

**AGENDA**  
**WORCESTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**WORCESTER TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY HALL**  
**1031 VALLEY FORGE ROAD, WORCESTER, PA 19490**  
**THURSDAY, MARCH 24, 2022, 7:00 PM**

1. **CALL TO ORDER**
2. **ATTENDANCE**
3. **APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**
  - A motion to approve the January 27, 2022 meeting minutes.
4. **3310 & 3320 WATER STREET ROAD-LOT LINE CHANGE (LD 2022-02)**
  - Review of a proposed Preliminary/Final Plan of Residential Lot Line Change on 3310 & 3320 Water Street Road.
5. **REVIEW OF COMP PLAN**
  - Review of Chapters- Introduction & Background, Worcester: Past & Present, Goals & Objectives, and Sense of Place.
6. **PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA**
  - Discussion on the agenda for the April 28th Planning Commission meeting.
    1. Comp Plan Review- Transportation & Mobility, Community Character, Preservation, Open Space & Parks
    2. LD- 2021-02- Huganir Review
    3. Clean-up Ordinance
7. **PUBLIC COMMENT**
8. **ADJOURNMENT**

active applications (review period expiration)

- LD 2017-02 Palmer Village, LLC (*June 30, 2022*)
- LD 2021-02 Huganir (*review period waived*)
- LD 2022-01 City View (*review period waived*)
- LD 2022-02 3310 & 3320 Water Street- Preliminary/Final (*review period waived*)

**WORCESTER TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
WORCESTER TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY HALL  
1031 VALLEY FORGE ROAD, WORCESTER, PA 19490  
THURSDAY, JANUARY 27, 2022, 7:30 PM**

**CALL TO ORDER** by Mr. Sherr at 7:31 PM

**ATTENDANCE**

PRESENT:	TONY SHERR	[X]
	LEE KOCH	[ ]
	BOB ANDORN	[X]
	MICHELLE GREENAWALT	[X]
	MICHAEL HOLSONBACK	[X]
	JENNIFER TAYLOR	[X]

1. **Reorganization** – Mr. Holsonback motioned to appoint Tony Sherr as Chair, second by Mr. Andorn. By unanimous vote the motion was approved.

Mr. Holsonback motioned to appoint Michelle Greenawalt as Vice Chair, second by Mr. Sherr. By unanimous vote the motion was approved.

Mr. Sherr motioned to appoint Lee Koch as Secretary, second by Mr. Holsonback. By unanimous vote the motion was approved.

2. **Introduction and Welcome**- Mr. Sherr welcomed new alternate member Jennifer Taylor. Ms. Taylor introduced herself. Mr. Sherr also welcomed Stacy Crandell, Assistant Township Manager as the new staff liaison to the committee. He also noted that it was nice to have County Planner, Brian Olszak in attendance for the meeting.

3. **Approval of November 11, 2021 Minutes**- Mr. Andorn made a motion to approve the November 11, 2021 Meeting Minutes, seconded by Ms. Greenawalt. By unanimous vote the motion was approved.

4. **Ordinance 2021-288**- Mr. Sherr introduced the topic and explained that Variety was at their previous meeting and presented their Master Plan and the ordinance. He stated that he wanted to start with Brian Olszak so he could comment on the County review letter regarding by-right versus conditional use.

Mr. Olszak explained that he did not have the background in regards to the discussions that had taken place with Variety and the Township on the intention of the ordinance. He went through the review letter and clarified some points in his letter. He also noted that while he wrote the letter, the review was from various section chiefs in the County Planning Commission.

Mr. Sherr commented on his concerns about the structure of the ordinance.

Mr. Andorn commented that the County review letter documented his concerns regarding the by-right versus conditional use.

Mr. Holsonback commented that ordinance should be cleaned up before proceeding with the ordinance.

Ms. Greenawalt commented that she looks to Brian for what is suggested to be cleaned up.

Peter Simone, the planner for Variety Club and Maribeth Roman Schmidt, Chair of the Variety Club Board were in attendance. Mr. Simone asked to clarify some of the concerns on the ordinance and the review letter.

Mr. Simone provide an in-depth overview of each of the points in the County review letter and explained the reasoning behind asking for the use to be by-right versus conditional use. Variety's Master Plan is estimated to cost \$35 million and Variety Club is trying to secure funding and donations. It is easier to do that with more certainty rather than uncertainty of conditional use. In addition, he explained the differences in uses under "Day Camp" and under the proposed ordinance. He also explained that "implicit" allowed uses are open to interpretation and this Special Needs Camp, School, Development Center" under this ordinance needs certainty for developmental purposes.

Township Engineer Joe Nolan was in attendance and clarified some of the questions and comments from the commission. Mr. Nolan explained that Variety Club and any other organization that may fall under this zoning would need to go through the land development process and they will have to comply with the Township ordinances including stormwater management and it would be reviewed by Township Consultants. Any land development would also go through the Planning Commission and finally to the Board of Supervisors for approval.

Mr. Simone noted that Variety Club understood this and stated that they were going to make sure they complied with all of the ordinances during the land development process.

Mr. Andorn asked if Variety Club had any past problems with receiving approval through conditional use. Mr. Simone had the Township look into the history and there were no records that Variety Club was not given any formal conditional use or land development process as they built the original facility just building permits. Variety Club came to the Township with master plan and the ordinance to help formalize the process with themselves internally and with the Township.

Ms. Schmidt explained that she has been working with Variety Club for about 7 years and in the past, there was no real planning and they are working to go forward with a new approach to update their facility with this Master Plan.

Mr. Sherr asked Mr. Nolan about practical use of the ordinance. Mr. Nolan noted that this ordinance was revised from its original format after review by the Township Staff and Township Consultants including the Township Solicitor.

Mr. Sherr asked if there was any public comment in regards to this. Mr. Burt Hynes commented that he did not understand why this ordinance was crafted for one property. He asked about Master Plan and also was concerned about the restaurant use that was in the ordinance. Mr. Simone noted that the restaurant use was there to help their clients to learn a vocational skill. Mr. Gerry Mizak commented that he had put in an application to volunteer and was happy to attend the meeting to learn more about what is happening in the Township.

Ms. Greenawalt commented she agreed with Mr. Nolan and felt that Variety Club was an asset to our community and the surrounding communities. She also talked about the partnership that Variety Club has with the school district and understands the need for them to be proactive for funding purposes.

Ms. Schmidt commented that she appreciated hearing that from Ms. Greenawalt and also added that they just recently started sharing their Master Plan with their donors and there is a lot of excitement for this plan. She added that there is an immediate need for this ordinance to move forward as they are seeking donations and funding. Donors and grant programs want to see that there is certainty to the plan.

Ms. Greenawalt made a motion to recommend the Ordinance 2021-288 for adoption with the recommendations from Township Engineer and Township Solicitor. There was no second.

Mr. Andorn made a motion to defer the recommendation of the ordinance until the Township Solicitor reviewed the County review letter and provided comments. The motion was seconded by Mr. Holsonback. The motion passed 3-1, with Ms. Greenawalt opposing the motion.

Mr. Sherr noted that he appreciated the discussion and again emphasized that the Planning Commission was not against Variety Club but felt the ordinance needed to be cleaned up more.

Mr. Simone asked for specifics on what needed to be cleaned up so they could better address it.

Mr. Sherr and Mr. Andorn commented that they were concerned about any zoning ordinance after previous challenges and felt that it needed to be more cleaned up. The Center Square Golf Course was noted as an example.

Mr. Simone stated that he did not understand why the ordinance could not be recommended after Mr. Olszak walked back some of the comments from County review letter. Mr. Andorn asked Mr. Olszak if that was accurate.

Mr. Olszak stated that he clarified the items in the letter after hearing about the background of the ordinance. He also stated that this ordinance can be cleaned up at any time. He also stated again that the County recommended the ordinance.

Mr. Andorn stated that he did not see the urgency to move forward on this without clarification from the Township Solicitor.

Mr. Simone stated that he is hoping this will still move forward to the Board of Supervisors at their February 16<sup>th</sup> meeting. Mr. Sherr stated that the commission is an advisory board and that the public hearing on the ordinance could still take place at the next Board of Supervisors even though the recommendation was tabled at the planning commission.

5. **Discussion on Meeting Time-** Mr. Sherr commented there was a proposal to move up the meeting time from 7:30pm. Ms. Crandell noted that she put this on the agenda to help alleviate really late evenings as the commission looks at the comp plan and other plans that may come up. Mr. Andorn made a motion to start the meeting at 6:30pm. There was no second. Ms. Greenawalt commented that it would be easier to meet at 7:00pm. Ms. Greenawalt made a motion to have the meeting time changed to 7:00pm, seconded by Mr. Sherr and the motion was passed unanimously.
6. **Comp Plan Update-** Mr. Sherr asked Ms. Crandell to provide an update on the comp plan and how the planning commission would review the plan. Ms. Crandell stated that the Comp Plan Update Task Force spent 18 months reviewing and drafting recommended updates to the previous plan. She stated that we allow for up to three meetings to review the document. She expects to have a draft sent to the commission members with their February meeting packet. Mr. Sherr commented that he thinks three meetings are needed. The meetings to discuss the comp plan will be March, April and May.
7. **Discussion on the February 24 Meeting Agenda-** Ms. Crandell stated that there is a potential for Haganir Land Development to be on the agenda but they are still revising plans so it may not be ready for February. Mr. Sherr commented he would like to have a meeting to discuss Palmer and the curative amendment but does not think a special meeting is needed.

**OTHER BUSINESS** - None.

**PUBLIC COMMENT** - There was no public comment.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the Planning Commission, Mr. Sherr adjourned the meeting at 9:06pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

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Stacy E. Crandell  
Assistant Township Manager



4259 W. Swamp Road  
Suite 410  
Doylestown, PA 18902

www.cksenineers.com  
215.340.0600

March 1, 2022  
Ref:# 7201-167

RECEIVED  
▶ MAR 04 2022 ◀  
RECEIVED

Worcester Township  
1721 Valley Forge Road  
PO Box 767  
Worcester, PA 19490-0767

Attention: Tommy Ryan, Township Manager

Reference: 3310 and 3320 Water Street Road – Residential Lot Line Change  
Revised Plans

Dear Mr. Ryan:

I am in receipt of revised plans for the lot line change at 3310 and 3320 Water Street Road. The plan and revision letter dated, February 25, 2022, were submitted via email by the Applicant's Engineer. CKS Engineers, Inc., previously reviewed this plan and prepared a review letter dated February 15, 2022. The plan calls for a lot line change which will include the conveyance of a parcel of land (6,300 sq. ft) from one owner to the other. This will not result in the creation of a new building lot and the intention is to provide a more uniform, rectangular, lot for both properties.

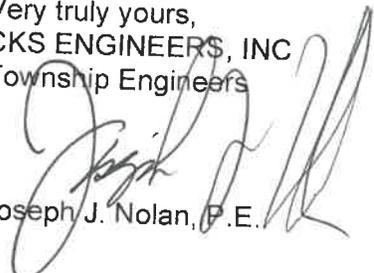
The revised plan consists of one (1) sheet, is dated February 3, 2022, and has a latest revision date of February 23, 2022. The plan has been prepared by Inland Design of West Chester, Pennsylvania for Matthew and Melissa Marcolina, who reside at 3320 Water Street Road.

The latest plan has addressed the four (4) comments set forth in my original review letter. Therefore, this plan is now ready for consideration for review by the Worcester Township Planning Commission and subsequently the Worcester Township Board of Supervisors.

Please note since this is a simple lot line change, there are no public improvements or construction proposed or required in conjunction with this plan.

Please contact this office if you have any questions or need any additional assistance on this project.

Very truly yours,  
CKS ENGINEERS, INC  
Township Engineers

  
Joseph J. Nolan, P.E.

JJN/paf

cc: Robert Brant, Esq., Township Solicitor  
Matthew & Melissa Marcolina  
Evan C. Pellegrino, P.E., Inland Design  
File



4259 W. Swamp Road  
Suite 410  
Doylestown, PA 18902

www.cksenineers.com  
215.340.0600

February 15, 2022  
Ref:# 7201-167

Worcester Township  
1721 Valley Forge Road  
PO Box 767  
Worcester, PA 19490-0767

RECEIVED  
▶ FEB 18 2022 ◀  
RECEIVED

Attention: Tommy Ryan, Township Manager

Reference: 3310 & 3320 Water Street Road – Residential Lot Line Change

Dear Mr. Ryan:

I am in receipt of the Township's memorandum dated February 7, 2022 requesting our review of a preliminary/final plan for a residential lot change for 3310 and 3320 Water Street Road. Accompanying your memorandum is a one (1) sheet plan entitled "Simple Conveyance Plan for Matthew & Melissa Marcolina", which is dated February 3, 2022 with no revisions. This plan calls for the conveyance of a parcel of land (6,300 sq. ft.) from one owner to another. This will not result in the creation of a building lot, and the intention is to provide a more uniform, rectangular lot for both property owners.

I have reviewed the plan, the land development subdivision application, and the applicable property deeds. Based on my review, I offer the following comments:

1. The plan is being proposed in accordance with Section 130-35.1, "Minor Plan Submission" of the Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance. A portion of this Section of the Ordinance allows for lot line adjustments for a simple conveyance between adjoining lots.
2. There are two (2) lots included in this subdivision. The lots should be identified as Lot 1 and Lot 2 on the plan.
3. One of the parcels (67-00-03881-00-3) is identified as being in the R-AG-175 Zoning District. This is not correct. This lot is actually in the R-175 Zoning District. The designation on the lot should be revised accordingly and the zoning data table for R-AG-175 should be revised to list the requirements of R-175. There are several differences between the two (2) districts.
4. Parcel 67-00-03881-00-3 shows the building set back line. However, this building setback line should be dimensioned, as is shown in the adjoining lot. The dimensions should be based on the correct zoning criteria, R-175, as described above

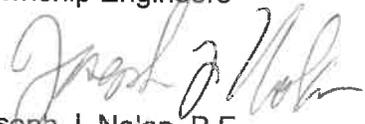
February 15, 2022

Ref:# 7201-167

Page 2

The above presents all comments on this plan submission. The above comments should be addressed, and the plan revised accordingly and resubmitted for further review. Please contact this office if you have any questions or need any additional assistance on this project.

Very truly yours,  
CKS ENGINEERS, INC  
Township Engineers



Joseph J. Nolan, P.E.

JJN/paf

cc:

Robert Brant, Esq., Township Solicitor

Matthew & Melissa Marcolino 3320 Water Street Road -Collegeville 19426

William R. Cujdik, Inland Design, 16 Hagerty Boulevard, West Chester PA 19382

File

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
VALERIE A. ARKOOSH, MD, MPH, CHAIR  
KENNETH E. LAWRENCE, 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

March 15, 2022

Mr. Tommy Ryan, Manager  
Worcester Township  
1721 Valley Forge Road—Box 767  
Worcester, Pennsylvania 19490

Re: MCPC #22-0044-001  
Plan Name: 3310 Water Street Rd. & 3320 Water Street Rd.  
(2 lots comprising approx. 6.98 acres)  
Situat: Water Street Road and Kriebel Mill Road  
Worcester Township

Dear Mr. Ryan:

We have reviewed the above-referenced subdivision in accordance with Section 502 of Act 247, "The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code," as you requested on February 18, 2022. We forward this letter as a report of our review and recommendations.

