



# Pottstown Metropolitan Region Comprehensive Plan

Douglass Township

East Coventry Township

Lower Pottsgrove Township

New Hanover Township

North Coventry Township

Pottstown Borough

Upper Pottsgrove Township

West Pottsgrove Township

Draft March 2026

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Draft March 2026



# Pottstown Metropolitan Region Comprehensive Plan

Draft March 2026

The Pottstown Metropolitan Region Comprehensive Plan was prepared by the Montgomery County Planning Commission with technical and professional assistance from the Chester County Planning Commission



## For the Municipalities of:

### *In Montgomery County:*

- Douglass Township
- Lower Pottsgrove Township
- New Hanover Township
- Pottstown Borough
- Upper Pottsgrove Township
- West Pottsgrove Township

### *In Chester County:*

- East Coventry Township
- North Coventry Township

Draft March 2026

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# Introduction

The Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Planning Commission (PMRPC) was established in 2005 through an Intergovernmental Cooperative Implementation Agreement and adopted regional comprehensive plans in 2005 and 2015. Since then, the eight municipalities that make up the Region have continued to work collaboratively on planning efforts such as a regional fiscal impact study, a regional trails feasibility study, and a regional safe routes to school study. In addition, several individual municipalities have completed individual comprehensive planning efforts to address local challenges. This plan builds upon the Region's joint and individual past planning efforts with a comprehensive approach and a long-range time frame.

### How to Use This Plan:

*Within this comprehensive plan document, the regional profile, municipal profiles, and existing land use chapters contain background information.*

*The future land use chapter contains the Future Land Use Plan which divides the Region into four distinct future land use classifications and establishes the growth and preservation areas of the Region. Additional suggested development guidelines for various land use categories that are appropriate for each future land use classification are also provided in this chapter.*

*A series of topic-based chapters explore Region-wide issues, such as housing and transportation, in-depth. The implementation chapter summarizes the recommendations for each chapter and implementation strategies for each, with additional information related to deliverables, potential funding sources, and potential partners.*

## Planning Process

The Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Comprehensive Plan will serve as the Pottstown Region's long-range vision and establish the policies, priorities, and guidelines to achieve that desired vision. The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) requires that the zoning ordinances, subdivision and land development ordinances, and capital improvements programs of the municipalities that adopt a regional (multi-municipal) comprehensive plan together all be generally consistent with the regional comprehensive plan.

The MPC also outlines the required components of a comprehensive plan, including discussions of many of the physical components of a community, such as land use, parks and open space, and infrastructure. The plan should outline how the physical components of the community will meet the anticipated future needs of the community, and demonstrate an understanding of the interrelationships between plan components. In

**WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE POTTSTOWN REGION?**



**PLEASE TAKE OUR COMMUNITY SURVEY**

The Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Planning Committee (PMRPC) was formed in October of 2005 and covers six municipalities in Montgomery County and two municipalities in Chester County (see map to the right). PMRPC is in the process of updating its regional comprehensive plan and wants to hear your feedback as a stakeholder within the community.


The intent of the regional comprehensive plan is to ensure proper management of future development in the Region and protection of the area's unique cultural and natural resources. The plan will provide a long-range vision and framework for future development in the Pottstown Region over the next 20 years.

**Please take our online, community survey to share your opinions on what you value most about the Pottstown Region and what you would like to see improved.**



<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PMRPC2025>

Scan the QR code with your smart phone or tablet to be taken directly to the survey



Questions or comments about the comprehensive plan update? Visit the PMRPC website for more information: <https://pottstownmetroregion.com/comprehensiveplan/> Contact Marley Bice, AICP: [marley.bice@montgomerycountypa.gov](mailto:marley.bice@montgomerycountypa.gov)

*A flyer with a QR code linking to the online survey was used to promote the survey by all of the Region's municipalities. The survey was open from April to October 2024 and received a total of 733 responses.*

addition, a comprehensive plan should discuss general consistency with the long-range plans of adjacent municipalities, as well as the county comprehensive plan.

As part of this plan, an extensive online community survey was conducted that garnered a total of 733 survey responses with the number of responses from residents of each municipality in the Region being relatively proportional to their proportion of the Region’s total population. Findings from this community survey are highlighted throughout the plan. A detailed summary of the survey results can be found in Appendix A.

## Goals and Objectives

The following goals and objectives for the Pottstown Metropolitan Region were established in “The Pottstown Metropolitan Region Intergovernmental Cooperative Implementation Agreement for Regional Planning,” which was originally adopted in October 2005 and amended in April 2010.

Along with the goals established in 2005, including natural resource protection, open space preservation, transportation improvements, and enhanced recreation options, the 2015 Regional Comprehensive Plan put an expanded emphasis on economic development. Through continued multi-municipal planning, the Region’s municipalities intend to advance these original 2005 goals and objectives, while also responding to new challenges and opportunities that have arisen over the last 20 years.

### General Goals

- ◆ 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.

### Housing Goal

Housing is a basic element of a community’s economic health and growth. The Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Comprehensive Plan will provide adequate housing opportunities for current and future residents.

#### Objectives:

- ◆ Meet residential fair share requirements as a region.
- ◆ Maintain and promote revitalization of existing residential neighborhoods and villages.
- ◆ Concentrate new housing where infrastructure is currently located and in designated growth areas.
- ◆ Encourage pedestrian-oriented, residential neighborhoods that foster a sense of community.
- ◆ Accommodate housing opportunities for a range of income levels and age groups.

### Commercial/Retail Goal

The Pottstown region’s commercial options are diverse, from traditional downtown and village shopping to new suburban commercial centers. Change is a constant for the region’s consumers and retailers, and the Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Comprehensive Plan will encourage revitalization of the region’s existing retail areas and limit new commercial development.

#### Objectives:

- ◆ Maintain and enhance existing commercial areas.
- ◆ Limit the amount of new commercial development outside of existing commercial areas.
- ◆ Promote revitalization of downtown Pottstown as a regional destination.
- ◆ Preserve and enhance village areas that support a mix of uses in a pedestrian-friendly environment.

### Office Goal

The dynamic economy has brought new economic needs and opportunities for the Pottstown region.

The regional comprehensive plan will encourage the development of office uses in locations that have the necessary transportation and facilities infrastructure.

*Objectives:*

- ◆ Provide high-quality employment opportunities.
- ◆ Enhance the region's tax base.
- ◆ Accommodate various office types for a range of users.
- ◆ Locate office uses where adequate transportation access and necessary utilities are available and planned for.

## Industrial/Light Manufacturing Goal

Industry has been and continues to be an important economic base for the Pottstown Metropolitan Region. The regional comprehensive plan will encourage industrial development in established industrial areas and in locations which have the necessary transportation and utilities infrastructure.

*Objectives:*

- ◆ Provide high-quality employment opportunities.
- ◆ Enhance the region's tax base.
- ◆ Provide for industrial/light manufacturing uses that meet the needs of a range of users.
- ◆ Prioritize redevelopment of underutilized, existing industrial sites.
- ◆ Promote clean and environmentally friendly industrial/light manufacturing uses.
- ◆ Locate industrial/light manufacturing uses where adequate transportation access and necessary utilities are available and planned for.

## Parks and Recreation Goal

Recreation facilities add to the quality of life of a community. The regional comprehensive plan will provide recreational opportunities to meet the needs of present and future residents.

*Objectives:*

- ◆ Coordinate park and recreational opportunities among the region's eight municipalities.

- ◆ Implement the park and recreation goals of municipal open space plans.
- ◆ Maintain and enhance existing park and recreation facilities.
- ◆ Encourage parks and open space be provided with new development.
- ◆ Create active and passive recreation opportunities.
- ◆ Emphasize park and recreation opportunities that preserve natural linkages, environmental resources and viewsheds.
- ◆ Expand recreational opportunities along the Schuylkill River.
- ◆ Develop a regional trail network to connect communities and recreation areas.
- ◆ Work with private organizations to provide recreational options.

## Open Space Goal

Open space provides many natural, aesthetic and economic benefits and the Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Comprehensive Plan intends to preserve open space for present and future residents.

*Objectives:*

- ◆ Implement the open space goals of municipal open space plans.
- ◆ Designate growth and rural resource areas within the region to ensure preservation of open space areas.
- ◆ Promote design options for new development that preserve open space.
- ◆ Encourage coordination and connection of open space areas between municipalities.
- ◆ Actively pursue strategies and resources to preserve open space in the region.
- ◆ Emphasize open space opportunities that preserve natural linkages, environmental resources and viewsheds, especially along the Schuylkill River.

## Natural Resource Protection Goal

Natural resources are the foundation on which communities are built. The Pottstown Metropolitan

Regional Comprehensive Plan will preserve and protect the region’s natural resources to sustain present and future residents.

*Objectives:*

- ◆ Protect existing groundwater resources and encourage groundwater recharge in the designs of new development.
- ◆ Preserve sensitive natural resources areas, including woodlands, stream systems, wetlands, steep slopes, and wildlife, especially along the Schuylkill River.
- ◆ Promote and protect street trees and other vegetation in developed areas.
- ◆ Protect all municipalities within the same watershed from impacts of improper development.
- ◆ Implement the natural resource preservation goals of municipal open space plans.

## Agriculture Goal

Farming has a long history in the Pottstown Metropolitan Region and the region’s comprehensive plan will promote the preservation of agricultural land and encourage maintaining agriculture as a viable industry in the region.

*Objectives:*

- ◆ Encourage farmland preservation through participation in government and private preservation programs at the local, state, and national level.
- ◆ Designate growth areas and rural resource areas within the region to ensure preservation of agriculture.
- ◆ Emphasize that new development in designated agricultural areas be limited and maximize agricultural preservation.

## Transportation Goal

Mobility is essential for connecting people and encouraging economic growth. The regional comprehensive plan will provide a safe and efficient transportation system to move people and goods in and through the region.

*Objectives:*

- ◆ Manage the region’s vehicular traffic congestion.
- ◆ Improve transportation safety in the region.
- ◆ Emphasize transportation improvements in new developments that maintain/enhance the region’s road hierarchy and connectivity.
- ◆ Promote the design of new developments to be walkable and encourage multiple transportation options.
- ◆ Expand public transportation options in the region, particularly regional rail service.
- ◆ Develop a local and regional pedestrian and bicycle network.
- ◆ Support innovative parking strategies to provide adequate parking that is safe and effective while minimizing traffic congestion and impervious coverage.
- ◆ Provide charter and other aviation transportation services at the Pottstown Municipal Airport.

## Community Facilities Goal

The Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Comprehensive Plan will serve the needs of current and future residents regarding public utilities, emergency services, and educational facilities. These services greatly impact the quality of life and safety of the region’s residents.

*Objectives:*

- ◆ Encourage the coordination of municipal services and facilities.
- ◆ Use public sewer and water facilities efficiently by extending these systems only within designated growth areas.
- ◆ Protect surface water quality and ensure sufficient water supply by using public and private sewer and water systems effectively, including on-site systems.
- ◆ Support existing emergency services and improve their capacities to serve a growing population.
- ◆ Cooperate with the local school districts, Montgomery County Community College and local library systems to encourage appropriate locations

for new or expanded facilities and promote pedestrian access to these facilities.

- ◆ Develop ways for residents from non-Montgomery County communities within the region to greater utilize Montgomery County Community College.

## Relationship to Other Plans

### Montco 2040: A Shared Vision<sup>1</sup>

*Montco 2040: A Shared Vision* is the Montgomery County comprehensive plan that was adopted in January 2015. *Montco 2040* provides an overall land use and growth management framework for local and multi-municipal comprehensive plans in Montgomery County and provides guidance on multi-municipal and regional issues such as flooding and transportation. *Montco 2040* is structured around the implementation of three interrelated themes: connected communities, sustainable places, and vibrant economy.

The Region's future land use plan is consistent with the *Montco 2040* future land use plan in terms of the distribution of residential and non-residential land uses, the preservation of parkland and stream corridors, and the continuation of the Region's established business areas. *Montco 2040* also supports many of the regional comprehensive plan recommendations such as continued emphasis on preservation of historic properties and agricultural land, green stormwater management techniques, and multimodal transportation improvements.

### Landscapes3: Chester County Comprehensive Plan<sup>2</sup>

*Landscapes3*, the Chester County comprehensive plan adopted in November 2018, includes the Landscapes Map which depicts growth and rural resource areas for the county overall. *Landscapes3* builds upon the first two *Landscapes* plans and continues to focus on protecting and enhancing the distinct character of Chester County with core principles such as resource preservation, revitalized centers, and housing diversity.

The Region's future land use plan is consistent with the *Landscapes3* future land use plan in terms of encouraging growth within designated centers and focusing on preservation in rural resource areas.

*Landscapes3* also supports recommendations from the regional comprehensive plan, including protection of farmland, promotion of adaptive reuse and compatible development, and ensuring quality emergency services.

## Municipal Comprehensive Plans

Although the regional comprehensive plan is the legal comprehensive plan for the Pottstown Metropolitan Region, some individual municipalities have gone the extra step of doing a municipal comprehensive plan to further refine their community vision, future land use plan, and implementation recommendations.

### *New Hanover Township*<sup>3</sup>

New Hanover Township adopted a municipal comprehensive plan in 2021 to address hyper-local challenges and opportunities resulting from increased development and offer tailored solutions to address emerging areas of interest. The detailed recommendations and future land use plan are meant to help manage change to best meet the needs of current and future residents.

### *North Coventry Township*<sup>4</sup>

North Coventry Township adopted a municipal comprehensive plan in 2019 to provide a municipal-specific demographics analysis, vision statement, and recommendations. The plan reflects the township's many actions since their last municipal comprehensive plan in 2001, such as ordinance updates and the adoption of an official map.

### *Pottstown Borough*<sup>5</sup>

Pottstown Borough adopted a municipal comprehensive plan in 2014 that provides a detailed analysis and recommendations for all aspects of the community, including a future land use plan and summary of other planning efforts since the borough's last individual comprehensive plan in 1986. The overall community vision statement is: "Keep Pottstown a desirable place in which to live, work, shop and play by maintaining high standards for new construction and redevelopment, and by providing quality community facilities and services to residents and visitors alike."

1 "Montco 2040: A Shared Vision – The Comprehensive Plan for Montgomery County." 2015, revised 2021. [https://www.montgomerycountypa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/7719/Adopted-Montco-2040-Shared-Vision\\_07\\_15\\_2021](https://www.montgomerycountypa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/7719/Adopted-Montco-2040-Shared-Vision_07_15_2021)

2 "Landscapes3: Chester County Comprehensive Plan." 2018. <https://www.chescoplanning.org/Publications/PDF/Landscapes3.pdf>

3 "New Hanover Township Comprehensive Plan 2040." 2021. [https://cms6.revize.com/revize/newhanover/departments/planning/docs/Comprehensive%20Plan/NewHanoverComPlan\\_April2021Web\\_FINAL.pdf](https://cms6.revize.com/revize/newhanover/departments/planning/docs/Comprehensive%20Plan/NewHanoverComPlan_April2021Web_FINAL.pdf)

4 "North Coventry Township 2019 Comprehensive Plan." 2019. <https://northcoventrytownship.com/download/north-coventry-comprehensive-plan-2019/>

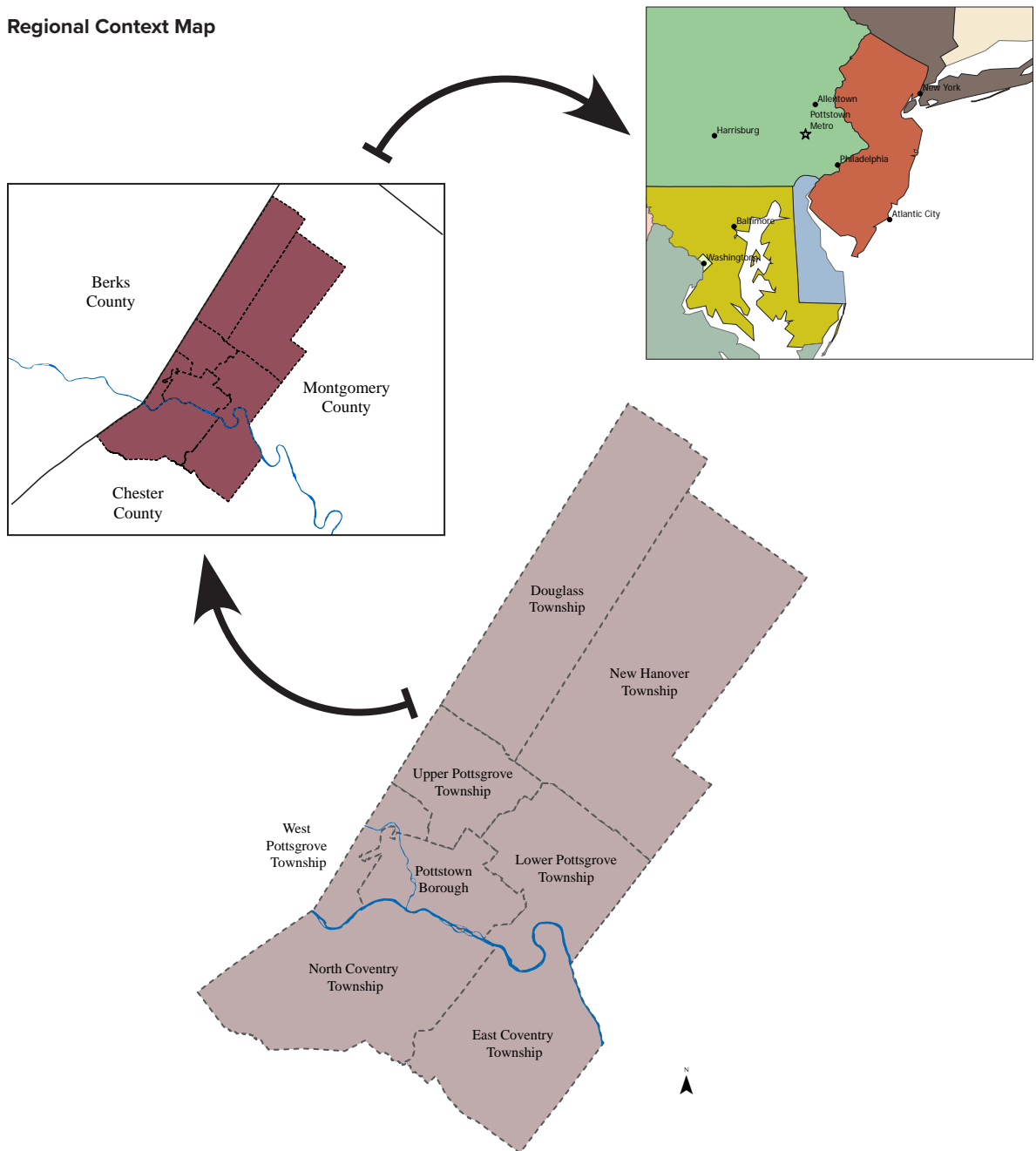
5 "Pottstown Borough Comprehensive Plan." 2014. <https://www.pottstown.org/DocumentCenter/View/470/Pottstown-2014-Comprehensive-Plan-?bidId>



# Regional Profile

The Pottstown Metropolitan Region is located approximately 40 miles west of the City of Philadelphia in Montgomery County and Chester County and abuts the eastern border of Berks County. The Region is comprised of Douglass Township, Lower Pottsgrove Township, New Hanover Township, Pottstown Borough, Upper Pottsgrove Township, and West Pottsgrove Township in Montgomery County and East Coventry Township and North Coventry Township in Chester County. The Schuylkill River runs through the center of the Region, separating Montgomery and Chester counties.

**Regional Context Map**



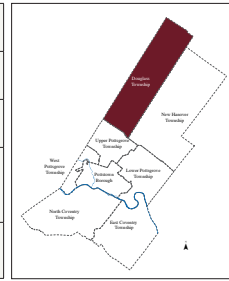
Centrally-located in the Region, along the Schuylkill River, is the Borough of Pottstown. It is the only borough in the Region and contains the highest density development of all the municipalities. The Region is also the crossroads of Route 422, a major east-west U.S. Route, and Route 100, a major north-south State Route.

The eight municipalities that make up the Pottstown Metropolitan Region have had a long-held desire to jointly plan land uses and development for more effective growth management and open space preservation. The following section briefly describes some of the unique history and qualities of each municipality in municipal profiles.

# Douglass Township Municipal Profile

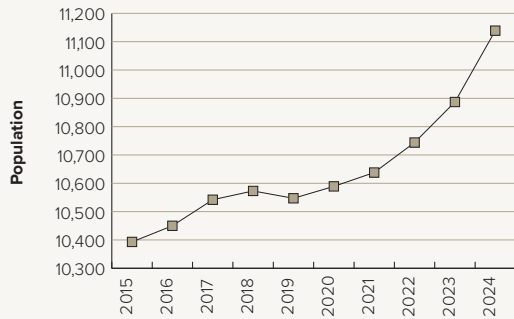


Year Founded:	1741
Population:	11,139 persons (7.2% increase since 2015)
Land Area:	15.4 square miles
Population Density:	728 persons/square mile (5 <sup>th</sup> of 8 municipalities in Region)
School District:	Boyertown Area School District



**Figure 1. Douglass Township Population Change: 2015-2024**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Annual Population Estimates



*The township experienced a small and steady rate of population growth between 2015 and 2018, followed by a small dip. Since 2019, the township has experienced nearly 6% population growth, likely due to several larger single-family residential developments being completed.*

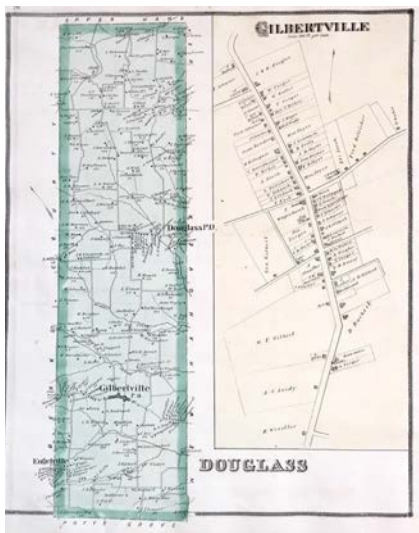
## Douglass Township History

In 1683, the first German settlers arrived in the area as part of William Penn’s recruiting effort and organized themselves as the Frankfurt Company. In 1741, New Hanover, Douglass, Upper Hanover, and Pottsgrove Townships were formed by the division of Hanover Township. In 1807, the southern boundary of Douglass Township was established, forming the current-day township boundary.

