by using previous years' growth and trending this growth to the future, or adapting regional population modeling to the local level.

However, determining growth trends derived from modelling of geographies smaller than a County are notoriously unreliable. The Township does not need to anticipate a future influx of residents because a model says that they will come—residents move to an area ultimately because 1.) the community is desirable for any number of reasons related to quality of life, schools, transportation options, etc., and 2.) because there is available housing already built or in the pipeline.

*Comparing DVRPC's Population Forecasts below from both **Connections 2045**, adopted in 2016, and **Connections 2050**, just adopted in 2021, illustrates the extreme difficulty of forecasting populations of such small geographies. In the span of just five years, total growth forecasted over a 30-35-year period was drastically revised downward for Worcester, indicating the inherent unpredictability, and ultimately the rather limited usefulness, of relying on forecasting to drive municipal policy.*

Municipal-Level Population Forecasts, 2015-2045

Worcester Township, Montgomery County

Absolute Change (2015-2045): **2,508**

Percent Change (2015-2045): **24.04%**

Absolute Change per Square Mile (2015-2045): **154.29**

2015 Population	10,435
2020 Forecast	10,917
2025 Forecast	11,396
2030 Forecast	11,882
2035 Forecast	12,304
2040 Forecast	12,650
2045 Forecast	12,943

Municipal-Level Population Forecasts, 2015-2050

Worcester Township - Montgomery County

Absolute Change 2015 - 2050 **1,134**

% Change 2015 - 2050 **10.90%**

2015 Population	10,368
2020 Estimate	10,436
2025 Estimate	10,470
2030 Estimate	10,733
2035 Estimate	10,962
2040 Estimate	11,171
2045 Estimate	11,347
2050 Estimate	11,502

How much new construction of both housing and nonresidential development (including commercial, industrial and institutional development) that Worcester could expect in 10-20 years is largely a function of hyper-local conditions on the ground. These conditions include the availability of land both for sale and unpreserved, the impacts of land use regulations, and even the particular motivations of a few select property owners.

Nevertheless, we can safely assume that growth and development *will* indeed happen, both because the Township must anticipate that certain “fair share” housing types, particularly high-density housing, will be built through time as required by law, and because it is impossible that all remaining undeveloped land will be restricted from development.

What might be more useful is describing several factors that *could* have an effect on **growth patterns** in the Township:

- **Growth of working from home.** While there will be significant areas of the economy that will always remain “in-person” and require the physical presence of workers and customers, the response of many employers to the COVID-19 pandemic work from home requirements has been to *extend* this benefit beyond the immediate public health crisis. Commuting, and motor vehicle traffic overall, could see a permanent diminishment, which can impact road maintenance funding, as well as obviate the necessity for certain future traffic capacity improvements.
- **Decline in physical, large-format general retail operations.** With the current dominance of online retail in many sectors, the region is seeing many large-format retail stores close or convert to other uses, suggesting that general merchandise retail may continue to move online.
- **Continued desire of “main street” shopping and entertainment.** While large-format general merchandise retail has seen declines, the strength of boutique or “main street” shopping and entertainment experiences has endured and is even growing in demand in the region. Worcester’s villages could benefit from this latent demand in the Township by developing retail and recreation amenities.
- **Continued feasibility of agricultural operations in the Township.** The availability of funding for agricultural preservation, and other avenues of revenue for agricultural operations in the Township, could determine how many farms ultimately decide to sell and convert to residential development.
- **Regional housing market and generally low housing supply.** The continuing low housing supply in the area could push demand high enough in the region, including in the Township, to create a very competitive market for developable land.

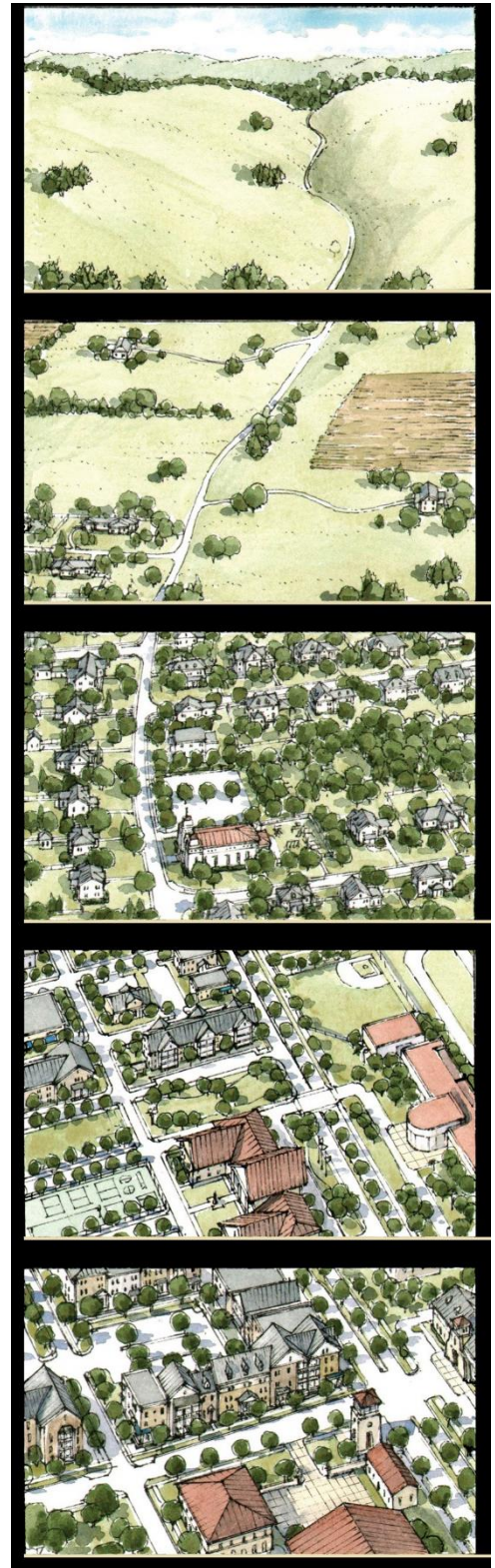
Implementing the Development Spectrum—Right Building, Right Place

