

Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Planning Committee 2018

ANNUAL REPORT



2018 Membership

Douglass Township

Edward O. Reitz Jr. (Chairman)

Anthony Kuklinski

Pete Hiryak

East Coventry Township

Michael A. Moyer

Walt Woessner

N. Lance Parson (Alternate)

Lower Pottsgrove Township

Thomas Troutman

Ray Lopez

New Hanover Township

Philip Agliano

Kurt Zebrowski

North Coventry Township

James T. Marks III

Bill Soumis (Vice Chairman)

Pottstown Borough

Daniel D. Weand

Ryan Procsal (Treasurer)

Upper Pottsgrove Township

Elwood Taylor

Greg Churach

West Pottsgrove Township

Mark Green

Recording Secretary



Bonnie Frisco (Non-Voting Member)

PMRPC Purpose

“The Pottstown Metropolitan Region is positioned directly in the path of growth as it continues to expand outward from Philadelphia and its suburbs. It is a well-balanced region with a richly diverse landscape of historic communities, attractive suburban neighborhoods, industry, commercial centers, rolling farmlands and abundant natural resources. The intersection of US Route 422 and PA Route 100 in the middle of the region provides a gateway for new growth. The region’s communities recognize that they are at a crossroads for directing growth and this is the catalyst for the region’s eight municipalities working together to plan their future. Especially important for the region is directing growth into the region’s older communities and designated growth areas, particularly the Borough of Pottstown, in order to revitalize these older places, maximize the costly public infrastructure of the region, and preserve the region’s rural areas.

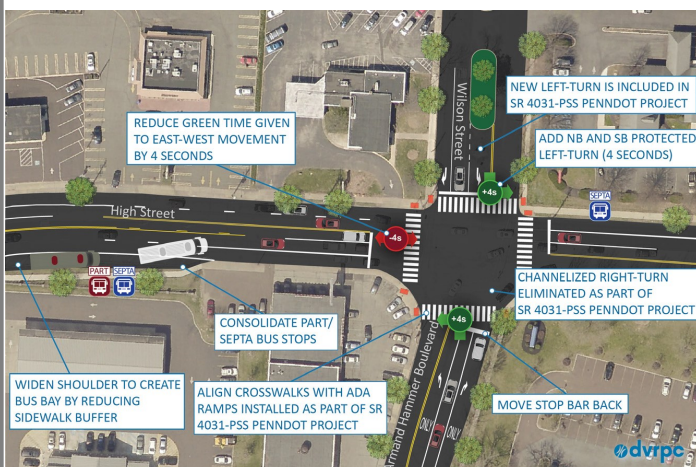
Through regional cooperation and planning the Pottstown Metropolitan Region intends to:

- Protect the unique historical, cultural, and natural resources of the region.
- Promote the economic vitality and quality of life of the region’s existing communities.
- Implement growth management techniques to provide for orderly and well-planned new development.
- Preserve open space and agriculture in the region.
- Develop transportation choices for better mobility in and through the region.
- Encourage walkable communities with a mix of uses and a range of housing options where appropriate.
- Promote new economic opportunities and jobs.
- Maintain and improve recreation options.
- Address the specific needs and unique conditions of each municipality.”

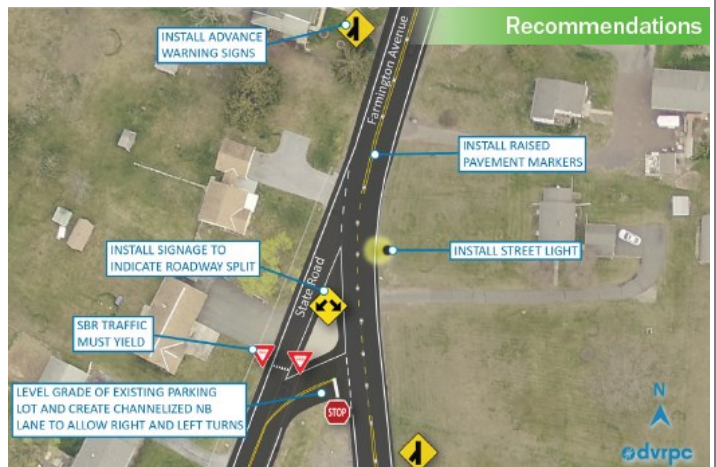
 *The Pottstown Metropolitan Region Intergovernmental Cooperative Implementation Agreement (ICIA)*
for Regional Planning (as amended April 12, 2010) 