In the 1800s, several villages were established within the township, often centered on a prominent hotel, gristmill, or church. These villages: Gilbertsville, Congo, Niantic, and Sassmansville, are an integral part of the township’s history and geography to this day.

Early schools within the township were affiliated with neighboring churches. A township-wide public school system was created in 1851, at which time numerous neighborhood schools were constructed to serve the local school-aged children. In 1965, a jointure was formed with the Boyertown Area School District, laying the groundwork for the current school system in the township.

Trolley tracks were laid in Gilbertsville in 1909, connecting the village to Pottstown, Boyertown, and the Swamp Hotel in New Hanover. The township experienced significant population growth in the second half of the 20th Century, largely driven by the development of Route 100 through the township and the extension of the Berks-Montgomery municipal sewer system.



Circa 1877 historical map of Douglass Township with inset map of Gilbertsville Village.



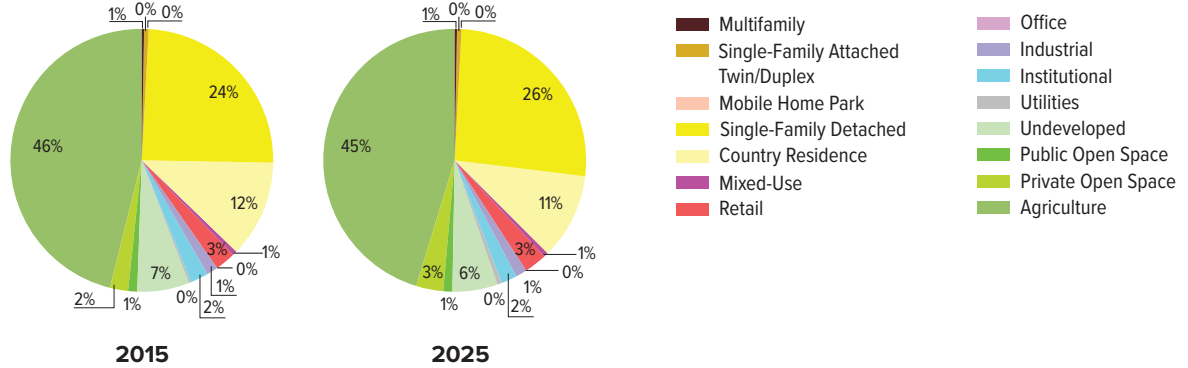
The current divided highway alignment of Pennsylvania Route 100 through Douglass was completed in 1964.



Circa 1960s view of Pennsylvania Route 73 (East Philadelphia Avenue) near its intersection with Route 100.

Figure 2. Douglass Township Land Use Distribution Change: 2015-2025

Source: Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals



Since 2015, there have been only subtle changes in the distribution of land uses across Douglass Township. The percentage of land used for single-family detached housing has increased by 2%. The percentage of private open space has also increased by 1%, likely indicating new open space preserved as part of residential developments over the last ten years. The percentage of land used for agriculture has decreased by only 1% and remains much higher than the Region overall at 45% of the township.

### Douglass Township Today

Douglass Township, located on the western border of Montgomery County, prides itself on having a unique balance of close-knit residential neighborhoods, convenient commercial centers, and hundreds of acres of rural rolling hills and farmland. Although the community has experienced both population growth

and commercial development, especially in the last few decades, Douglass Township maintains a rural small town feel and low population density.



The Douglass Township Municipal Building and Police Department are conveniently located on East Philadelphia Avenue and are connected to Douglass Park.



Several historic buildings in Douglass Township's villages have been converted into small commercial establishments.


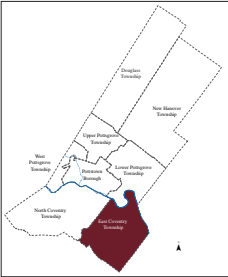


Douglass Township is home to dozens of preserved farms, including the Lutz Farm.



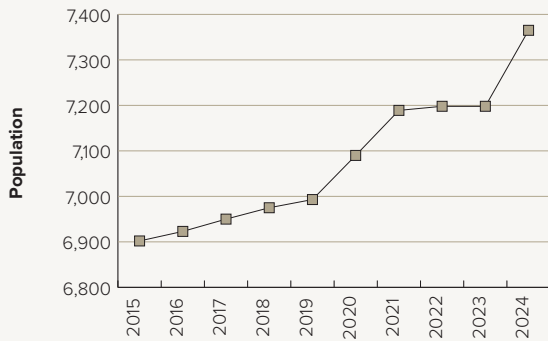
Douglass Park is the township's largest park and offers many active and passive recreational opportunities to residents.

## East Coventry Township Municipal Profile

	<b>Year Founded:</b>	1844	
	<b>Population:</b>	7,365 persons (6.7% increase since 2015)	
	<b>Land Area:</b>	10.9 square miles	
	<b>Population Density:</b>	675 persons/square mile (6th of 8 municipalities in Region)	
	<b>School District:</b>	Owen J. Roberts School District	

**Figure 3. East Coventry Township Population Change: 2015-2024**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Annual Population Estimates



Over the last ten years, East Coventry Township’s population has stayed relatively steady, with the exception of noticeable isolated increases due to individual townhome or single-family subdivisions being constructed. In addition, the 155-unit Coventry Run development is under construction and will likely result in another noticeable population increase in the township.

### East Coventry Township History

The area of Chester County where East Coventry is located today was once known as the “Skoolkill District”. The name Coventry was given to it by Samuel Nutt, an early settler, whose forebearers were from an English town of the same name. It was first settled in 1718 by 28 families and by 1774, the population had almost tripled.

Beginning in the 1700s, farming was the primary economic activity within the township, although several grist mills were located along Pigeon Creek. Following the Revolutionary War, there was a steady increase in population. In 1841, the Township was split in half to form North and South Coventry and in 1844, there was a further division, with East Coventry being carved out of North Coventry.

The Schuylkill Canal Navigation System along the Schuylkill River was incorporated in 1815 and completed in 1824. The purpose of the 108-mile Schuylkill Canal was to provide a system for transporting coal, iron, lumber, merchandise, and produce between the Mt. Carbon-Mill Creek area of Schuylkill County and the City of Philadelphia. The canal system played an important role in the growth and development of East Coventry Township. However, by 1870, the Schuylkill Canal became obsolete and eventually was abandoned in favor of other improved transportation systems.

Between 1850 and 1950, there was little growth within the township and agriculture remained the dominant land use. However, between 1950 and 1960 the township’s population grew over 45%. This growth rate is mostly attributed to the availability of reasonably-priced land, the township’s strategic location within the region, a growing economy, and the improvements to the regional transportation network. These factors continue to attract modest development and population growth in the township, with much of the recent growth occurring in the northern portion of the township.

Adapted from “East Coventry Township History” <https://eastcoventry-pa.gov/history>



Circa 1883 map of East Coventry Township.



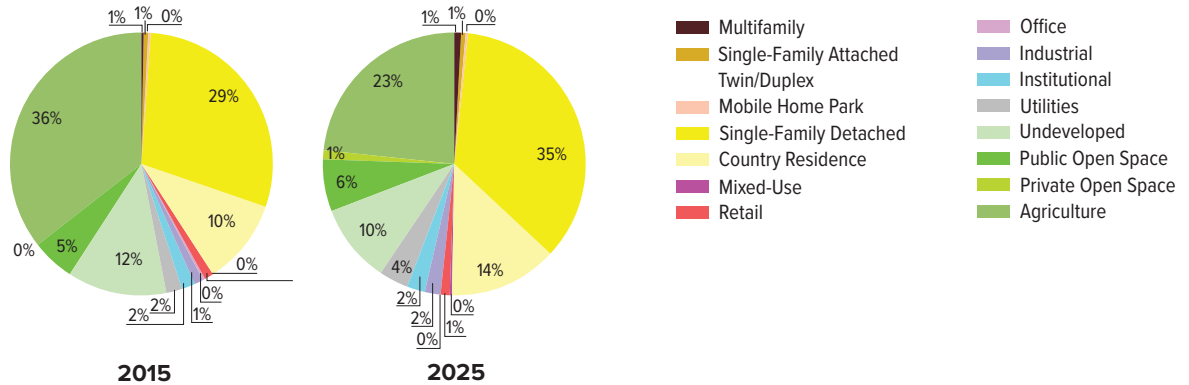
Image of a historic postcard reading “Old Bridge and Toll House at Linfield”



Historic aerial view with farmland in East Coventry Township in the foreground and the more developed areas of Lower Pottsgrove Township and Pottstown Borough across the Schuylkill River to the north.

Figure 4. East Coventry Township Land Use Distribution Change: 2015-2025

Source: Chester County Board of Assessment



Since 2015, there has been a 6% increase in the percent of the township’s land area used for single-family detached housing, as well as a 4% increase in the percent of land area used for country residence (single-family detached homes on five or more acres). During the same time period there was a corresponding decrease in agricultural land and undeveloped land as new residential developments have come in. Notably, 147 new acres of open space, both public and private, has been created.

### East Coventry Township Today

East Coventry Township has maintained a great deal of its historically rural character over time. However, like most areas in the region, residential development is occurring as families find the area a pleasant place to live and as access to employment centers improves. The region offers numerous opportunities for its

residents, including good schools, recreational lands, local services and regional retail centers. Within this network of facilities and services, the setting of the township remains one of low-density development with a high degree of open space.

Adapted from “East Coventry Township History” <https://eastcoventry-pa.gov/history>



A scenic vista within the township of farm fields, woodlands, and rolling hills.



An example of the township’s detailed parks and trails wayfinding and interpretive signage.





A residential street in East Coventry Township.



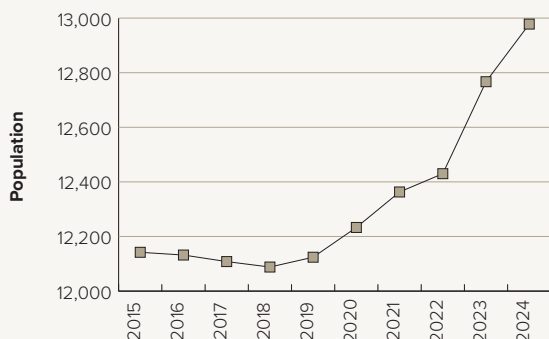
A significant portion of the Schuylkill River Trail crosses through East Coventry, with a trailhead and parking in Parkerford.

## Lower Pottsgrove Township Municipal Profile

	Year Founded:	1889	
	Population:	12,978 persons (6.9% increase since 2015)	
	Land Area:	8.04 square miles	
	Population Density:	1,614 persons/square mile (#3 of 8 municipalities in the region)	
	School District:	Pottsgrove School District	

**Figure 5. Lower Pottsgrove Township Population Change: 2015-2024**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Annual Population Estimates



Although the township’s population decreased slightly between 2015 and 2018, the overall population has been steadily increasing since then with the most growth in the last two years, likely related to the 147-unit Sanatoga Crossing townhome community and adjacent 310-unit Apartments at Sanatoga development.

the Borough of Pottstown throughout the early 1900’s, some of which were successful. Lower Pottsgrove Township became a first-class township in 1954, partly in an attempt to prevent further annexation.

The Sanatoga Run, called “Senetoga” (meaning “swift stony stream”) by the native inhabitants of the area, was home to five gristmills, three sawmills, a carding mill, and a clover mill in the 1800’s. In 1890, two stores opened in the Village of Sanatoga. By 1900, only four gristmills and two sawmills remained along the Sanatoga Run.

In the 1890s, Ringing Rocks Park was developed. It had many attractions including a roller coaster, zoo, merry-go-round, and dancing pavilion. Around the same time, Sanatoga Park, which also included an amusement section with a roller coaster and dancing pavilion, attracted visitors with trails, bridges, and boats for rent on Sanatoga Lake.

The township was initially made more accessible by the opening of the Perkiomen and Reading Turnpike in 1815. By 1938, the railroad had come through the town with a stop at Sanatoga Station. In the 1960s, development pressure began to increase, and by 1971 public sewer lines were installed in some areas of the township.

## Lower Pottsgrove Township History

Lower Pottsgrove was founded in 1889 when the larger Pottsgrove Township was divided into Upper Pottsgrove and Lower Pottsgrove, which were once all included in the former Hanover Township. After the separation, several annexation attempts were made by

Pottsgrove Township was served by five, one-room schoolhouses throughout the 1800s. In 1890, when Lower, Upper, and West Pottsgrove townships separated, so did the schools, with each running



The Sunny Brook Ballroom site originally included an iconic circular swimming pool.



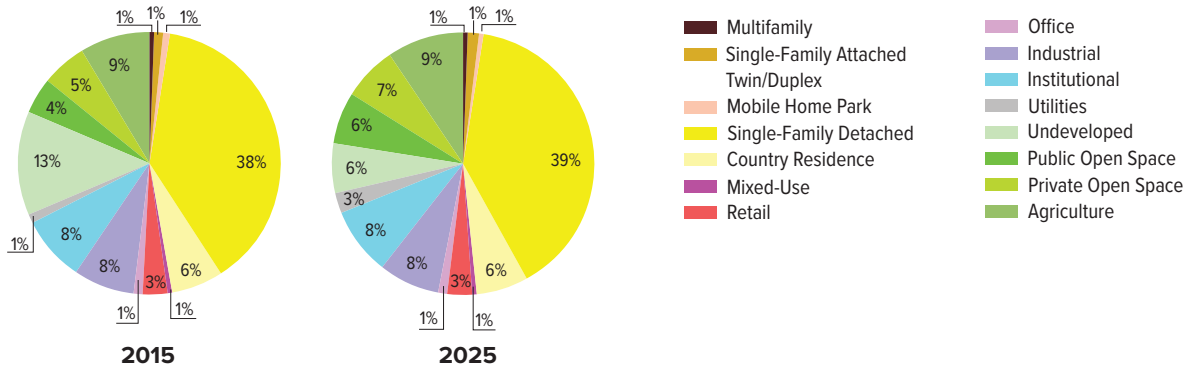
Sanatoga Park was a popular amusement park destination in Lower Pottsgrove Township in the late 1800s and early 1900s.



Circa 1950s aerial photo of the Firestone Plant off of Armand Hammer Boulevard, now known as the “Oxy Chem site.”

### Figure 6. Lower Pottsgrove Township Land Use Distribution Change: 2015-2025

Source: Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals



This land use analysis shows that although the township’s population has been growing steadily since 2018, new development in the last ten years has primarily taken place on undeveloped land. The percentage of the township’s land area used for agriculture has remained steady and the acreage of open space, both public and private, has increased by over 160 acres.

schools in their municipality. In 1955, the three municipalities’ school systems consolidated again to form the Pottsgrove School District that continues to serve all three municipalities today.

### Lower Pottsgrove Township Today

In recent times, the township has seen noticeable growth as the development of US Route 422 through the southern part of the township has encouraged

migration to the outer suburbs. New developments such as Sanatoga Crossing, Spring Valley Farms, and the Apartments at Sanatoga Greene have added to the diversity of housing options in the township. While the amusement parks of the past are gone, the Village of Sanatoga and some of the parks developed in the early days of the township still remain, and the township continues to take pride in protecting their unique natural features as valuable community amenities.



The largest multifamily development in the last ten years is the Apartments at Sanatoga Greene in Lower Pottsgrove Township.



The SunnyBrook Ballroom first opened in 1931 and rose to prominence as a popular dance floor during the Big Band era.


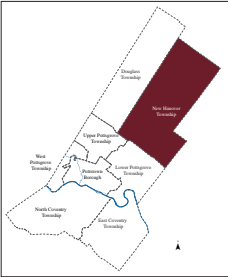


Ringing Rocks Park is one of many township parks and open spaces that provide both active and passive recreational opportunities for residents.



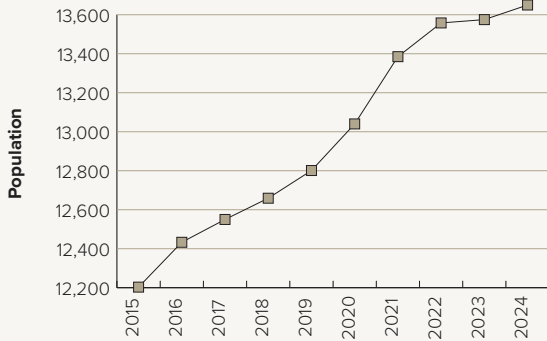
High Street through the Sanatoga Village section of the township still retains a mixed-use village feel with many historic buildings remaining.

# New Hanover Township Municipal Profile

	Year Founded:	1741	
	Population:	13,650 persons (11.9% increase since 2015)	
	Land Area:	21.7 square miles	
	Population Density:	630 persons/square mile (#7 of 8 municipalities in the region)	
	School District:	Boyertown Area School District	

**Figure 7. New Hanover Township Population Change: 2015-2024**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Annual Population Estimates



*New Hanover Township's population has been steadily growing at an average rate of 1.3% per year since 2015. This steady growth reflects the fact that on average of 65 new housing units were built in the township each year over this time period.*

## New Hanover Township History

New Hanover Township was established in 1741 by the division of the former Hanover Township into New Hanover, Upper Hanover, Douglass, and Pottsgrove townships. New Hanover is bisected by Route 73, or Big Road, one of Montgomery County's oldest east-west highways. A second major road through the township, Swamp Pike, was constructed from Limerick to Boyertown in 1723 and became a toll road in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup>-century.

Trolley service from Pottstown went through the farmland of New Hanover to the Swamp Hotel, and continued on through Douglass to the Borough of Boyertown. In the 1930s, bus service replaced the trolley system, but that service too was disbanded as personal vehicle ownership became more prevalent post-World War II.

Early education in New Hanover was provided by neighborhood schools, as it was in neighboring communities. However, the township has been served by the Boyertown Area School District since 1966. A sewer authority was formed in 1973, and a sewer system was operational by 1982. Most of the system ran (and still runs) by gravity flows. Drinking water was originally provided by hand dug wells in the township, including some 70 to 90-foot deep artesian wells.



*An 1877 map of the township showing that development was historically centered at crossroad locations and around post offices.*

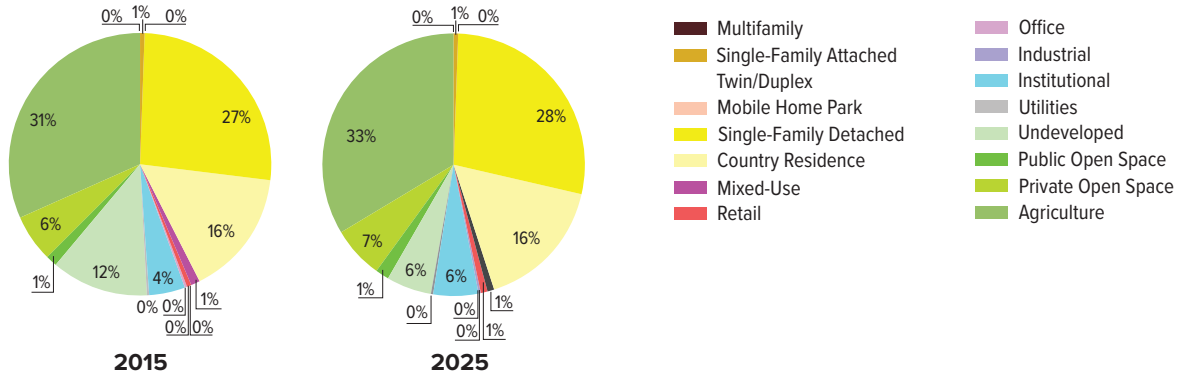


*An iconic structure in New Hanover's viewshed is the New Hanover Evangelical Lutheran Church, which dates back to the early 1900s.*



Figure 8. New Hanover Township Land Use Distribution Change: 2015-2025

Source: Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals



Although the township’s population has grown by 9.2% since 2015, new development in the last ten years has primarily taken place on undeveloped land, as the percentage of the township’s land area used for agriculture has actually increased, and the acreage of private open space has increased by over 80 acres.

### New Hanover Township Today

New Hanover Township’s strategic location and blend of rural charm and small-town character continue to make it an attractive area for growth. In light of these development pressures, the township remains committed to responsible growth that aligns with the community’s commitment to preserving open

space, ensuring proper stormwater management, and protecting natural resources, including the aquifer. This approach emphasizes thoughtful land use planning, high-quality site design, and long-term infrastructure stewardship to ensure projects contribute to—rather than detract from—the township’s environmental integrity and overall quality of life.



The Bella Vista Golf Course opened in 2002 on the site of a former farm. The property maintains viewsheds of gently rolling hills and features a premier 18-hole golf course and a banquet facility that was converted from the original stone barn on the property.



New Hanover-Upper Frederick Elementary School is located at the intersection of Hoffmansville Road and Big Road and had a total enrollment of 608 students for the 2024-2025 school year.



Over 4,400 acres of land within the township is used for agricultural purpose to this day, allowing large parts of the township to retain their rural character.