When planting a tree, it is important to take into consideration the many conditions that can factor into its growth into a mature, healthy tree: its shape and habit, the amount of water and nutrients it needs, how fast or slow it grows, and how much sunlight it needs. If you plant a young tree right next to your house that could grow into a giant canopy tree, you'll have to severely cut it back or remove it entirely within the not-too-distant future. If you plant a sun-loving plant in the shade, it may struggle and remain stunted for a long time, and never reach its full potential. Think of all the lost opportunities you might have had to enjoy its fruit or shade, and the lost effort you took to plant and water it, only to have it never fully thrive its whole life because something about its ultimate location was never right to begin with. The concept of considering all the possible circumstances that could affect the growth of a tree before you plant is called, "Right Tree, Right Place."

The same goes for a building. A building in its proper place requires a logical relation to its surroundings, proximity to other buildings and uses like it, and a connection to all the appropriate amenities it needs. In a conventional suburban municipality, development is permitted to sprawl at roughly the same density across a wide-ranging area, with no relation to the local environmental character, specific resources or amenities.

At right is an example of a "transect"—an illustration of different development "zones", ranging from least development to most developed, which are meant to be spatially related to each other along a spectrum, in that rural areas transition to suburban areas, which transition to village centers; the least to most intense. The zones of the transect could be thought of as different "habitats" for different people—those who prefer the different levels of intensity represented by the rural to suburban to village center transition, so that walkability, housing diversity and existing communities are prioritized. Likewise, places of village or suburban density should ideally be near other places like them, and not separated into isolated pods or pockets apart from others. The kinds of development illustrative of the different zones, such as those on the right, are specifically formulated for the scale and character of a community.

For Worcester, implementing the transect by creating desirable forms for each "zone"—in essence a design guideline for each section—would be part of a separate planning and design exercise for the Township, which would then be the basis for a larger zoning implementation. However, the kernel of the idea—designating essential "character zones" in the Township—could be implemented through this very Plan, which is discussed below under "Future Land Use /Place Type Plan."



Long Term Fiscal Resilience: The Costs of Land

As we have seen, the land use of Worcester impacts many other realms of community life, including traffic, available housing, and the age and lifestyles of residents. However, it also affects the taxes and quality of life of residents as well. The fiscal impacts of land use affects the size of the local government and the scope of services it can provide, the types of equipment that must be purchased, the number of municipal and school district staff members, the number of students, the size and number of schools that must be maintained, and the tax rates municipalities and school districts must adopt.

One way to analyze these impacts is through a Cost of Community Services (COCS) ratio, which compares the tax and nontax revenues generated by different land uses to the cost of providing services to those same land uses. We will look at four major groups of land uses: residential, commercial, industrial, and farm and open land. Such an analysis can only include properties which are taxable; this will specifically *not* include land owned by governmental entities as well as exempt properties, like nonprofit institutions and school district properties. Studies of this kind which have been produced for communities both in Pennsylvania and in other states on a relatively regular basis have found that residential land typically costs more than what it provides back in revenues, and will almost certainly cost more to service than all other types of land. Commercial, industrial, and farm and open land, on the other hand, tend to provide more revenue than they require in services. These studies, looking at tax and non-tax revenue and expenditures for both municipal and school district budgets, attribute the types of revenue typically induced by the land use type (e.g. earned income tax to residential, school and municipal real estate tax proportionally to all land use categories, etc.) and likewise attribute the appropriate expenditures typically spent on the land use type (e.g. school district expenditures to residential, road maintenance costs proportionally to all land use types by area, etc.). The result of this analysis for Worcester is as follows:

Ratio of Revenue to Costs of Community Services Attributable to Different Land Use Types in Worcester (1 : X = \$1 of revenue : \$X of expenditures)

Residential	Commercial	Industrial	Agricultural
1 : 0.84	1 : 0.26	1 : 0.19	1 : 0.17

As can be seen above, nonresidential and agricultural land uses in the Township are **3-5x more fiscally beneficial** than residential lands. This is particularly important when considering where the tax burden currently lies in the Township: even though nonresidential and agricultural uses produce much more revenue than they take to be serviced, there is relatively little tax base currently dedicated to these uses. Industrial and commercial uses in the

Township combined produce only about 5% of real estate taxes, and produce no earned income taxes—in contrast, non-agricultural residential uses account for more than 90% of real estate taxes and 100% of earned income taxes. Finding ways to increase the tax base dedicated to industrial and commercial uses could begin to relieve the pressure on residential properties to provide the vast majority of the tax revenue to the municipality and school district.

What is unusual in Worcester’s case is that, despite still costing more than all other land use types to service, residential land uses in the Township are still a net *positive* fiscal benefit, which is relatively rare. There are several factors which may contribute to this situation, such as:

- Worcester’s very low municipal real estate tax millage (the lowest in the County). The largest cost driver with which most municipalities in the County contend, which Worcester does *not* have, is Police Service, and the attendant staff, equipment, and pension and benefit costs.
- Reliance on earned income tax revenue to fund 2/3 of the General Fund (which is aided by the Township’s having the fifth-highest median household income in the County).
- Worcester contributes approximately 37% of the total revenue the Methacton School District receives from real estate taxes, but students from Worcester compose only about 25% of the total student body of the District. This itself could be related to Worcester’s older population in general (median age 47.7) compared to Lower Providence Township (median age 40.1), the other constituent member of the School District.