## BACKGROUND

The Applicant, Matthew Marcolina, is proposing a simple conveyance of approximately 6,300 square feet of land from one lot to an abutting lot on Water Street Road in the AGR Agricultural Zoning District. The conveyance of land from one lot (Lot 2) to the other (Lot 1) will essentially "square off" both lots, eliminating an irregular piece of Lot 2 with frontage on Water Street Road. No other improvements are proposed as a part of this application.

## RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

The Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) generally supports the Applicant's proposal without comment, as we have found it to be generally consistent with the AGR District and have not found significant planning, design, transportation, or environmental issues regarding the proposal.

Please note that the review comments and recommendations contained in this report are advisory to the municipality and final disposition for the approval of any proposal will be made by the municipality.

Should the governing body approve a final plat of this proposal, the Applicant must present the plan to our office for seal and signature prior to recording with the Recorder of Deeds office. A paper copy bearing the



municipal seal and signature of approval must be supplied for our files. Please print the assigned MCPC number #22-0044-001 on any plans submitted for final recording.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian J. Olszak". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "B".

Brian J. Olszak, Senior Planner  
[bolszak@montcopa.org](mailto:bolszak@montcopa.org) - 610-278-3737

c: Matthew Marcolina, Applicant  
Evan C Pellegrino, PE, Applicant's Representative  
Stacey Crandell, Asst. Township Manager

Attachments: 1. Reduced copy of plan  
2. Aerial Map







# Introduction & Background

## *An explanation of the Plan and the Process*

*According to the PA Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), Comprehensive Plans should include, among other things:*

- *A statement of objectives*
- *A plan for land use*
- *A plan for the protection of natural and historic resources*
- *A plan to meet the housing needs*
- *A plan for movement of people and goods*
- *A plan for community facilities and utilities*
- *A statement of the interrelationships between plan components*
- *A discussion of short- and long-term implementation strategies*

Worcester retains much of its rural and historic charm offering a setting supportive of families and small businesses. But, as with all communities, Worcester faces many pressures fueling change. Addressing these aspects are fundamental to making a meaningful update of the comprehensive plan. First, however, we will need to discuss and define what this document intends to do, the why, and the how.

### What Is a Comprehensive Plan?

All communities must strive to plan for their futures in some way: infrastructure, adequate housing, and economic development potential all impact how ready a community is to address the myriad challenges that their constituents face. While sometimes it will make sense to create a targeted, small area plan to address specific challenges of a neighborhood or city block, the key tool that is common to all places is the *Comprehensive Plan*. Inherent in the name, such a plan is *comprehensive* in nature, in that it factors in *all* of the major issues, dimensions, and perspectives of life in a community, everything from natural resources and housing, to transportation, parks and recreation, and more. Even though state and federal laws and policies must be addressed on the local level, and not every aspect of our daily lives can be changed or determined locally, the key is to understand how so many components of our community are interconnected. How wide or long a road is can impact how desirable a neighborhood is, the types of development permitted can impact the fiscal situation of the township, and the character of preserved lands can impact climate resiliency—these are only some of the many interdependent relationships between design, policies, and regulations which impact how our community looks and behaves. While a comprehensive plan cannot radically change a community, it is able to demonstrate the interrelationships between varying perspectives and indicate where the best strategic interventions can take place to have the maximum effect.

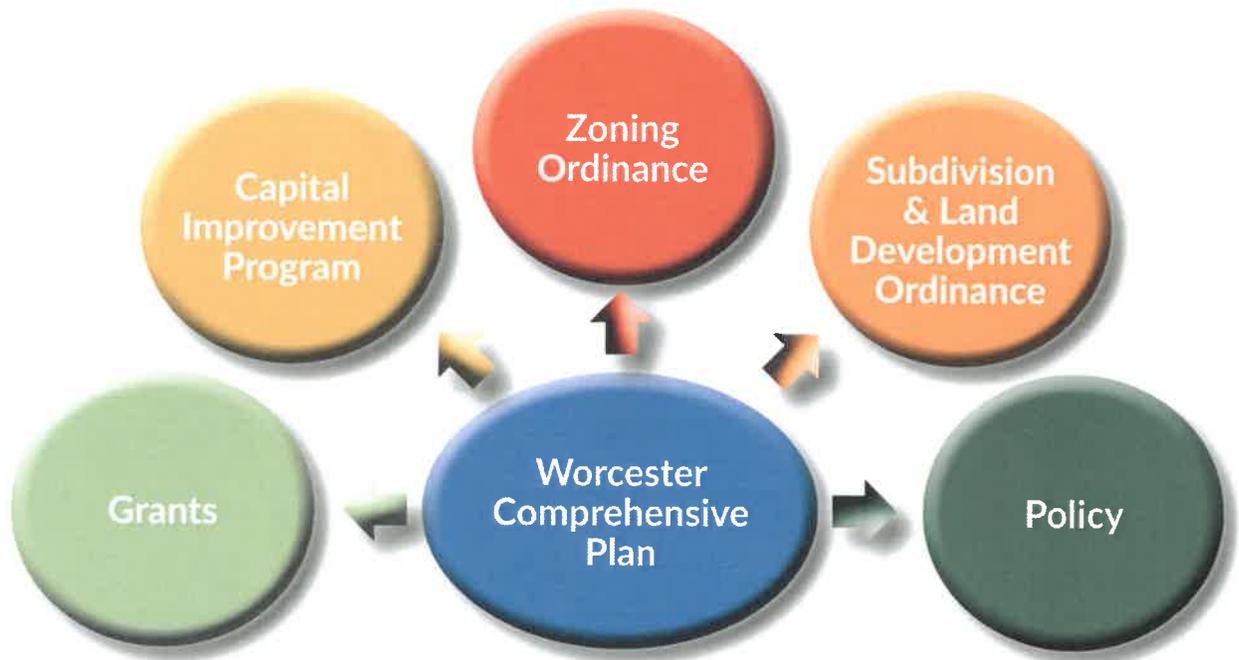


## Why Do We Need a Plan?

We like to say that a comprehensive plan is a “living document,” because it is not supposed to be etched in stone and unchangeable, but should be flexible and adaptable to the evolving needs of the township. The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) is the legislation which governs how townships, boroughs, and cities plan, regulate, and approve development in the state. According to the MPC, a comprehensive plan should be reviewed and updated periodically to remain useful and relevant, which is why Worcester has embarked on this new plan. This plan is an update to the 2008 Worcester Comprehensive Plan Update.

The key uses of a comprehensive plan are to:

- ◆ **Address future growth and development.**
- ◆ **Provide a long-range vision for the community.**
- ◆ **Establish policies, priorities, and guidelines to implement and achieve the community’s desired vision.**
- ◆ **Unify township-wide planning work and policy under a single document.**



As one of the most important pieces of adopted township policy, the comprehensive plan acts as an influence for many of the township’s legal instruments, including the two major ordinances which impact the built environment: the zoning and land development ordinances. Additionally, by illustrating that municipal improvement projects have a foundation in sound planning and design, a comprehensive plan is a practical tool for change when apply for grants.

## Who Was Involved in Making This Plan?

The plan reflects not just where the township is, but more importantly *where it will go from here*. This plan does not just reflect the opinions and expertise of just one or a few people, but of many people who live, work, and recreate in the township, who care about its future and have chosen to be co-creators of its path forward. The following groups of people played a significant part in the creation of this plan:

- ◆ **Comprehensive Plan Update Task Force:** Residents of the township who represent many different constituencies, interests, and skill sets who were appointed to be the main body responsible for reviewing the plan, establish community goals, and encourage community input and engagement.
- ◆ **Township Staff and Consultants:** Township management provided ongoing input on process, background data, current municipal projects, communication with the public, and development and dissemination of the outreach survey.
- ◆ **Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC):** Contracted by the township to lead the planning process, MCPC coordinated all aspects of plan development with township staff and task force members, including background research and analysis, public meeting facilitation, and plan preparation. MCPC also advised on planning best practices and programs.
- ◆ **The Public:** Community members provided input on community priorities and projects through both public meetings and responses to the outreach survey.
- ◆ **Board of Supervisors:** The elected legislative body of the township is the ultimate authority which approves the plan for adoption, making it official township policy. The board also appointed the task force members.



## How to Read and Use This Plan

The plan is organized into a number of chapters. First, there is an Existing Conditions chapter, describing the state of things and the issues as they exist today in Worcester. Next, there is the Goals and Objectives chapter, which clearly states the values of this plan and the ways in which we hope to see Worcester “move the needle” on important topics. And, lastly, there are several chapters which focus on exactly *how* to move the needle, by describing strategies and tools to accomplish the goals of the plan.

While the township will be one of the main implementers of the plan, it is by no means the only actor. In fact, it will take the collective actions of all the stakeholders of Worcester to bring this plan to fruition. If you are reading this plan, then it is written for *you too*.



## Our Assumptions

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We understand that we are not able to know or definitely predict the future, even though that is frequently what writing a comprehensive plan involves. To account for this, and to manage our own expectations, we have written this plan with a number of assumptions in mind:

### EFFECTS OF COVID-19 ON THE FUTURE

The most unavoidable condition under which we have been working has been the COVID-19 pandemic, which has not only altered many of the assumptions, but has even impacted the timeline of writing this plan. Because of how the spending and working habits of the average person have changed so much as a result of the pandemic, whether due to social distancing or widespread working from home, many of our basic assumptions on how life might look in the future have come into question. For instance, commuting patterns, and the resultant impacts on the transportation system, may never return to pre-pandemic levels. While vaccinations are up and signs of normalcy are returning as of this writing, we still may not be able to fully account for all the changes our economy and nation as a whole will see in the coming months or years. Nonetheless, we are obligated to consider many different future conditions in the planning process.

### UPDATE THE PLAN, KEEP THE SPIRIT

Worcester proceeded with this new plan in order to update its 2008 Worcester Comprehensive Plan Update. While this new plan may look substantially different than the 2008 plan, it is the express intent of the township that we follow the spirit of the previous plan, updating and revising the parts where things have changed or evolved, and adding complementary sections and materials which support needed incremental change.

### OBLIGATIONS OF GOVERNANCE

Planning for the future inevitably involves the balancing of concerns, analyzing the impacts and costs of a decision, and then *making* choices: the effects of Option A are different than Option B, even if they are meant to solve the same problem. All the while the township must uphold its duties and obligations under the law, which have the practical effect of constricting further the choices which are available. While it may be impossible to address every concern or desire, we intend to provide a plan that is visionary but acknowledges the unavoidable limitations.

### FOCUS ON ACTION

Far too many plans can fail to be implemented, and therefore may have the tendency to sit forgotten on a shelf. This can be for many reasons: either the plan is not specific or clear enough in its recommendations, or the plan is too encyclopedic and dense to have a widespread impact, or the plan is not relevant to the everyday decisions a community must make. We intend that this plan be *relevant* so that it provides *concrete* and *realistic actions* to tackle the issues confronting Worcester.



# Worcester: Past & Present

*A snapshot of the facts, issues, and opportunities of the township*



## A Short History of Worcester

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. 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. 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 Montgomery County historic site and on the National Register of Historic Places. The army encamped at the Worcester Mennonite Church and cemetery near Fairview Village.

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. The primary industry of the township was agriculture from the 18<sup>th</sup> century all the way through the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Much of the trading, commercial, and assembly activity evolved around the township's three main village areas: Center Point, Fairview Village, and Cedars. Center Point received its name because it was

believed to be at the geographical center of the county. The former Center Point Hotel was the third such hotel in succession in the Center Point village. 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. 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.

## Worcester Today

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### DEMOGRAPHICS

Worcester Township saw significant population increase between the years 1990 and 2000, where the resident population rose by 66% to 7,789 people. The last Decennial Census recorded 9,750 Worcester residents, a 25% increase from the decade prior, which at the time outpaced the population projected for the time period, as stated in the earlier comp plan. Although the latest population estimate is from 2019, and represents only 9 years since the last Census, Worcester may return a lower population than previously projected for 2020. Between 2010 and 2019, Worcester's population only increased by 7%, which could be due to several factors, including the overall development slow-downs caused by the 2008-9 recession.

An "age pyramid" shows how population "cohorts," or large clusters of people, age through time within a community, where the greatest concentrations of people of a certain age are, and where we may expect them to occur in future years. We are able to watch the largest cohort from the 2000 Census (those aged 40-49) move up in age 10 years later, where the 50-59 year-olds represent the largest group, seen on the next page.

This shows us, among other things, that Worcester is getting older. The median age of a Worcester resident moved from 42.3 in 1990, to 43.9 in 2000, to 47.4 in 2010. A greater percentage of older people in a community suggests that Worcester may benefit from planning for an aging population.

Like much of the county overall, the township has become more racially diverse, seeing an increase in the Black or African American population (to 5.1%) and in the Asian population (to 12%). In particular, the largest groups identifying as Asian are of Asian Indian, Korean, and Chinese ancestry. This suggests that the broadening population base of the township may have new and different needs.