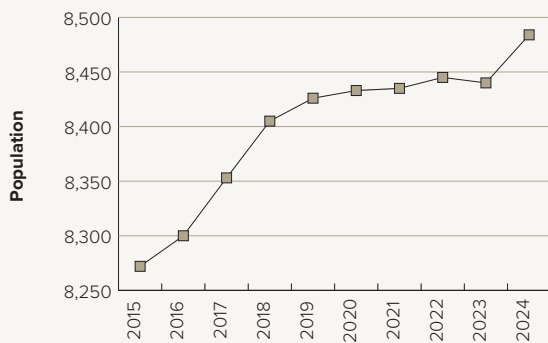
The Windlestrae townhome development off of Middle Creek Road was developed in phases in the 2010s.

# North Coventry Township Municipal Profile

	<b>Year Founded:</b>	1844	
	<b>Population:</b>	8,484 persons (2.6% increase since 2015)	
	<b>Land Area:</b>	13.5 square miles	
	<b>Population Density:</b>	628 persons/square mile (#8 of 8 municipalities in the region)	
	<b>School District:</b>	Owen J. Roberts School District	

**Figure 9. North Coventry Township Population Change: 2015-2024**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Annual Population Estimates



According to county property records, only 29 new housing units were built in North Coventry Township between 2015 and 2024. However, the township's population has increased by 212 persons during that same time period, with the greatest increase between 2016 and 2018. The timing of the significant population increase suggests most of the population growth is due to changes in household size as more families may have relocated to suburban communities as work-and-life styles shifted during the last decade.

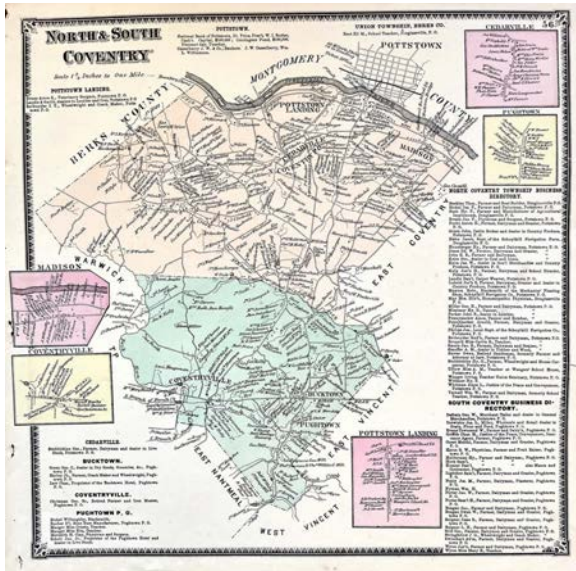
## North Coventry Township History

The first wave of European settlers settled in northern Chester County in the early 1700s as William Penn was conveying large tracts of land throughout the Region. This area was first mapped by the early settlers as the "Skoolkill District" and later renamed to "Coventry" by Samuel Nutt.

In the 1790s, the Pennsylvania Legislature authorized the construction of toll roads throughout the state. One of the early toll roads was the Wilmington-Exton Turnpike, now Route 100, which runs north-south through North Coventry Township. With the construction of this turnpike came the first bridge in the area across the Schuylkill River, thereby connecting the area more directly to Pottstown Borough. In the early 1800s, the Girard reach of the Union Canal along the Schuylkill River was constructed through the township. The canal had a significant impact on both local and regional commerce, trade, and transportation, and spurred the development of the Pottstown Landing neighborhood within the township.

Formal education in the township began to develop in the early 1800s when farmers joined together to hire teachers. A high school was constructed in the township in 1912. In the late 1950s, North Coventry joined other neighboring municipalities and formed the Owen J. Roberts School District.

Through the 1950's and 1960's, North Coventry experienced a housing boom likely spurred by improvements to the highway network and the nationwide population shift to the suburbs. The increased development of the township brought with it a demand for more services. During this time, roads throughout the township were paved, sewage disposal was brought to the township, and zoning was first enacted.



Circa 1873 map of North and South Coventry townships.



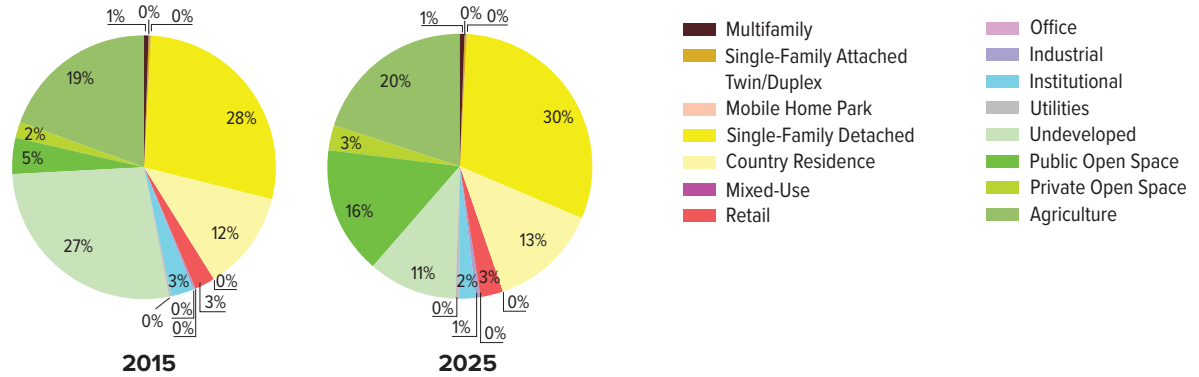
A portion of the Schuylkill River Canal passed through North Coventry Township in the 1800s, including a locks structure on what is now Laurel Locks Farms.



Circa 1960s aerial view of North Coventry Township with the Schuylkill River separating it from Pottstown Borough to the north.

Figure 10. North Coventry Township Land Use Distribution Change: 2015-2025

Source: Chester County Board of Assessment



Over the last ten years, the percentage of North Coventry Township’s land area used for single-family detached residential, including country residence, increased by 3% and the amount of land used for agriculture remained steady. The largest shifts were a 16% decrease in land considered undeveloped and an 11% increase in public open space as the result of the township’s strong open space preservation efforts.

### North Coventry Township Today

North Coventry Township continues to be a major connector and gateway between Montgomery County and Chester County with both Route 100 and Hanover Street connecting the two. These two north-south corridors traversing the township have resulted in increased pressure for development over the years but also help define the logical regional growth areas for commercial and higher-intensity development in the township. Agriculture and low-density residential

dominate the western half of the township, which is also where the township has focused on acquiring hundreds of acres of open space thereby preserving this portion of the township’s distinctive viewsheds and sensitive natural features.



Hanover Meadows Park is a centrally-located community park with a multi-use field, meadows, and walking paths.



The Shoppes at Coventry (formerly known as Coventry Mall) is the second largest shopping center in the Region.





With 1,660 acres of farmland, agriculture continues to be a dominant land use in North Coventry Township.



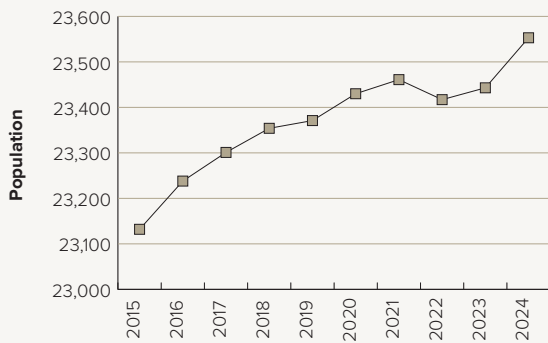
The township has diverse housing options, with the attached and multifamily housing concentrated in the eastern half of the township along Route 100 or Hanover Street.

## Pottstown Borough Municipal Profile

	<b>Year Founded:</b>	1815	
	<b>Population:</b>	23,553 persons (1.8% increase since 2015)	
	<b>Land Area:</b>	4.9 square miles	
	<b>Population Density:</b>	4,768 persons/square mile (#1 of 8 municipalities in the region)	
	<b>School District:</b>	Pottstown Borough School District	

**Figure 11. Pottstown Borough Population Change: 2015-2024**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Annual Population Estimates



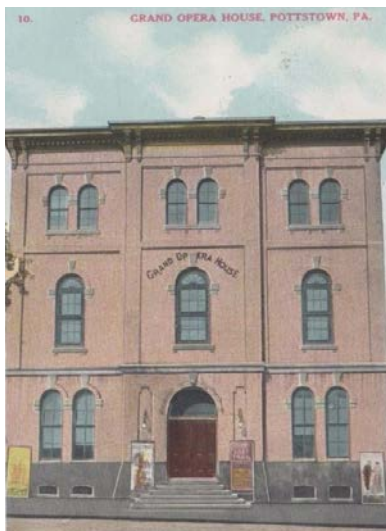
*Pottstown Borough's population has grown nearly 2% since 2015, with the largest increase observed between 2023 and 2024. Although a total of 162 new housing units were built in the borough during this time period, it appears that the shift in population over the last decade is more likely due to migration and increases in the average household size.*

## Pottstown Borough History

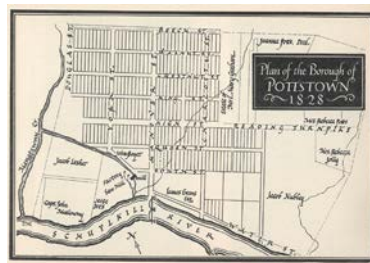
Historically, the convergence of the Manatawny Creek and Schuylkill River was an ancestral location for members of the Delaware Tribe of Indians. John Potts, an ironmaster, helped develop one of the first iron forges in the Region in the mid-1700s and the area was subsequently incorporated as a borough in 1815.

Pottstown became a prominent metal manufacturing town, first for the production of cast iron and wrought iron, followed by the development of steelworks. Industrial development along the Schuylkill River was supported by a growing transportation network with the opening of the Union Canal across the river in 1824 and with the opening of a Reading Railroad link to Philadelphia in 1838, which was subsequently extended to Mt. Carbon in 1842. More locally, trolley lines connected residents to adjacent communities such as Sanatoga and Stowe. The borough's population continued to grow as industrial activity remained prolific until after World War II when increased competition began to slow production demand.

The borough's school system dates back to before 1800 when two log cabin schoolhouses existed. In 1838, Pottstown established a public school system. In the 1860's, a water company was formed and water was pumped to a reservoir on Washington Hill. A municipal sewer system was not installed in the current day borough until development pressures increased in 1915.



*Vintage postcard of the Pottstown Opera House that was located on King Street. Source: Pottstown Historical Society*



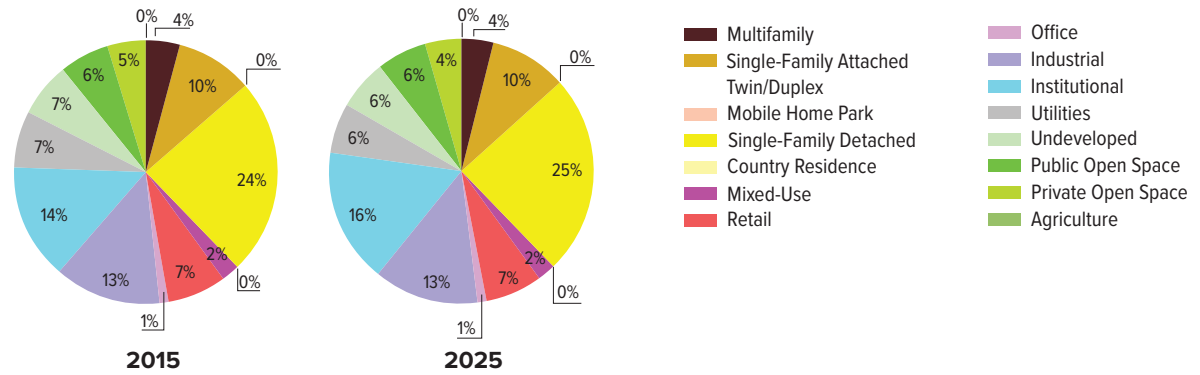
*Plan of the Borough of Pottstown, 1828. Source: Pottstown Area History Collective*



*Circa 1940s aerial view of High Street, historically the commercial center of the Region. Source: Pottstown Historical Society*

Figure 12. Pottstown Borough Land Use Distribution Change: 2015-2025

Source: Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals



The distribution of land uses within the borough has changed very little over the last ten years as most development has occurred as adaptive reuse and small infill development. Notably, the percentage of the borough’s land used for institutional land uses has increased by 2%, likely due in large part to expansions of the Hill School and Montgomery County Community College campuses.

### Pottstown Borough Today

Although several major industrial plant closures in the 1970s and 1980s created challenges for the borough, the development of major institutions such as the Pottstown Memorial Medical Center and the Pottstown campus of the Montgomery County Community

College, helped to sustain development momentum in the borough. The community’s historic preservation and beautification efforts, focused on High Street, have also resulted in tangible benefits as downtown Pottstown is now home to many small businesses and cultural venues.



Originally built in 1905, the Pottstown Carousel reopened in its current location 2016.



High Street has seen a resurgence of small businesses in recent years, which are supported by the borough’s traffic calming and beautification efforts.



The borough’s historic housing stock contributes greatly to its distinctive small town character.



Pottstown Borough is home to over 160 acres of public open space and parks, including the 78-acre Memorial Park.

## Upper Pottsgrove Township Municipal Profile



	Year Founded:	1815	
	Population:	6,306 persons (13.6% increase since 2015)	
	Land Area:	5.05 square miles	
	Population Density:	1,249 persons/square mile (#4 of 8 municipalities in the region)	
	School District:	Pottsgrove School District	

Figure 13. Upper Pottsgrove Township Population Change: 2015-2024

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Annual Population Estimates



Upper Pottsgrove Township’s population has grown nearly 14% over the last ten years, with the largest single-year growth in 2023 with the construction of the 143-unit Pottsgrove Hunt development. The township’s population is forecasted to continue growing with several other potential housing developments “in the pipeline”.

## Upper Pottsgrove Township History

The land that is now Upper Pottsgrove Township was part of a manor set up by William Penn that was eventually sold to a wealthy Philadelphia merchant named George McCall. At his death, the manor was divided between McCall’s children. One of the divisions encompassed at least the area of Upper and West Pottsgrove townships. A further division occurred in 1889 officially separating the current day Upper Pottsgrove from West Pottsgrove. Upper Pottsgrove became a first-class township in 1965.

The Village of Halfway House was named for a tavern located halfway between Pottstown and Boyertown on Farmington Road. The tavern’s location led to the development of this small community within the township. Like many of the surrounding townships, agricultural occupations historically dominated the township’s economy. Workers were also employed in the iron mills in Pottstown. During WWII, increased wages for industrial workers moved people off of the farms and into factories.

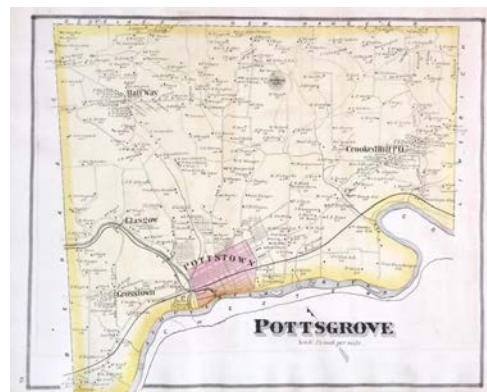
In the early days, elementary school children were educated in one-room schoolhouses, while high school students went to Pottstown. A brick consolidated



Historically farmland dominated the Upper Pottsgrove landscape.



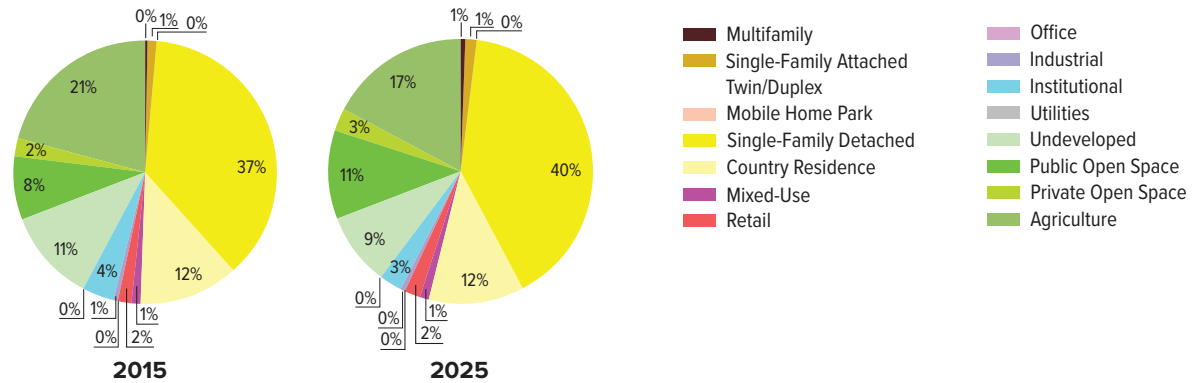
Circa 1970s aerial view of the Hanover Drive neighborhood.



Historic 1877 map of the Region before the modern day municipal boundaries were established. The label “Half Way” indicates the center of what is now Upper Pottsgrove Township.

Figure 14. Upper Pottsgrove Township Land Use Distribution Change: 2015-2025

Source: Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals



The amount of land used in Upper Pottsgrove Township for single-family detached housing has increased by 3% since 2015. This new housing development has occurred on both lands previously classified as undeveloped and agricultural. In addition, over the last ten years, public open space in the township has increased by 88 acres.

school, built on Farmington Avenue in 1929, was used until it closed in 1973. Students today are educated in the Pottsgrove School District.

Development has increased throughout the township since the housing boom of the 1950s and 1960s and is projected to continue into the future. A sewer authority was established in 1972 to serve Upper Pottsgrove residents; however, many homes continue to be served by on-lot septic systems and private water wells.

### Upper Pottsgrove Township Today

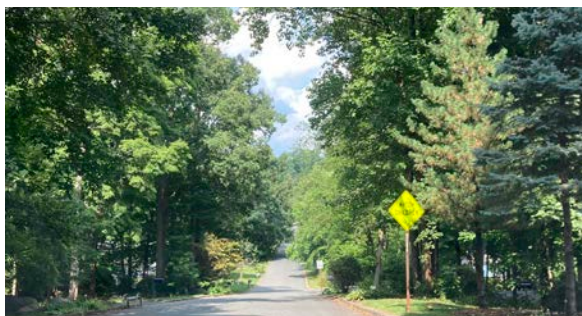
Although agriculture is no longer a dominant employment type for township residents, Upper Pottsgrove continues to take immense pride in their rural agricultural landscape and viewsheds. New development is encouraged along the Route 100 corridor and in the southern part of the township closer to Pottstown Borough, while low-density residential development and open space preservation is the focus elsewhere.



Upper Pottsgrove Township has a strong history of open space preservation and trail development.



Example of a walkable residential neighborhood in Upper Pottsgrove.



The township topography includes rolling hills that offer green vistas.

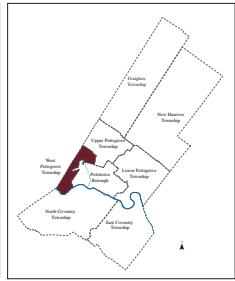


The current Pottsgrove Middle School was built in Upper Pottsgrove in 1999.

# West Pottsgrove Township Municipal Profile

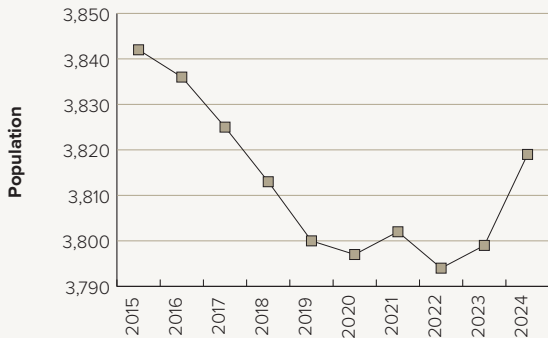


Year Founded:	1900
Population:	3,819 persons (0.6% decrease since 2015)
Land Area:	2.4 square miles
Population Density:	1,625 persons/square mile (#2 of 8 municipalities in the region)
School District:	Pottsgrove School District



**Figure 15. West Pottsgrove Township Population Change: 2015-2024**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Annual Population Estimates



West Pottsgrove Township's population decreased by 48 persons between 2015 and 2022, but has since begun to grow again. Only five new housing units have been constructed in the township during this time period, therefore any shifts in population are likely due to migration in and out of the township, and changes in household size.

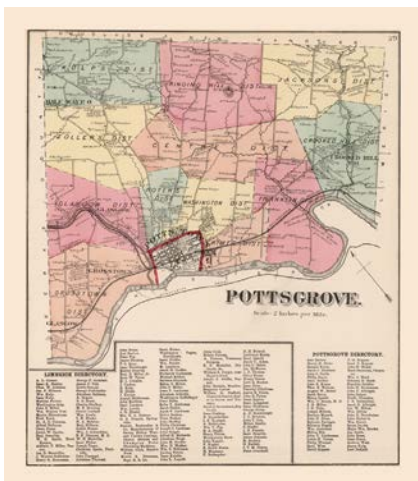
## West Pottsgrove Township History

In 1900, West Pottsgrove separated from Upper Pottsgrove and formed its own second-class township government. Subsequently, West Pottsgrove became a first-class township in 1922.

The Village of Stowe, formerly Buchanville, was once primarily populated by immigrant labor. In 1885, a stop for the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad Company was constructed in the township and given the name of Stowe, in reference to the Stowe farm located near the station.

Prior to 1900, children were educated in a one room schoolhouse. In 1892, a two-room school building was built and in 1905 a larger school building was constructed in the township. Between 1914 and 1932, multiple room additions were made to the larger school building with another new school building completed in 1944. In 1956, West Pottsgrove joined both Upper and Lower Pottsgrove to form the Pottsgrove School District.

Municipal sewer and water have been provided and are still provided to West Pottsgrove under a contract with the Borough of Pottstown. A landfill operated in the township for nearly 70 years until it reached capacity and was closed in 2005.