Featured Project: Pottstown Region Traffic Analysis

The Pottstown Region Traffic Analysis, which was started in the fall of 2017, is being completed in partnership with the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC). This project will identify low-cost roadway improvements to support future traffic growth in the Pottstown Region by anticipating the impact of approved and proposed land developments that will increase the residential population and number of employees within the Region. PMRPC identified 18 critical locations, primarily on local roads, that they felt may be impacted by potential traffic increases from recently approved or proposed land developments. By evaluating current conditions, modeling conditions with future development, and defining congestion management strategies and traffic circulation improvements for each of these intersections; this study will identify low-cost improvements that could have a positive impact on the traffic safety and mobility of the Region as-a-whole



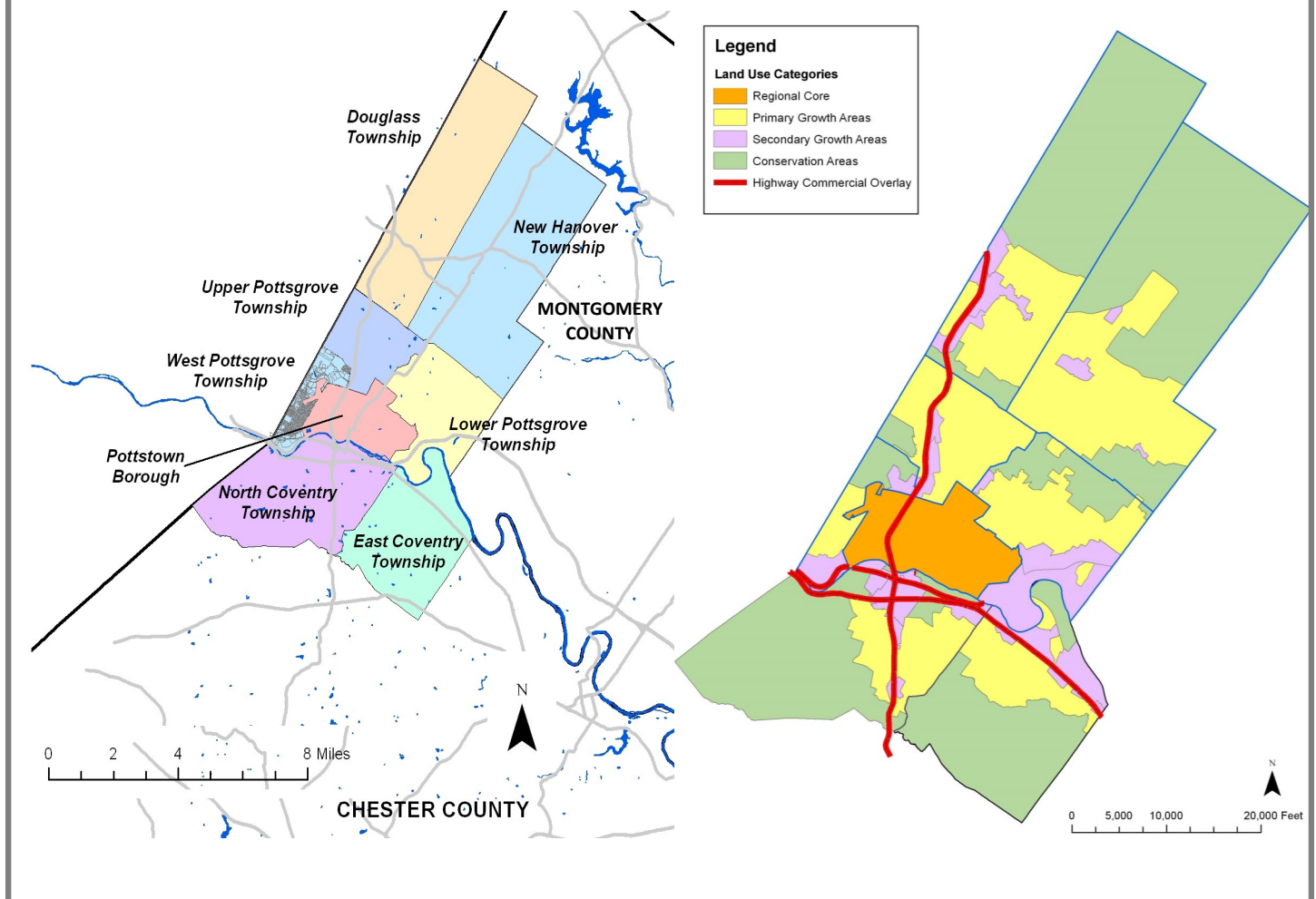
Draft recommendations for Armand Hammer Boulevard and High Street in Pottstown Borough



Draft recommendations for Farmington Avenue and State Road in Upper Pottsgrove Township

Regional Setting Map

Future Land Use Map



Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Comprehensive Plan

The Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2015 as an update to the first regional comprehensive Plan adopted in 2005. The 2015 Regional Comprehensive Plan lays out goals and objectives for the region related to economic development, housing, parks and recreation, open space, natural resource protection, agriculture, transportation, and community facilities.