### *NOTE TO DRAFT READER:*

*Census data will  
be updated with  
2020 Census  
figures once they  
become available  
in Q1 2022.*

## WORCESTER POPULATION, PROJECTED AND ACTUAL, 1950-2040

Year	Projected Population	Actual 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	9,750	25%
2020	10,917*	2019 Estimate: 10,430	7%
2030	11,882*		
2040	12,650*		

**NOTE TO DRAFT READER:**

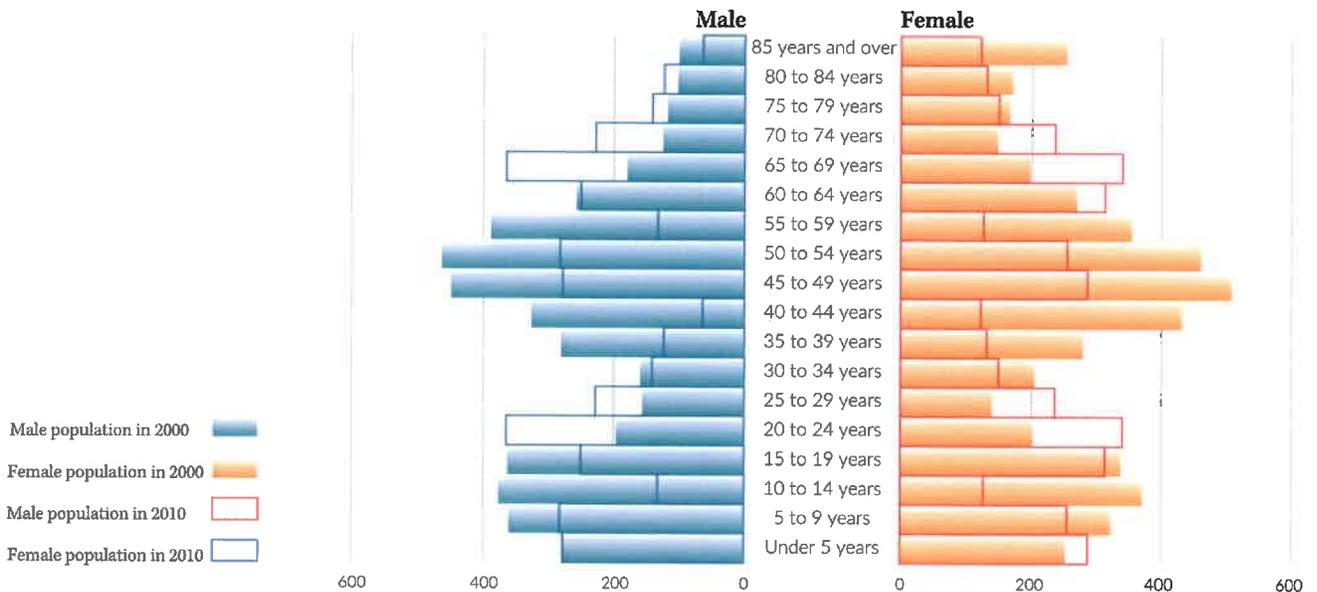
*Census data will be updated with 2020 Census figures once they become available in Q1 2022.*

SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU, DVRPC

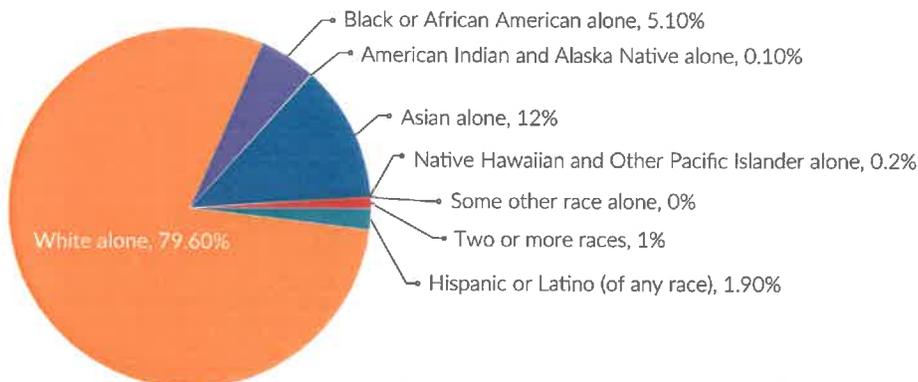
\*ACCORDING TO DVRPC'S MORE-RECENT 2016 POPULATION PROJECTIONS

## AGE DISTRIBUTION BY SEX, 2000 -2010

SOURCE: 2020 DECENNIAL CENSUS.



## RACE AND ETHNICITY, 2014-2018



SOURCE: AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY (ACS) 2014-2018 5-YEAR ESTIMATES.

**NOTE TO  
DRAFT READER:**

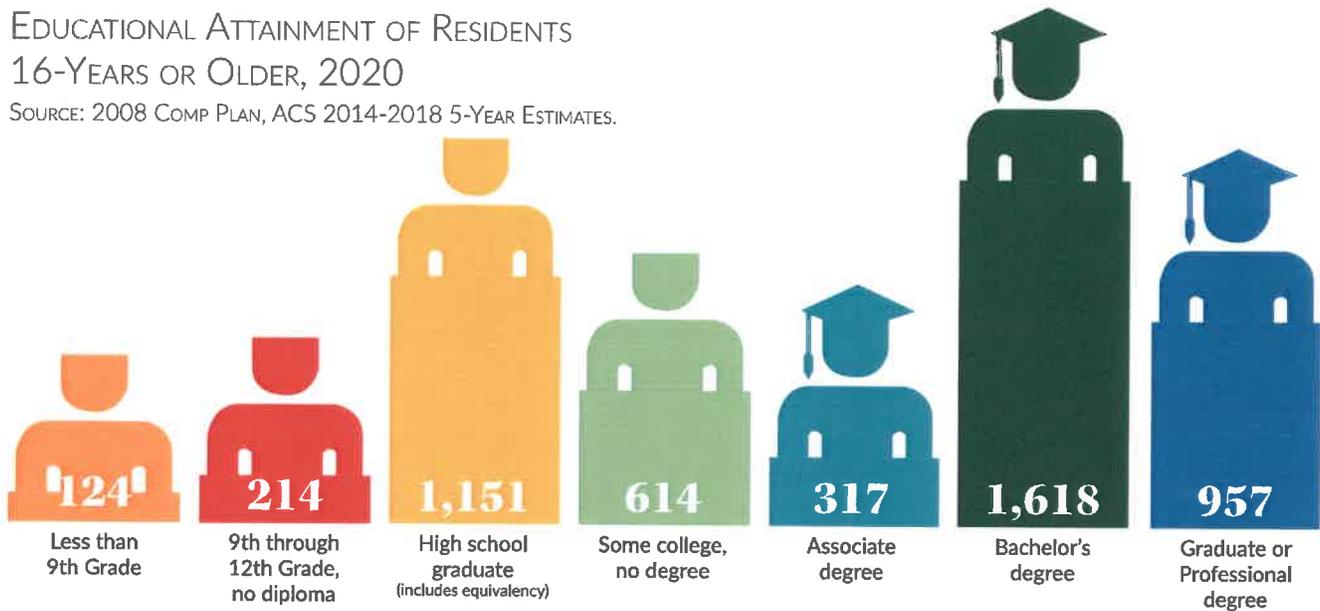
*Census data will be updated with 2020 Census figures once they become available in Q1 2022.*

Overall, Worcester continues to have a highly-educated population, with well over half the adult population having at least a bachelor's degree, similar to the county as a whole. Since 2000, the percentage of the population with at least some college has continued to grow. This could be a good selling point for companies looking to locate in or near the township.

As noted earlier, the percentage of older residents has gone up in the township, which is similarly reflected here as "Residents Over 65 Years of Age."

**EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF RESIDENTS  
16-YEARS OR OLDER, 2020**

SOURCE: 2008 COMP PLAN, ACS 2014-2018 5-YEAR ESTIMATES.

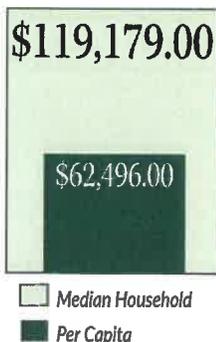


**SPECIAL NEEDS POPULATION (# OF RESIDENTS), 2020**

SOURCE: ACS 2014-2018 5-YEAR ESTIMATES.



**MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD  
INCOME AND PER  
CAPITA INCOME, 2020**



When adjusted for inflation, the median household income has remained relatively steady.

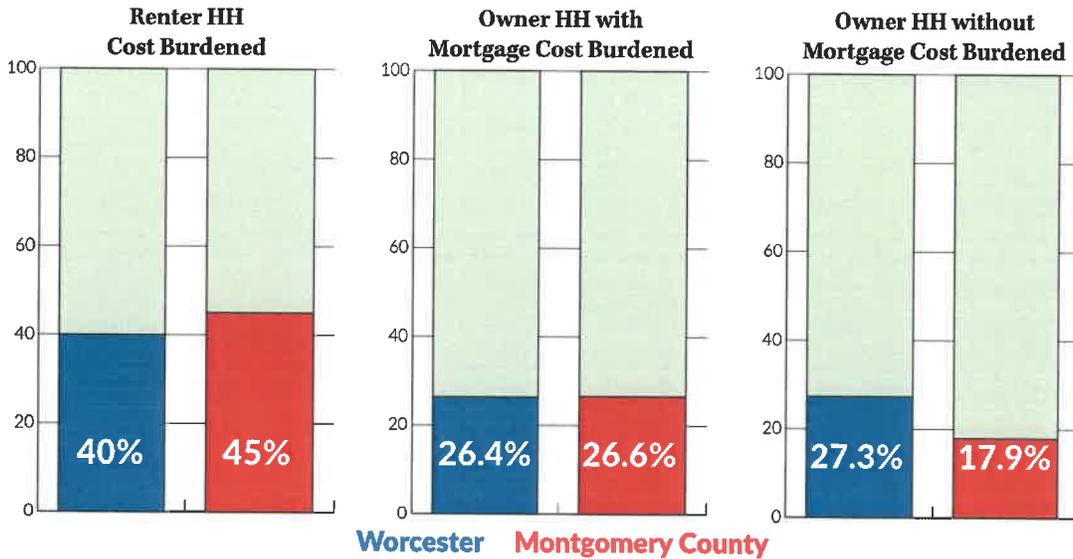
However, an additional indicator which should be noted is that the number of people who live in households below the poverty line has increased noticeably, to **5.0%**, which is slightly below the county average of **6.8%**. Another way to measure economic challenge is by using "housing cost burden": this is defined by the Census and federal agencies as having housing-related costs (rent, mortgage payments, insurance, utility and fuel

payments, real estate taxes and condo fees, etc.) accounting for **over 30% of the household income**. Available data track households who rent, as well as those who own with and without a mortgage on their property: the data are shown below.

*NOTE TO DRAFT READER:  
Census data will be updated with 2020 Census figures once they become available in Q1 2022.*

### RATES OF HOUSING COST BURDEN FOR RENTER AND OWNER HOUSEHOLDS (HH), 2020

SOURCE: ACS 2014-2018 5-YEAR ESTIMATES.



While Worcester tracks pretty well with renters and owners with mortgages compared with the county, the township registers a significantly higher percentage of cost-burdened owners without a mortgage than the county as a whole. We can surmise that there is likely some connection between this and the median age in Worcester: those households who own their house without a mortgage tend on average to be older, having lived in their house long enough to have paid off any previous mortgage. Nonetheless, this particular datapoint suggests that we may want to look into how Worcester can address this and other related issues.

### Key Takeaway

Worcester has begun to mature in its development, and partially as a result of this the average resident is getting older, which has significant policy implications. This is likely impacted by the relative housing stock that is available in the township, as well as the available amenities which exist in the township. We will want to ensure that the desires and services of older adults are provided for, while also contemplating how to attract more balanced demographics, particularly in attracting and retaining younger adults.



## GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

When describing what the "land use" of a particular property is, we take into account what structures or activities are present (residential, nonresidential, agriculture, etc.), as well as how intensely developed that property is (vacant or open space, low-density, high-density, etc.). Each use and development type has different service and infrastructure needs, creates different traffic volumes, and impacts the quality of life of the community differently." In sum, knowing what the existing land use is, and how it may have changed, allows us to plan for the future.

The updated Existing Land Use map on the next page is based on data pulled in July 2020, which has been corrected by checking data-transcription errors, field-verifying through aerial photographs and other sources, and manual updating. Items which will need to be updated at a later date are properties which are actively under development, such as the Reserve at Center Square development. The table on page 13 is based upon these same datasets. The land use categories are described in more detail in the call out box on page 12.



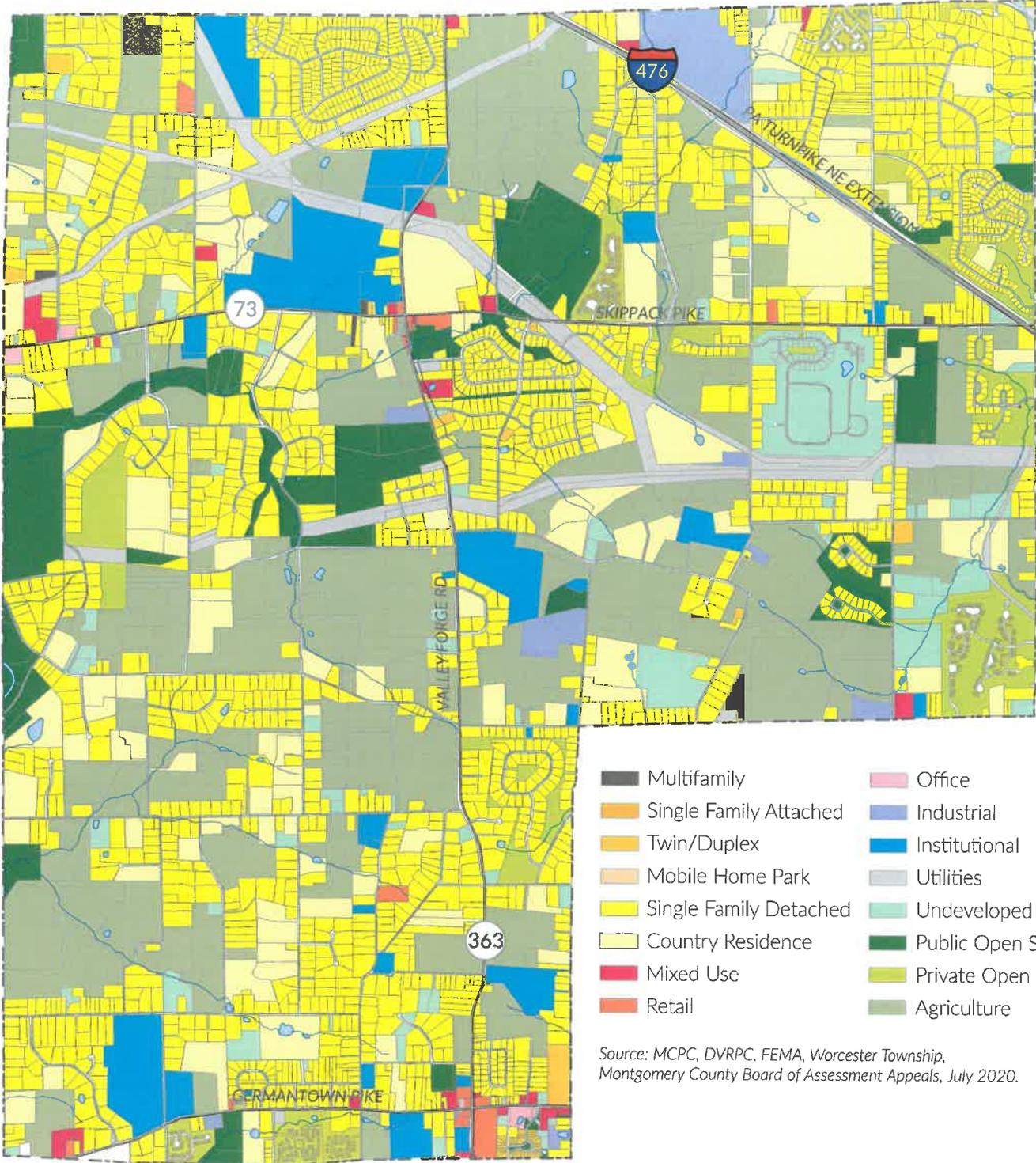
Residential land uses occupy a majority of the land area in the township, with single family detached lots the single most common individual land use, in both the number of parcels as well as in total land area. Nonresidential properties, on the other hand, appear to have declined since 2007, but this could likely be due to the reassignment of two large properties on Skippack Pike.



While the township has seen increases in preserved farmland and open space, there was a slight decline in agricultural area overall of 7%. Private open space has also declined, but this can be attributed almost entirely to the conversion of the Center Square Golf Course to residential. Public Open Space, on the other hand, has increased by 25%, which includes any publicly-accessible, publicly-owned land. In many communities, vacant or "undeveloped" land refers to infill lots in already-developed areas, but in rural townships the designation applies more often to large wooded parcels with no preferential assessment covenant, or fields or meadows not actively worked or farmed. Nonetheless, the inventory of designated undeveloped land has the tendency to fluctuate over time, since it can frequently involve land actively under development (see definition of "**Undeveloped**" on page 12), so it cannot also be a reliable indicator of greater changes in a community.