Historic 1871 map of the Pottsgrove area. The areas labeled as the Glasgow District and the Grosstown District correspond to much of modern day West Pottsgrove Township.



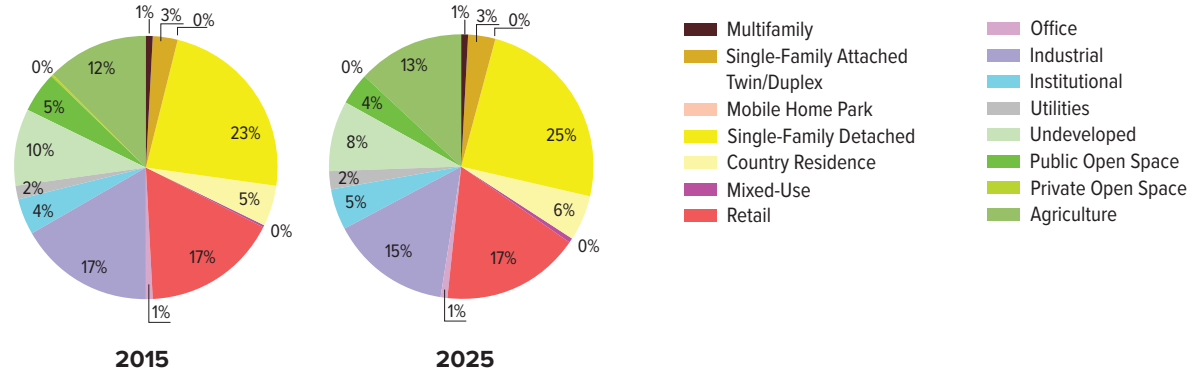
A landfill operated in the northern portion of the township for many decades until it closed in 2005 after reaching capacity.



Early 20th-century view of the West End Fire Company building.

### Figure 16. West Pottsgrove Township Land Use Distribution Change: 2015-2025

Source: Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals



There have been very few significant changes in the last ten years in terms of how land in West Pottsgrove Township is used. One of the most notable changes is a 2% decrease in the percentage of land used for industrial purposes.

### West Pottsgrove Township Today

The township’s development pattern is well-established with commercial uses logically concentrated along the river and along Upland Square Drive, while residential uses are set within a well-established and walkable street grid. Even as the township continues to modernize and develop, West Pottsgrove takes pride in maintaining its small town setting and close-knit community feeling, reflecting many residents’ deep family roots in the local area.



West Pottsgrove Township retains a small town character and community feeling.



The township has over 44 acres of parks and open space, including the Old Timer’s Field property.



Upland Square Shopping Center in West Pottsgrove is the largest shopping center in the Pottstown Region.



The Schuylkill River Trail passes through West Pottsgrove Township and is a popular recreational amenity for township residents.

## Demographic Profile

This section provides a snapshot of key population trends and forecasts for the Pottstown Region. An understanding of these trends will help guide the Region towards a unified planning vision and provide the basis for land use and development recommendations that meet the needs of the Region's changing population. Additional, demographic information specific to individual topics can be found in some of the topic-based chapters.

## Population Trends

### Population Change

Pottstown Borough quickly grew in population in the 1800s and early 1900s, reaching a peak population of 26,144 in 1960, while most of the surrounding townships in the Pottstown Region remained small agrarian communities until the mid-20th Century. The townships surrounding Pottstown Borough began to experience significant housing development and population growth in response to highway development in the late 1900s. Figure 17 below shows

Figure 17. Regional Population Change: 1930-2020

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 1930-2020

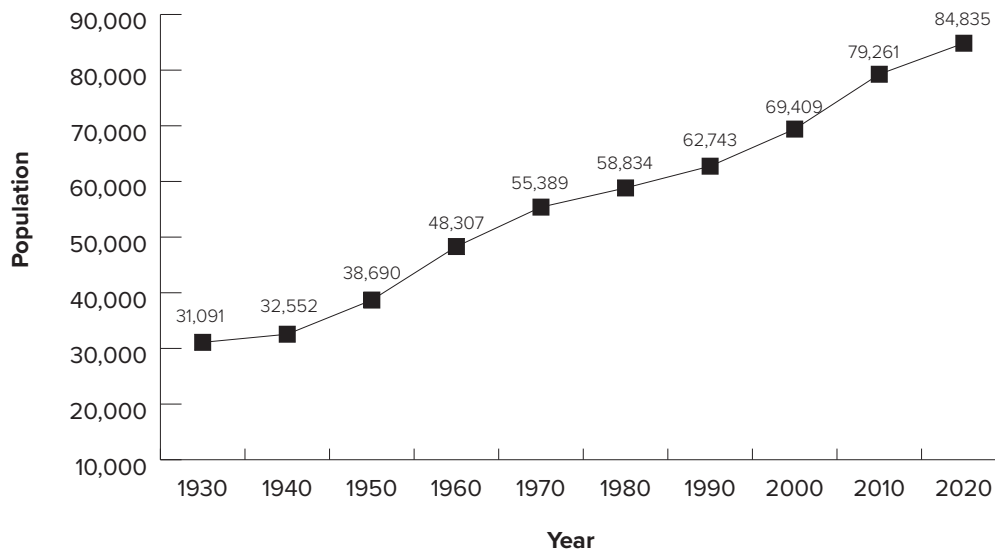


Table 1. Municipal Population Change: 2010-2020

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2010-2020

Municipality	2010	2020	% Change
Douglass Township	10,195	10,585	3.8%
East Coventry Township	6,636	7,068	6.5%
Lower Pottsgrove Township	12,059	12,217	1.3%
New Hanover Township	10,939	12,973	18.6%
North Coventry Township	7,866	8,441	7.3%
Pottstown Borough	22,377	23,433	4.7%
Upper Pottsgrove Township	5,315	5,870	10.4%
West Pottsgrove Township	3,874	3,798	-2.0%
<b>PMRPC Region</b>	<b>79,261</b>	<b>84,385</b>	<b>6.5%</b>

that the Region’s total population has been historically steadily growing. Figure 18 below shows municipal population change since 1990.

The Pottstown Region as a whole experienced a 6.5% growth in population, an increase of 5,124 people from 2010 to 2020 (see Figure 17 and Table 1 on the previous page). The highest levels of growth were concentrated in New Hanover Township (18.6%) and Upper Pottsgrove Township (10.4%). The municipality with the lowest level of population growth during this time frame was Lower Pottsgrove Township (1.3%) and West Pottsgrove experienced a population decrease of 2.0%. Overall, the Region experienced a much lower level of population growth from 2010 to 2020 than it did in the previous decade, when the population

grew by 14.2% (or 9,852 new residents); however, the regional population change is similar to Montgomery County and Chester County, which both experienced a 7.1% population increase over the same time period.

According to the 2023 American Community Survey, the Borough of Pottstown has the largest population (23,392 people) of all the municipalities in the Region, and accounts for 27% of the Region’s total population (see Figure 19 below). New Hanover Township has the second largest population (13,276 people) with 16% of the Region’s population and Lower Pottsgrove Township has the third largest population (12,398 people) with 15% of the Region’s total population.

Figure 18. Municipal Population Change: 1990-2020

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 1990-2020

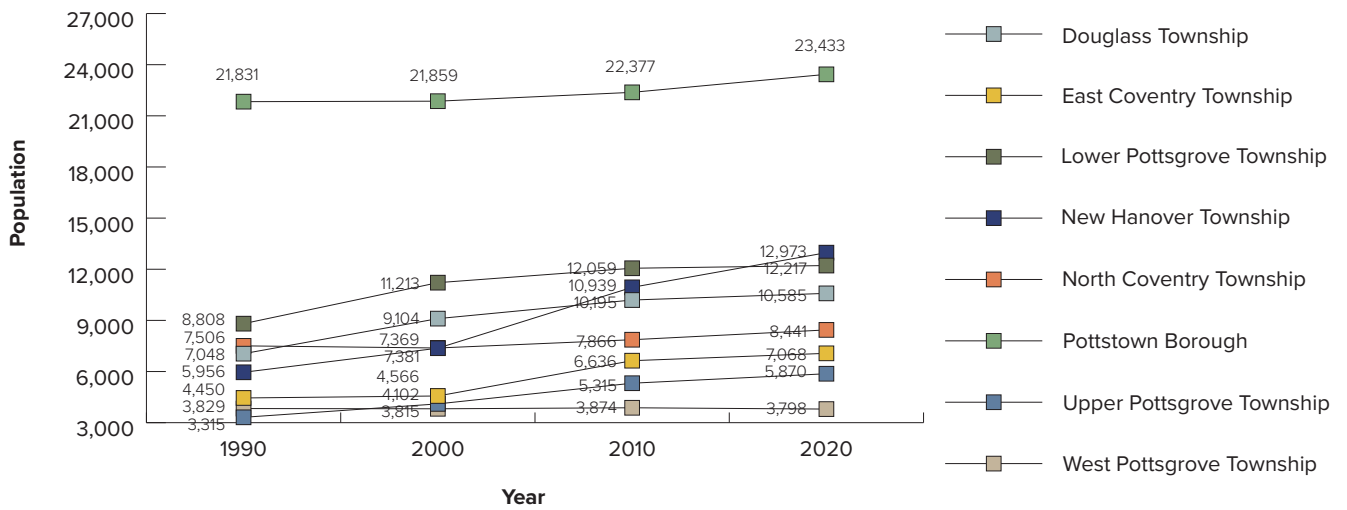
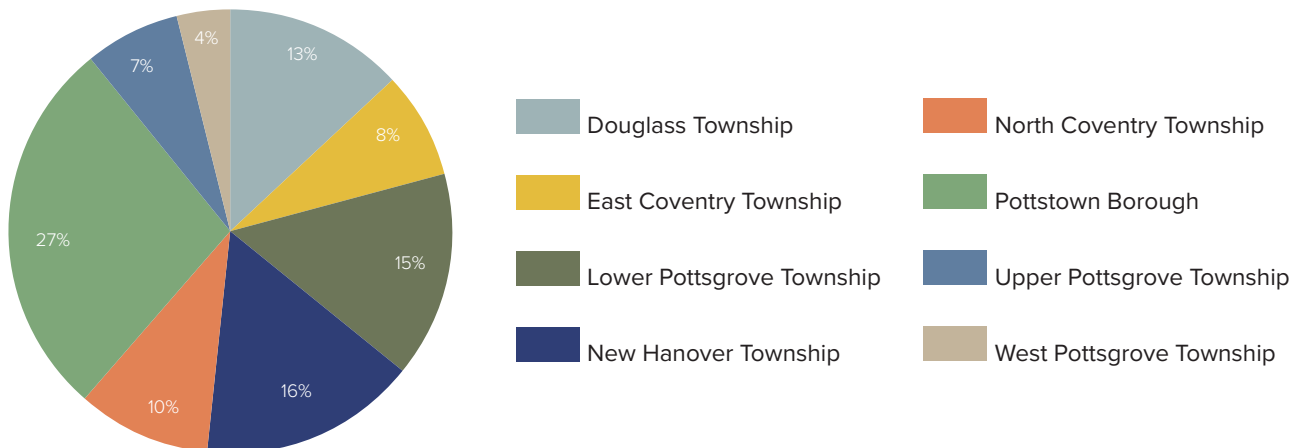


Figure 19. Municipal Population as % of Regional Population: 2024

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Annual Population Estimates



*Population Density*

With a total population of 85,306 persons in 2023 and a total land area of just under 82 square miles, the Pottstown Region as a whole has a population density of 1,040 persons per square mile (see Table 2 below). However, population is more concentrated in Pottstown Borough, as well as the adjacent townships of Lower Pottsgrove Township, Upper Pottsgrove Township, and West Pottsgrove Township to a lesser degree.

*Population Forecasts: 2020-2050*

Based on population forecasts from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), the population of the Pottstown Metropolitan Region is anticipated to increase 18.1% by 2050 (see Figure 20 below). This rate is lower than the rate forecasted in the 2010-2040 forecasts, which predicted regional growth of 22.1%. DVRPC's population forecasts, which are updated every 5 years, are based on existing conditions and recent

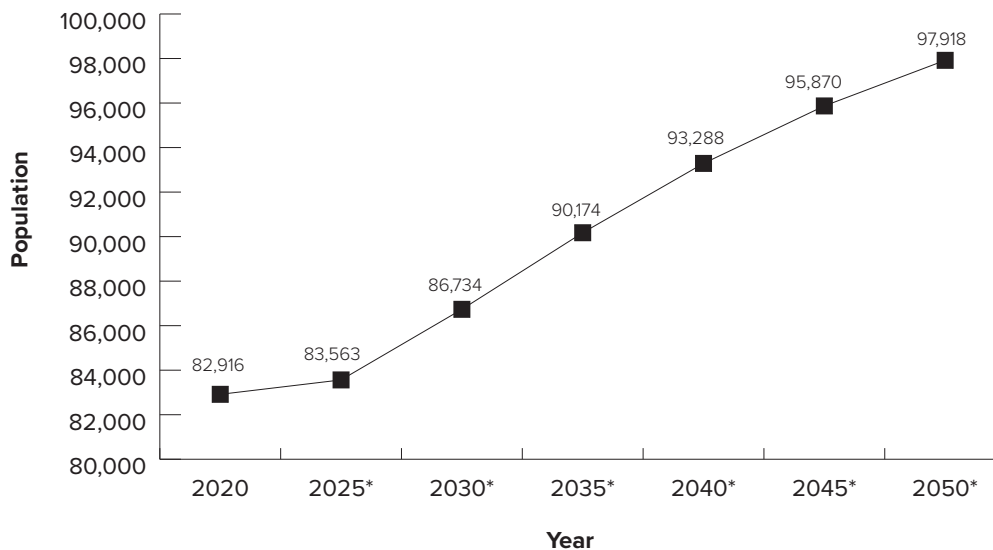
**Table 2. Population Density: 2024**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Annual Population Estimates

Municipality	Population	Land Area	Population Density
Douglass Township	11,139	15.3 sq. mi.	728 persons/sq. mi.
East Coventry Township	7,365	10.91 sq. mi.	675 persons/sq. mi.
Lower Pottsgrove Township	12,978	8.04 sq. mi.	1,614 persons/sq. mi.
New Hanover Township	13,650	21.68 sq. mi.	630 persons/sq. mi.
North Coventry Township	8,484	13.51 sq. mi.	632 persons/sq. mi.
Pottstown Borough	23,553	4.94 sq. mi.	4,768 persons/sq. mi.
Upper Pottsgrove Township	6,306	5.05 sq. mi.	1,249 persons/sq. mi.
West Pottsgrove Township	3,819	2.35 sq. mi.	1,625 persons/sq. mi.
<b>PMRPC Region</b>	<b>87,294</b>	<b>81.78 sq. mi.</b>	<b>1,067 persons/sq. mi.</b>

**Figure 20. Regional Forecasted Population Change: 2020-2050**

Source: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (\* Forecasted values)



**Table 3. Municipal Forecasted Population Change: 2020-2050**

Source: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (\* Forecasted values)

Municipality	2020	2025*	2030*	2035*	2040*	2045*	2050*	Absolute Change 2020-2050	% Change 2020-2050
Douglass Township	10,554	10,579	10,893	11,290	11,696	12,055	12,309	1,755	16.6%
East Coventry Township	6,785	7,001	7,538	8,053	8,489	8,860	9,147	2,362	34.8%
Lower Pottsgrove Township	12,143	12,199	12,398	12,657	12,840	13,042	13,164	1,021	8.4%
New Hanover Township	13,225	13,389	14,378	15,585	16,764	17,677	18,426	5,201	39.3%
North Coventry Township	8,011	8,098	8,660	9,171	9,601	9,952	10,277	2,266	28.3%
Pottstown Borough	22,604	22,649	22,961	23,254	23,548	23,785	23,961	1,357	6.0%
Upper Pottsgrove Township	5,756	5,802	6,039	6,283	6,447	6,584	6,695	939	16.3%
West Pottsgrove Township	3,838	3,846	3,867	3,881	3,903	3,915	3,939	101	2.6%
<b>PMRPC Region</b>	<b>82,916</b>	<b>83,563</b>	<b>86,734</b>	<b>90,174</b>	<b>93,288</b>	<b>95,870</b>	<b>97,918</b>	<b>15,002</b>	<b>18.1%</b>
<b>Montgomery County</b>	<b>833,914</b>	<b>852,415</b>	<b>868,662</b>	<b>883,800</b>	<b>896,576</b>	<b>907,942</b>	<b>917,924</b>	<b>84,010</b>	<b>10.1%</b>
<b>Chester County</b>	<b>528,218</b>	<b>563,468</b>	<b>586,300</b>	<b>604,007</b>	<b>620,391</b>	<b>634,119</b>	<b>645,673</b>	<b>117,455</b>	<b>22.2%</b>

trends such as land use changes and development activity. A small decrease in the average household size and the economic downturn in the late 2000s may have contributed to the Region's population growth being less than that predicted by the previous long-term population forecasts.

While rates have slowed from previous years, there are many reasons to anticipate the Region's population will continue to grow. The area's developable land, as well as infill development potential; quality school districts; and accessibility to employment opportunities in the Greater Philadelphia area will continue to make the Region an attractive place for developers and new residents. In addition, the cycle of housing turnover from empty-nesters to families can also impact the average household size, and therefore the total population.

However, the anticipated population growth is not spread evenly across the Region's eight municipalities (see Table 3 above). The forecasts predict that the highest levels of growth will occur in New Hanover Township (39.3%), with substantial increases also occurring in East Coventry Township (34.8%), Douglass Township (16.6%), and Upper Pottsgrove Township (16.3%). Pottstown Borough and West Pottsgrove Township, which were both forecasted to lose population in the previous DVRPC projections, are now expected to grow at 6.0% and 2.6%, respectively.

## Age Group Trends

The school-age population (under 18 years old) made up 24.1% of the Pottstown Region's total population in 2023, a slight increase from 23.8% in 2018, which is more than the percentage in both Montgomery County and Chester County. The school-age population in each of the Region's municipalities is summarized in Table 4 on the following page. In 2023, over 26% of New Hanover Township's population was school-age, the highest percentage in the Region. On the other hand, North Coventry Township had the lowest percentage school-age population with 20.4% in 2023.

The senior population (65 years old and older) makes up a significant and growing component of the Region's population at 16.0% in 2023 (a slight increase from 14.7% in 2018). However, this percentage is slightly lower than both Montgomery County and Chester County. The senior population in each of the Region's municipalities is also shown in Table 4 on the following page. At 18.9% and 17.6% respectively, North Coventry Township and East Coventry Township had the highest percentage senior populations in 2023. Upper Pottsgrove Township had the lowest senior population percentage in 2023 with just 13.4%.

Overall, the municipalities within the Pottstown Region have a median age that is generally similar to that of Montgomery County and Chester County (see Table 4 on the following page). The median age in the Region

**Table 4. Age Characteristics: 2018 vs. 2023**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2014-2018 & 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Municipality	Median Age (years)		% Under 18		% 65 and Over	
	2018	2023	2018	2023	2018	2023
Douglass Township	42.5	43.1	23.2%	23.8%	15.6%	17.2%
East Coventry Township	41.7	44.3	25.8%	24.2%	14.5%	17.6%
Lower Pottsgrove Township	43.5	39.4	23.1%	26.0%	18.5%	16.9%
New Hanover Township	41.3	41.3	25.2%	26.5%	14.4%	13.5%
North Coventry Township	43.5	45.4	21.0%	20.4%	17.0%	18.9%
Pottstown Borough	35.5	36.1	24.8%	24.4%	12.6%	15.9%
Upper Pottsgrove Township	39.1	40.8	23.2%	21.2%	10.2%	13.4%
West Pottsgrove Township	39.4	37.9	19.1%	21.5%	15.0%	13.8%
<b>PMRPC Region</b>	-	-	<b>23.8%</b>	<b>24.1%</b>	<b>14.7%</b>	<b>16.0%</b>
<b>Montgomery County</b>	<b>41.3</b>	<b>41.1</b>	<b>21.8%</b>	<b>21.5%</b>	<b>17.0%</b>	<b>18.4%</b>
<b>Chester County</b>	<b>40.4</b>	<b>40.7</b>	<b>23.1%</b>	<b>22.3%</b>	<b>15.4%</b>	<b>17.3%</b>

ranges from the youngest in Pottstown Borough at 36.1 years to the oldest in North Coventry Township and East Coventry Township at 45.4 years and 44.3 years, respectively.

The Region’s population can be further analyzed by dividing it between male and female in five-year increments of age (see Figure 21 on the following page). The baby-boomer generation (generally defined as those persons born between the years of 1946 and 1964 and therefore being between 56 and 74 years of age in 2020) together made up the largest percentage of the population in 2020. Figure 21 also indicates a dip in population for ages between 20 and 30 years old. This loss of 20 to 30 year-olds from more suburban and semi-rural areas is a common trend nationally when younger adult professionals may relocate to metropolitan areas for higher-education and job opportunities or lifestyle preferences.

However, the Region has seen an increase in persons aged 30 to 50 indicating the Region’s growing and sustained ability to attract young professionals once they reach an age they are ready to settle down and start a family. The Region’s quality school districts, diverse housing options, walkable borough center, and recreation amenities have all been shown to attract young families.

## Racial Composition

Figure 22 on the following page shows the racial composition of the Pottstown Region as compared to Montgomery County and Chester County. The PMRPC Region has a slightly higher percentage of the population that is white relative to either Chester County or Montgomery County overall. The PMRPC Region and Montgomery County have a similar percentage of the population that is Black or African American, almost double that of Chester County. The percentage of the Region’s population that is Asian is much lower than either county overall.

The percentage of the Region’s population that identifies as Hispanic or Latino increased from 4.3% to 6.5% from 2018 to 2023 according to the American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. Similarly, the Hispanic or Latino population increased from 5.0% to 6.5% in Montgomery County and from 7.3% to 8.2% in Chester County over the same time period.