Nonetheless, while the Township is in a fiscally positive place right now, we should not assume that it will stay this way forever. Even the most fiscally conservative administration of the Township cannot by itself address the structural forces of land use that drive long-term fiscal sustainability. The Township will need to consider the impacts of several future forces which will impact Worcester’s fiscal outlook:

- **Changes in household income trends.** Unlike real estate, people who earn income can move in—or *out*—of the Township; additionally, earned income taxes tend to be more vulnerable to downward trends in the economy.
- **Continued residential land development.** It’s possible that continued conversion of cost-effective agricultural land to less-cost-effective residential land will continue to squeeze the fiscal situation of the township, particularly if the residential development is of a type particularly impactful to the bottom line. Typically, larger-lot singles are less cost-effective than smaller lot single detached or attached.

Population growth, and the attendant growth of residential and nonresidential property to serve that population, is inevitable. As has been discussed earlier, state statute and case law stipulate that a municipality:

- cannot unduly restrict growth and development;
- must permit its fair share of high-, medium- and low-density housing, and

To grow conscientiously, we want to grow in a manner that:

1. balances growth with the high priority of land preservation;
2. maximizes financial productivity of development;
3. minimizes future obligations for maintenance and debt financing;
4. balances tax base between residential and nonresidential.

- likewise must permit all other legal uses, including commercial and industrial uses

Understanding that there is growth that must be expected, we can manage growth conscientiously.

Developing the Future Growth Management Strategy

To implement this plan, areas of the Township must be designated a category that describes the desired future state of the land: how intensely developed it will be, the character of the development, and what kind of impacts can be expected from that development. Typically, this kind of plan is called “the Future Land Use Map”: all future geography-based policy in this Comprehensive Plan ultimately derives from this map, including future zoning text and map amendments, preservation decisions, and construction projects. Ideally this map should correspond, or at least should consult, the Future Land Use Maps of the County Comprehensive Plan, *Montco 2040: A Shared Vision*. While there should be general consistency with the county’s Future Land Use Maps, the map produced by Worcester’s Comprehensive Plan is the controlling one for the Township.

Montco 2040 Future Land Use Areas in Worcester

Business Areas – Business Areas are concentrations of employment-oriented land uses, such as offices, research facilities, and industrial parks. Most office-oriented Business Areas are located near highway interchanges while industrial-oriented ones tend to have a wider range of locations, reflecting older transportation networks based on train lines. Business Areas often generate a lot of general traffic during peak times and freight traffic throughout the day.

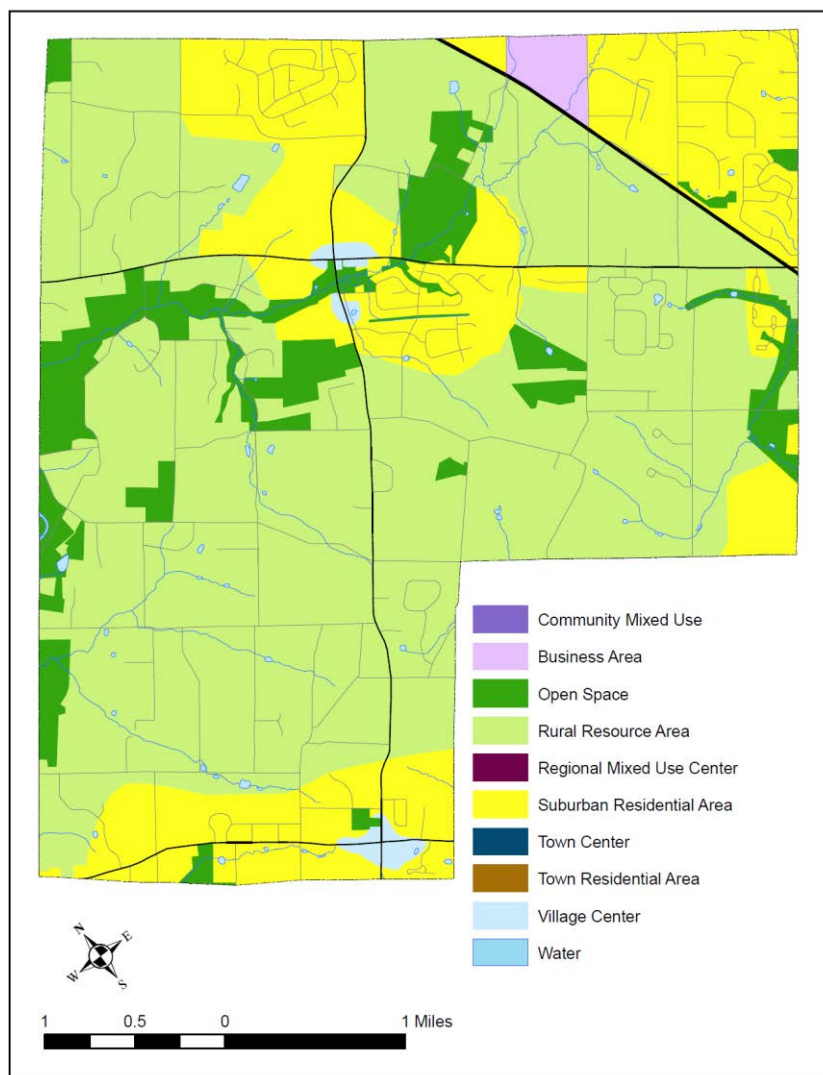
Village Center – Village Centers are traditional village areas with a mix of retail, institutional, office, and residential uses. Unlike denser town centers, these centers usually have small separate buildings located close to each other, with people walking and driving from use to use. Most older buildings began as residences, although many have been converted to other uses.