Assessing the existing land use in the township is the first step in determining what lots remain developable, and consequently what the growth potentials for the township. In determining what lands are developable, we take all lands which are categorized as Undeveloped, Country Residence, and (unpreserved) Agriculture, and combine them. While it's certainly feasible and plausible to redevelop existing land categorized under other uses, these selected land use types most often are the types which are considered "virgin" land which, when developed, are considered "greenfield" developments. This can be seen in the map "Residentially Developable Land" on page 14.

# WORCESTER EXISTING LAND USE, 2020



Source: MCPC, DVRPC, FEMA, Worcester Township, Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, July 2020.



# MCPC LAND USE CATEGORIES

- ◆ Multifamily (MF). Residential buildings that contain more than 2 dwelling units, with units usually horizontally separated. Apartments, including garden-style apartment complexes, triplexes and quadraplexes are included.
- ◆ Single-Family Attached (SFA). Residential homes that share at least one vertical wall with a neighboring house, more commonly known as townhouses or rowhomes.
- ◆ Twins/Duplexes. Residential buildings that contain 2 dwelling units, either side-by-side or one above the other.
- ◆ Mobile Home Park (MH). Residential developments that contain mobile homes, which are also known as manufactured homes.
- ◆ Single-Family Detached (SFD). Residential homes that are completely separated from each other and have yards of varying sides on all sides.
- ◆ Country Residence. Residential areas with the same characteristics as SFD, but have lot sizes of at least 5 acres but no more than 20 acres, and which are more rural in character. Generally, they are found in areas without public sewer service. Such uses may or may not include agricultural activities.
- ◆ Mixed Use. These buildings usually are found within traditional main street or village corridors. They typically feature retail, residential, and office facilities with little separation among uses. Many of the buildings are attached to each other, and it is common to have first floor retail with apartments or offices on the floors above.
- ◆ Retail. Land that is predominately used for the sale of goods and services. Commercial strips, malls, big box stores, shopping centers, gas stations, convenience stores, and restaurants are obvious examples.
- ◆ Office. Land that is occupied by office buildings and associated parking. This category also includes research and development facilities, hotels, and convention centers.
- ◆ Industrial. This category includes heavy industrial uses—such as oil refineries, chemical plants, steel and metal fabrication facilities, and manufacturing facilities—as well as lighter industrial uses, warehousing and distribution centers, mini- storage facilities, body shops, junkyards, and other outdoor storage facilities.
- ◆ Institutional. These areas include a wide variety of governmental and non-profit services. Examples include government centers, educational facilities, places of worship, cemeteries, hospitals and medical centers, nursing homes, life care facilities, and correctional facilities.
- ◆ Utilities. These areas include power generators and substations, water filtration and storage tanks, wastewater treatment plants, landfills, and recycling centers.
- ◆ Undeveloped. Areas which are composed generally of scrub, woodlands or other vegetation, or other lands which contain no buildings or underutilized or vacant buildings. This also includes areas and parcels which are a part of an under-construction land development: the Board of Assessment (BOA) does not consider residential units built until they are at least 90% complete, even if the individual lots are already recorded.
- ◆ Public Open Space. Open land or facilities which are publicly owned by municipal, state, county or federal governments which are generally passive in nature but can also include active recreational amenities, which are generally known to be permanently preserved.
- ◆ Private Open Space. Open land and areas which are privately owned but are generally used in a recreational or passive open space manner, which may or may not be permanently preserved. Golf courses are common examples of private open space: these may have a temporary conservation covenant as a result of a preferential assessment, but ownership and use can change over time. Private open space can also be deeded, permanently preserved open space which is part of a residential subdivision or homeowners' association, or private conservation land.
- ◆ Agriculture. Land or areas which are currently used to produce crops, livestock, or other agricultural products, or land which contains barns, farmhouses or other agricultural buildings. Included in this category are lands which are covenanted under the Act 319 preferential assessment program, which include lands that are both agricultural and forested. Lastly, lots over 20 acres which include a single SFD are included in this category, regardless of whether agricultural activities occur on the site.

## EXISTING LAND USE BY ACREAGE, 2020

Land Use Description	Parcels	Acres	Percentage of Total
Single-Family Detached	2,373	3,472.14	35.27%
Agriculture	161	2,607.28	26.49%
Country Residence	121	1,135.76	11.54%
Public Open Space	53	616.15	6.26%
Institutional	37	470.55	4.78%
Undeveloped	161	414.37	4.21%
Utilities	52	400.79	4.07%
Private Open Space	48	389.07	3.95%
Industrial	11	141.66	1.44%
Mixed Use	29	58.99	0.60%
Twins/Duplexes	58	45.79	0.47%
Retail	18	41.99	0.43%
Single-Family Attached	824	31.23	0.32%
Office	5	11.10	0.11%
Multifamily	6	6.05	0.06%
Mobile Home Park	16	0.20	0.01%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,973</b>	<b>9,843.10</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

NOTE: TOTAL ACREAGE DOES NOT INCLUDE STREETS AND PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAYS.  
SOURCE: MCPC, MCBOA

## GENERAL LAND USE CATEGORIES, 2020

SOURCE: MCPC, MCBOA

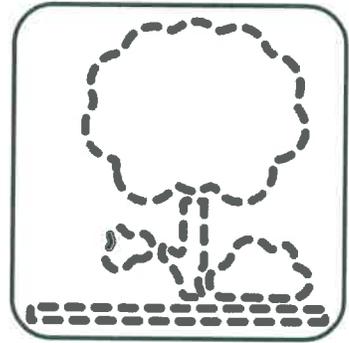


## OPEN SPACE, AGRICULTURAL & UNDEVELOPED USES, 2020

SOURCE: MCPC, MCBOA



Agriculture **65%**



Undeveloped **10%**

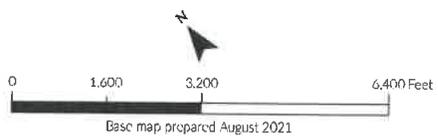
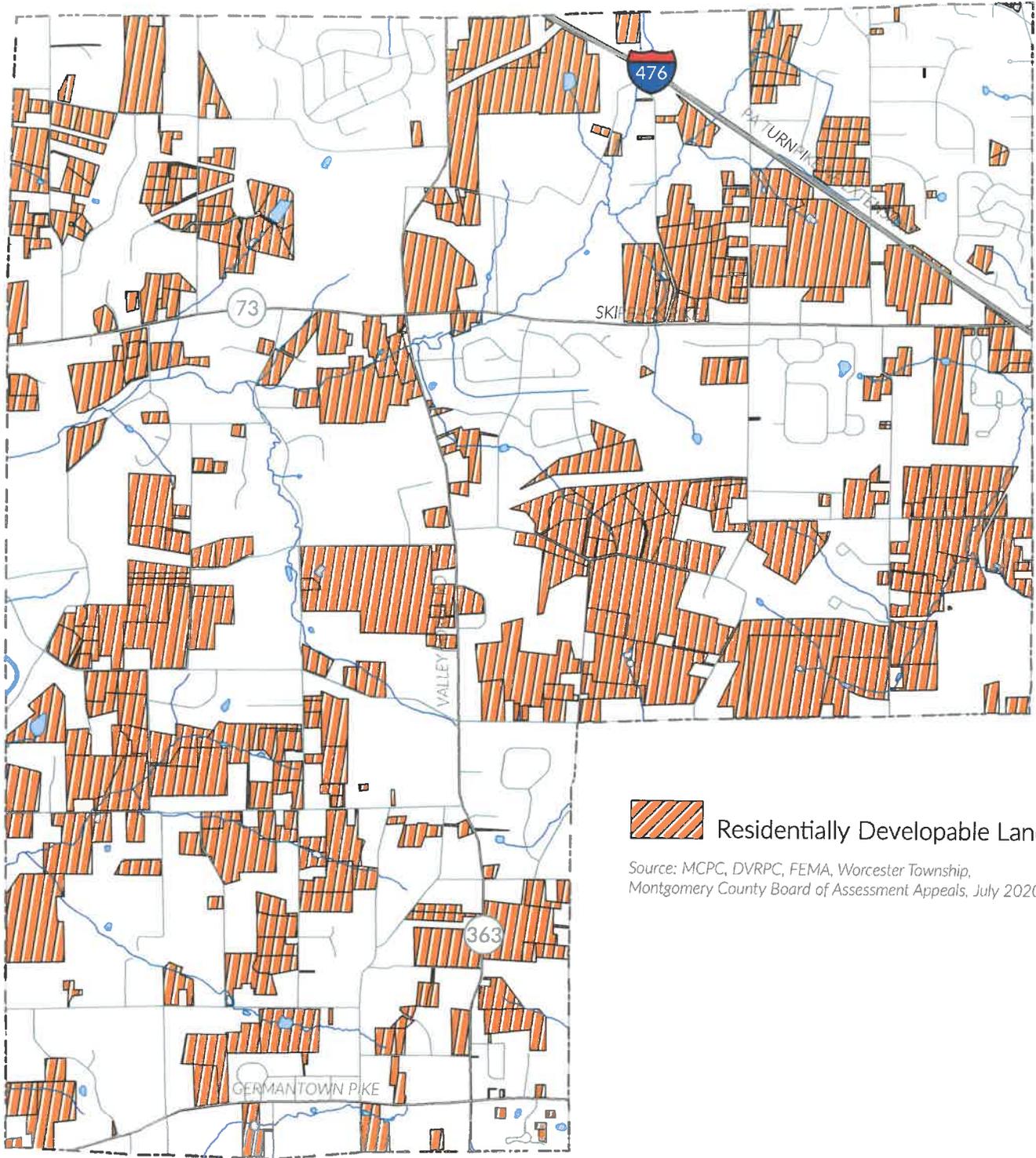


Public Open Space **15%**



Private Open Space **10%**

# WORCESTER DEVELOPABLE LAND



This map, however, likely overestimates developable parcels, in that certain large parcels may be restricted from further development through deed restrictions acquired through a past land development approval: further research would be necessary to account for these.

## Key Takeaway

There is still room to grow in Worcester, but looking closely at the development potential in the township is necessary to determine what kind of development and preservation policies may be needed to maintain fiscal sustainability and adequately account for the future service needs of the township.

## HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

The possible household composition and types within the township have not changed that dramatically in the 30 years for which we have data, although it is interesting to note that the average household size has been slowly increasing. Household composition, and household size in general, is often a function of larger demographic trends in the region and the available housing in a municipality; in Worcester’s case, the prevalence of single-family detached housing may dictate this.

When Montgomery County tracks housing construction, residential land use types are condensed into four main housing types: single-family detached (SFD), single-family attached (SFA, which includes twins/duplexes), multifamily (MF), and mobile/manufactured home developments (MH). Between 2008 and 2019, **206 SFAs** and **137 SFDs** were constructed in the township, with an average of 31 units constructed per year. No multifamily or mobile/manufactured homes were constructed in that timeframe.

In terms of existing units, residential homes have increased in almost every category. Overall, **349 residential** units were added between 2007 and 2020, the majority of which were single-family attached, or SFAs, followed closely by single-family detached, or SFDs. Generally across the county we have seen a growing popularity of attached townhomes being constructed, and in many years it surpasses detached units, which applies to Worcester as well.

While there are 266 independent-living multifamily units spread among several small buildings within the Meadowood Senior Living, there appears to be only five other buildings in the townships containing multifamily apartment units, all of which are converted single residences of varying sizes. Since the Meadowood units are age-restricted, only 23 units are available to the general population in the township.

*Section 604.4 of the Municipalities Planning Code states that each municipality must provide “...for residential housing of various dwelling types encompassing all basic forms of housing, including single family and two family dwellings, and a reasonable range of multiple family dwellings in various arrangements.”*

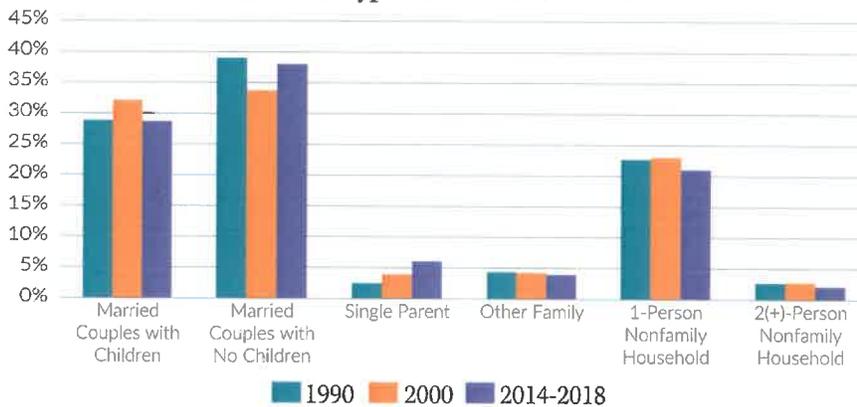


In Pennsylvania, municipalities are required by law to permit, through zoning, a wide variety of housing types, including single-family attached units such as twins, duplexes, and townhouses; multifamily units; and mobile home parks. If a municipality does not have enough land set aside for all of these uses, it runs the risk of having its zoning successfully challenged in the courts for not meeting its "fair share" and having an aggressive corrective applied through a judgment. As of this writing, the township has just adopted a municipal curative amendment which revises the zoning ordinance to address the provision of multifamily dwellings.

## EXISTING HOUSEHOLD TYPES, 2000, 2007 AND, 2020

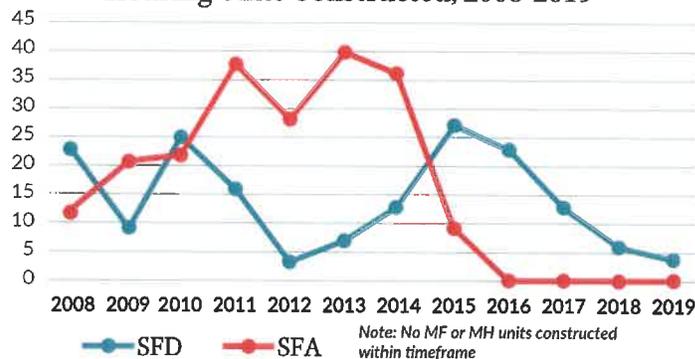
SOURCE: MCPC, MCBOA.

