

POTTSTOWN METROPOLITAN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



POTTSTOWN METROPOLITAN REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE

2021 MEMBERSHIP:

DOUGLASS TOWNSHIP

Edward O. Reitz Jr.
Pete Hiryak
Joshua Stouch

EAST COVENTRY TOWNSHIP

Michael A. Moyer
Larry Tietjen
N. Lance Parson (Alternate)

LOWER POTTS GROVE TOWNSHIP

Thomas Troutman (Vice Chairman)
Ray Lopez

NEW HANOVER TOWNSHIP

D. W Boone Flint
Kurt Zebrowski

NORTH COVENTRY TOWNSHIP

James T. Marks III
Bill Soumis (Chairman)

POTTSTOWN BOROUGH

Daniel D. Weand
Ryan Procsal (Treasurer)

UPPER POTTS GROVE TOWNSHIP

David Waldt
Greg Churach

WEST POTTS GROVE TOWNSHIP

Pete LaRosa

RECORDING SECRETARY

Bonnie Frisco (Non-Voting Member)

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PMRPC Website: <https://pottstownmetroregion.com/>

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.

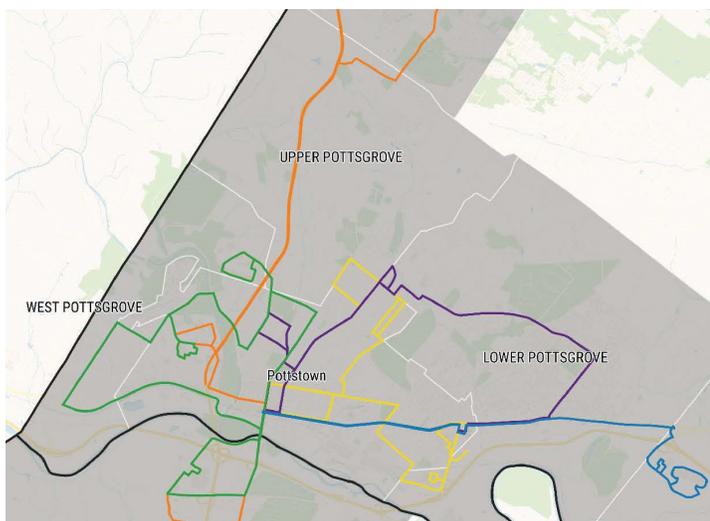
Through regional cooperation and planning the Pottstown Metropolitan Region intends to:

- 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.”

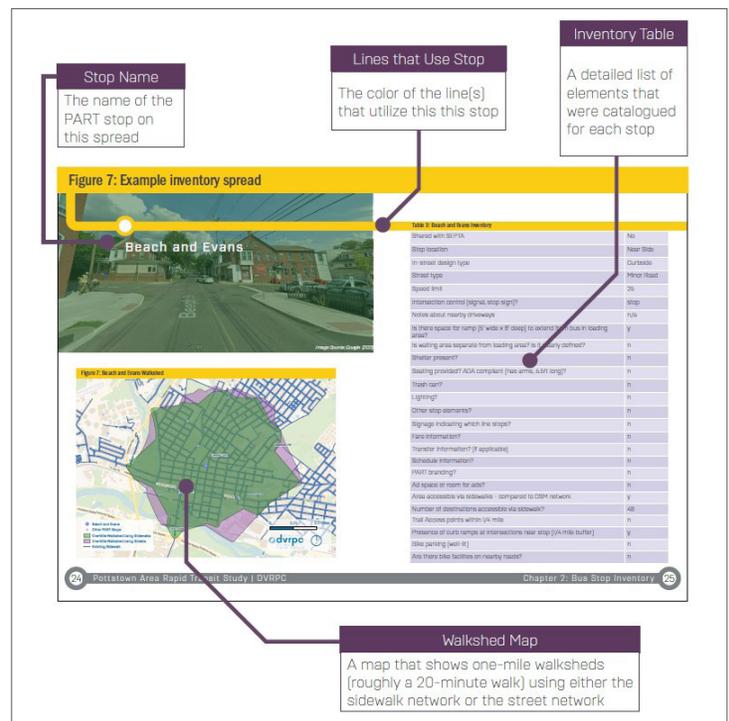
Source: Pottstown Metropolitan Region Intergovernmental Cooperative Implementation Agreement for Regional Planning (April 12, 2010)