Figure 21. Population Pyramid: 2020

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2020

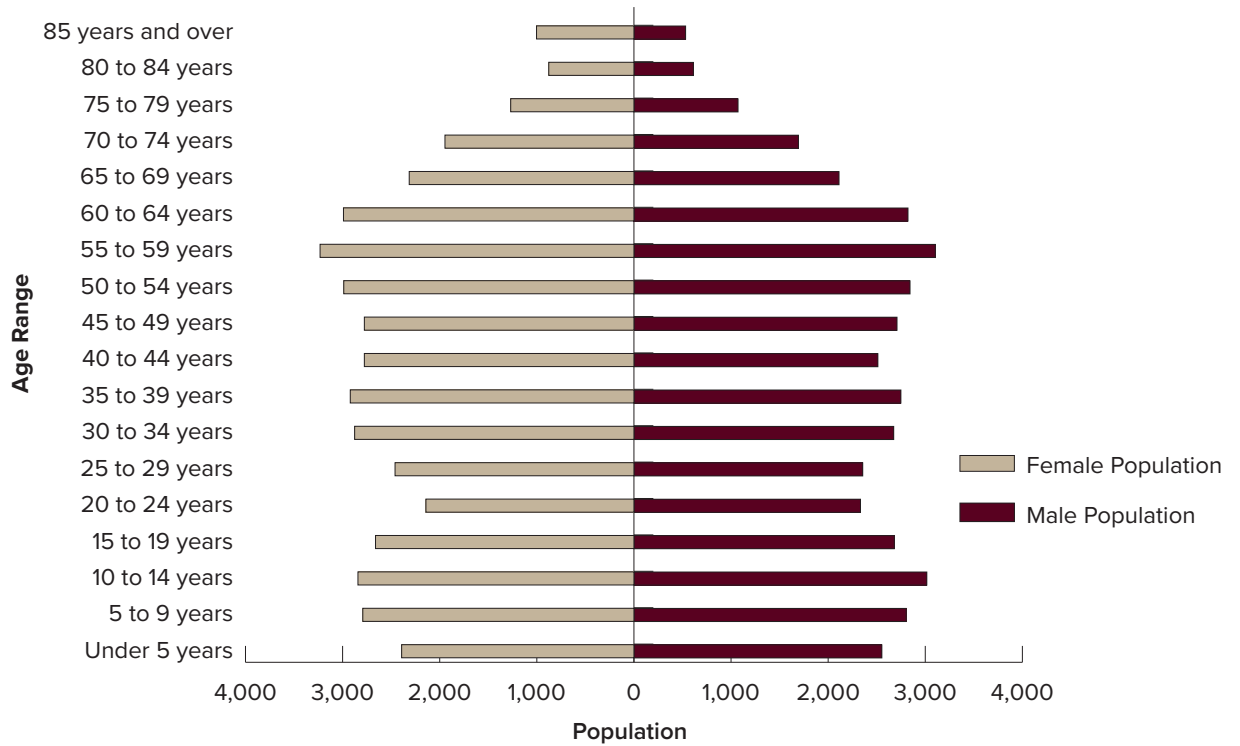
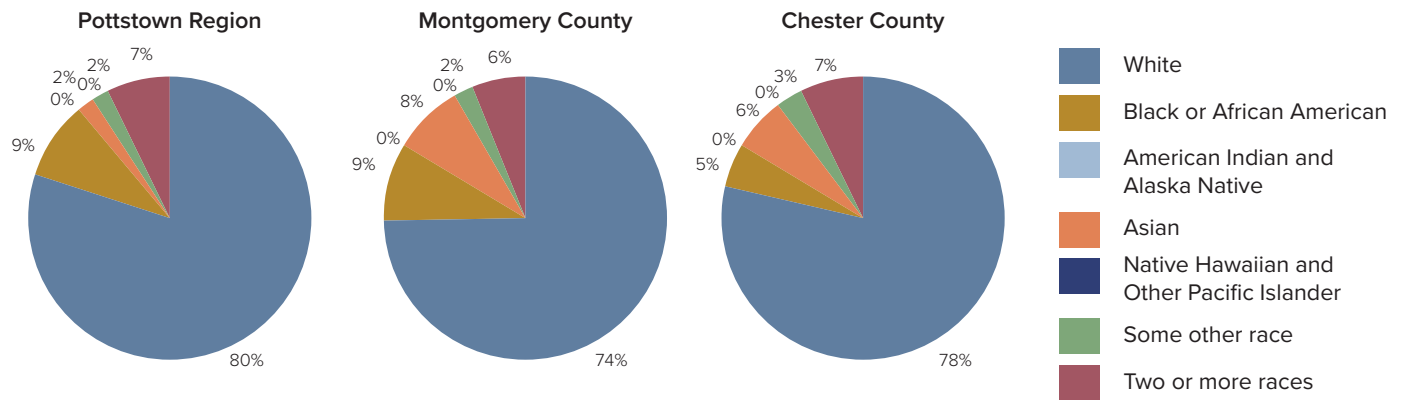


Figure 22. Racial Composition: 2023

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates





# Existing Land Use

The Pottstown Metropolitan Region's existing diverse land uses range from walkable, urban neighborhoods to open, rolling farmlands. Although the Region's land uses continue to evolve, there is an established development pattern that has been shaped by previous regional comprehensive plans and will continue to influence change. This chapter will focus on the existing characteristics of land uses within the Region as well as land use trends when compared to the 2015 comprehensive plan.



The largest multifamily development between 2015 and 2025 was the Apartments at Sanatoga Greene in Lower Pottsgrove Township with 310 apartment units.



The Pottstown Region offers many convenient shopping centers for residents.

## Categories of Existing Land Use

Map 1 on the following page shows the existing land use distribution within the Pottstown Metropolitan Region. Table 5 below shows the existing land use composition of the Region (as compared to 2015) in terms of the percent of the Region’s total land area that is currently used for three general categories of land use: residential (all types), non-residential (all types), and agriculture/undeveloped/open space.

In 2015, a majority of the Region’s land area fell into the agriculture/open space/undeveloped category. However, in 2025, residential land uses account for 0.7% more of the Region’s land area than agriculture/ open space/undeveloped. There was also a small increase of 0.7% of land area in the Region used for non-residential purposes between 2015 and 2025.

Table 6 and Figure 23 on page # includes a more detailed breakdown of the Region’s land area into 16 land use sub-categories (corresponding to the land use categories in Map 1 on the following page), as it compares to 2015 values. There has been a 5.7% decrease in the percent of land area classified as undeveloped from 2015 to 2025. The largest decreases in undeveloped land area (by acreage) occurred in New Hanover Township and North Coventry Township; however, some land no longer classified as undeveloped could have been purchased as public open space or transitioned into active agricultural use.

In addition, there was a 1.3% decrease in land area used for agricultural purposes from 2015 to 2025. By acreage, the largest decreases in agricultural land occurred in East Coventry Township and Upper Pottsgrove Township, where some agricultural land may have also been purchased by the municipality and reclassified accordingly.

**Table 5. Existing Land Use Distribution by General Categories: 2015 vs. 2024<sup>1</sup>**

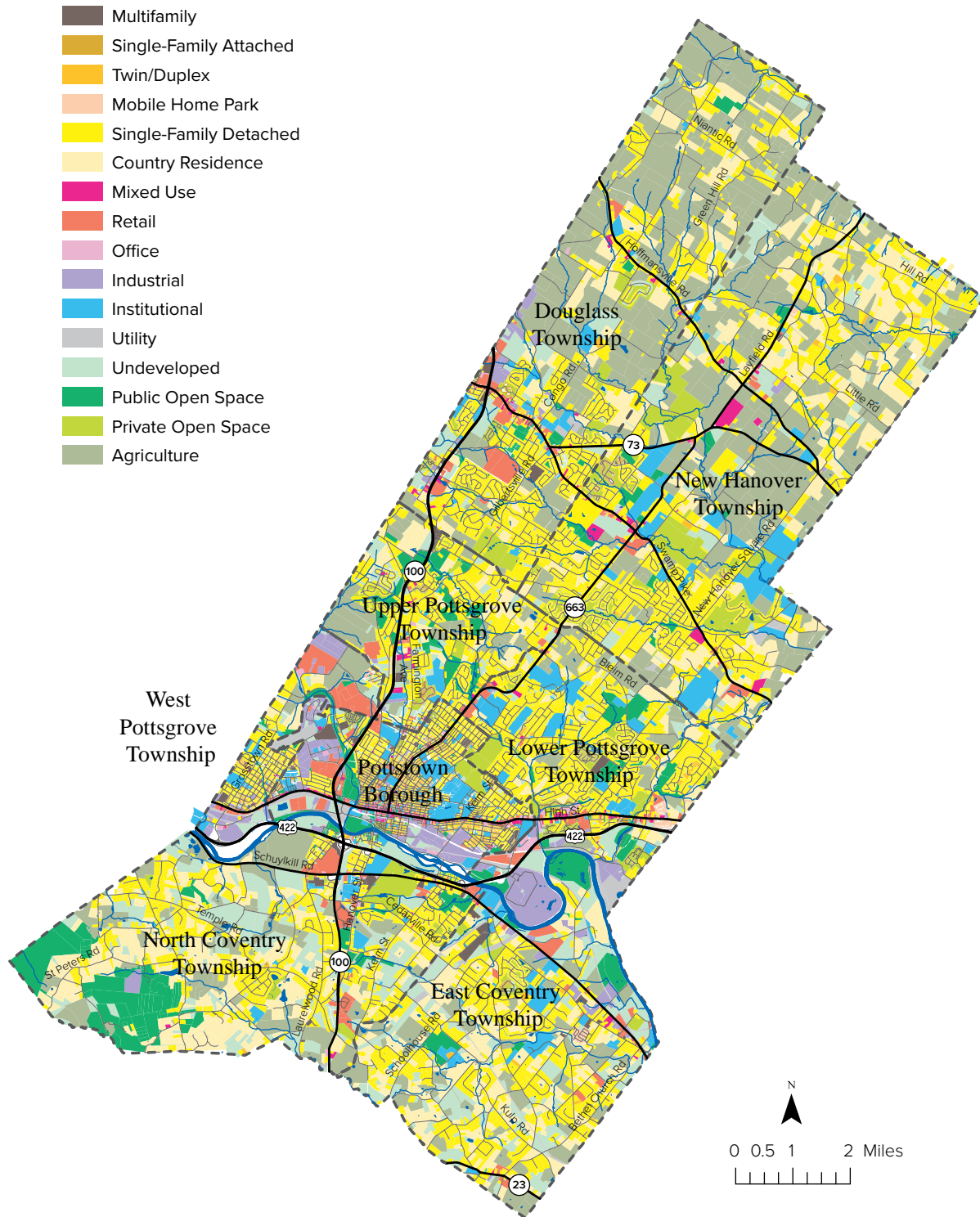
Source: Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals; Chester County Board of Assessment

General Land Use Category	Acres		% of Total Land Area	
	2015	2025	2015	2025
Residential (All Types)	20,229	21,806	41.6%	44.5%
Non-Residential (All Types)	5,292	5,723	10.9%	11.6%
Agriculture, Undeveloped, Open Space	23,154	21,418	47.6%	43.8%

<sup>1</sup> The designations given to each property were based initially on land use classifications used by the Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals and the Chester County Board of Assessment Appeals, which are responsible for assigning categories for taxing purposes. For the purposes of land use planning and creating consistency across the two counties studied, some of these categories have been modified. For example, private golf courses are categorized as commercial land for taxing purposes, but are considered private open space for land use planning.

## Map 1. Existing Land Use

Source: Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals; Chester County Board of Assessment Appeals



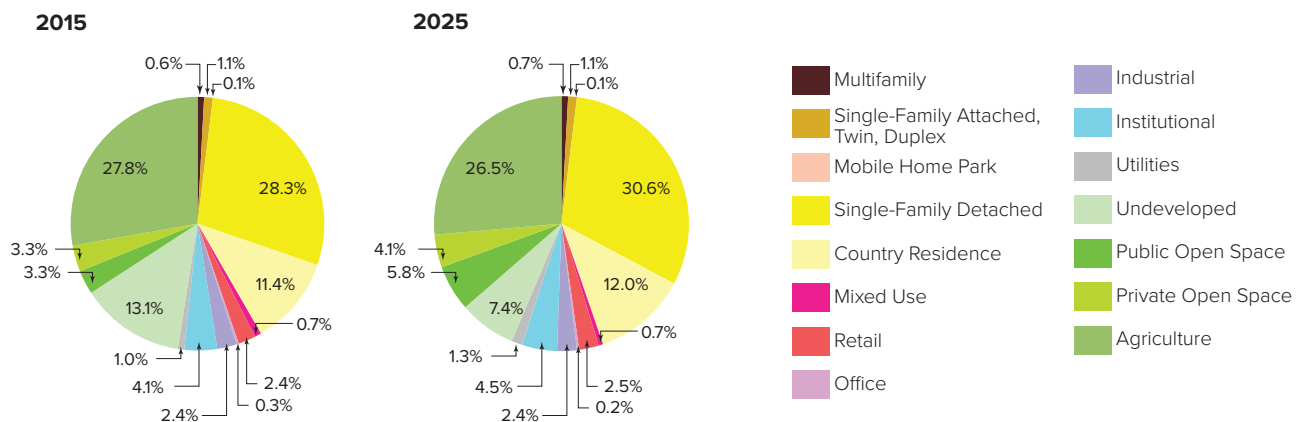
**Table 6. Existing Land Use Distribution by Specific Categories: 2015 vs. 2025**

Source: Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals; Chester County Board of Assessment

General Land Use Category	Specific Category	Acres		% of Total Land Area		Change 2015-2025 (Acres)	Change 2015-2025 (%)
		2015	2025	2015	2024		
Residential	Multifamily	292	340	0.6%	0.7%	+48	+0.1%
	Twin/Duplex; Single-Family Attached	541	564	1.1%	1.1%	+23	0
	Mobile Home Park	68	70	0.1%	0.1%	+2	0
	Single-Family Detached	13,785	14,966	28.3%	30.6%	+1,181	+2.3%
	Country Residence	5,543	5,866	11.4%	12.0%	+323	+0.6%
Non-Residential	Mixed-Use	337	326	0.7%	0.7%	-11	0
	Retail	1,173	1,244	2.4%	2.5%	+71	+0.1%
	Office	131	120	0.3%	0.2%	-10	-0.1%
	Industrial	1,160	1,195	2.4%	2.4%	+36	0
	Institutional	2,002	2,185	4.1%	4.5%	+183	+0.4%
	Utilities	490	652	1.0%	1.3%	+162	+0.3%
	Agriculture, Undeveloped, Open Space	Undeveloped	6,385	3,600	13.1%	7.4%	-2,785
	Public Open Space	1,627	2,856	3.3%	5.8%	+1,229	+2.5%
	Private Open Space	1,601	2,007	3.3%	4.1%	+407	+0.8%
	Agriculture	13,541	12,955	27.8%	26.5%	-587	-1.3%

**Figure 23. Existing Land Use Distribution by Specific Categories: 2015 vs. 2025**

Source: Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals; Chester County Board of Assessment





*Pottsgrove Hunt is a new age-restricted, single-family detached housing development in Upper Pottsgrove Township.*



*One notable, recent non-residential development is the Lehigh Valley Hospital - Gilbertsville in Douglass Township.*

*Photo Credit: Lehigh Valley Health Network*

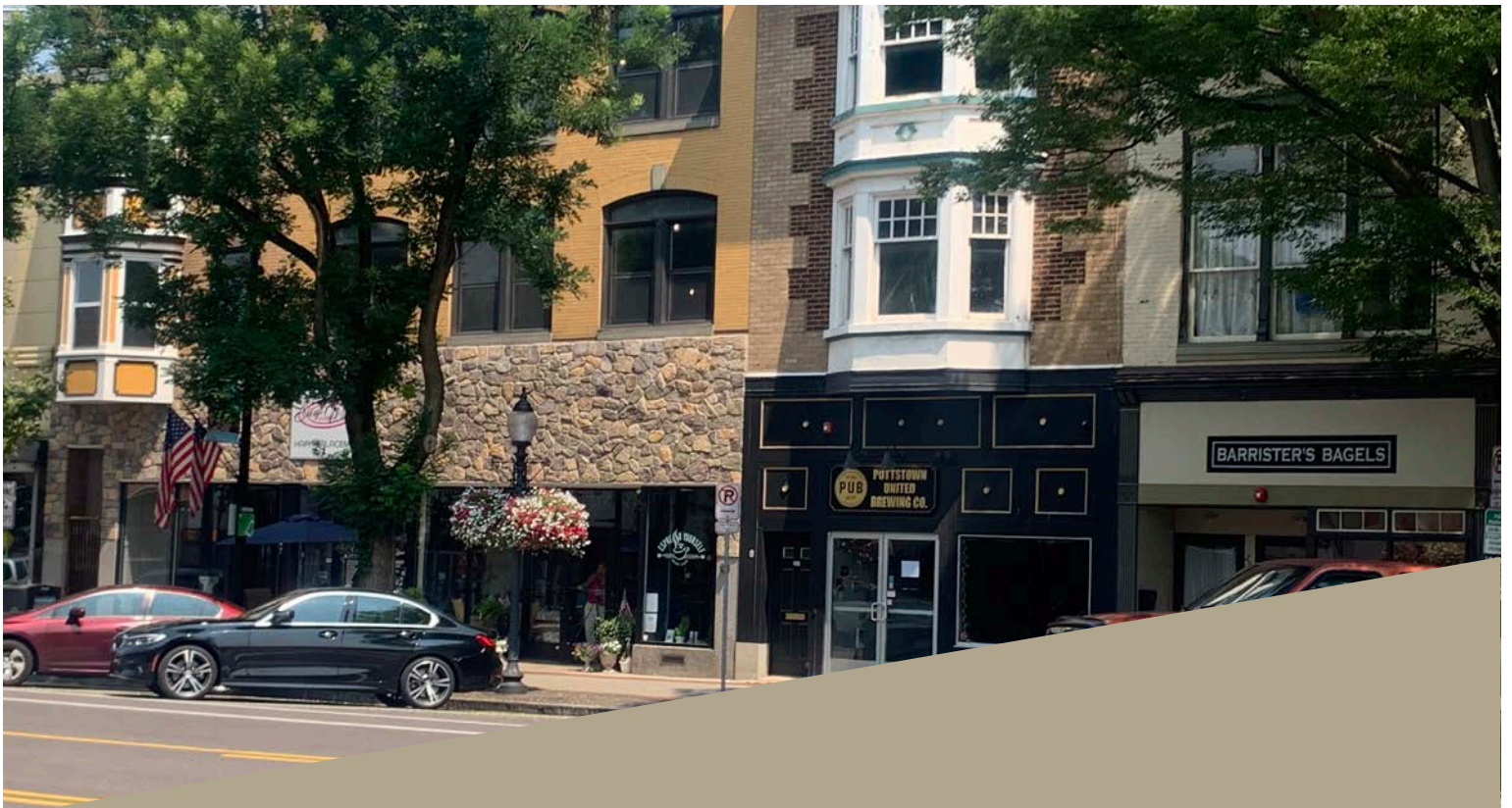
In terms of residential land use categories, nearly 1,200 acres of new single-family detached land was constructed between 2015 and 2025 (a 2.3% increase). In addition, 323 acres of new country residence land was constructed between 2015 and 2025 (a 0.6% increase). “Country residence” refers to properties of 5 acres or greater in size with a single-family detached home.

Overall, there has been very little relative change in the acreage or percent land area utilized for non-residential purposes in the Region.

The Borough of Pottstown and its surrounding villages formed as centers of commerce during the Pottstown Metropolitan Region’s agrarian and industrial eras. In more recent times, suburbanization has led to approximately 43% of the Region’s land being developed for lower-density housing. Today, approximately 44% of the Region’s land area remains as agriculture/open space/undeveloped. Some of these lands are permanently preserved for agriculture or parkland, but large areas of prime developable land exist in the Region.

The Region’s past has created a diverse land use pattern that meets the variety of economic and social needs of the Region: from urban neighborhoods to rural farms, corner stores to the Coventry Mall, Route 422 to the Pottstown Airport, and small garages to large manufacturing facilities. A fundamental planning consideration for the Region is how it can maintain the established diverse land use pattern while encouraging strategic new development and revitalization of underutilized properties, goals that are explored further in the Future Land Use chapter.





# Future Land Use

The Pottstown Metropolitan Region is located directly within the path of growth that continues to expand outward from nearby cities such as Philadelphia and Reading. Understanding that how future growth is managed will influence the preservation of their natural resources, the cost of infrastructure, and ultimately their economic success and quality of life; the Region's municipalities have decided to establish a regional Future Land Use Plan. The policies and maps contained in this section are intended to guide future growth in the Region for the next 20 years.

The Regional Future Land Use Plan is shown in Map 2 on the following page and depicts the general distribution of the four future land use classifications that make up the Future Land Use Plan. The specific land use categories that are appropriate for each future land use classification are summarized in Table 7 on page 40. This chapter also contains an intent statement and description of the four future land use classification and design guidelines and additional information for each land use category.

### Changes from Previous Regional Comprehensive Plans

*Similar to the 2015 regional comprehensive plan, this Future Land Use Plan does not provide for strict residential density limits; therefore, individual municipalities retain the authority to set density and intensity standards. However, each municipality in the Pottstown Metropolitan Region must ensure their zoning ordinances are generally consistent with the overall intent of this Future Land Use Plan.*

*In order to create a more efficient land use pattern, more effectively preserve the natural environment, and promote the revitalization of the Region's older neighborhoods, this Future Land Use Plan provides a range of appropriate residential densities and other dimensional criteria for each future land use classification, as well as a set of design guidelines for specific land use categories.*

## Future Land Use Classifications

### Regional Core

*Intent: to encourage the revitalization of Pottstown Borough as the historic, urban, mixed-use core of the Region*

The Regional Core area includes all of the Borough of Pottstown. Pottstown Borough is the “center” of the Region and was historically the economic hub and densest portion of the area. The borough has a

traditional town character with a diverse mix of housing types and nonresidential land uses, set within a walkable grid street system. Established infrastructure, including public water and sewer, and strategic access to several major roadways and two highways, support the borough's continued position as the region's core.