### Household Types over Time, 1990-2018



Residential Land Use Categories	2000	2007	2020
Multifamily		314	289
Single-Family Attached		717	823
Twin/Duplex		<i>incl in SFA</i>	116
Mobile Home Park		16	16
SFD (under 5 acres)		2216	2373
Country Residence		126	121
SFD (all lot sizes)		2,342	2,494
<b>Total Residential Units</b>	<b>3,026</b>	<b>3,389</b>	<b>3,738</b>

### Housing Units Constructed, 2008-2019



Housing sales in 2020 have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, which have manifested mainly through a great reduction in housing inventory regionally and nationally. However, we have seen that home sales in Worcester have been increasing year on year, suggesting that the desire to move into Worcester is growing nonetheless, and not only because the total number of housing units is increasing (through construction). This is particularly supported by the average number of days a property is on the market before it is sold, which we see declining year on year, suggesting a “seller’s market.” Regionally we have seen a significant differential in the greater reductions in inventory and days on market, both in 2020 and over the past three years as well, in which Philadelphia’s reductions are much less dramatic than those of Montgomery County and the three other PA suburban counties of our region. What this may mean, overall, is that in-migration to the suburbs from Philadelphia is outpacing out-migration to the city, and that demand for housing in the county has not slackened a bit.

## SELECTED HOUSING SALES FIGURES FROM THE HOMEXPERT MARKET REPORT, 2020

SOURCE: BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY HOME SERVICES FOX & ROACH RESEARCH DIVISION



### Key Takeaway

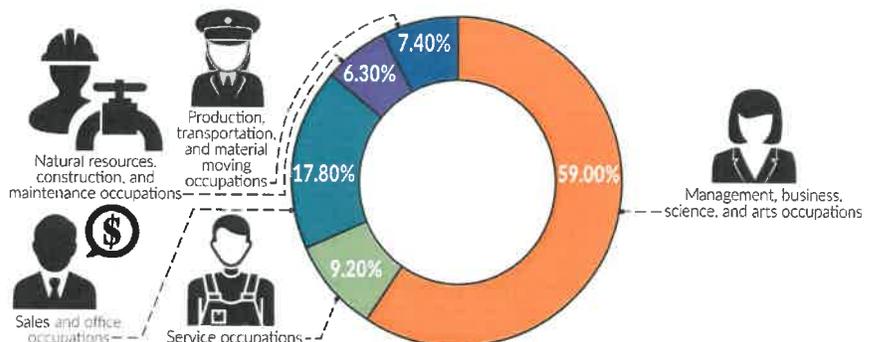
The availability and prices of housing in the township impacts the residents who will live there: we will need to ensure that the existing and future housing that Worcester accommodates will serve current and future residents according to our planning goals. Also, there is significant evidence that the typical “commuting to the office in the city” dynamic, hastened by the pandemic restrictions, is changing and may become more permanent, leading to a potentially significant shift in where people may want to live, unrestricted by where they may have to commute.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A majority of the jobs of Worcester residents are generally those of the professional or high-skill kinds. Almost 60% of Worcester residents are employed in “management, business, science and arts” occupations. The “industry” is the type of activity at a person’s place of work, while “occupation” is the kind of work a person does to earn a living.

### OCCUPATION OF WORCESTER RESIDENTS, 2014-2018

SOURCE: ACS 2014-2018 5-YEAR ESTIMATES.



# INDUSTRY OF THE PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OF WORCESTER RESIDENTS, 2014-2018

SOURCE: ACS 2014-2018 5-YEAR ESTIMATES

INDUSTRY	2014-2018	
	Number	% of Total
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	4,820	100.00%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	53	1%
Construction	315	6.50%
Manufacturing	749	15.50%
Wholesale trade	95	2.00%
Retail trade	337	7.00%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	171	3.50%
Information	45	0.90%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	642	13.30%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	1,039	21.60%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	881	18.30%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	171	3.50%
Other services, except public administration	233	4.80%
Public administration	89	1.80%

According to Berkheimer, the EIT collector for the township, as of Q1 2020, there were 3,667 people employed in the township (both residents and nonresidents)—this information is gleaned from EIT returns. The Top Ten Employers in the township, listed below, account for more than half (54%) of all the jobs for which EIT is collected in the township. However, we should noted these totals include part-time and full-time employees, as well as employees who may only spend a portion of their day in the township.

## TOP TEN EMPLOYERS IN THE TOWNSHIP

SOURCE: BERKHEIMER, 2020

Employer Name	# of Employees
Allan Myers Inc.	581
Meadowood Corp.	368
Methacton School District	340
Merrymead Farm Inc.	161
Keystone Technologies LLC	138
First Student Inc.	96
Testequity LLC	93
Randstad US LLC	79
Fairview Village Church	77
ACS Acquisitions	66

## ONTheMAP INFLOW/OUTFLOW ANALYSIS, 2017



SOURCE, ONTheMAP, CENSUS BUREAU, 2017

Using another Census Bureau product, *OnTheMap*, which combines state-level unemployment insurance data with Census data, we can see that actually many more Worcester residents work outside the township than within it. Only approximately 227 people both live and work within the township, however this may not include all self-employed people in Worcester.

### Key Takeaway

Most of the people of working age in Worcester must commute outside the Township to their jobs, and most of the people who work in the Township commute from outside. Both these facts have implications for the transportation system and fiscal situation of Worcester, which can be addressed through a focus on local economic planning.

## TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

### Street And Motor Vehicle Facilities

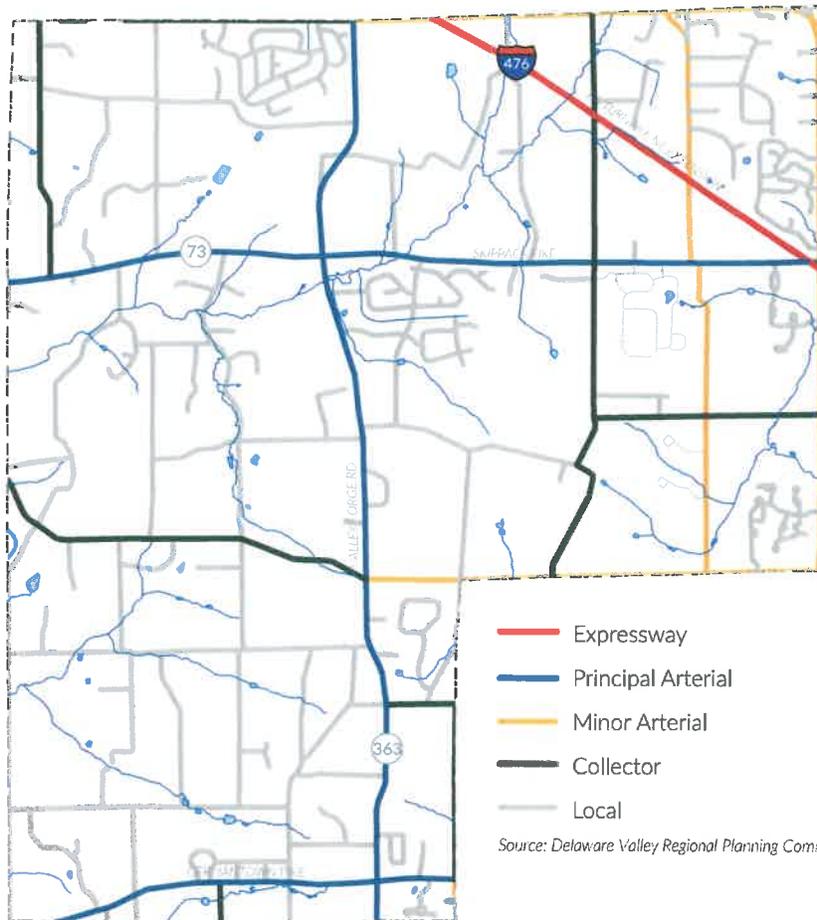
The functional classification of a road determines the overall character and design of that road, particularly in their width, design speed and number of lanes.

### STREETS BY FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

SOURCE: PENNDOT

*“Functional classification” is the way roads are categorized according to their importance in either moving traffic longer distances (expressways and arterials) through the Township or enabling local access to residences or businesses (collectors and local roads). The primary list of classifications is as follows:*

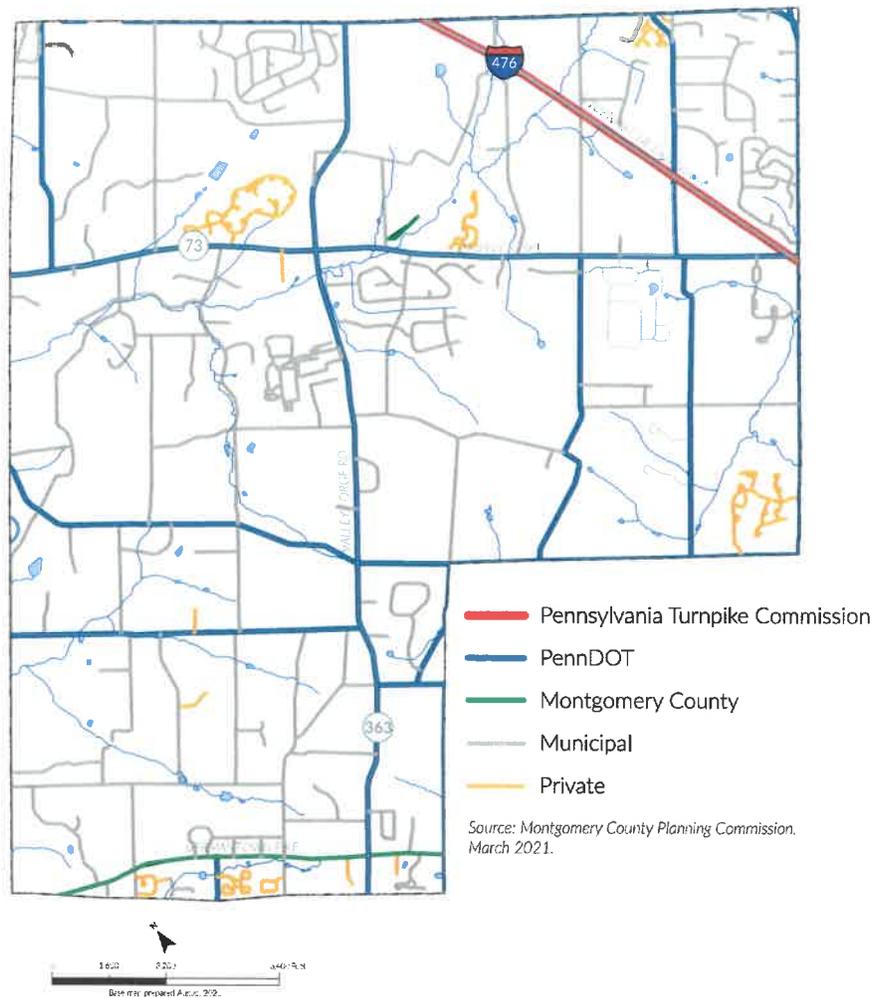
- *Expressways*
- *Principal arterials*
- *Minor arterials*
- *[Major] collectors*
- *Local roads*



Typically the responsibility of maintenance for a street is determined by what entity owns it. The state, for example, owns more roads in the township than those that are signed as such, such as Route 73 and Route 363; when the township desires to make improvements to state roads, only half of the cost can be paid for with township-generated impact fees. Only a few counties in the state own any roads: Montgomery County is one of them, which owns 75 miles of roadway in the county, including Germantown Pike and Shultz Road in the township.

# WORCESTER STREETS BY OWNERSHIP

SOURCE: PENNDOT, WORCESTER TOWNSHIP.



## Circulation and Roadway Improvement Updates

The township has an Act 209 Plan, which is the main transportation planning tool that Worcester has at its disposal. It acts as the Transportation Capital Improvements Plan for the township concerning street and intersection improvements, as well as the basis for the Traffic Impact Fee which is levied upon land developments. An analysis of roadway sufficiency, traffic volumes, and preferred Levels of Service (or how quickly a vehicle can make it through a street intersection) on township roads are comprehensively addressed in the township’s Act 209 Transportation Impact Fee Study.

Below is a map which identifies more recent traffic counts on roads in the township, ranging from 2010 through early 2020. Several counts through a number of years are taken at the same or nearby locations, in an attempt to compare change over time. In a number of locations, traffic, measured as “Annual Average Daily Traffic” (AADT), is reported at slightly increased rates. However, in many other locations traffic is recorded at lower rates, in some cases significantly lower (such as on Valley Forge below Township Line Road). These can sometimes be caused by detours or road closures.

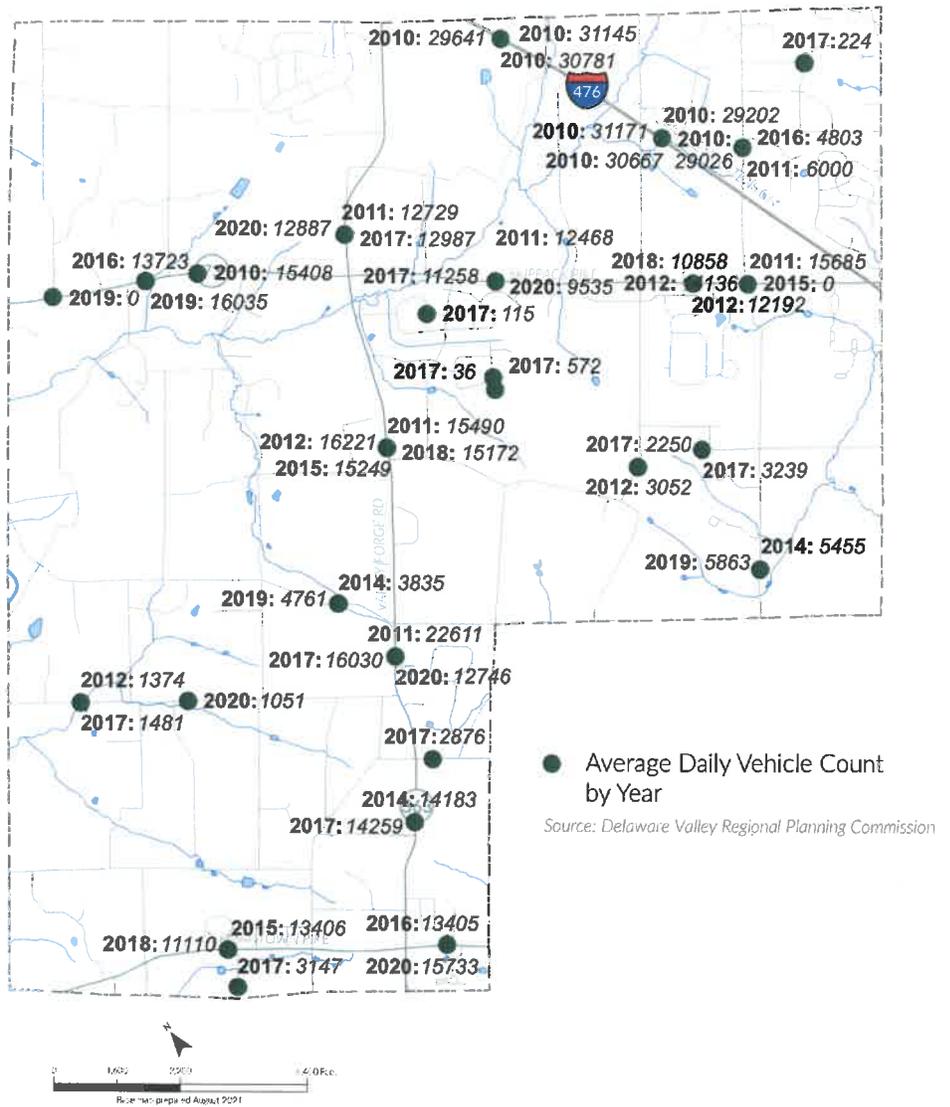


## WORCESTER RECENT TRAFFIC COUNTS (AADT) BY YEAR, 2010-2020

SOURCE: DVRPC

*From Worcester's Public Outreach Survey:*  
Which ONE roadway in Worcester Township is in the most need of improvement?