FEATURED PROJECT: PART BUS STOP ENHANCEMENT STUDY

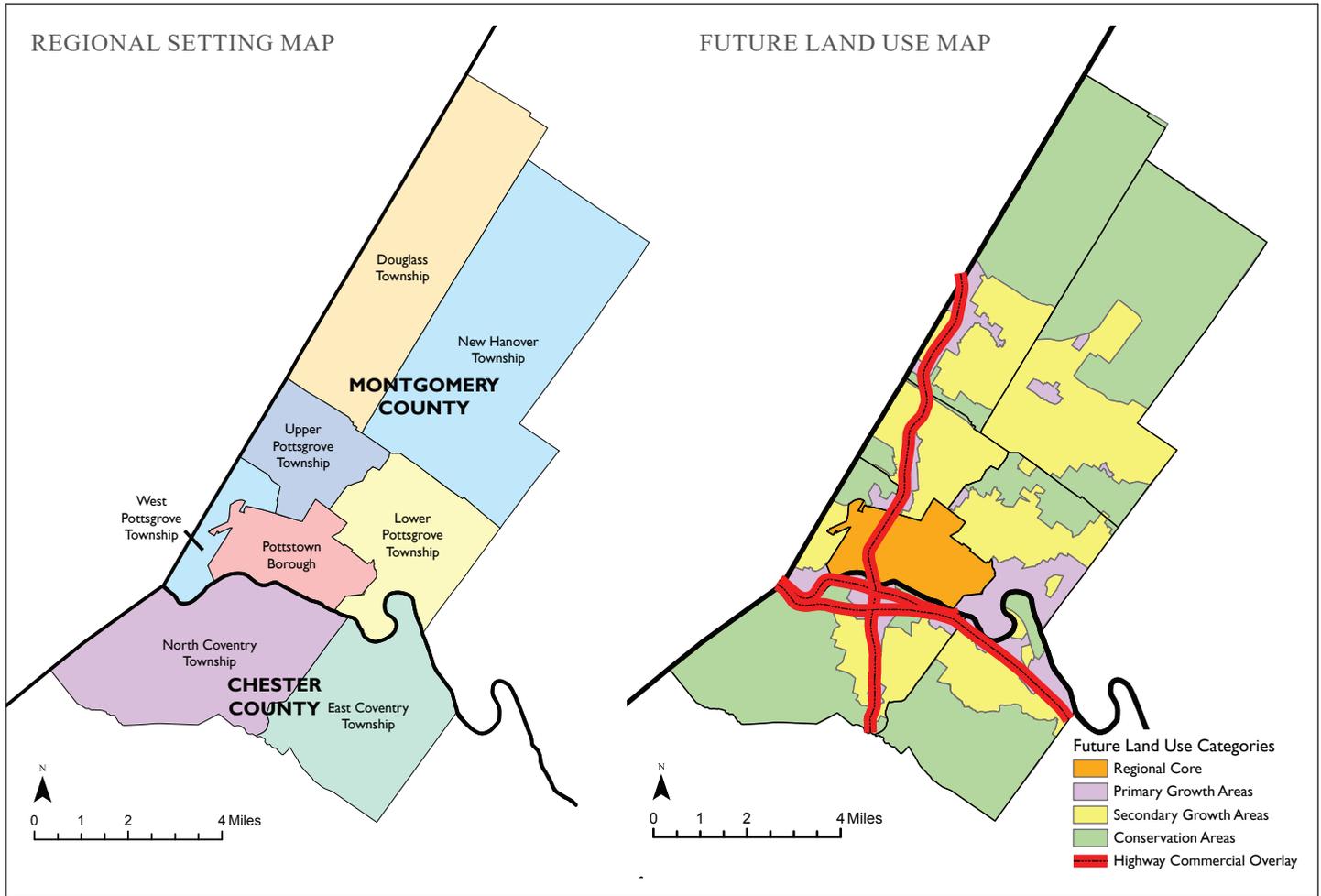
PMRPC is partnering with the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) to conduct a study to identify and prioritize bus stop and access improvements to increase ridership on the local transit service, Pottstown Area Rapid Transit (PART). This study will serve as a guide to help PART apply best practices in bus stop design and access across the system to increase efficiency and better connect riders to regional destinations.