Suburban Residential Area – Suburban Residential Areas are residential areas which depend on automobiles for transportation and often have extensive landscaping on individual properties. These areas will have a variety of housing types, with single-family detached homes the most prominent type.

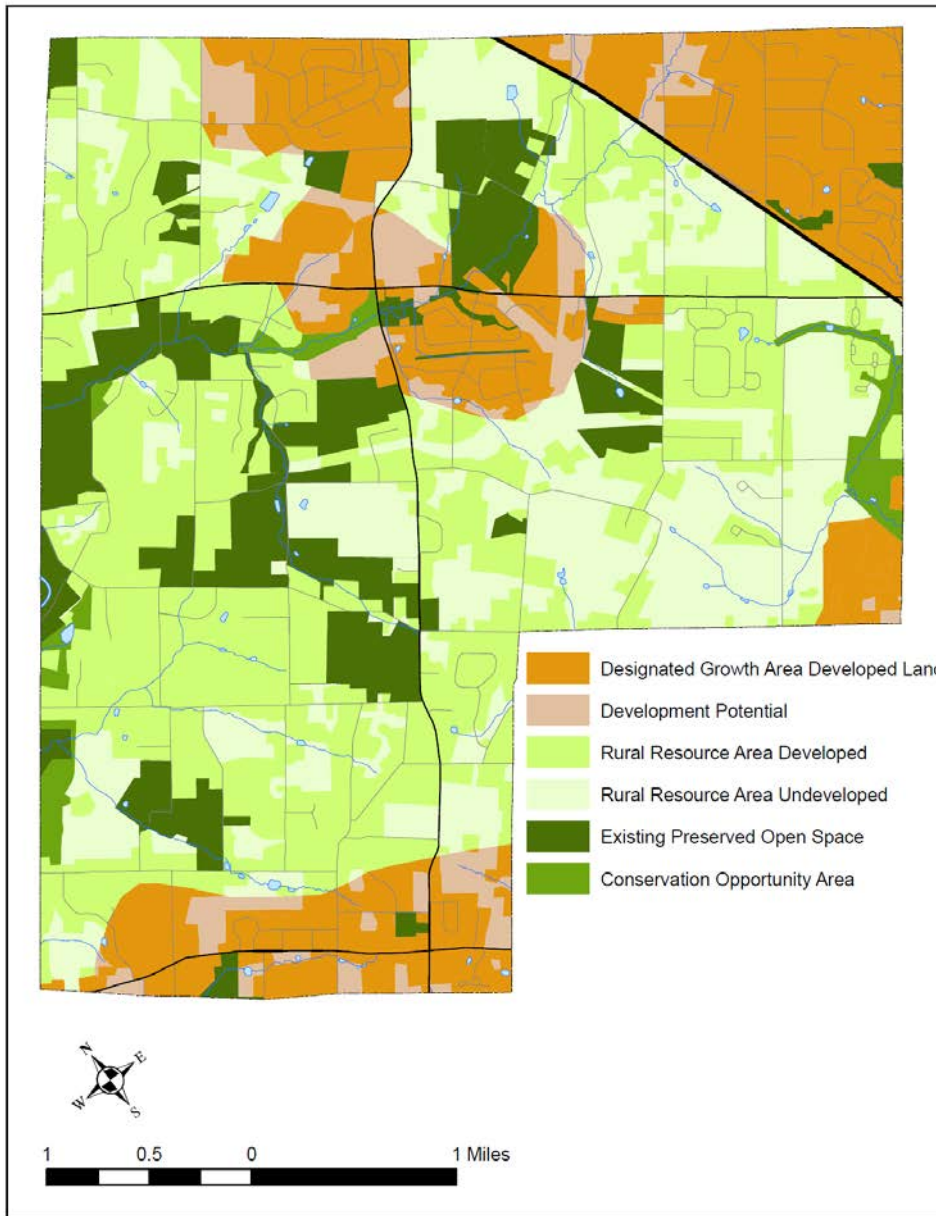
Rural Resource Area – Rural Resource Areas consist of open land with a traditional rural appearance that includes farms, small woodlands, some low density residential homes, and rural villages.

Open Space / Conservation Area – Open Space and Conservation Areas primarily consist of parks, environmentally-sensitive land, and connecting land, with little, if any, existing development.

Montco 2040’s Future Land Use Designations in Worcester.



Montco 2040's Growth and Preservation Plan Designations in Worcester.



Montco 2040 Growth and Rural Resource Areas in Worcester

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

Development Potential/Developable Land in Growth Areas - *Developable Land properties are currently farmed, vacant, or open. These properties may see future development, and much of the new development in the county is expected to go on these properties.*

Developed Land and Preserved Farmland in Rural Resource Areas - *These areas are either developed with low-intensity residential, business, and institutional uses or are permanently preserved as farms. Very little additional development is expected on these properties.*

Undeveloped/Developable Land in Rural Resource Areas - *These properties, which might be unpreserved farms or wooded properties, should remain undeveloped, although the little development that does occur in the Rural Resource Areas will most likely be on these properties.*

Existing Preserved Open Space - *These areas are existing federal, state, county, and local parks or properties protected through a conservation easement. Except for park improvements, no new development should occur.*

Conservation Opportunity Areas - *These environmentally-sensitive areas and greenways should have minimal development, if any.*

Future Land Use Place Types

Oftentimes the only difference between zoning districts is the size and shape of the lots, and marginal difference between permitted uses. We should move away from the wonky terms of “land use” and really call them what they are. We propose a way to characterize not a single use or collection of uses, but of the *types of places* they are: this takes a more comprehensive approach to understanding areas and tries to categorize not just the uses, but the *character, style, and surrounding environment* of the development that is either existing or proposed. Below are descriptions of these place types for our Future Land Use / Place Type Plan.