Valley Forge Road	181	31.3%
None, all acceptable	135	23.4%
Skippack Pike	83	14.4%
Germantown Pike	36	6.2%
Morris Road	21	3.6%
Other	59	10.2%
No response	63	10.9%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>578</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



Respondents from the Worcester Comprehensive Plan Outreach Survey clearly show that many residents believe some of the busiest roads in the township are also those that require the most improvement.

### *Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities*

The difference between sidewalks and trails can sometimes be slim, but there are practical reasons to distinguish them, particularly when considering their purpose. Sidewalks are typically found within the public right-of-way abutting streets, connecting houses or businesses which are denser or closer together, and are composed of cement. Trails, on the other hand, tend to connect larger distances and destinations which are further apart, generally are wider than sidewalks, and are typically composed of asphalt, gravel cinders or another natural surface.

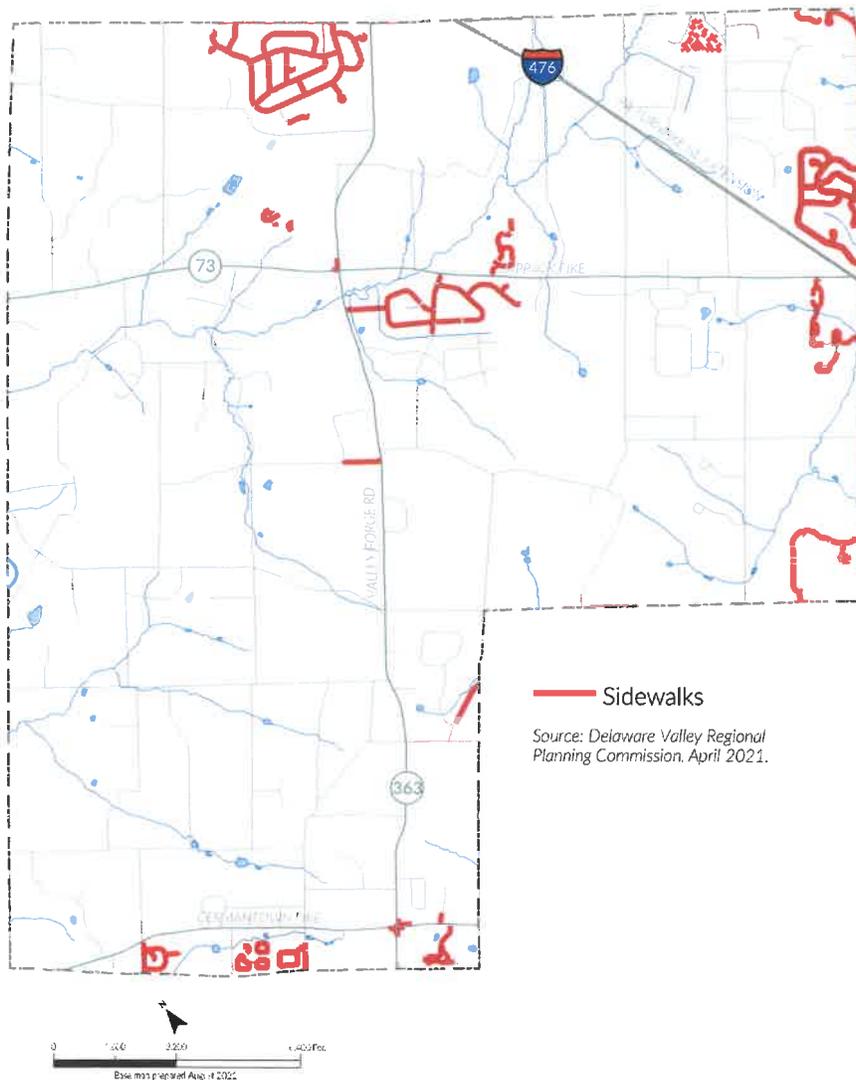
The first map shows where the existing sidewalks are in the township, and indicates whether sidewalks exist, partially or fully, on one side or both side of a street. Typically we want to see sidewalks in denser residential areas, as well as villages, town-center business areas, and other areas that we may want to become more walkable.

Sidewalks typically are first developed through the land development approval process and are generally required to be included as part of a development. The township's policy is to never waive the sidewalk requirement if a waiver is requested. If it does not make sense to install sidewalks at a particular location today, the township gets the deferral and gives future Boards the option to install if conditions change.



### WORCESTER SIDEWALKS

SOURCE: MCPC, WORCESTER.





The map to the right shows the existing and proposed trails in the township. Existing trails can be owned or maintained privately but open to the public (e.g. through an HOA) or by the township. Support for trail development in the Worcester Comprehensive Plan Survey was very high. The Future Township Trails are sourced from the township’s *Community Greenways Plan and Open Space Plan*. Some of the recently completed trail projects include those within Heebner Park and the Zacharias Creek Trail, as well as an extension of the Zacharias Creek Trail in the planning stages (and recently funded by a grant from DCNR). Longer, regional trails are represented as “County/Circuit” Trails, which in Worcester include the proposed Power Line Trail (to the north) and the Liberty Bell Trail (to the east). These trails could be planned and developed by the county or the township. The Circuit is a vast regional network of hundreds of miles of multi-use trails owned and maintained by various public entities. More information on the Circuit can be found here: <https://circuittrails.org/>.

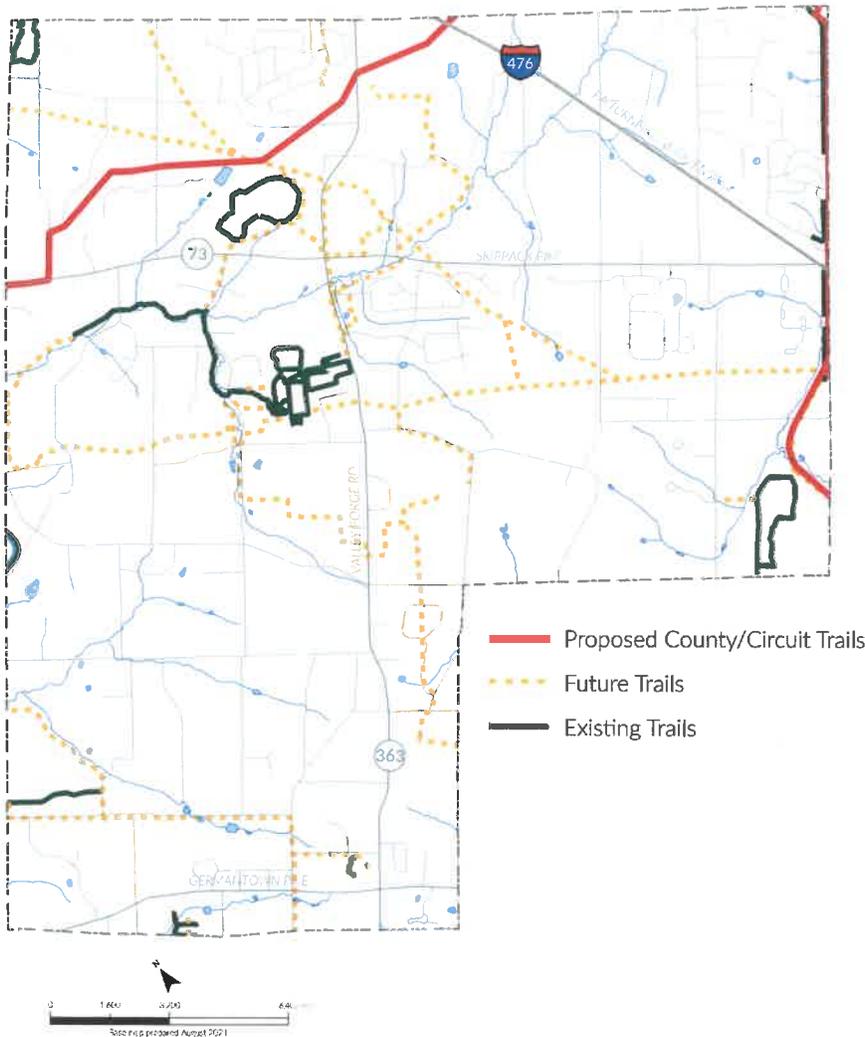
During the land development process, the township reserves and “banks” trail easements whenever possible. When a trail is installed that serves only one development—i.e., a trail that does not connect to neighboring developments—the trail is privately-owned and maintained by an HOA until it does connect to something else, in which case it is dedicated to the township. This is the same process the county typically uses for its trail system when individual, isolated segments are secured through the land development process. It is the township’s policy that public funding should not be used to support that which is effectively a private recreational facility, until it “goes public”.

### Key Takeaway

Because the few major roads in Worcester are also the busiest, cut-through traffic can be a problem. While improvements to existing roads will continue to be necessary, the township could look for ways to decrease travel demand and increase the usage of other transportation mode alternatives, particularly in encouraging walkable neighborhoods, which can help reduce congestion and make the system more resilient.

## EXISTING AND PROPOSED TRAILS

SOURCE: WORCESTER TOWNSHIP, DVRPC, MCPC, TOWNSHIP COMMUNITY GREENWAYS AND OPEN SPACE PLANS.



*From Worcester's Public Outreach Survey:*  
Which ONE recreational facility does Worcester Township need more of?  
(select one only)

<i>None, all acceptable</i>	170	29.4%
<i>Natural open spaces</i>	142	24.6%
<i>Trails</i>	138	23.9%
<i>Playground &amp; tot lots</i>	24	4.2%
<i>Fields &amp; courts</i>	23	4.0%
<i>Other</i>	40	6.9%
<i>No response</i>	41	10.9%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>578</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



### *Parks and Preserved Open Space Inventory*

The amount of *public* preserved land has increased in the township since the 2008 Comprehensive Plan. The newest parcels of land which the township now owns are located in eastern part of the township, including two smaller parcels in the vicinity of Bethel Road and the Northeast Extension of the Turnpike, as well as a large wooded tract at the corner of Whitehall Road and Skippack Pike. Also, the open space resulting from the Whitehall Estates land development was dedicated to the township.



# PUBLIC PARKS AND OPEN SPACE INFORMATION, 2020

SOURCE: WORCESTER TOWNSHIP

Name	Owner	Area (ac)	Features
Valley Green OS	Worcester Township	27.8	Zacharias Creek
Heebner Park	Worcester Township	88.6	Active & Passive Recreation and Township Building
Lenhart Tract	Worcester Township	14	Undeveloped
Fawn Creek OS	Worcester Township	22	Tributary to Zacharias Creek
Hollow Road OS	Worcester Township	17.7	Zacharias Creek
Markel Tract OS	Worcester Township	22.4	Zacharias Creek
Mt. Kirk Park	Worcester Township	17.6	Neighborhood Park
Community Hall	Worcester Township	2	Historic Meeting Hall
Nike Park	Worcester Township	9.2	Undeveloped
Sunnybrook Estates	Worcester Township	9.1	Active Recreation
Farmers Union Hall	Worcester Township	0.5	Historic Meeting Hall
Fisher Park	Towamencin Township	27	Active & Passive Recreation
Peter Wentz Farmstead	Montgomery County	88	Historic Farmstead
Evansburg State Park	Commonwealth of PA	143.6	Passive Recreation and Zacharias Creek

The map presents the entire gamut of preserved and conserved lands in the township, which include not just conventional parks and open space, but also conserved agricultural lands.

A significant consideration is the impact of private reservations of open space, originally created through the land development process, and how these can contribute to the total available park and open space system in the township. While privately held by homeowners' or condo associations, these lands are deed restricted as open space in perpetuity, and often are required to be publicly accessible in some form. An example of these facilities includes the trails within the Preserver at Worcester (at Skippack Pike and North Wales Road).

Conserved agricultural lands are shown on the map as farmland conservation easements, which are typically held by the county but can also be held by the township. This land is conserved in perpetuity. Shown as well are agricultural security area (ASA) properties, which provide member properties certain privileges and protection from nuisance

# ALL CONSERVED AND RESTRICTED LANDS, 2020

SOURCE: WORCESTER TOWNSHIP

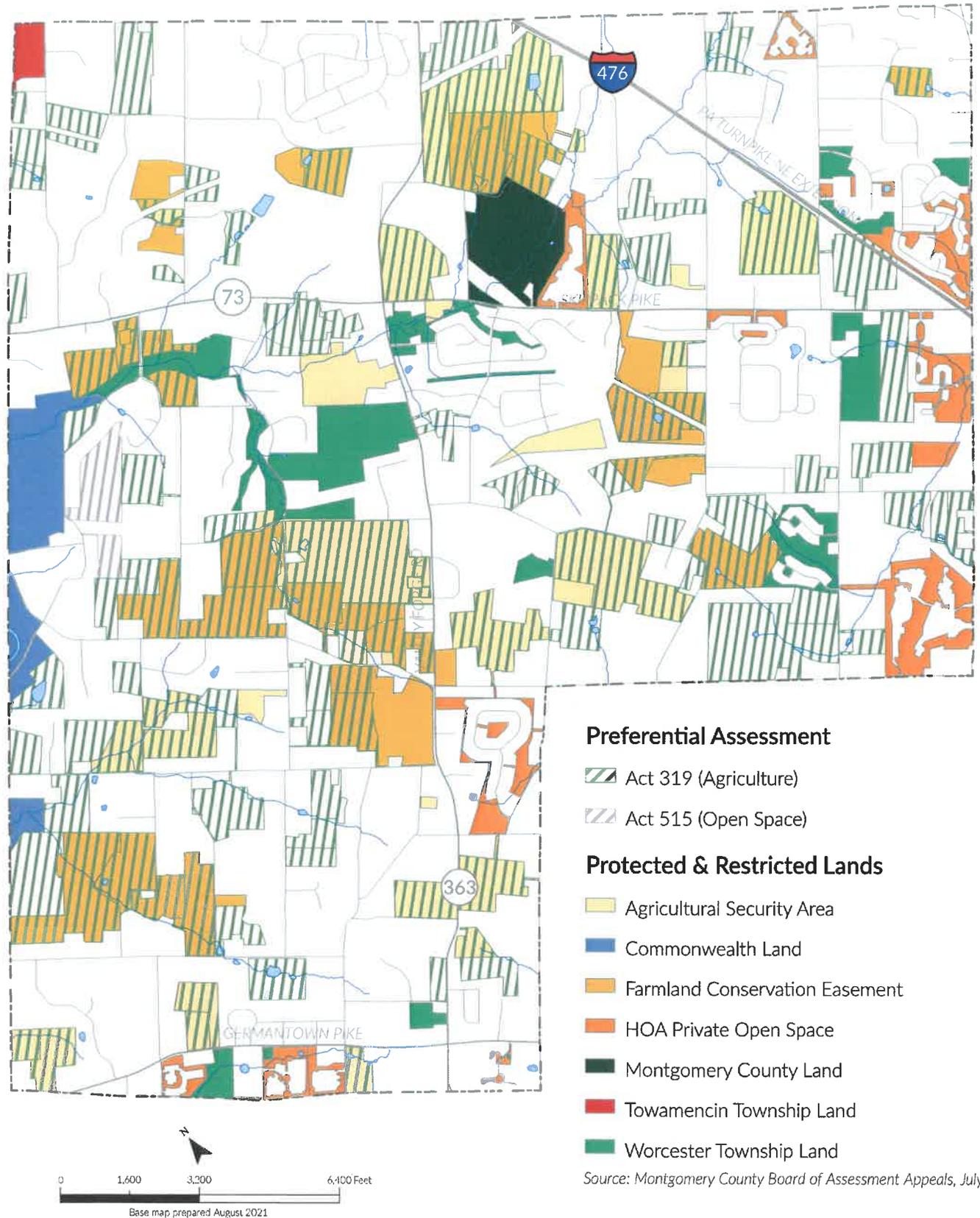


TABLE OF ALL CONSERVED AND RESTRICTED LANDS, AS OF NOVEMBER 18, 2020

SOURCE: WORCESTER TOWNSHIP

Preserved Lands	Acres
Worcester Township	323.99
Montgomery County	107.66
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania	147.67
Private (HOA) Open Space	60.44
Conservation Easements	817.00
	<b>1,826.24</b>
Agricultural Security Area	Acres
Worcester Township	1,002.45
	<b>1,002.45</b>
Township Area Total Acres (16.22 sm)	<b>10,381.00</b>
Percent Preserved	<b>17.59%</b>
Percent Preserved and ASA-Enrolled	<b>27.25%</b>

List last updated 11/18/2020

lawsuits, and agricultural land that is preferentially assessed under Act 319. However, neither of these designations provide preservation in and of themselves. While a property tax incentive is received by Act 319 properties and a covenant is placed on a property for the duration of its enrollment, a property can voluntarily exit the program and be developed, although rollback taxes are due for the preceding seven years. Properties in an ASA are not preserved *by* that program, but membership in that program is a prerequisite for applying to the County Farmland Preservation Program.