No amendments to the regional comprehensive plan were reviewed or adopted by the Committee during 2018.

Zoning Ordinance and Map Consistency Reviews

All proposed zoning text or zoning map amendments that change the standards regulating use, residential density, or non-residential intensity within a member municipality are sent to the Committee for review and comment. The Committee reviews the proposed amendment to determine whether it is generally consistent with the stated goals, objectives, and policies of the adopted Regional Comprehensive Plan.


No zoning text or zoning map amendments affecting a change in use, density, or intensity were reviewed by the Committee during 2018.


Future Land Use Plan


The Future Land Use Plan for the Pottstown Metropolitan Region as outlined in the 2015 Regional Comprehensive Plan includes policies and maps intended to guide future growth in the Region for the next 20 years (see the Future Land Use Map on page 3).


Subdivisions and Land Developments of Regional Impact

Any subdivision or land development proposal within the Region which meets the definition of a “subdivision or land development of regional impact” is reviewed by the Committee. The Committee reviews and provides advisory comments to the individual municipality where the proposal is located as it relates to the stated goals, objectives, and policies of the adopted Regional Comprehensive Plan.

Hanover Crossing  At the March meeting, PMRPC reviewed a 79 unit housing development in New Hanover Township located off of Swamp Pike near New Hanover Square Road. The 32-acre development is located in the Secondary Growth Area and includes over 14 acres of open space. No issues of regional significance were identified.

Budget Store & Lock Self Storage  At the March meeting, PMRPC reviewed a 70,800 square foot commercial development of a self storage facility. The 9.44 acre development at the intersection of Route 100 and Jackson Road is located in the Primary Growth Area. No issues of regional significance were identified.

J.J. Kane Auctioneers, Inc.  At the April meeting, PMRPC reviewed a 48.2 acre development of an open-air auction lot due to the projected traffic volumes during auction days. The Regional Planning Committee provided comments related to potential environmental contamination, traffic impacts, and intersection configuration at Route 724/Schuylkill Road and Fricks Lock Road.

663 Storage Center  At the September meeting, PMRPC reviewed the proposed development of a 179-unit self-storage facility on North Charlotte Street. The approximately 4 acre development is located on the border of Lower Pottsgrove and Upper Pottsgrove Townships. The Regional Planning Committee provided comments related to enhancing a vegetative buffer between the proposed development and existing homes.

Grant Programs

Circuit Rider Grant

PMRPC received a 5-year Circuit Rider grant through the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) to fund a regional recreation coordinator position to be shared across six municipalities: Douglass Township, Lower Pottsgrove Township, North Coventry Township, Pottstown Borough, Upper Pottsgrove Township, and West Pottsgrove Township. In the first year of the grant, the recreation coordinator’s salary is fully funded by DCNR. Each subsequent year the DCNR contribution reduces by 25% and the local municipal contribution increases by 25% . Now in its fifth year, the program is fully funded locally. PMRPC was able to partner with the Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation (PAHWF) that provides significant financial and administrative support for this program. A committee of representatives from PAHWF and the participating municipalities meets monthly to discuss the recreation coordinator’s work items and provide feedback.

Michael Lane was hired as the second Pottstown Area Regional Recreation Coordinator in October of 2016. During 2018 Mr. Lane worked with an engineering consultant to complete the pre-design and engineering of four key trail segments, worked with municipalities to submit grant applications for park and open space improvements, completed playground safety inspections as a Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI), and coordinated the design and installation of several projects including a pollinator garden along the Schuylkill River and a new, nature-based play space in Memorial Park in Pottstown Borough (see photo to the right).



Mini-Grants Program

The Pottstown Parks and Recreation Improvement Mini-Grant Program is a local grant program jointly-administered by PMRPC and PAHWF with grant funding from DCNR which is matched 50:50 locally by PAHWF. Mini-grants are available to all eight of the municipalities within the Region. The program is designed to fund park improvements to increase park usage and improve the health of area residents.