Village Center

- **Description:** The most densely-developed areas in the Township, villages are centers of social and economic activity in the community. Unlike most places in the Township, there are significant infill and

redevelopment opportunities present in these locations, since they contain many of the older, cross-road clusters of homes and businesses with reinvestment potential. In furtherance of the Township's growth objectives, these will also be the sites designated for higher-density residential development, which will be supported by walkable street and trail networks. These areas will likewise support a flexible mix of nonresidential uses and services, catering primarily to local or neighborhood-based demand, which can adapt and change over time.

- **Character/Intent:** 50% residential 50% commercial
- **Primary Uses:** Commercial and high-density residential
- **Secondary Uses:** Civic and institutional uses, parks and open space, lower-density residential.

Small-Scale Mixed Use and Commercial Development

Because of some of the many future forces described above that will impact growth patterns on the Township and the region, commercial properties in village areas could see future investment and redevelopment if properly accommodated. Supporting compatible commercial development will likewise relieve some of the burden on residential properties and taxpayers.

A few ways the Township can increase compatible commercial uses involve zoning and policy changes which permit a wider variety and configuration of commercial uses. However, this will need to be done carefully: for Worcester's villages, it is highly desirable that commercial uses be *small scale* in nature. Case law suggests that, while municipalities are required to provide for every legal and reasonable use, communities can still limit the *size* and *scale* of such uses and development. Therefore, it's desirable to continue to restrict "big box" style retail and conventional shopping center development through zoning. Additionally, the Township may want to take a more comprehensive look at current commercial district regulations to ensure they are up to date with best practices concerning village development and are adequately business-friendly. Greater liaising with the business community in the area could also give the Township additional insight as to how to increase investment in these village areas, as well as to support entrepreneurship as well.

Suburban Residential

- **Description:** This is the most common type of residential development currently in Worcester, consisting of single-family homes and wider, automobile-oriented streets. Generally only infill or redevelopment will continue to happen in these areas, as they are already at their built-out stage.
- **Character/Intent:** 95% residential, 5% nonresidential
- **Primary Uses:** Single-family residential
- **Secondary Uses:** Parks and open space, neighborhood-based institutional uses, compatible mixed-use

Regional Commercial/Industrial Center

- **Description:** Areas catering to the regional demand, rather than local or neighborhood-based demand, for commercial or business activity, including light industrial uses, such as manufacturing, processing,

warehousing, and distribution, research and development, and office parks. These areas will have access to public water and sewer.

- **Character/Intent:** 100% nonresidential
- **Primary Uses:** Light industrial uses, research and development, professional offices
- **Secondary Uses:** Regional institutional uses

Rural Residential & Agricultural Areas

- **Description:** Areas which are primarily composed of existing low-density, large-lot residential and both preserved and unpreserved agricultural properties which are situated away from the three village centers of Worcester. Further development of these areas leaves a significant amount of surrounding open space, should involve minimal infrastructure investment, and are generally not served by public water and sewer.
- **Character/Intent:** 100% residential and agriculture
- **Primary Uses:** Single-family residential, agriculture
- **Secondary Uses:** Parks and open space, neighborhood-based institutional uses

Retaining Agricultural Operations

Worcester residents value the rural character of the Township, most significantly demonstrated by the number and variety of agricultural properties. As has been discussed earlier, agricultural preservation programs through the state and county can contribute to preservation efforts in the Township. However, there are several situations in which existing agricultural properties would either not qualify or be very competitive for these programs, and other circumstances where property owners may not be interested in dealing with the restrictions involved in maintaining an agricultural conservation easement on their property.

In situations where conservation is not desired or feasible, there are other ways the Township can help keep agriculture viable in the community. The Township can enable additional business ventures on these types of properties which can keep them financially viable when more traditional agricultural activities may become increasingly difficult to maintain. One of these avenues is agritourism, in which the agricultural properties invite customers and visitors to participate in agricultural-related services, activities and events. These activities can include explicitly permitting, with conditions, such things as pick-your-own operations, seasonal events like fall festivals, private social gatherings, and varied other education or entertainment attractions.

Understandably, concerns may arise as to the compatibility of such activities with nearby residential uses, whether they be noise, traffic or parking impacts. However, many, if not all, of these kinds of concerns can be alleviated through zoning and other land use regulations, which can include limitations placed on kinds and duration of activities, required buffering and nuisance controls.