Private properties can also voluntarily join another preferential assessment program, known as Act 515, which can provide a similar temporary conservation of a property through a property tax incentive and a covenant on the property. These properties can be agricultural, or they can be wooded working lands, private recreation (like a golf course), or otherwise properties over 10 acres with a single residence, but there is generally a requirement that there be some sort of public accessibility to the property.

### Key Takeaway

Worcester has a very good mix of preserved open space types and an understanding of the residents' desire for open space in the township. Further efforts to preserve open space and reserve park land should take into account a holistic approach considering habitat conservation, agriculture, and recreation uses, while also integrating the best practices of conservation subdivisions so the township achieves its goals.

## INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES

### Water Updates

Public water in the township is supplied by numerous suppliers, including North Penn Water Authority, North Wales Water Authority, PA American Water Company (Norristown District), and Aqua Superior Center Point. These supplies serve approximately 2,628 connections, both residential and nonresidential properties, which are further broken down in the infographic to the right.

The 2008 Comprehensive Plan recommended that those areas to be supplied with public sewer should also be served by public water, resulting in the proposed service areas for each of these public utilities to be relatively similar. Since much of the low-density and other rural areas of the township would continue to be served by private wells instead of public water, new developments can still be served by new private wells. According to survey data provided to MCPC, 37 new private wells have come online in the township since 2007. These 37 wells will yield 1,060 gallons and serve approximately 673 people. In order to continue the viability and safety of private well usage, continuing to plan for safe and effective groundwater recharge, as well as the conservation and protection overall of groundwater and surface water resources should be addressed.

Stream corridors, as well as lakes, ponds and wetlands, all maintain unique aquatic-based habitats and plant communities. The land-based resources abutting these water bodies can provide a number of ecological benefits, including the attenuation of stormwater, streambank conservation, and erosion prevention, as well as the regulation of pollutants and oxygen levels in waterways. Worcester regulates activities on the land abutting these waterways, called riparian corridors, primarily through the Riparian Corridor Conservation Overlay District (RCCD) in the zoning ordinance. These areas usually include a minimum 50-75 foot-

## PUBLIC WATER CONNECTIONS BY TYPE IN THE TOWNSHIP, 2018.



wide area, measured perpendicularly from each side of a stream.

The following map indicates the presence of the existing buffer, if any, with the:

- ◆ Full Buffer (green line): Segments with at least a 50-foot wide buffer on both sides only, with at least 50% canopy coverage
- ◆ Half Buffer (yellow line): Segments with at least a 50-foot wide buffer on one side only, with at least 50% canopy coverage.
- ◆ No Buffer (red line): Segments which do not appear to have a riparian buffer of trees and shrubs that is a minimum of 50 feet wide (on each side) and with at least 50% canopy coverage
- ◆ Culvert Area (pink line): Segments where a stream goes underground or is channelized into a culvert under a road.

Overall we see that a majority of stream corridors in the township have at least a partial buffer existing, with full buffers located along 61% of the more than 28 miles of streams in the township. The missing buffer areas occur on large-lot residential or agricultural lands, as well as near roadways; the majority of these areas are located on private property.



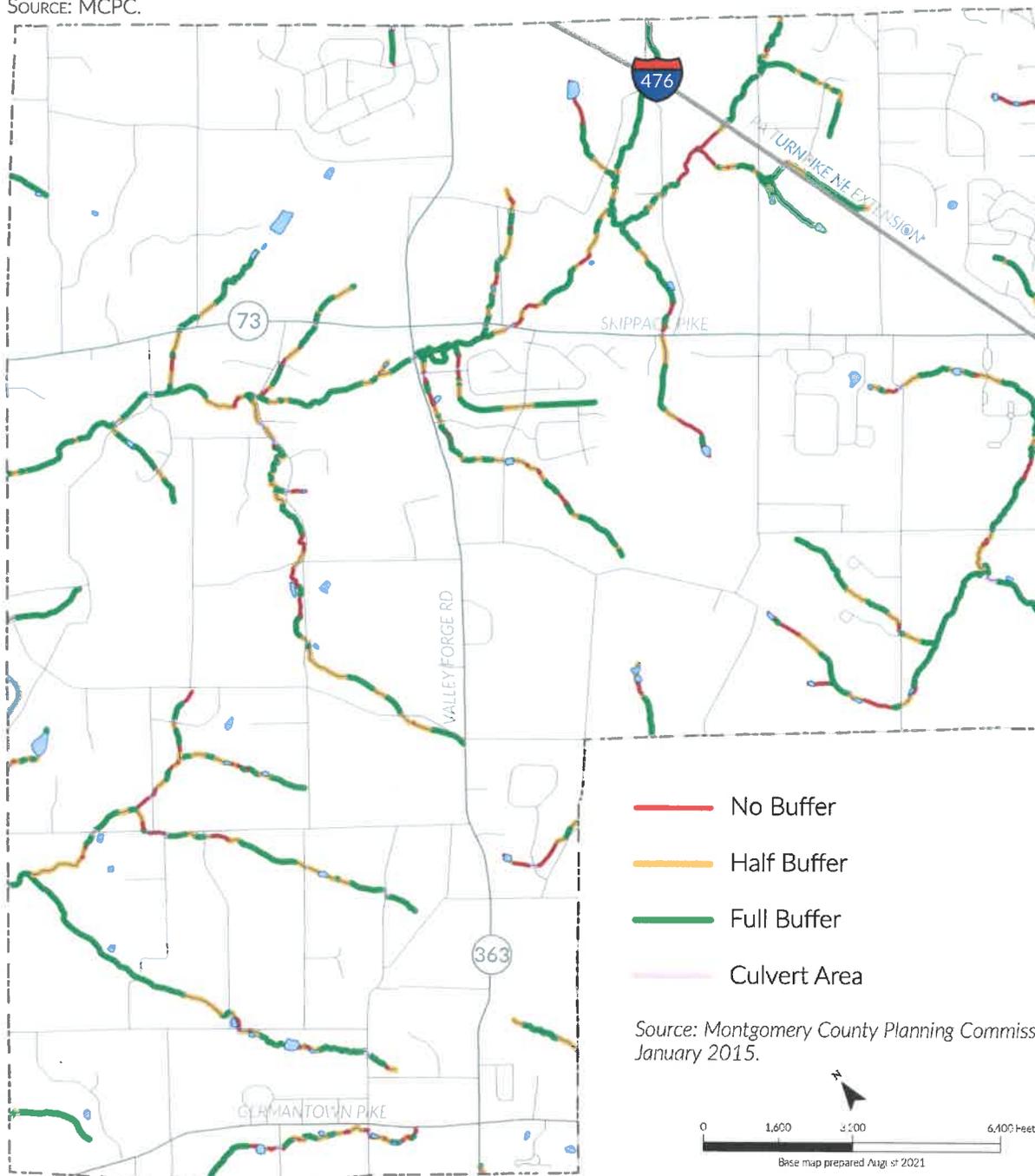
# WORCESTER RIPARIAN BUFFER QUALITY BY OWNERSHIP TYPE

SOURCE: MCPC, HERITAGE CONSERVANCY.

	Public Land		Private Land		Total	
	Length (feet)	Percent	Length (feet)	Percent	Length (feet)	Percent
No Buffer	2,408.4	10.0%	21,438.2	17.2%	23,846.6	16.1%
Half Buffer	5,127.2	21.3%	28,350.5	22.8%	33,477.7	22.5%
Full Buffer	16,427.2	68.4%	73,908.2	59.4%	90,335.4	60.8%
Culvert Area	57.1	0.2%	828.2	0.7%	885.2	0.6%
TOTAL	24,019.8	100.0%	124,525.1	100.0%	148,544.9	100.0%

# WORCESTER RIPARIAN BUFFER CLASSES

SOURCE: MCPC.



### Woodlands

The next map shows the extent of the tree canopy and overall tree cover in the township. It shows the tree coverage by the size of the “forest patch”, which generally means the greater the size of the patch, the more intact the ecological function in terms of forest health and habitat quality. We see some of the most intact and mature tree canopy along the western township boundary, adjacent to Evansburg State Park, as well as on township land, but significant woodland patches still exist on many private and undeveloped lands.

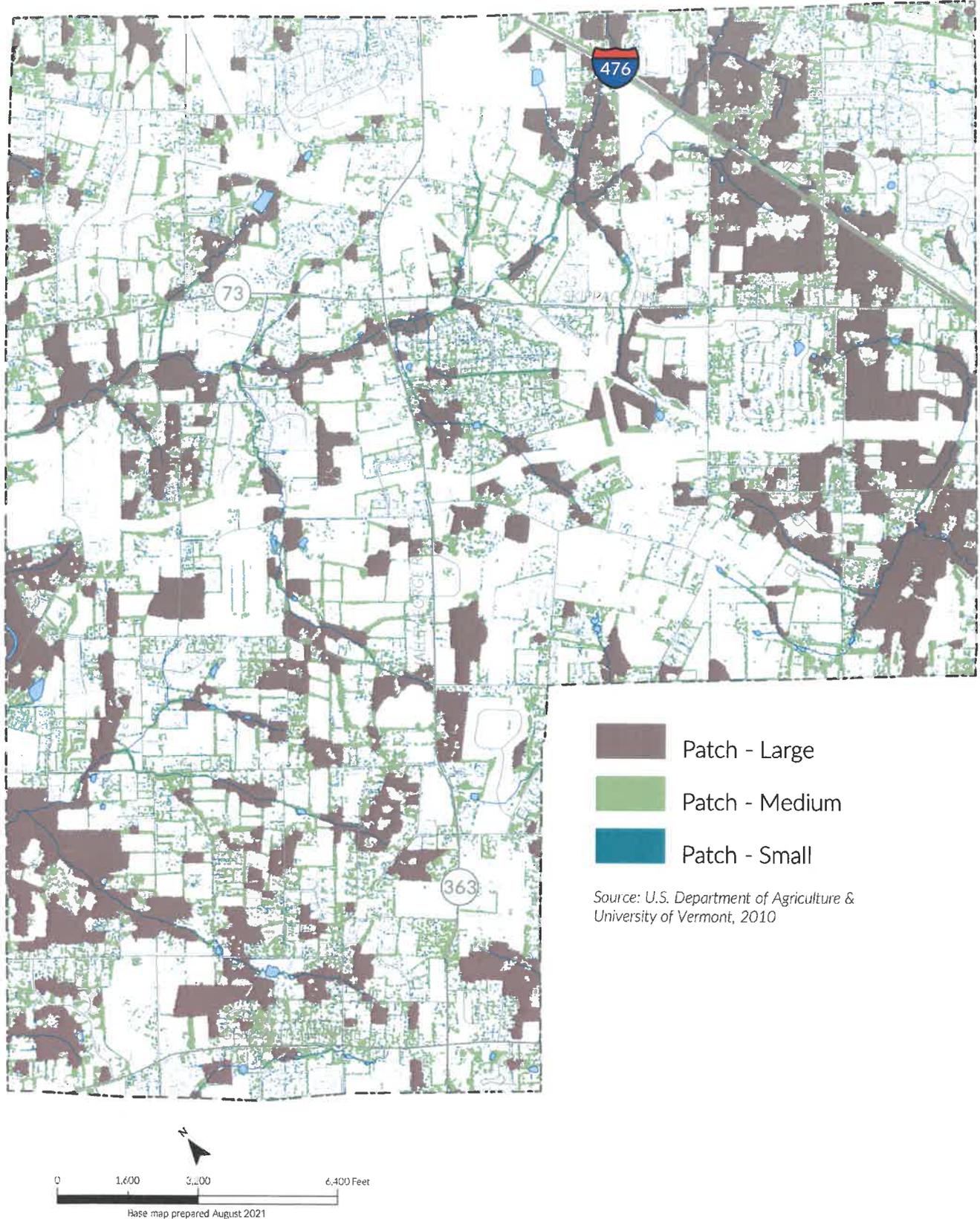
Woodlands provide habitat for numerous species of birds, mammals, and other wildlife, particularly when there is a generous interior away from streets and people. Canopy coverage near stream corridors provides needed shade to regulate water temperature and oxygen levels, as well as conserving streambanks. Tree coverage provides many benefits to humans as well, such as reducing the local surface temperature through shading, stormwater attenuation and carbon sequestration. The opportunities to regulate tree planting and removal are generally restricted to the land development process, in which trees must be planted per a calculation determined by the number of trees proposed to be removed. However, outside of this process, boosting tree planting and maintenance efforts must be done on a voluntary basis.

### Key Takeaway

Ensuring that both natural and built infrastructure systems are maintained in a sustainable manner will be that much more important as the township continues to be built out. Further work can be done to integrate overall sustainability planning and practices into community life.

# WORCESTER TREE CANOPY BY FOREST PATCH SIZE, 2010

SOURCE: MCPC.