New development should primarily be in the form of context-sensitive infill development and reuse of buildings to maintain the historic fabric and scale of the community. New developments should also contribute to the borough's multimodal transportation network through sidewalk improvements, bicycle amenities, and enhanced bus shelters.



Regional Core Future Land Use Classification



### Map 2. Pottstown Region Future Land Use

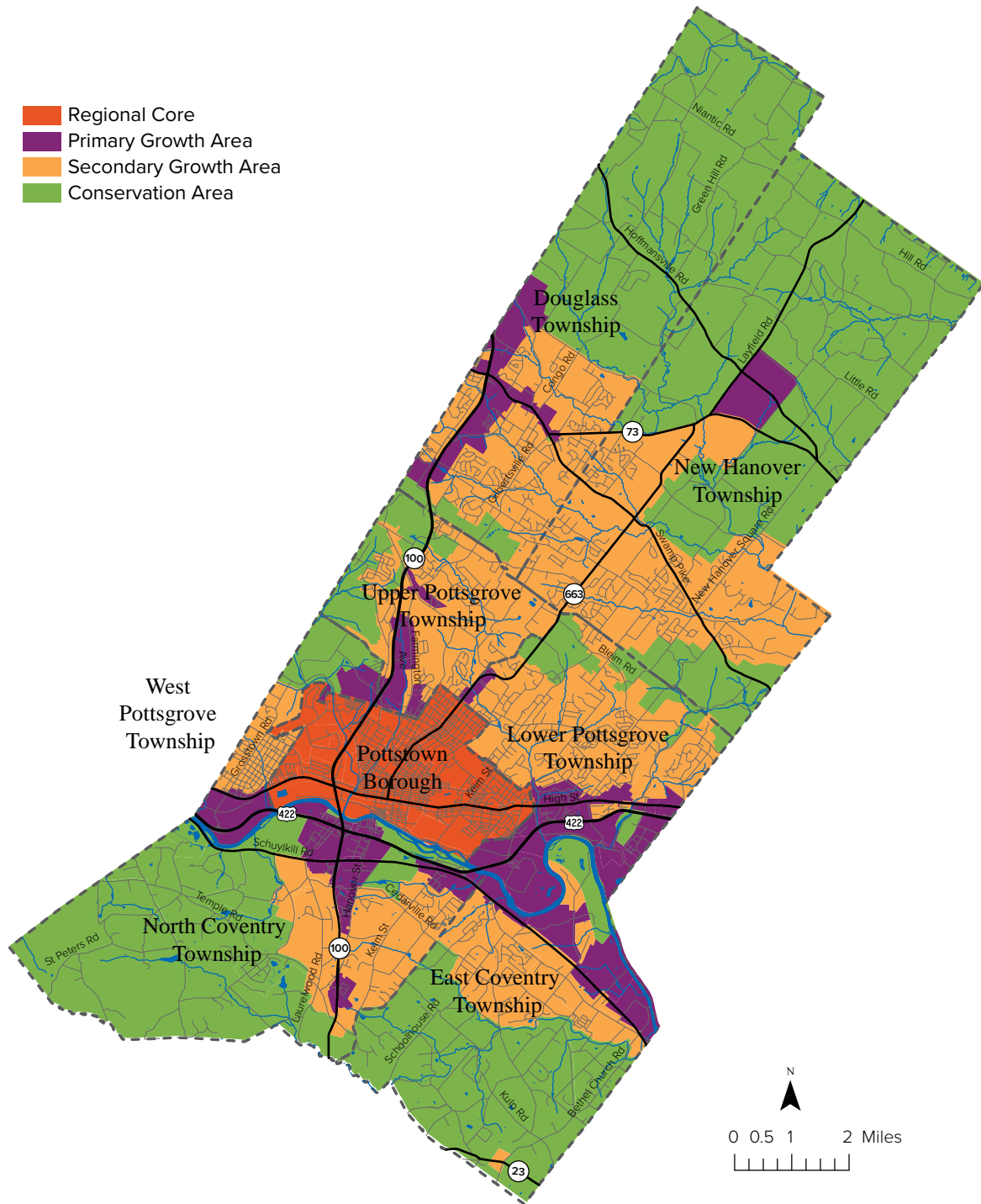


Table 7. Future Land Use Classifications and Appropriate Use Options

LAND USE CATEGORIES	Future Land Use Classifications			
	Regional Core	Primary Growth Areas	Secondary Growth Areas	Conservation Area
Agricultural Activities			Y	Y
Low-Density Residential				Y
Medium-Density Residential	Y	Y	Y	
High-Density Residential	Y	Y		
Institutional	Y	Y	Y	Y*
Town Mixed-Use	Y	Y		
Village Mixed-Use		Y	Y	
General Commercial & Office	Y	Y	Y	
Industrial & Manufacturing	Y	Y		

**NOTES**

Y indicates future land use classifications where that land use category would be considered appropriate

\* Only neighborhood-scale or historic institutions

**Using the Future Land Use Plan**

The Regional Future Land Use Plan is shown in Map 2 on the previous page. This map includes the four future land use classifications that make up the Future Land Use Plan. The general land use categories that are considered appropriate for each future land use classification are summarized in Table 7 above. The following pages contain design guidelines and additional information for each general land use category.

The list of general land use categories considered appropriate in each future land use classification should be treated as a menu of options. Not all of the land use categories considered appropriate need to be permitted in all of the corresponding zoning districts, as long as all land uses are permitted within a reasonable geographic area within the Region overall.



*Primary Growth Area Future Land Use Classification*

## Primary Growth Areas

*Intent: to encourage new development through infill and redevelopment within already-developed areas of the Region*

The Region's Primary Growth Area consists primarily of places outside of Pottstown Borough where growth has already occurred, and where new growth, particularly non-residential and high-density residential growth, should be focused. These areas range in character, and future development that occurs in these areas should reflect the diverse characteristics of the surrounding communities, including adjacent land uses, so that new development provides appropriate transitions between different uses and intensities of development.

Most of the Primary Growth Area is currently served by public sewer and water and is easily accessible by the Region's road network. Within the Primary Growth Area, new growth shall be located in areas where this infrastructure already exists or can be easily extended. For example, medium- and high-density residential development should be located along major roadways and developed as a part of a larger community, including supportive commercial uses, to ensure their long-term viability and improved quality of life for residents. In addition, repurposing vacant and underutilized sites within the Primary Growth Area should be encouraged to help alleviate the pressure for growth in the Region's Conservation Area and revitalize existing communities.



*Secondary Growth Area Future Land Use Classification*

## Secondary Growth Areas

*Intent: to allow medium-density development as a transition between Primary Growth Area and the Conservation Area, where existing infrastructure or planned infrastructure extensions support it*

Much of the Region's Secondary Growth Area can be categorized today as suburban, single-family residential development. As population growth continues in the Pottstown Region, there will be increased pressure to develop the Region's Secondary Growth Area. New residential growth shall therefore be generally directed within the Secondary Growth Area where important infrastructure is already in-place, or has been identified as a sewer growth area in the municipality's sewer facilities plan.

New medium-density residential development should be located near supporting land uses, including

commercial or mixed-use development, and should be developed as a part of a larger community to ensure its long-term viability and improved quality of life for residents. New residential and non-residential development shall be built to generally reflect the context of the surrounding community and adjacent land uses, whether it is of a more suburban, village, or rural nature. New development shall also be designed and planned in a way that provides appropriate transitions between different uses and intensities of development.

In all cases, importance shall be given to creating walkable neighborhoods that connect to the surrounding community. New roads shall be built to tie into and improve the existing road network. Pedestrian infrastructure in the form of sidewalks and trails should be provided to not only connect residents within a neighborhood, but also to facilitate access to neighborhood-level destinations, such as retail, parks and open space areas, and community institutions, including schools.



Conservation Area Future Land Use Classification

## Conservation Areas

*Intent: to protect the Region's rural and agricultural character, limit the geographic spread of development, and preserve the Region's natural resource-related industries and jobs*

Most of the Region's farmland, woodlands, and ecologically sensitive areas of the Region are located within the Conservation Area. Installation of public sewer and water shall be limited in these areas in order to prevent significant amounts of development and limit further growth pressure.

The primary land uses anticipated in the Conservation Area are agriculture and open space, although forestry, and other extractive industries are also anticipated to occur. Only very low-density residential development (i.e., one dwelling unit per two acres) is considered appropriate for the Conservation Area. Although, where slightly higher densities are sought, significant areas of common open space shall be a major part of any new development. Protecting open spaces and conserving environmental resources shall be prioritized when locating and designing any new development.

## Development Guidelines



### Agricultural

#### Appropriate Locations

Regional Core	Primary Growth Area	Secondary Growth Area	Conservation Area

Agricultural and related activities constitute an important and significant land use in many of the Region’s municipalities. Preservation and proper management of these lands will be important for the continued success of the Region.

#### Development Objectives

1. Promote the preservation of agriculture as an important industry within the Region.
2. Identify and protect significant natural resources, such as water bodies, riparian buffers, steep slopes, woodlands, and wetlands.
3. Preserve the natural rural landscape and viewsheds.

#### Appropriate Land Uses:

It is recommended that municipalities adopt zoning regulations that allow landowners flexibility in the economic use of their land, while still maintaining the long-term viability and sustainability of agriculture, which in turn helps to control the pressure for future development in rural areas and protect natural resources.

In addition to agricultural activities and resource extraction activities, the following accessory uses may be appropriate on properties where agriculture is the primary land use:

- ◆ Single-family detached residential
- ◆ Accessory dwelling units and/or conversion of historic buildings to multiple residential units
- ◆ Bed-and-breakfast

- ◆ Agri-tourism, such as farm tours, hayrides, pick-your-own flowers, roadside markets
- ◆ Solar energy and wind energy generation equipment

### *Dimensional Guidelines*

- ◆ Municipalities that wish to limit development of farmland may want to consider adopting a minimum farm size requirement in their agricultural zoning districts. This way, a farm parcel could not be subdivided if the resultant size of the farm would fall below the minimum farm size.
- ◆ Some ordinances set a minimum farm size of 10 acres, which is the same minimum acreage that a landowner must possess to participate in the state's preferential tax assessment program for farmland, Act 319, Clean and Green.
- ◆ It is important to consider a recent trend towards smaller-scale farm operations that don't require large amounts of land. Depending on the prevalence of this trend in each municipality, a minimum farm size regulation may not be appropriate or necessary.

### *Building Design Guidelines*

- ◆ Agricultural buildings should be designed to accommodate a site's natural features, topography, and sensitive areas. New buildings should blend into the natural form of the land and should not be located on platforms or exposed skylines or ridges.
- ◆ Overhanging eaves and large roofs should be incorporated into buildings. These features can help settle a building in to the landscape, create shadows, and give depth to the building.
- ◆ Roofs should be dark whenever possible, with a non-reflective finish, in order to mimic the color and texture of the surrounding landscape.

### *Open Space and Landscaping*

- ◆ *Buffers:* Where agricultural properties are located adjacent to non-agricultural land uses, adequate buffers and screens should be used to minimize the visual impact of farming operations, as viewed from adjacent properties.
- ◆ *Riparian Buffers:* Where a stream or water body is located on agricultural property, a minimum

riparian buffer of 100 feet should be provided, within which farming operations would be excluded, in order to protect water quality.

- ◆ *General Landscaping:* Landscaping should be provided around farm buildings to help integrate them into the landscape.



## Low-Density Residential

### Appropriate Locations

Regional Core	Primary Growth Area	Secondary Growth Area	Conservation Area

Low-density residential development should be designed to accommodate a site’s natural features, topography, and sensitive areas.

### Development Objectives

1. Protect and conserve important environmental and natural resources, including wetlands, streams, woodlands, steep slopes, prime agricultural soils, and open space.
2. Permit low-density development that is consistent with the resource preservation goals of the Region’s Conservation areas.
3. Limit the demand and extension of certain utilities, including public sewer and water, so as to maintain the Region’s rural character.

### Appropriate Land Uses

- ◆ Single-family detached residential
- ◆ Accessory dwelling units and/or conversion of historic buildings to multiple residential units

### Dimensional Guidelines

- ◆ Low-density residential development tends to range from a high density of 1 dwelling unit per 2 acres to a low density of 1 dwelling unit per 10 acres.
- ◆ Typically, low-density residential development should be located on lots large enough to utilize on-site or community sewer and water systems. Cluster development should prioritize community sewage or water systems over any extension of public utilities into the Conservation Area.

- ◆ Flexibility in minimum lot size and other development criteria may be needed in order to accommodate or incentivize natural feature conservation.

### Cluster Development

*Cluster development prioritizes open space preservation and designing around preservation of sensitive environmental features and scenic viewsheds. In return for permitting reduced lot sizes for individual housing units, and therefore less infrastructure costs for the developer in terms of roads and utility lines, cluster developments preserve at least 60% of the total site area.*

### Building Design Guidelines

Buildings shall be harmonious with their rural surroundings with new construction making efforts to utilize building materials, roof pitches, window sizes, and other architectural details that complement the Region’s rural landscape.

- ◆ Within the development tract, residential units should be sited so as to minimize any negative impacts on the environmental, historical, and visual character of the community
- ◆ Front yard setbacks should have variation to enhance rural streetscapes
- ◆ Homes should be hidden by topography and existing woodlands, where possible, or by buffer landscaping

### Open Space and Landscaping

Landscaping of residential areas should retain existing natural features and incorporate low-maintenance and native vegetation

- ◆ *Buffers:* screening buffers should be provided along external roadway frontages and all tract boundaries

- ◆ *Street Trees:* street trees should be provided along both sides of all existing and new streets, with an average spacing of 40 feet, and should consist of a wide variety of native or adapted tree species.
- ◆ *Open Space:* Even when residences are developed on large lots, it is important to preserve a site’s most important environmental features. Determining the net developable area should consider features such as wetlands, floodplains, steep slopes, woodlands, historic buildings, and scenic viewsheds. Overall, 30-40% of larger development tracts (60% for cluster development) should be preserved as open space.
  - An open space area at least 100 feet wide should be provided between at least every ten residential units located in a row.
  - Homes abutting central open space areas should directly face those areas.
  - Preserved open space should be located on portions of the development tract adjacent to other areas of open space, or properties where the potential for open space preservation exists
  - Cluster developments should require a minimum of 10% of the total open space area to be designed as usable open spaces, such as village greens, to provide additional gathering areas for residents.

### Circulation Guidelines

- ◆ Homes should take access from interior streets and should be screened from view along exterior roads using existing topography and/or vegetation
- ◆ Roadways should be designed to reflect a rural character with narrow road widths, and swales instead of curbs. Guard rails and stream crossings should be built with appropriate materials.
- ◆ Either sidewalks, multi-use trails, or pedestrian pathways should be encouraged to connect residences to each other and to open space areas.

### Utilities

Low-density residential development should be located on lots large enough to utilize on-site or community sewer and water systems. Cluster Development should prioritize community sewage or water systems over any extension of public utilities into the Conservation Areas.



## Medium-Density Residential

### Appropriate Locations

Regional Core	Primary Growth Area	Secondary Growth Area	Conservation Area

A significant portion of the Region’s current residential development takes the form of medium-density residential, with typical densities ranging from 1 dwelling unit per acre to 5 dwelling units per acre. It is likely that most new residential development in the Region will continue to take this form, therefore strong development standards are encouraged to facilitate neighborhood development with a sense of community.

### Development Objectives

1. Provide pedestrian-oriented residential neighborhoods that foster a sense of community.
2. Create new housing that reflects the character of the surrounding area.
3. Provide usable and accessible neighborhood open space.

### Appropriate Land Uses

- ◆ Single-family detached residential
- ◆ Townhomes and multi-family residential, appropriate where adjacent to mixed-use, village or commercial areas, or located near high-density residential development

### Dimensional Guidelines

- ◆ *Maximum Density:* 1 dwelling unit per acre to 5 dwelling units per acre
- ◆ *Minimum Lot Sizes:* will vary based on the overall density of the site and the types of residential buildings proposed
- ◆ *Front Setbacks:* between 20 and 30 feet, should be encouraged in order to create a diverse and attractive streetscape.

### *Building Design Guidelines*

- ◆ *Porches:* Residential buildings should incorporate a front porch, covered stoop, or balcony that extends across at least half the front façade. These features help to connect residents to the neighborhood, as well as improve the overall appearance of the development.
- ◆ *Garages:* Alley access and rear-facing garages should be utilized whenever possible. Where utilized, front-facing garages should be set back at least 20 feet from the front façade. Alternatively, detached garages that are located in the rear or side yard and side-facing garages are also appropriate for this type of development.
- ◆ Sidewalks should always be provided on both sides of the street. Sidewalks and/or trails should extend to connect to abutting developments and amenities such as public parks and schools.

### *Open Space and Landscaping*

Generally, medium-density residential developments should strive to retain existing natural features and limit excessive clearing of vegetation.

- ◆ *Open Space:* ideally, new development should incorporate at least 10-20% open space. A portion of the preserved open space requirement should include communal open spaces, such as village greens, and usable open space with amenities such as walking trails, gazebos, tot lots, and dog parks. Additionally, 40% or more of the lots in the development should front on open space.
- ◆ *Buffers:* landscaped buffers should be provided where a medium-density residential development abuts a public road or existing low-density residential development.
- ◆ *Street Trees:* street trees should be provided along both sides of all existing and new streets, with an average spacing of 40 feet, and should consist of a wide variety of native or adapted tree species.

### *Circulation Guidelines*

Reasonable street width, sidewalks, and street trees help make medium-density residential development an attractive and inviting place for both cars and pedestrians.

- ◆ *Recommended street width:* 26-30 feet allows for two lanes of traffic with on-street parking on at least one side of the street
- ◆ Streets should be interconnected, both within the development, and with the surrounding street network.



## High-Density Residential

### Appropriate Locations

Regional Core	Primary Growth Area	Secondary Growth Area	Conservation Area

High-density residential development can provide workers with housing close to employment opportunities; create vibrant communities; and reduce costs associated with expanding infrastructure, such as roads or utilities, that often comes with less dense development. New and infill high-density residential development should be located within or adjacent to established communities that are within reasonable walking distance of commercial centers, schools, and parks.

### Development Objectives

1. Provide an adequate supply of housing in proximity to commercial and employment centers.
2. Allow for a variety of quality and attractive housing types in order to meet the needs of a diverse population.
3. Create vibrant and walkable neighborhoods that enhance neighborhood character.

4. Decrease infrastructure costs associated with development, by concentrating housing where infrastructure is currently located, and limiting the extension of public facilities.

### Appropriate Land Uses

A variety of residential building types can be appropriate for high-density residential development, including:

- ◆ Small lot single-family detached units
- ◆ Twins and duplexes
- ◆ Townhomes
- ◆ Multifamily residential

In many situations, a mix of residential building types is preferable and should be encouraged in order to provide a range of housing choices and to more accurately reflect the original villages and towns of the Region.

### *Dimensional Guidelines*

- ◆ *Maximum Density:* 6 dwelling units per acre to 20 dwelling units per acre
- ◆ *Minimum Lot Size:* will vary based on the overall density of the site and the types of residential buildings proposed
- ◆ *Front Setback:* establish a maximum front setback to ensure homes are close enough to the street to encourage a sense of community. Multifamily buildings may be set back further where courtyards, plazas, or additional landscape area is provided.
- ◆ *Setbacks:* while individual lot setbacks will vary according to the type of development, a larger tract boundary setback should be required where new high-density residential development abuts existing low- or medium-density residential development to maintain privacy.

### *Building Design Guidelines*

- ◆ *Parking:* Alley access and rear-facing garages should be utilized whenever possible. Where utilized, front-facing garages should be set back at least 20 feet from the front façade. Alternatively, detached garages that are located in the rear or side yard and side-facing garages are also appropriate for this type of development. Structured parking can be integrated within apartment buildings and surface parking lots should be located to the rear or side of buildings.

### *Open Space and Landscaping*

New development should strive to retain the existing natural features on a site and limit excessive clearing of vegetation.

- ◆ *Open Space:* ideally, new development should incorporate at least 20-40% open space. A portion of the preserved open space requirement should include communal open spaces, such as village greens, and usable open space with amenities such as walking trails, gazebos, tot lots, and dog parks. Additionally, 40% or more of the lots in the development should front on open space.
- ◆ *Buffers:* landscaped buffers should be provided where a high-density residential development abuts a public road or existing low- or medium-density residential development.

- ◆ *Street Trees:* street trees should be provided along both sides of all existing and new streets, with an average spacing of 40 feet, and should consist of a wide variety of native or adapted tree species.

### *Circulation Guidelines*

- ◆ High-density residential communities should be built along a gridded street network that facilitates connectivity
- ◆ Roads should be narrow and should incorporate sidewalks on both sides of the street and be buffered from the roadway with a vegetated shoulder or on-street parking.
- ◆ Sidewalks should always be provided on both sides of the street. Sidewalks and/or trails should extend to connect to abutting developments and amenities such as public parks and schools.



# Institutional

## Appropriate Locations

Regional Core	Primary Growth Area	Secondary Growth Area	Conservation Area
			*

\* Only neighborhood-scale or historic institutions

Institutional uses should be permitted and integrated with a variety of other uses, including residential and commercial uses.

### Development Objectives

1. Ensure proper development and location of institutional uses that serve the needs of current and future residents and businesses within the Region.