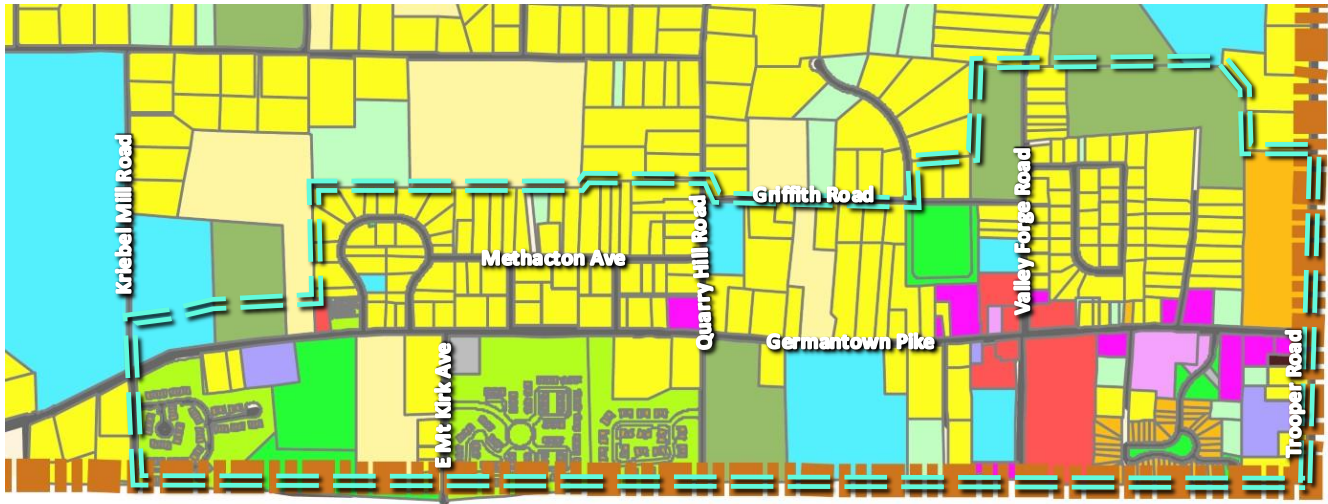
Conservation Areas

- **Description:** Lands which are already conserved, or open and undeveloped lands which may be high priorities for conservation efforts in the future. Such lands may have minimal existing development, usually in the form of an estate home and other outbuildings.
- **Character/Intent:** N/A
- **Primary Uses:** Parks and preserved natural open spaces, preserved agriculture
- **Secondary Uses:** Low-density single family detached (no longer developable).

















**INSERT
FUTURE
LAND USE /
PLACE TYPE
PLAN HERE**

A Closer Look: The Villages

Fairview Village



Existing Land Use

 Multifamily	 Single Family Detached	 Office	 Undeveloped
 Single Family Attached	 Country Residence	 Industrial	 Public Open Space
 Twin/Duplex	 Mixed Use	 Institutional	 Private Open Space
 Mobile Home Park	 Retail	 Utilities	 Agriculture

This village historically developed along Germantown Pike, with additional development along Valley Forge and Trooper Roads. The key commercial development is clustered at the eastern edge of the village along Germantown Pike, from Valley Forge Road moving east to the township line with East Norriton. This development includes a small shopping center, gas station, automotive services, small professional offices, a sports club and a dollar store. While the *Montco2040* Future Land Use Map only includes the Valley Forge/Germantown intersection area as a “Village Center,” there is significant justification to designate much of Germantown Pike in this area as a Village Center. Much of the Township’s densest existing housing is also located here, including four single-family attached developments south of Germantown Pike. Because this is where the recently amended MR Overlay District is also located, future multifamily developments could further increase the number of residents in this part of the village. However, despite the significant number of existing and potential higher-density homes in this area, there are few pedestrian connections between these developments or to other parts of the village. Few sidewalks also exist within the main commercial center. The commercial areas may have a latent demand of users in these developments if the Township were to focus on implementing pedestrian connections—the prospect of opening up access to this area could also begin the process of revitalizing the commercial spaces and improving the public realm of the street. The Township could also further study the prospect of expanding the opportunities for commercial and retail uses in this area. The proposed visual provided below gives an idea of what a potential placemaking opportunity could look like in the village: public investment to beautify an underutilized space here could generate investment

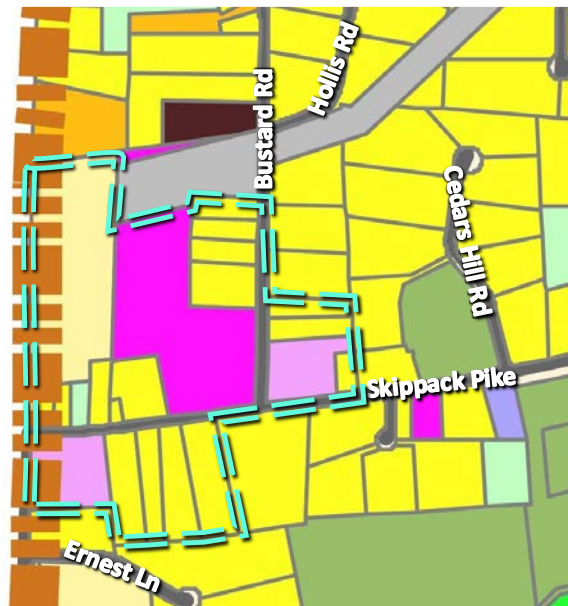
and interest from others to this area, while also emphasizing the Township's identity with signage and other design motifs.

**INSERT FAIRVIEW VILLAGE VISUAL
HERE**

Goals of the Cedars Village Overlay District

1. *Preserve and reuse the historic structures in Cedars Village, and provide for renovation and new construction that complement the existing desirable village characteristics of Cedars Village to the greatest extent possible.*
2. *Permit a variety of uses that can be accommodated by existing types of structures, lot sizes, and other physical and visual attributes of properties in the district.*
3. *Encourage development that is in keeping with the character of Worcester Township.*
4. *Prohibit development of retail commercial uses that are typically high-volume-traffic generators, have a strip-type or highway-oriented commercial appearance, contain excessive amounts of paved areas or numerous access points, have incongruous architectural styles, or do not contribute to the historic character of the village.*
5. *Encourage shared use of access driveways to reduce the total number of driveways, minimize the number of new driveways, and provide more efficient and safer access and traffic flow.*
6. *Reduce the visual impact of parking and encourage adjoining properties to share parking.*
7. *Provide safe and sufficient pedestrian access from along roadways and from parking areas to the various permitted uses in the village, and encourage the inclusion of trail connections to and throughout the village.*
8. *Minimize visual and functional conflicts between residential and nonresidential uses within the district, and protect abutting residential districts from adverse impacts.*
9. *Provide for public gathering space and public open space.*
10. *Provide for a transfer of development rights receiving area from rural and agricultural preservation areas of the Township into the village, to reduce development pressures on the rural and preservation areas of the Township and provide additional development options in the villages, consistent with the goals above.*