## Goals & Objectives

Setting the goals for the community, and how to accomplish those goals, is an important step in the planning process. Creating goals, objectives, and recommendations is an iterative process, meaning that it involves several adjustments over time and integrating results from:

- ◆ our outreach survey,
- ◆ input from the task force, township officials, and staff,
- ◆ the findings from current conditions in the community and past plans,
- ◆ input from public meetings, and
- ◆ professional analysis from township consultants and planners

This process was performed for the six major subject areas of this plan. Descriptions of how goals, objectives, and recommendations contribute to the planning process are described in more detail below.

**Goals.** Overarching principles or statements indicating community aspirations and long-term vision. Goals themselves do not suggest what needs to be done to achieve them, but instead simply envision an ideal outcome or state of being. For instance, desiring to “preserve farmland” does not itself suggest how the preservation will be accomplished: an objective or recommendation later will suggest the best or relevant way(s) to accomplish preservation.

**Objectives.** Measurable characteristics of a community, changes in which are attributable to a policy, project, or community action. Objectives measure *progress* to a particular goal or envisioned outcome, allowing comparison over time, or they simply track overall changes. Some examples of objectives include “increased acres in preservation,” “percentage of new housing within designated growth areas,” and “miles of trails built.” The township will investigate creating realistic benchmark metrics for these objectives when plan implementation begins.

**Recommendations.** *Specific* policy proposals, actions, and projects that should be undertaken to “move the needle” on an objective, and by extension make progress on achieving a larger goal of the plan. An implementation plan indicates who is responsible for carrying out proposals or actions, the available funding sources, and how the township should prioritize different action steps. **Recommendations for each subject area will be indicated in subsequent chapters.**

## POLICY STATEMENT

*Worcester will ensure that a diverse, safe, sustainable, and efficient transportation system is maintained for motorists and nonmotorists alike.*

## Transportation & Mobility

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### GOALS

- ◆ Assure that a diversity of modes of transportation are provided to improve connectivity throughout the township.
- ◆ Encourage the use of alternatives to motor vehicles.
- ◆ Reduce traffic congestion.
- ◆ Improve traffic safety for both motorists and nonmotorists.
- ◆ Provide a comprehensive network of trails throughout the township and connect to regional trails.

### OBJECTIVES

- ▷ Increase in # of miles of trail built.
- ▷ Increase # of intersections with improved level of service (LOS).
- ▷ Increase # of documented trail users.
- ▷ Decrease in # of traffic accidents.
- ▷ Increase in % of trips by walking or biking.
- ▷ Increase in # of miles of sidewalk/trails per square mile.

## Community Character

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### GOALS

- ◆ Encourage new and existing housing and amenities which are compatible with the traditional and rural character of the township.
- ◆ Provide a range of housing, densities and opportunities for enhanced amenities and neighborhood design, and ensure a mix of housing, densities and land uses as required by law.
- ◆ Support “aging in place” principles and other means by which older adults can secure or maintain appropriate housing in the township.

### OBJECTIVES

- ▷ Increase in # of housing proposed and constructed of desired types.
- ▷ Improvement in % of desired housing types in the township to desired levels.
- ▷ Increase in # of placemaking projects.

### POLICY STATEMENT

*Worcester will support the provision of a range of high-quality housing and neighborhoods with appropriate and desirable amenities to support existing and future residents’ needs in line with Worcester’s community character and sense of place.*

## Preservation, Open Space & Parks

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### GOALS

- ◆ Support and encourage the preservation of the unique and rare aspects of the township’s history, culture, and environment which are emblematic of community character.
- ◆ Provide for the passive and active recreational needs of township residents.
- ◆ Enhance connectivity between parks and neighborhoods.
- ◆ Provide a degree of public access at properties acquired or eased for preservation purposes, as appropriate.

### OBJECTIVES

- ▷ Increase in # of properties/# of acres purchased or eased for preservation for agriculture, sensitive environmental areas, and general open space.

### POLICY STATEMENT

*Worcester will support and encourage the preservation of the township’s history, culture, and environment, while supporting an interconnected network of active and passive recreation system.*

- ▷ Increase in # of participants in township park/rec programs
- ▷ Increase in # residents rating satisfaction with township's park/rec system

## Environmental Resources & Infrastructure

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### POLICY STATEMENT

*Worcester will strive to maintain sustainable natural systems and the built environment to ensure the township's quality of life is maintained for future generations. Worcester will ensure that the functionality and maintenance of relevant infrastructure systems are sound and sustainably provided.*

### GOALS

- ◆ Preserve and conserve sensitive environmental features, such as floodplains, steep slopes, riparian buffers, forests, and wetlands.
- ◆ Restrict development from environmentally sensitive areas
- ◆ Support practices which address climate change, including renewable energy, sustainable transportation options, low-impact development, and reductions in waste, emissions, and water and energy use.
- ◆ Provide for the sustainable management of stormwater throughout the township.
- ◆ Provide and maintain sewer and water infrastructure capacity in line with reasonable needs
- ◆ Plan for public sewer in areas at risk for malfunctioning systems and retrofit failing systems

### OBJECTIVES

- ▷ Decrease in % of development occurring within sensitive environmental areas
- ▷ Decrease in rate of land converted to impervious surface.
- ▷ Increase in % tree canopy coverage
- ▷ Increase in % of riparian corridors with full or half buffers
- ▷ Increase in # of streambank restoration projects; # of feet of streambanks restored
- ▷ Increase in % of watersheds in good health
- ▷ Increase in alternative energy usage in residential and nonresidential properties
- ▷ Decrease in # of flooding events or illicit discharge complaints documented
- ▷ Increase in # of new connections to public water and sewer
- ▷ Increase in # of municipal stormwater projects; amount of stormwater issues abated through projects

## Governance & Public Services

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### 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

### OBJECTIVES

- ▷ Increase in # of residents rating satisfaction with township government
- ▷ Increase in # of municipal code self-reviews
- ▷ Increase in # and type of partnerships established by the township
- ▷ Increase in # and rate of complaints resolved

### POLICY STATEMENT

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

## Land Use & Growth Management

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### GOALS

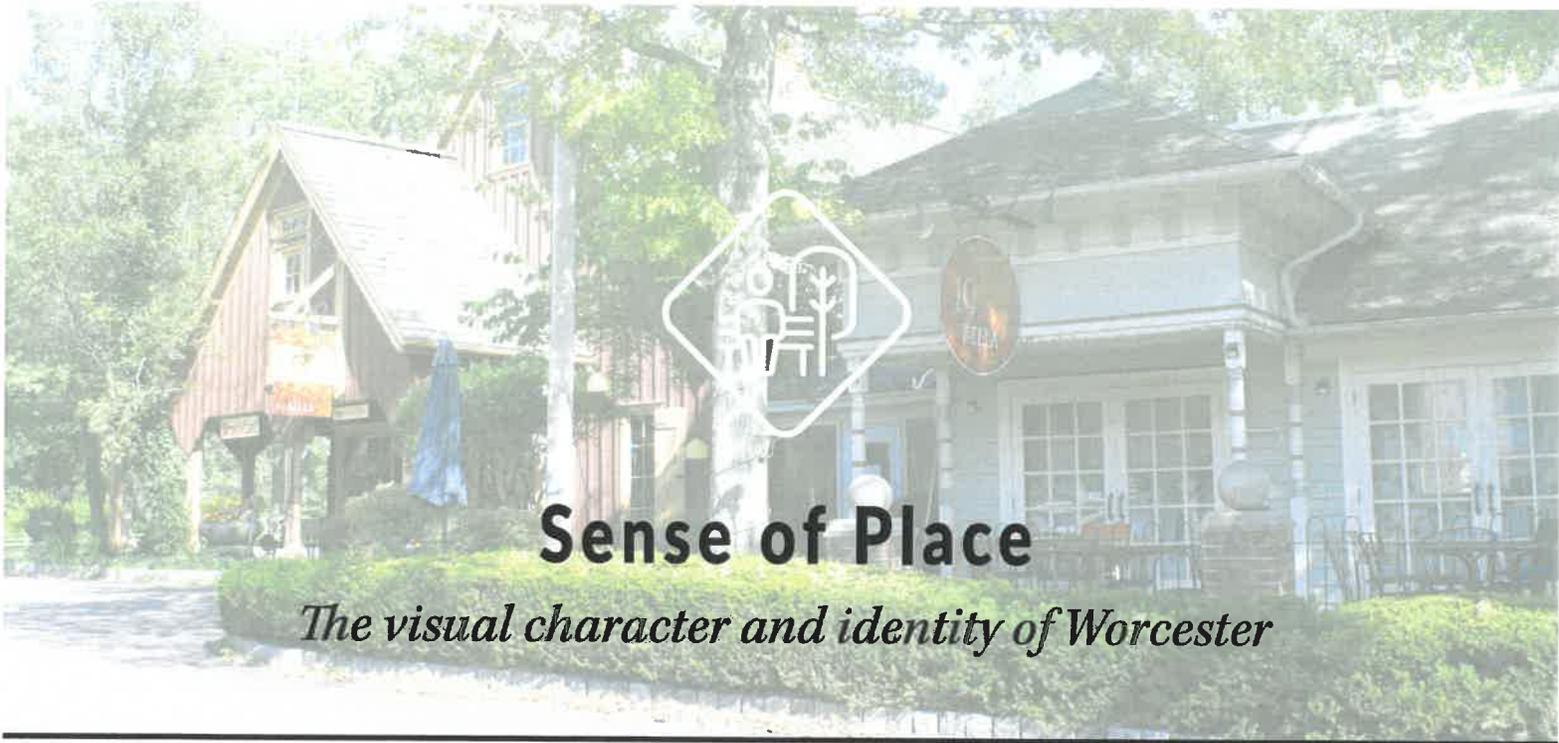
- ◆ Plan for a balanced land-use mix for fiscal sustainability for the township and for the residential tax base.
- ◆ Concentrate development where infrastructure and development already exists, such as in village growth areas.
- ◆ Ensure context-sensitive design of development, scaled according to its 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, concentrated in village growth areas.
- ◆ Support the continuing viability of agriculture in all its forms in the township.
- ◆ Support local small business development and retention, as well as entrepreneurship.

### 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. Worcester will support a local economic model which can provide a range of employment opportunities while maintaining a balanced commercial tax base.*

## OBJECTIVES

- ▷ Increase in % of developments within designated growth/village areas
- ▷ Increase in assessed property values
- ▷ Increase in # of acres preserved, both with and without public access as appropriate
- ▷ Increase in # of developments whose fiscal impact is net-zero or positive per acre revenue yield of development
- ▷ Decrease in # of developments resulting from court challenges or changed zoning
- ▷ Increase in # of jobs within the township
- ▷ Increase in # of business establishments
- ▷ Increase in # of agricultural operations
- ▷ Increase in # of agricultural-related jobs



## Sense of Place

### *The visual character and identity of Worcester*

#### ***Sense of Place:***

*The experience or sensation of being in a specific, unique place in the world. Those who experience a sense of place in a community experience the attractive, special, and unique physical aspects of an area as a manifestation of that feeling. These physical aspects of a community can include natural forms such as landscapes, topography, wildlife, and plant communities, as well as human-made forms such as architecture, signage, artistic and cultural objects, and structures. Mass-produced forms and structures with little local significance, or those aspects which “can be found anywhere,” in contrast, tend not to produce a sense of place.*

Worcester is a community built of brick and clapboard, of stone walls and wood fences, and of field and forest. Residents of Worcester value the rural experience above all else and have the benefit of enjoying their own little slice of small town America—all within about 20 to 25 miles of Philadelphia. Worcester is home to a welcoming community which is reflected through the variety of housing options of its many neighborhoods and the manifold amenities that the township offers.

The township’s commitment to preserving and enhancing its community character, a most valuable resource, is shown through the many beautiful parks and trails that offer recreation opportunities to users of all ages and abilities; its excellent schools offering bright futures to those who walk the halls; its many barns and working farms that define the landscape; its preserved open space that is home to diverse ecosystems; and its quaint villages that are home to a diverse mix of commercial and housing options. The people of Worcester lead rich lives filled with a variety of recreation and leisure opportunities—there is something for everyone in Worcester.

Worcester is a special place, and township residents can point out the many things that make Worcester unique. Many people believe great places “just happen,” or might happen by accident. Even though there is a fair bit of luck involved, great places are the result of a series of policy decisions, design interventions, and ongoing efforts to specifically

cultivate that *sense of place*. Four important purposes of placemaking include the following:

- ◆ *Identity:* Placemaking efforts enhance the identity of the community through unique design features which evoke the township's vernacular architecture, history, and patterns of development. When done successfully, through a mix of programming and design, no one would mistake Worcester for anywhere else, and this increases the sense of belonging among residents.
- ◆ *Orientation:* Both visitors and residents benefit from a coherent, obvious path to their chosen destination. A consistently-designed wayfinding program encourages greater and more efficient patronage of businesses, as well as recreational and natural amenities, all while supporting the community's overall design scheme.
- ◆ *Comfort:* No one wants to be in a place which feels uninviting or hostile. Improvements should not only make walking, shopping, and doing business in a village area safer, but also more comfortable. Public spaces should be inviting and intimate, encouraging people to stay longer and recreate or patronize more businesses.
- ◆ *Beauty:* People naturally want to live, work and visit places which are pleasing to behold and pleasant to dwell in. Street furniture which recalls historic forms, appropriately-scaled and -designed signs, well-articulated façade treatments, and plentiful plantings not only make the landscape attractive, but capture Worcester's spirit.

**THESE ARE PREFERRED...**



**THESE ARE NOT...**



**Residential Design:** *new residential and mixed-use development should be built of materials similar to the township overall—generally brick, stone, and wood as opposed to cookie cutter designs or vinyl siding.*

## THESE ARE PREFERRED...



## THESE ARE NOT...



*Commercial Design: In many cases, existing commercial spaces can be repurposed for new uses. When this does not meet the demand for commercial space, new commercial spaces will need to be built. Cookie cutter strip malls can detract from the community, so any new construction should be of building materials sympathetic to the community character and overall architecture of the area where they are built. Vast parking areas are a visual pollutant, and can also cause stormwater issues and add to heat island impacts.*



THESE ARE PREFERRED...



THESE ARE NOT...



**Signage:** *Smaller scale, wooden signage is preferred to large, vinyl, or aluminum signage. Lighting for monument/freestanding signage should be limited to external downlighting as opposed to internal illumination; the same goes for wall signs, which should preferably have gooseneck lighting.*

THESE ARE PREFERRED...



THESE ARE NOT...



**Street Lamps:** *Period lighting takes one back to a simpler time. Lamp posts are both aesthetically pleasing and functional, making pedestrians safer and creating a sense of place.*

## THESE ARE PREFERRED...



## THESE ARE NOT...



*Public Amenities: Benches in public parks, along public streets, and even in shopping centers can act as refuges for those who need to rest or just want to enjoy the weather or scenery. The design of benches can mesh with the community and enhance the streetscape. Even trash and recycling bins can be beautiful and add to the overall aesthetic of the community.*

## THESE ARE PREFERRED...



## THESE ARE NOT...



**Recreation:** *Recreation areas are a key piece of a community. The way that parks are integrated into the community and what amenities they offer has a big impact on how much they are visited by the community. Large parks can offer a wide variety of recreation opportunities for people of all ages and can act as event spaces.*