### Appropriate Land Uses:

Examples of institutional uses include:

- ◆ Educational facilities, including colleges, trade schools, day care centers
- ◆ Community facilities, including libraries, post offices, community centers
- ◆ Municipal services, fire stations
- ◆ Religious institutions and cemeteries
- ◆ Medical facilities such as hospitals

### Open Space and Landscaping:

Institutional uses should be designed to blend with the surrounding community.

- ◆ *Buffers:* landscaped buffers should be provided where an institutional development abuts a public road or existing residential development.
- ◆ *Street Trees:* street trees should be provided along both sides of all existing and new streets, with an average spacing of 40 feet, and should consist of a wide variety of native or adapted tree species
- ◆ *Open Space:* within the site, landscaping and tree canopy coverage within parking lots should be maximized, which can also provide stormwater management benefits

### Circulation Guidelines

- ◆ More intense institutional uses, such as hospitals or colleges, should be focused in non-residential or high-density residential areas with direct access to collector or higher classification roads because they commonly generate higher levels of vehicular traffic, including truck traffic
- ◆ Institutions should generally be centrally-located and designed to provide access to different modes, including vehicles, transit users, bicyclists, and pedestrians. ADA accessibility is often of particular importance for medical facilities.
- ◆ Shared parking is encouraged as many institutional uses, such as religious organizations, have peak parking times that differ from other types of uses



## Town Mixed-Use

### Appropriate Locations

Regional Core	Primary Growth Area	Secondary Growth Area	Conservation Area

Town Mixed-Use developments are compact, walkable, and mixed-use developments that typically contain higher densities than Village Mixed-Use development. Town Mixed-Use development is ideal for the redevelopment of suburban commercial areas and older industrial sites in need of revitalization.

### Development Objectives

1. Create lively and sustainable places by providing for a mix of compatible land uses.
2. Incorporate attractive central gathering places and green space.
3. Create pedestrian-friendly areas through good design and building placement.
4. Design parking areas to be unobtrusive, well-landscaped, and to provide convenient parking for multiple tenants or uses.

### Appropriate Land Uses

Town Mixed-Use developments should incorporate a mixture of uses, including:

- ◆ Higher-density residential (townhomes, apartments over non-residential, multifamily)
- ◆ Retail, offices, restaurants
- ◆ Boutique hotels, bed-and-breakfasts, small-scale entertainment uses
- ◆ Institutions, including schools, libraries, and religious facilities
- ◆ Potential accessory uses: structured parking facilities, parks, and central open spaces.

Auto-oriented uses such as drive-through facilities, and large land consumers like self-storage facilities, should be discouraged in order to ensure development is compatible with residential uses and the pedestrian environment of Town Mixed-Use developments.

### *Dimensional Guidelines*

- ◆ *Building Height:* a range of building heights are appropriate in Town Mixed-Use developments, but should typically be 2 to 6 stories.
- ◆ *Setbacks:* an average ground floor setback of around 12 feet from the curblines is appropriate for Town Mixed-Use development; however, a larger ground floor setback of around 20 feet is appropriate along busier streets or where outdoor dining or public gathering space is provided between the street and the building.
- ◆ *Upper-Floor Stepbacks:* the upper floors on taller buildings should incorporate a stepback so that the façade of upper floors is set back further from the street than the lower floors. A stepback of 10-20 feet is appropriate for portions of the building above 40 feet, or 3 stories, so as to maintain a pedestrian-scale along the street.

### *Building Design Guidelines*

- ◆ Accentuated entrances should be incorporated into buildings that are located along all existing and proposed streets.
- ◆ Blank walls should be discouraged along street-facing facades. Minimum window percentages and other architectural treatments should be used to break up the bulk of a wall.
- ◆ Features such as gables, dormers, towers, domes, projecting cornices, parapets, or varied vertical heights should be used to break up roof planes and building ridgelines.
- ◆ Façades should appear to be broken into smaller sections or buildings. A break in the depth of a façade can be created with the use of architectural features such as bay windows, porches, porticos, building extensions, building recesses, balconies, towers, and other treatments.

### *Open Space and Landscaping:*

- ◆ *Buffers:* landscaped buffers should be provided where a Town Mixed-Use development abuts a public road or existing low-density residential development.
- ◆ *Street Trees:* street trees should be provided along both sides of all existing and new streets, with an average spacing of 40 feet, and should consist of a wide variety of native or adapted tree species.

- ◆ *Open Space:* Central gathering spaces, often referred to as plazas, should be provided in all Town Mixed-Use developments, with consideration for the following design guidelines:
  - A minimum of 20% of the site should be set-aside as common open space in the form of a central gathering space or plaza.
  - Plazas can range in size between 2,500 and 40,000 square feet.
  - Plazas should be surrounded by streets or front façades of buildings.
  - A portion, 25% -80%, of the plaza should be landscaped.
  - Plazas should contain amenities such as fountains, public art, shade trees, trash receptacles, benches, or other similar features.

### *Circulation Guidelines*

- ◆ Street design should promote connectivity both within the development and to the existing street network, with blocks that are generally not longer than 800 feet
- ◆ Denser residential developments should incorporate alley access to improve walkability and development design
- ◆ Structured parking facilities are preferable over surface parking lots due to their ability to concentrate parking in a smaller area, reduce the visual impact of parking, and preserve the pedestrian environment.
- ◆ Stand-alone parking garages, when used, should ideally have active uses along the ground floor. Upper levels of parking garages should be screened with design features such as lattices, mock windows, or other architectural treatments.
- ◆ Surface parking lots should be located to the side or rear of buildings and interconnected whenever possible
- ◆ Sidewalks should be provided along all street frontages on both sides of the street.
- ◆ Street furnishings, such as benches, bicycle parking, lighting, trash disposal, should be provided



## Village Mixed-Use

### Appropriate Locations

Regional Core	Primary Growth Area	Secondary Growth Area	Conservation Area

Village Mixed-Use developments contains a variety of residential, commercial, and institutional uses in small traditional-style buildings. Village Mixed-Use developments could be appropriate within or adjacent to an existing village (such as Gilbertsville in Douglass Township and Pottstown Landing in North Coventry Township), as a buffer between commercial and residential uses, or as a way to create a new activity center within an undeveloped portion of the Region’s growth area.

### Development Objectives

1. Provide for a mix of compatible land uses within a walkable network of streets and sidewalks.
2. Create a walkable community through quality building design, appropriately-located parking, and a cohesive streetscape.
3. Incorporate attractive central gathering places and green space.

### Appropriate Land Uses

A Village Mixed-Use development should incorporate a wide variety of uses to mimic the character of traditional villages, including:

- ◆ Single-family detached residential
- ◆ Single-family attached residential (twins and townhomes)
- ◆ Multifamily residential (apartments over commercial)
- ◆ Retail, offices, restaurants
- ◆ Boutique hotels and bed-and-breakfasts
- ◆ Institutions, including schools, libraries, and religious facilities
- ◆ Potential accessory uses: public parking facilities, parks, and central open spaces.

Auto-oriented uses such as drive-through facilities, and large land consumers like self- storage

facilities, should be discouraged in order to ensure development is compatible with residential uses and the pedestrian environment of Village Mixed-Use developments.

New commercial buildings should be close to the street, grouped together, and connected to residential areas through a network of streets and sidewalks. Residential uses of all types should be mixed within the development, rather than segregated by building type.

### *Dimensional Guidelines*

- ◆ *Maximum Density:* 6 dwelling units per acre provides a good balance between walkable mixed-use development and small town character.
- ◆ *Minimum Lot Size:* will vary based on the overall density of the site and the types of residential buildings proposed
- ◆ *Front Setback:* Instead of a typical minimum front setback requirement, Village Mixed-Use development should employ both a minimum and maximum front setback range. This range limits buildings from being too close, as well as too far from the street.
- ◆ *Scale:* No more than four townhome units should be attached side-to-side and apartment buildings should have a maximum façade length of 80 feet

### *Building Design Guidelines*

- ◆ *Small Building Footprint:* non-residential buildings should be limited to a maximum building footprint of 7,000 square feet
- ◆ *Building Orientation and Entrance:* buildings should be located close to the street, with pedestrian entrances facing the sidewalk or internal pathways
- ◆ *Porches:* Residential buildings should incorporate a front porch, covered stoop, or balcony that extends across at least half the front façade. These features help to connect residents to the neighborhood, as well as improve the overall appearance of the development.
- ◆ *Walls:* Attractive and varied walls with adequate window openings should be located along streets, walkways, and parking areas to create a more hospitable walking environment.
- ◆ *Roofs:* Pitched roofs are encouraged, ideally of a 6:12 or 8:12 slope.

- ◆ *Garages:* Alley access and rear-facing garages should be utilized whenever possible. Where utilized, front-facing garages should be set back at least 20 feet from the front façade. Alternatively, detached garages that are located in the rear or side yard and side-facing garages are also appropriate for this type of development. For interior townhome units, front-facing garages should comprise no more than 30% of the total frontage length.

### *Open Space and Landscaping*

Village Mixed-Use developments should have extensive greenery, including:

- ◆ *Buffers:* landscaped buffers should be provided where a Village Mixed-Use development abuts a public road or existing low-density residential development.
- ◆ *Street Trees:* street trees should be provided along both sides of all existing and new streets, with an average spacing of 40 feet, and should consist of a wide variety of native or adapted tree species.
- ◆ *Open Space:* ideally, a minimum of 20% of the development tract should be open space, including central open spaces, such as village greens, plazas, and landscaped medians.

### *Circulation Guidelines*

Village Mixed-Use developments should be laid out to provide efficient vehicular circulation while encouraging walking and biking within the development.

- ◆ Street design should promote connectivity both within the development and to the existing street network with blocks that are generally not longer than 800 feet
- ◆ Denser residential developments should incorporate alley access to improve walkability and development design
- ◆ Surface parking lots should be located to the side or rear of buildings and interconnected whenever possible



## Commercial & Office

### Appropriate Locations

Regional Core	Primary Growth Area	Secondary Growth Area	Conservation Area

Commercial and office development ranges from small, neighborhood-scale retail sites to larger, more diverse community commercial centers that may also include uses such as movie theaters, fast food restaurants, and auto sales and service, but typically do not include a residential component. Generally, commercial and office development should be concentrated in clusters near major intersections, rather than extending linearly along roadways.

### Development Objectives

1. Encourage infill and redevelopment of existing underutilized commercial and office properties.
2. Discourage strip-style commercial development which requires incongruous architectural styles, excessive paved areas, and numerous curb cuts.
3. Encourage access management through techniques such as driveway consolidation and shared parking.

4. Assure suitable design to protect the character and property values of adjacent and nearby neighborhoods.

### Appropriate Land Uses

The commercial and office land use category incorporates a wide variety of uses, including:

- ◆ Professional offices
- ◆ Medical and educational facilities
- ◆ Hotel and entertainment uses
- ◆ Retail, restaurants, cafes, personal services, day care centers

Municipalities may wish to include additional conditions or design standards for drive-through facilities and other uses with potential external impacts from vehicular traffic and noise, such as gas stations, auto sales and repair uses, kennels, etc., especially if these uses are located adjacent to residential.

### *Dimensional Guidelines*

- ◆ *Setbacks:* Commercial and office developments that are intended for use by both pedestrians and drivers should have a reduced setback from the street than a development that is primarily auto-oriented. In either case, however, increased setbacks should be provided between commercial and office developments and residential uses.
- ◆ *Impervious Coverage:* Commercial and office developments in rural areas may want to limit impervious coverage to only 50%, while developments in suburban or more urban settings will likely require higher maximum limits ranging from 70-85%.
- ◆ Surface parking lots should incorporate landscaped island and medians to help direct traffic to central driveways within the development and provide ample space for landscaping and tree cover.
- ◆ Pedestrian circulation can also be improved within parking areas by installing walkways within landscaped strips, delineating pedestrian crossings, and providing traffic calming devices near building entrances

### *Building Design Guidelines*

- ◆ *Façade Articulation:* large-scale commercial buildings should incorporate façade and roofline variations to help break-up the mass of a large building.
- ◆ *Roofs:* pitched roofs are encouraged where commercial and office developments are located in rural or suburban areas
- ◆ *Building Orientation and Entrance:* buildings should be located close to the street, with pedestrian entrances facing the sidewalk or internal pathways

### *Open Space and Landscaping*

- ◆ *Buffers:* landscaped buffers should be provided where a commercial or office development abuts a public road or existing residential development.
- ◆ *Street Trees:* street trees should be provided along both sides of all existing and new streets, with an average spacing of 40 feet, and should consist of a wide variety of native or adapted tree species.
- ◆ *Open Space:* within the site, landscaping and tree canopy coverage within parking lots should be maximized, which can also provide stormwater management benefits

### *Circulation Guidelines*

- ◆ *Maximum Number of Driveways:* Efforts should be made to minimize the number of driveways onto external roadways by ensuring internal parking lots are interconnected and driveway access is shared between adjacent properties



# Industrial & Manufacturing

## Appropriate Locations

Regional Core	Primary Growth Area	Secondary Growth Area	Conservation Area

## Industrial & Manufacturing

Industrial and manufacturing development is an important component of the Region’s economy. When possible, these developments should be situated so as to have access to higher-volume roads or highway interchanges, so as to minimize truck traffic on residential roads. Where freight rail lines or airports exist in a municipality, industrial and manufacturing development should be encouraged near these facilities.

### Development Objectives

1. Protect and enhance the Region’s economic vitality by creating high-quality industrial and manufacturing development.
2. Prioritize economic development in locations where adequate transportation access and necessary utilities are available or planned for.
3. Minimize adverse impacts of vehicular circulation, especially truck traffic, on existing neighborhoods and the surrounding environment.

### Appropriate Land Uses

The industrial and manufacturing land use category incorporates a range of potential land uses. The most appropriate location within the designated Regional Core and Primary Growth Area for each type of industrial and manufacturing land use will depend on many factors including road access, land availability, utility capacity, and natural resources. Examples of industrial and manufacturing land uses include:

- ◆ Industrial, manufacturing, or flex spaces
- ◆ Office, research and development facilities, laboratories
- ◆ Warehouses, storage, and distribution facilities
- ◆ Supportive uses could include: limited retail, cafes, personal services, day care centers, and hotels

### *Dimensional Guidelines*

*Setbacks:* Buildings in industrial or manufacturing districts will typically require larger setbacks than other types of uses. Setbacks should be progressively increased as building footprint size and/or building height increases.

### *Building Design Guidelines*

- ◆ Green building techniques for new projects should be encouraged to reduce the environmental impact of these facilities.
- ◆ Loading areas will vary based on the use of the building, but are often effective when located to the rear of buildings, or between industrial buildings, and screened from adjacent properties

### *Circulation Guidelines*

Well-designed roads and access can help improve safety and traffic flow of an industrial development.

- ◆ Separate entrances and parking areas should be provided for truck and car traffic and can help increase efficiency. Road access should be clear and direct.
- ◆ Parking facilities should generally be located to the side or rear of buildings, set back from property lines and roads, and screened with landscaping.
- ◆ When industrial and manufacturing development is located close to residential or commercial areas, sidewalks and bike paths should be provided to link these developments to the surrounding sidewalk or bicycle network, in addition to on-site pedestrian amenities such as walking trails, landscaped areas with benches, and other similar features.

### *Open Space and Landscaping*

- ◆ *Buffers:* landscaped buffers should be provided where an industrial or manufacturing development abuts a public road or existing residential, village mixed-use, or town mixed-use development.
- ◆ *Street Trees:* street trees should be provided along both sides of all existing and new streets, with an average spacing of 40 feet, and should consist of a wide variety of native or adapted tree species.

- ◆ *Open Space:* within the site, landscaping and tree canopy coverage within parking lots should be maximized, which can also provide stormwater management benefits. Providing pedestrian amenities and gathering spaces for nearby employees within the open space can help make the developments attractive to both workers and potential new businesses.



# Housing

An important factor in the social and economic success of the Pottstown Metropolitan Region is an adequate supply of housing of all types. There is a diverse supply of housing currently available, from rowhomes and small-lot singles, to large-lot single-family dwellings and farmhouses on agricultural tracts. However, as the Region grows, and the population increases, new homes will need to be added to the existing supply to meet the future demand.

Some of the very things that brought people to the Region decades ago: farmland, open space, and small town character, still bring people today. Therefore, new development should be done in a way that complements and reinforces the amenities that the Pottstown Region already provides, so as to help preserve the Region's quality-of-life in light of expected continued development pressure.

## Community Survey Insights

**49%** *When asked what factors most influenced their decision to live in or relocate to the Pottstown Region, “housing price/option” was the most commonly selected option by community survey respondents (49%). Locational factors, such as being close to family or work and the Region’s rural setting were also common selections.*

**37%** *Over a third of survey respondents feel that there are not enough housing options for seniors wishing to stay in their community. Specific challenges with property maintenance costs and the inability to downsize and stay with the Region because of high housing prices were mentioned.*

**46%** *Nearly half of survey respondents feel that there is not enough housing in the Region that is generally affordable for the average person/family. Although housing development is occurring in some municipalities, respondents specifically emphasized the need for “starter homes in the \$200-300k range”.*



*Townhomes have increasingly become a popular housing type for developers in the last several decades.*

## Housing Distribution

### Housing Unit Characteristics

Based on recent U.S. Census data, the Pottstown Region has over 85,000 residents living in approximately 34,000 housing units.<sup>1</sup> Approximately 75% of all housing units are owner-occupied with the remaining 25% of homes being renter-occupied units.

The current distribution of housing units by housing unit type is shown in Map 3 on the following page. Nearly 61% of the Region’s housing units are single-family detached homes on individual lots. The second most common housing type is single-family attached (e.g., townhomes), which makes up approximately 22% of the Region’s housing units. Multifamily (including large apartment complexes, small multifamily buildings like triplexes and quadraplexes, and multifamily condominiums) make up another 13% of the Region’s housing units (see Table 8 and Figure 24 page 64).



*Historically, the Region’s housing was concentrated in Pottstown Borough and in villages, such as Gilbertsville.*

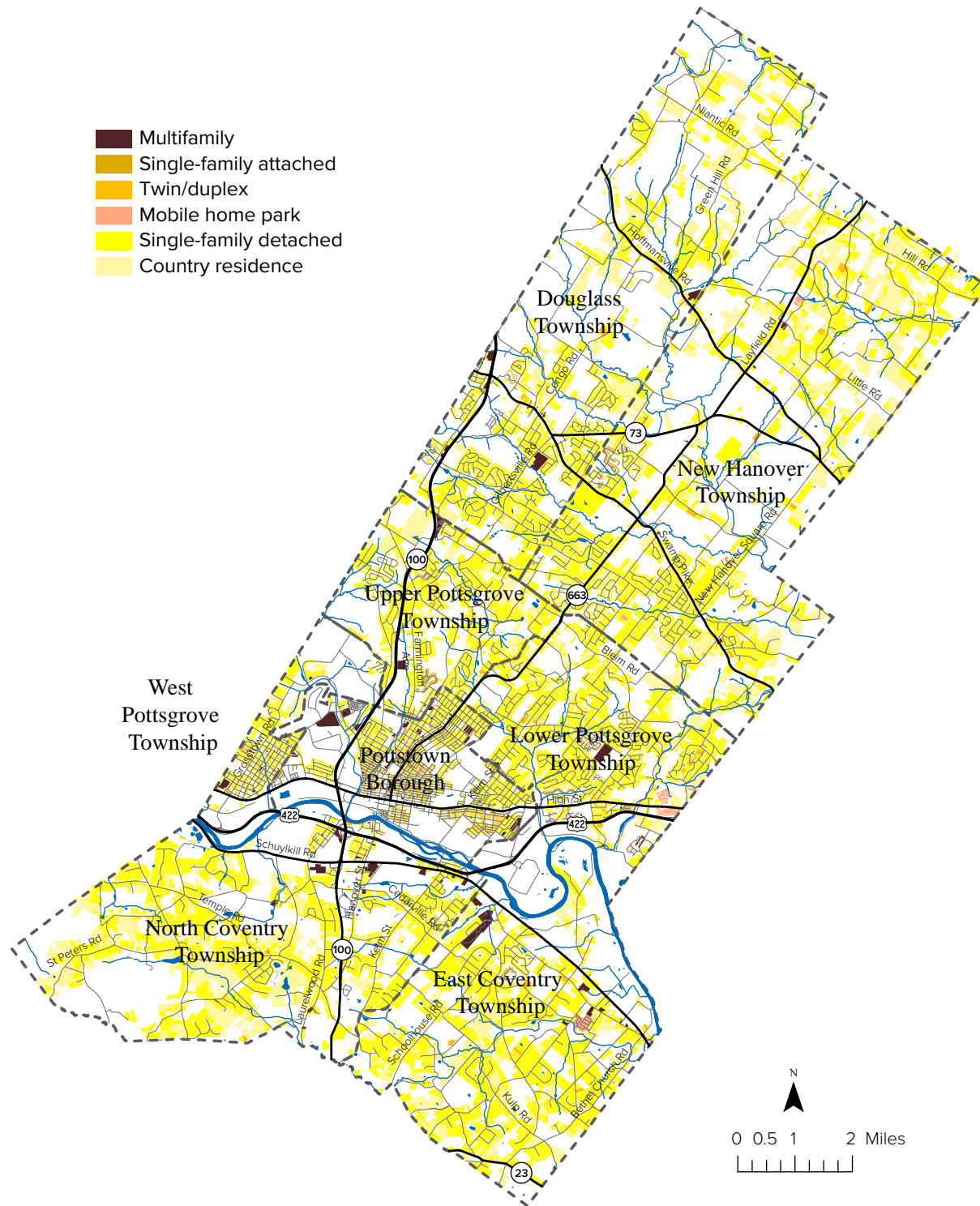


*Garden apartments in North Coventry Township.*

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2018-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

### Map 3. Existing Housing by Type: 2024

Source: Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals; Chester County Board of Assessment



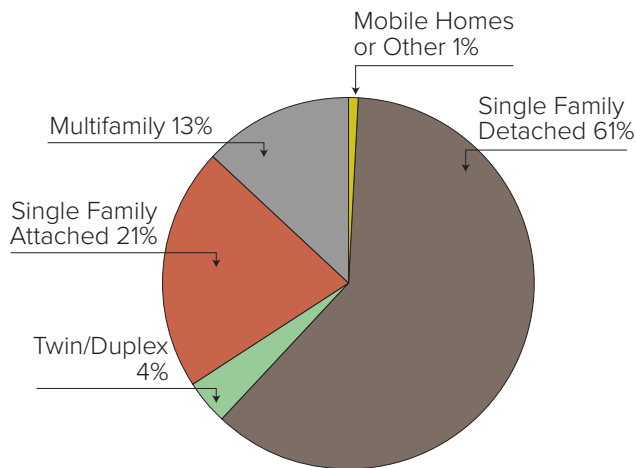
**Table 8. Housing Unit Type by Municipality: 2023**

Source: Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, Chester County Board of Assessment

Municipality	Total Housing Units	Single-Family Detached	Twin/Duplex	Single-Family Attached	Multifamily	Mobile Homes or Other
Douglass Township	3,947	3,263	52	155	466	11
East Coventry Township	2,784	1,864	141	489	231	59
Lower Pottsgrove Township	4,602	2,832	30	1,320	312	108
New Hanover Township	4,841	4,427	0	381	26	7
North Coventry Township	3,446	2,372	14	266	770	24
Pottstown Borough	10,872	3,609	981	3,833	2,414	35
Upper Pottsgrove Township	2,132	1,530	14	561	27	0
West Pottsgrove Township	1,679	980	38	382	279	0
<b>PMRPC Region (Total)</b>	<b>34,303</b>	<b>20,877</b>	<b>1,270</b>	<b>7,387</b>	<b>4,525</b>	<b>244</b>
<b>PMRPC Region (%)</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>60.9%</b>	<b>3.7%</b>	<b>21.5%</b>	<b>13.2%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>

**Figure 24. Regional Housing Units by Type: 2023**

Source: Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, Chester County Board of Assessment



### Mobile Home Parks

The Region currently has a number of mobile home parks. Mobile home parks are specifically required by the MPC to be provided for on 1% of land within a municipality (in this case, within the Region). Currently, 6.0% of the Region’s land is zoned to permit mobile home parks, although some zones only allow mobile home parks as conditional uses or by special exception.