Cedars

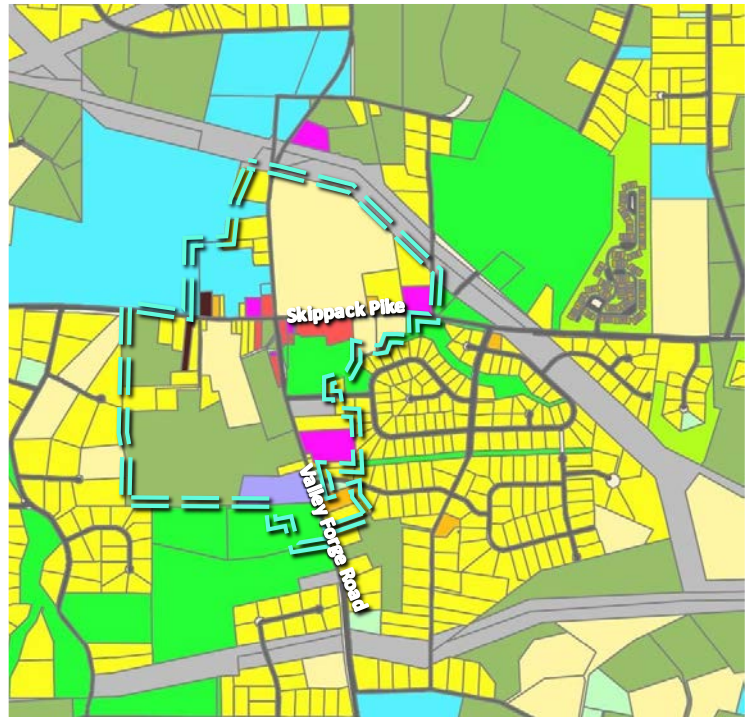
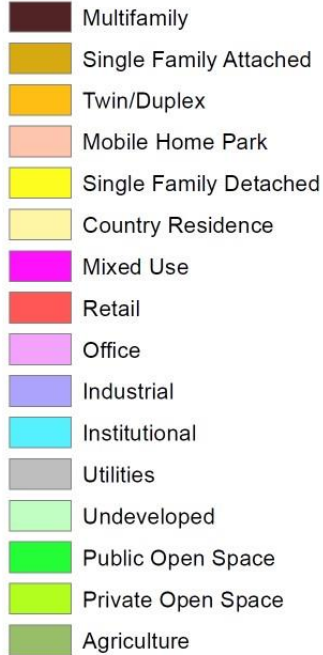


Of the three main villages of the Township, Cedars is the least developed. The majority of what is mapped above as Cedars is residential in nature. The main nonresidential property which puts Cedars “on the map” is 3401 Skippack Pike, which contains numerous small boutique shops, restaurants and personal service businesses, which are contained within a number of historic buildings within a picturesque setting. Since the surrounding area is relatively low density housing and there are no sidewalks or trails connecting the village, the only way to access the area is by car. Beyond 3401 Skippack Pike, other artisanal and small-scale commercial uses are permitted within the area, as well as a few additional residential uses, through the Cedars Village Overlay District. The Township adopted this zoning district in 2012 to foster the further development of the village that would be compatible with its rural surroundings. However, since the ordinance was adopted, the Overlay has not yet been utilized by operators seeking to further develop the village. Since trail connections to the area are anticipated by the Ordinance, we recommend that the Township further investigate developing regional trails connecting to this village. Also, the Township may wish to explore how to further incentivize the usage of TDRs in this Overlay, which are currently permitted, but may not be structured as effectively as they could be. Additionally, in reference to the illustration of a potential improvements below, vehicular access to 3401 Skippack Pike could be altered so as to create a safer and more inviting entrance for both pedestrians and vehicles, which also offering a more aesthetic frontage.