PART operates five bus routes with stops in six of the eight PMRPC municipalities.



In 2021, DVRPC completed a detailed inventory of over 30 bus stop locations detailing existing amenities, accessibility, and design considerations.



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 2021.

ZONING ORDINANCE AND MAP CONSISTENCY REVIEWS

Keim Street Gateway Overlay District Zoning Map Amendment—Pottstown

Borough – At the January meeting, PMRPC reviewed a proposed zoning map amendment to create a new overlay district in Pottstown Borough called the Keim Street Gateway Overlay District intended to incentivize development in accordance with the Keim Street Gateway Plan. The PMRPC determined the zoning map amendment to be generally consistent with the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

B2 Performance Standard Development Zoning Text Amendment —New Hanover

Township – At the January meeting, PMRPC reviewed a proposed zoning text amendment to remove the B2 Performance Standard Development in New Hanover Township. PMRPC determined the zoning text amendment to be generally consistent with the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

HI Heavy Industrial District Zoning Text Amendment—New Hanover Township

– At the March meeting, PMRPC reviewed a proposed zoning text amendment to remove extractive operation uses from the Heavy Industrial zoning district in New Hanover Township. PMRPC determined the zoning text amendment to be generally consistent with the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

TC Town Center & TN Traditional Neighborhood Districts Zoning Text Amendment

– **New Hanover Township** – At the March meeting, PMRPC reviewed a proposed zoning text amendment to remove atrium house and townhouse uses from the Town Center zoning district and remove twins and atrium house uses from the Traditional Neighborhood zoning district in New Hanover Township. PMRPC determined the zoning text amendments to be generally consistent with the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

Business Overlay Zoning Map Amendment – Pottstown Borough – At the August meeting, PMRPC reviewed a proposed zoning map amendment to create a new overlay district called the Business Overlay zoning district in Pottstown Borough intended to provide for low intensity, light industrial uses that provide a transition between the Traditional Town Neighborhood and Heavy Manufacturing zoning districts. PMRPC determined the zoning text amendments to be generally consistent with the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

Bee Ordinance Zoning Text Amendment – New Hanover Township – At the September meeting, PMRPC reviewed a proposed zoning text amendment related to beekeeping in New Hanover Township. PMRPC determined the zoning text amendments to be generally consistent with the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

Village Mixed Use District Zoning Map & Text Amendment – New Hanover

Township – At the October meeting, PMRPC reviewed a proposed zoning map and text amendment to create a new zoning district called the Village Mixed Use zoning district in New Hanover Township to permit a mix of various housing types, commercial businesses, and institutional buildings in a pedestrian-oriented neighborhood. PMRPC determined the zoning map and text amendments to be generally consistent with the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

TTN Traditional Town Neighborhood Zoning Text Amendment – Pottstown

Borough – At the December meeting, PMRPC reviewed a proposed zoning text amendment to amend the permitted and conditional uses in the Traditional Town Neighborhood zoning district in Pottstown Borough. PMRPC determined the zoning text amendments to be generally consistent with the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

GMU Gateway Mixed Use Zoning Text Amendment – Lower Pottsgrove Township

– At the December meeting, PMRPC reviewed a proposed zoning text amendment to amend the permitted uses in the Gateway Mixed Use zoning district in Lower Pottsgrove Township. PMRPC determined the zoning text amendments to be generally consistent with the Regional Comprehensive Plan.

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 2).

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.

Willow Street – Upper Pottsgrove Township – At the January meeting, PMRPC reviewed a proposed development to create eight twin dwelling units. No issues of regional significance were identified.

Kummerer Phase 2A – Upper Pottsgrove Township – At the January meeting, PMRPC reviewed a proposed development consisting of 130 single family homes on a 47-acre tract with approximately 15 acres of preserved open space. PMRPC provided comments on parks and open space, parking, and road network.

Moove In Partners – Lower Pottsgrove Township – At the May meeting, PMRPC reviewed a proposed 53,900 sq. ft. self-storage facility on East High Street. PMRPC provided comments related to driveway access.

Royal Farms – Lower Pottsgrove Township – At the August meeting, PMRPC reviewed a proposed three lot subdivision including the development of a gas station with 16 pumps, a convenience store, and a car wash. PMRPC provided comments related to stormwater management.