Mini-Grants Round #1: 2013-2016

10

PROJECTS

6

MUNICIPALITIES

70% PARK
DEVELOPMENT
PROJECTS

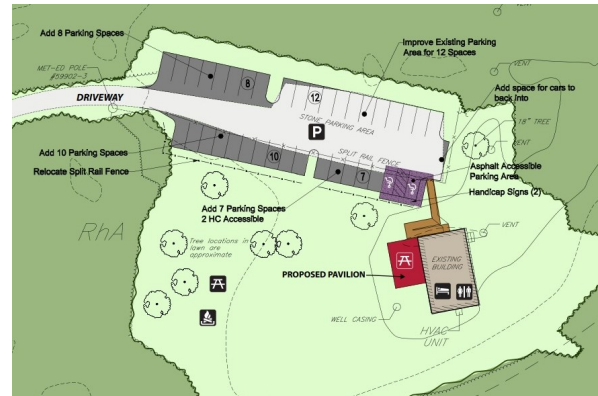
30% PARK
PLANNING
PROJECTS

\$173,550

TOTAL GRANT FUNDS SPENT



Upper Pottsgrove Township received a \$12,788 grant to professionally evaluate the health of three ponds using mapping, sediment sampling, and water quality testing. The evaluation found that the ponds are relatively healthy.



Douglass Township received a \$25,000 grant to identify Township-wide park needs and complete plans for three public parks, including the Libor Tract. The plans call for additional parking, a picnic pavilion, and a disc golf area.

Mini-Grants Round #2: 2015-2018

10

PROJECTS

7

MUNICIPALITIES

70% PARK
DEVELOPMENT
PROJECTS

30% PARK
PLANNING
PROJECTS

\$197,054

TOTAL GRANT FUNDS SPENT



West Pottsgrove Township received a \$25,000 grant for design, permitting, and construction of a pedestrian bridge over the Manatawny Creek with 200 linear feet of trail connecting to improvements completed in Phase 1.

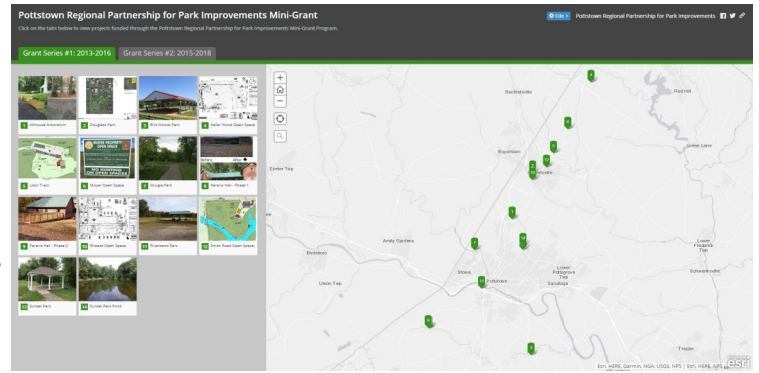


Pottstown Borough received a \$10,000 grant to construct a pavilion in Riverfront Park near the Schuylkill River Trail. Pollinator gardens were installed along the path in conjunction with a wooden mural donated by artist Beck Morris.

Mini-Grants Round #3: 2018-2021

In 2017, PMRPC received a \$100,000 grant from DCNR, matched by \$100,000 of funding from the Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation to continue the Pottstown Parks and Recreation Improvement Mini-Grant program. The first round of grant applications was received in the fall of 2018.

An online, interactive map has been created to summarize facts about each of the active and completed mini-grants projects: <https://pottstownmetroregion.com/current-and-completed-mini-grants-project-map/>



2018 Guest Speakers

- **January** – Karen Whitaker, DVRPC Senior Transportation Planner; David Anderson, DVRPC Manager Office of Transportation and Corridor Studies (Pottstown Region Traffic Analysis)
- **February**—Eric Jarrell, MCPC Section Chief of Community Planning; Kelsey Boyd, Natural Lands Trust (Multi-Regional Greenways & Stewardship Plan)
- **March** – Michael Lane, Pottstown Region Recreation Coordinator (Regional Recreation Coordinator Update)
- **March**—Craig Bachik, Navarro & Wright (Tri-County Trails Project)
- **May** – Jon Leshar, MCPC Principal Environmental Planner (Pottstown Sustainability Plan)
- **June** – Eric Jarrell, MCPC Section Chief of Community Planning (Multi-Regional Greenways & Stewardship Plan)
- **September** – Michael Lane, Pottstown Region Recreation Coordinator (Regional Recreation Coordinator Update)
- **September** – John Cover, MCPC Assistant Director (Keystone Economic and Employment Plan)
- **September** – Kourtney High, Pottstown Borough Grants Administrator (Walk/Bike Pottstown)
- **October** – Melissa Andrews, DVRPC Environmental Planner (Tri-County Trails Feasibility Study)
- **October** – Michael Lane, Pottstown Region Recreation Coordinator (Tri-County Trails Key Trail Segment Design)
- **October** – Andrew Besold, MCPC Transportation Planner II (Bike Montco)
- **December** – Karen Whitaker, DVRPC Senior Transportation Planner (Pottstown Region Traffic Analysis)

Contact Information

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