**INSERT
CEDARS
VISUAL
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Center Point Village

Existing Land Use



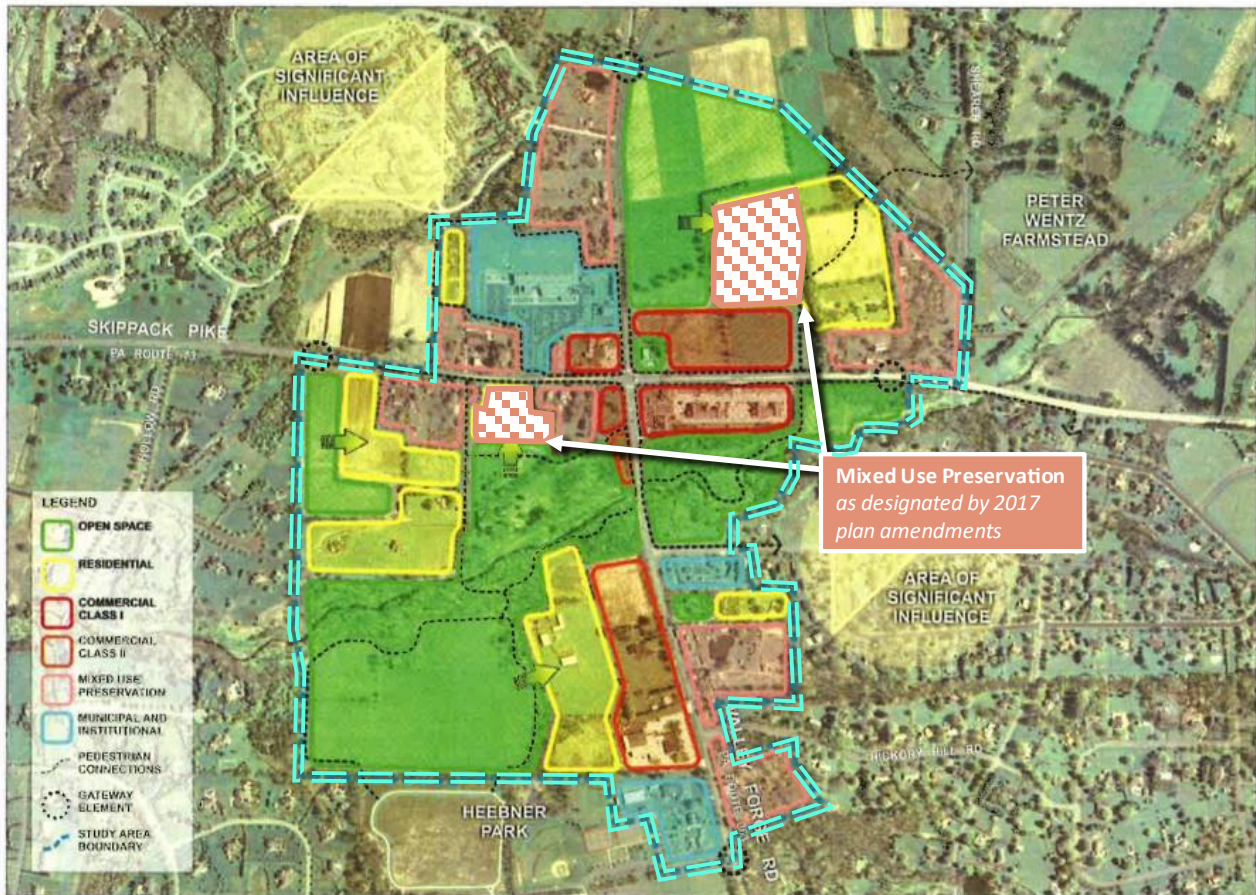
Centered at the intersection of Valley Forge Road and Skippack Pike, Center Point Village has received the most planning attention as of late from the Township, culminating in the master plan *A Vision for Center Point*, which was adopted in 2014 and amended in 2017. The Final Land Use Bubble below, which includes the amendments to it from 2017, envisioned a mixed-use village center, which would include higher-density residential and significant preserved open space secured through transfers of development rights. While the plan still technically remains adopted Township policy, the zoning revisions required to permit the various development schemes were not adopted by the Township.

Nonetheless, we believe that there is still value in the existing *A Vision for Center Point* plan, although it would likely need to be slightly updated to reflect current circumstances. The idea of a mixed-use village center at Center Point Village is still in keeping with previous and current Township planning goals, as well as with the goals of this Comprehensive Plan. We recommend that the Township revisit the planning goals and process of the original plan, and reconsider its options to see if there are remaining pieces of the original zoning scheme which are salvageable, and to renegotiate points of division which may still exist in the community.

Recommendations, Best Policies and Practices for Center Point Village from *A Vision for Center Point*

1. *Create a mapped Center Point Village zoning district.*
2. *Include an institutional zoning designation within the village zoning district to better manage the future of lands currently used by the school district and township.*
3. *Allow a wider range of residential and nonresidential uses within the village zoning district.*
4. *Permit a base density of 2.5 dwelling units per acre on land designated for residential uses.*
5. *Establish density bonuses and incentives that are tied to desired improvements, such as transferable development rights.*
6. *Pursue an aggressive traffic planning and calming program that will protect quality of life in the village.*
7. *Ensure public sewer facilities are available to the entire village area.*
8. *Create a pedestrian circulation system that extends throughout the entire village area.*

Final Land Use Bubble Plan



CENTER POINT VILLAGE
LAND USE BUBBLE PLAN
WORCESTER TOWNSHIP, PA.



Recommendations

Plan for a balanced land-use mix for fiscal sustainability, for the Township and for the residential tax base.

- Adequately zone for an appropriate mix of both residential and nonresidential uses.

Concentrate development where infrastructure and development already exists, such as in village growth areas.

- Promote and incentivize development in specific growth areas and other areas where existing infrastructure is available and has additional capacity.
- Revisit and update Center Point Village Vision plan and proposed overlay to meet the Township's current needs.
- Promote the usage of the existing Cedars Village Overlay, and investigate potential changes to encourage its use. *Since its adoption, the Cedars Overlay has not been used by any property owners.*
- Consider future planning focused on Fairview Village.
- Update the Township's Zoning Ordinance and SALDO to align with the Future Land Use Plan, policies and recommendations in this Plan.

Ensure context-sensitive design of development, scaled according to its environment and surroundings

- Restrict undesirable or inappropriate development.
- Consider developing guidelines for Transect zones of development in Worcester.
- Support implementation of design guidance recommendations of the *Community Character* chapter.

Promote responsible development that reduces the consumption of land.

- Discourage large-lot residential development, particularly through the *Conservation Subdivisions* process.
- Support wider use of Transfers of Development Rights (TDR), as discussed in further detail in the *Preservation, Open Space + Parks* chapter.

Balance the need to accommodate growth in the Township while supporting and ensuring that land preservation is a high priority.

- Consider incentives and bonuses for increased land preservation in land development

Provide the physical capacity for economic growth and investment.

- Support branding and placemaking recommendations of *Community Character* Chapter.

Allow commercial development when it's small-scale in nature.

- Continue to restrict “big box” style retail and shopping center development.
- Enable more small-scale and mixed-use development of commercial uses, emphasizing incremental changes and improvements over time, versus large-scale redevelopments or transitions.

Support the continuing viability of agriculture in all its forms in the Township.

- Consider zoning and other incentives which permit additional, compatible accessory uses and businesses on agricultural properties.
- Investigate further studies regarding the potential growth of agritourism in the Township

Support local small business development and retention, as well as entrepreneurialism.

- Continue to maintain a liaison to local Chambers of Commerce, with an eye to expand outreach to potential local businesses to locate to Worcester.