Hanover Meadows – New Hanover Township – At the October meeting, PMRPC reviewed a proposed development of a retirement community containing 519 total age-restricted housing units (137 single-family detached, 28 twins, 258 townhouses, and 96 quads), 14,000 square feet of commercial space, and an 11,025 square foot community center. PMRPC provided comments related to utilities, natural resource protection, vehicular access, and regional traffic impacts.

Pottstown Sustainable Energy Park – Pottstown Borough – At the December meeting, PMRPC reviewed the proposed development of a cellulose based solid waste gasification facility on a vacant parcel located within the Keystone Employment and Economic Plan (KEEP) Overlay District. The proposed facility includes a 144,566 square foot feedstock preparation and fuel conversion building and a 4,284 square foot administrative office building. No issues of regional significance were identified.

Coventry Chase Townhomes (Painter Tract B) – East Coventry Township – At the December meeting, PMRPC reviewed the proposed development of 112 townhomes. No issues of regional significance were identified.

GRANT PROGRAMS

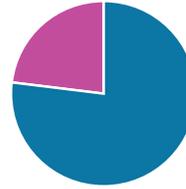
Previous Mini-Grants Rounds #1-3: 2013-2021



31
Projects



8
Municipalities



77%
Park development projects &
23% park planning projects



\$570,575
Total grant
funds spent

MINI-GRANTS PROGRAM

The Pottstown Parks and Recreation Improvement Mini-Grant Program is a local grant program jointly-administered by PMRPC and the Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation (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 #4: 2021-2024

In 2021, PMRPC worked with the Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation to update the mini-grant guidance and administrative documents.

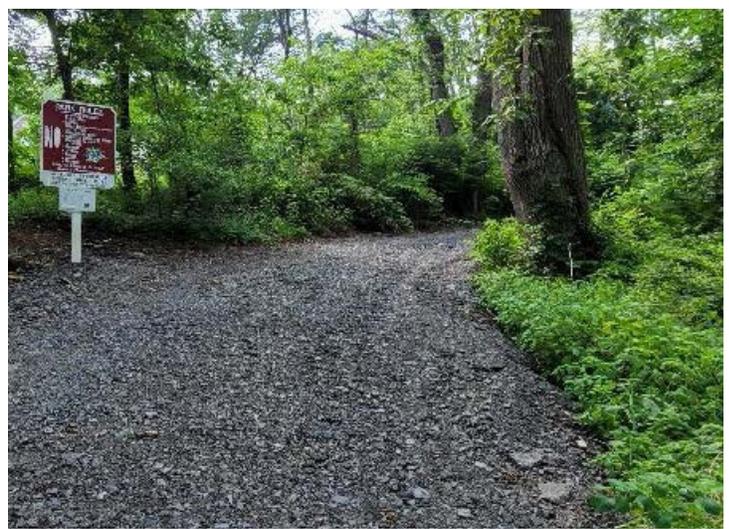
A call for applications was conducted in the fall of 2021 and six applications were received.

2021 GUEST SPEAKERS

- **February** – Barbara Heller, Manager, Berry Dunn (Pottstown Area Regional Recreation Committee (PARRC) Strategic Plan)
- **June** – Matthew Edmond, AICP, Assistant Director of Transportation and Long-Range Planning, Montgomery County Planning Commission (Tri-County Passenger Rail Committee)
- **October** – Craig Colistra, Ph.D., Program Officer Recreation & Health, Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation (Pottstown Area 10-Minute Walk Project)
- **December** – Rebecca Swanson, Executive Director Montgomery County Redevelopment Authority (Montgomery County Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) Program)



West Pottsgrove Township received a \$17,846 grant to improve access to the Vine Street and Howard Street playgrounds. With the help of the awarded grant funding, the township was able to install ADA accessible pathways around and connecting to the playgrounds. To complement this effort, the township also installed ADA accessible picnic tables and installed new edging around the playgrounds.



Upper Pottsgrove Township received a \$20,000 grant to make significant improvements to the Fox Hill Trail. In 2019, a severe rainstorm caused significant damage to the trail that left many areas unsafe and unusable. Thanks to the grant funding provided, the township was able to get the trail back in working order with significant upgrades to manage stormwater and keep the trail operational even after intense rain events.