Table 9 on the following page summarizes recent housing development in the Region. During the 10-year time period between 2015 and 2024, a total of 2,360 new housing units of all types were built, or an average of 236 dwelling units per year.

Table 10 on the following page summarizes total housing development by type between 2015 and 2024 for each of the Region’s municipalities. Approximately 55% of the new housing units



A new age-restricted housing development in Upper Pottsgrove Township.

**Table 9. Housing Units Built by Type: 2015-2024**

Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission; Chester County Planning Commission

Year	Single-Family Detached	Single-Family Attached	Multifamily	Mobile Homes	Total Built Each Year
2024	115	156	0	1	272
2023	59	95	310	2	466
2022	135	22	0	1	158
2021	169	119	27	4	319
2020	161	86	0	1	248
2019	159	76	0	5	240
2018	89	14	0	4	107
2017	76	33	43	2	154
2016	94	76	0	1	171
2015	129	95	0	1	225
<b># Housing Units Built 2015-2024</b>	<b>1,186</b>	<b>772</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>2,360</b>
<b>% Housing Units Built 2015-2024</b>	<b>50.3%</b>	<b>32.7%</b>	<b>16.1%</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>--</b>

**Table 10. Housing Units Built by Municipality: 2015-2024**

Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission; Chester County Planning Commission

Municipality	Single-Family Detached	Single-Family Attached	Multifamily	Mobile Homes	Total Built in Each Municipality	% Built in Each Municipality
Douglass Township	209	212	0	0	421	17.8%
East Coventry Township	33	144	0	1	178	7.5%
Lower Pottsgrove Township	247	69	310	21	647	27.4%
New Hanover Township	490	162	0	0	652	27.6%
North Coventry Township	29	0	0	0	29	1.2%
Pottstown Borough	3	89	70	0	162	6.9%
Upper Pottsgrove Township	170	96	0	0	266	11.3%
West Pottsgrove Township	5	0	0	0	5	0.2%
<b>PMRPC Region (Total)</b>	<b>1,186</b>	<b>772</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>2,360</b>	<b>--</b>

constructed in the Region over the last ten years were in Lower Pottsgrove Township (27%) and New Hanover Township (28%). In addition, 82% of the new multifamily units constructed were located in Lower Pottsgrove Township in a single development (Apartments at Sanatoga Greene).

### Fair Share Housing and Build-Out Analysis

Since 1988, the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), has required municipalities

to provide “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” (§604-4). Therefore, the MPC requires municipalities, or in this case, regional planning committees, to zone an adequate portion of land to allow for “fair share” housing types, such as townhomes and multifamily (three or more dwelling units per building) developments.

However, determining the adequate amount of land to zone for “fair share” housing types can be less clear. The Commonwealth courts have determined in cases

involving Warwick Township, Marshall Township, and Upper Southampton Township that zoning 2.9%, 2.7%, and 3.5% of their gross land area, respectively, was adequate for compliance with the fair share

housing requirement. Currently, the Pottstown Region as-a-whole more than meets this requirement with 12.5% of their land area being zoned to allow “fair share” housing types (see Table 11 below).

**Table 11. Regional Fair Share Zoning Analysis**

Source: Municipal zoning ordinances

	Residentially-Zoned Land Area			Nonresidential and Other Zones	Region Totals
	Low-Density Housing Types	Fair Share Housing Types	Total		
Region Total (acres)	37,810	6,198	44,008	5,426	49,434
Percent of Region Total	76.5%	12.5%	89.0%	11.0%	-
Percent of Total Residentially-Zoned Area	85.9%	14.1%	-	-	-

**Fair Share Housing Three-Part Test**

*A 1977 Pennsylvania Supreme Court case, Surrick v. Zoning Board of Upper Providence Township<sup>1</sup>, established a three-part analytical test for determining compliance with the state’s fair share housing obligation:*

**PART 1: Is the municipality a logical area for population growth and development?**

*The Pottstown Region is a logical area for population growth and development based on sustained population growth recently. The Region’s population has grown by nearly 22% over the last 20 years and is forecasted to grow by another 19% by 2050.<sup>2</sup>*

**PART 2: Is the municipality developed or developing?**

*According to analyses of current land use, nearly 7.6% of the Region’s land area is considered undeveloped. Recent development activity and the potential for infill development and adaptive reuse projects suggest that the Region may be considered “developing.” In addition, previous regional comprehensive plans have concluded that the Region lies in the path of growth that is extending outward from the City of Philadelphia westward along the Route 422 corridor.*

**PART 3: Is the amount of land available for multifamily development disproportionately small, in relation to population growth pressure and present level of development?**

*The build-out analysis showed that full build-out of residentially-zoned properties under the current zoning would result in a ratio of fair share housing units to low-density housing units that is the same or better than the current ratio.*

<sup>1</sup>Surrick v. Zoning Board of Upper Providence Township, 776 Pa. 182, 382 A. 2d 105  
<sup>2</sup> Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. Updated 2050 population estimates.

It has been further established by case law that the amount of land actually available for development of fair share housing types is critical in determining compliance with the fair share obligation. For this plan, a build-out analysis was conducted to determine the ratio between fair share housing and low-density housing, assuming full development of all undeveloped and unprotected, residentially-zoned land. This analysis showed that the ratio between fair share housing units and low-density housing units under full build-out would be the same or better than the current ratio (see Table 12 below). This buildout analysis does not quantify the potential for additional housing to be created through redevelopment and infill development in existing developed areas as well. In addition, there are several larger residential projects that are under construction or “in the pipeline” that will also contribute to the housing supply in the Region.

### Forecasted Housing Need

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code requires that all comprehensive plans include a plan to meet the current and future housing needs of the community’s population. Specifically, the housing plan should address the “accommodation of expected housing in different dwelling types and at appropriate densities for households of all income levels.” In general, a community that provides for a range of permitted residential dwelling types and densities in their zoning ordinances creates opportunities for potential residents with a range of household incomes to find housing to meet their needs.

The Pottstown Metropolitan Region is expected to see an increase in population of 15,726 individuals between 2020 and 2050 based on population forecasts from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission.<sup>2</sup> Table 13 to the right shows a calculation for the estimated future 2050 housing demand for the Region based on the forecasted 2050 population and other demographic factors.

**Table 13. Regional Forecasted Housing Need: 2050**

\* Group quarters are defined by the U.S. Census Bureau as “noninstitutional living arrangements for groups not living in conventional housing units or groups living in housing units containing ten or more unrelated people or nine or more people unrelated to the person in charge.” Source: <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/technical-documentation/subject-definitions.html#groupquarters>

<b>2050 Forecasted Population</b>	<b>102,941</b>
<i>Source: DVRPC</i>	
2050 Forecasted Group Quarters Population*	1,097
<i>Based on 2020 value</i>	
<i>Source: U.S. Census Bureau</i>	
2050 Forecasted Household Population	101,844
<i>Forecasted population minus forecasted group quarters population</i>	
2050 Average Household Size	Varies by municipality
<i>Based on 2023 value</i>	
<i>Source: U.S. Census Bureau</i>	
2050 Forecasted Number of Households	39,967
<i>Forecasted household population divided by forecasted average household size</i>	
Estimated Total Number of Housing Units Needed by 2050	42,151
<i>Forecasted number of households plus the number of forecasted vacant units, based on 2023 values</i>	
<i>Source: U.S. Census Bureau</i>	
2024 Total Number of Housing Units	35,521
<i>Source: Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals and Chester County BOA</i>	
Estimated Number of Housing Units Remaining to be Built by 2050	6,630
<i>Total estimated number of housing units minus housing units built as of 2024</i>	

**Table 12. Regional Fair Share Housing Buildout Analysis**

Source: Municipal zoning ordinances, Montgomery County Planning Commission

Housing Type	Existing Housing Units	Percentage of Existing Housing Units	Housing Units at Buildout	Percentage of Total Units at Buildout
Low-Density Housing	22,391	65.3%	29,674	63.5%
Fair Share Housing	11,912	34.7%	17,088	36.5%
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>34,303</b>	-	<b>46,762</b>	-

<sup>2</sup> Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. “Population & Employment Forecasts.” <https://www.dvrpc.org/webmaps/popempforecasts/>, as updated in October 2024

Based on this analysis, it is estimated that 6,630 new housing units would need to be constructed by 2050 to accommodate the forecasted increase in the Region’s population over this time period. To meet this forecasted housing need, an average of 246 new housing units per year would need to be constructed by 2050. This amount of housing construction would represent a 4.2% increase in the rate of average annual housing production, as compared to the amount of housing production observed per year on average over the last ten years.

Factors influencing the amount of housing needed to accommodate a certain population, such as average household size, will continue to fluctuate as the type of housing being developed in the Region and societal factors continue to evolve.

**Adaptive Reuse & Infill Development**

*In the Region’s more built-out areas, new housing may be developed through creative adaptive reuse projects and infill development. These types of projects encourage new uses in existing buildings and/or on already developed sites that are either vacant or underutilized. Adaptive reuse and infill residential projects encourage new residents in areas where there is typically already critical infrastructure already in-place to support them, while in turn encouraging preservation of undeveloped lands and open space in other portions of the Region.*

## Housing Values

In 2023, the median housing value for the Pottstown Region municipalities was between \$172,300 and \$405,800 which is lower than both the Montgomery County-wide and Chester County-wide median housing values (see Table 14 below). The median housing values for 2013 are also shown in Table # and have been adjusted for inflation to 2023 levels for an easier comparison. When adjusted for inflation, median housing values increased the most in North Coventry Township and decreased the most in West Pottsgrove Township over this ten-year period.

**Table 14. Median Housing Value by Municipality: 2013 vs. 2023\***

\* Adjusted for inflation to 2023 levels using the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Consumer Price Index (CPI) Inflation Calculator

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 & 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Municipality	Median Housing Value		% Change 2013*-2023
	2013*	2023	
Douglass	\$343,294	\$361,600	5.3%
East Coventry	\$357,736	\$376,900	5.4%
Lower Pottsgrove	\$269,759	\$285,900	6.0%
New Hanover	\$391,522	\$405,800	3.6%
North Coventry	\$331,104	\$370,000	11.7%
Pottstown	\$180,193	\$172,300	-4.4%
Upper Pottsgrove	\$304,473	\$304,600	0.0%
West Pottsgrove	\$207,619	\$196,200	-5.5%
<b>Montgomery County</b>	<b>\$387,680</b>	<b>\$409,900</b>	<b>5.7%</b>
<b>Chester County</b>	<b>\$430,873</b>	<b>\$461,800</b>	<b>7.2%</b>

## Housing & Transportation Costs

Housing prices and property values can fluctuate over time based on factors such as inflation, market conditions, and development trends; however, a home is typically considered affordable if the household’s total housing costs do not exceed 30% of their total income. Table 15 on the following page shows the percentage of households in each municipality that have housing costs that are greater than 30% of their total income. This data also shows that a greater percentage of renter households within the Region are housing cost-burdened.

**Table 15. Percent of Households with Housing Costs Exceeding 30% of Household Income: 2023**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Municipality	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied
	% of Households with Housing Costs 30% or More of Household Income	
Douglass	17.7%	37.9%
East Coventry	22.6%	32.0%
Lower Pottsgrove	15.7%	56.6%
New Hanover	15.6%	0.0%
North Coventry	25.6%	44.4%
Pottstown	23.2%	59.0%
Upper Pottsgrove	15.3%	23.3%
West Pottsgrove	16.3%	42.0%
<b>Montgomery County</b>	<b>19.9%</b>	<b>48.0%</b>
<b>Chester County</b>	<b>19.2%</b>	<b>47.2%</b>

Incorporating a household’s essential transportation costs into this affordability calculation (see Table 16 on the following page) can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the general affordability of living within a community. For example, transportation costs are typically lower for communities that have access to public transit, communities with a high number of jobs in close proximity, and walkable communities.

*Housing costs typically decrease the further a community is located from urban centers*

*Transportation costs often increase the further a community is located from urban centers*



Rolling Hills Apartments is a 232-unit affordable housing development in Lower Pottsgrove Township.

**Table 16. Average Housing & Transportation Costs as % of Median Household Income: 2019**

Source: Center for Neighborhood Technology

Municipality	Average Housing Costs	Average Transportation Costs	Average Total Costs
	% of Household Income		
Douglass	30%	23%	53%
East Coventry	33%	22%	55%
Lower Pottsgrove	26%	22%	48%
New Hanover	33%	24%	57%
North Coventry	31%	24%	55%
Pottstown	20%	18%	38%
Upper Pottsgrove	32%	24%	56%
West Pottsgrove	22%	21%	43%
<b>Montgomery County</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>53%</b>
<b>Chester County</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>56%</b>



*The Region as-a-whole offers a wide range of housing choices and transportation options.*

## Aging in Place

According to the 2023 American Community Survey, over 48% of Region residents have lived in the same housing unit for more than 15 years.<sup>3</sup> This suggests that much of the Region’s population may wish to continue to stay in their homes, or at least within the Region, as their lifestyles and family needs continue to evolve. However, in the recent community survey 37% of respondents felt that there are not enough housing options for seniors wishing to stay in their community.

Table 17 on the following page summarizes the current inventory of age-restricted housing, which includes two income-restricted developments and two public housing facilities managed by the Montgomery County Housing Authority (MCHA).

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines “aging-in-place” as “the ability to live in one’s home and community safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income, or ability level with a focus on ensuring an individual home is accessible and safe.”<sup>4</sup>

In recent years, planners have begun to also promote a broader “aging-in-community” approach that



*Pottstown Borough has two public housing buildings for low-income seniors.*

3 U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

4 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. “Healthy Places Terminology,” <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/terminology.htm>

**Table 17. Age-Restricted Housing Inventory**

Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission

Municipality	Development Name	# of Units	Housing Type	Year Built	Notes
Douglass	St. Luke’s Knolls	58	SFA	1992	income-restricted
Lower Pottsgrove	Buchert Ridge	78	40 SFA; 38 MF	2004-2020	
Lower Pottsgrove	Sanatoga Ridge	227	177 SFA; 50 MF	1995-2005	
Lower Pottsgrove	Spring Valley Farms	200	SFD	2019-2022	
Pottstown	Jefferson School Apartments	46	MF	2004	income-restricted
Pottstown	Manatawny Village	143	142 SFA; 1 SFD	2007	
Pottstown	Robert P. Smith Towers	80	MF	1968	MCHA - public housing
Pottstown	Sidney Pollack House	100	MF	1980	MCHA - public housing
Upper Pottsgrove	Pottsgrove Hunt	143	SFD	2022	

Housing Types: SFA = single-family attached; SFD = single-family detached; MF = multifamily; MCHA = Montgomery County Housing Authority

focuses on the design of the built environment of the community as-a-whole. This approach recommends offering a broad range of housing options and integrating land uses, so that individuals can remain comfortable and independent within the same community, but not necessarily in the same housing unit, as their physical needs change. In addition to housing options and walkability improvements: transportation access, community programs to reduce social isolation, and locating food stores and pharmacies in proximity to housing can all contribute to the ability of the Region’s residents to comfortably “age-in-community”.

## Locating Future Housing

Based on recent population forecasts and demographic trends, it is estimated that approximately 4,447 housing units would need to be built by 2050. Continued effective growth management can help direct new development to designated growth areas. In addition, regional planning for essential infrastructure such as roads and public utilities is essential to ensure new development does not significantly adversely affect current residents or the environment.

Focusing development will also help advance the plan objectives to encourage reinvestment in existing older neighborhoods and villages, particularly in the Borough of Pottstown, as well as to protect the Region’s rural areas by limiting the amount of new development in these areas.

## Low-Density Residential

In order to continue to decrease development pressure and potential conflicts between homes and active farms, residential development in the Conservation Areas of the Region should be limited to predominately low-density residential zoning. The Conservation Areas were identified based on geological limitations for development, farmland preservation efforts, infrastructure constraints, and natural resource protection. Maintaining low-density residential zoning in these areas will help to protect and conserve important environmental and natural resources, and limit the demand for extensions of certain utility infrastructure.

While the Future Land Use Plan does not set specific density limitations, low-density residential can range from a high of 1 dwelling unit per 2 acres to a low density of 1 dwelling unit per 10 acres for areas with significant farming activity, and depending on the amount of environmental constraints, or other significant natural resources, in the area.

In addition to density limitations, municipalities are encouraged to implement other conservation tools such as: conservation subdivision design, farmland zoning, environmental performance zoning and transfer of development rights. Also, to reinforce these land use tools for controlling development, public sewer and water extensions are discouraged within the Conservation Areas.



*Low-Density Residential*



*See pages 46-47 in the Future Land Use Chapter for more suggested design guidelines for Low-Density Residential development.*

### Medium-Density Residential

Medium-density housing make up a large percentage of the Region’s existing suburban housing and typically ranges from 1 to 5 dwelling units per acre. Homes in medium-density residential developments will typically consist of single-family detached units on small lots, although townhomes and multi-family may be appropriate in certain locations as well.

To preserve the rural countryside as much as possible, infill in the Borough of Pottstown and the Region’s older suburbs is strongly encouraged, and new large-scale development of medium-density residential development should be directed to the designated

growth areas. These growth areas are situated near existing supportive infrastructure, such as the road network, community facilities, and retail centers. In addition, the growth areas take into account existing and planned sewer service areas.

Medium-density development that is well-designed and creates a sense of place is encouraged. Such developments may include central greens, landscaped cul-de-sacs, sidewalks, and other pedestrian-oriented design features.



*Medium-Density Residential*



*See pages 48-49 in the Future Land Use Chapter for more suggested design guidelines for Medium-Density Residential development.*

## High-Density Residential

High-density residential (typically developments with 6 dwelling units per acre or greater) is most appropriate for the Region's Core and Primary Growth Areas. High-density residential can consist of a range of housing types, including small-lot single-family detached units, twins, townhomes, and multi-family. Most of the Region's existing high-density housing is located in the Borough of Pottstown and neighboring municipalities. With the necessary infrastructure already in-place, the Borough, along with the Region's designated growth areas are best suited to accommodate new high-density infill housing or mixed-use projects on

scattered, underutilized sites. In particular, adaptive reuse of former industrial buildings or infill residential development on large retail or office properties may also be appropriate.

New high-density residential should be physically- and architecturally-compatible with existing high-density housing. Design criteria for high-density residential developments should be considered, including sidewalks, interconnected streets, and central greens, which work in combination to help create livable communities.



*High-Density Residential*



*See pages 50-51 in the Future Land Use Chapter for more suggested design guidelines for High-Density Residential development.*

## Conclusion

The housing stock of the Region is a well-balanced mixture of styles and densities in a variety of neighborhood settings. This Plan will help to ensure that this balance is maintained for the foreseeable future by providing for a wide variety of housing types at densities sufficient to meet the needs of the future forecasted population. This plan also ensures that the Region will continue to meet its Pennsylvania “fair share” housing requirements.

## Recommendations

**RECOMMENDATION 1.** Provide sufficient housing opportunities to meet the housing needs of the forecasted population growth over the next 20 years based on population forecasts from DVRPC while continuing to provide for a variety of housing types and densities.

### Implementation Strategies:

- 1a. Concentrate new housing in designated growth areas where infrastructure is currently located.
- 1b. Encourage the conservation of existing housing units and maintain the overall scale and character of the township’s established residential neighborhoods while allowing for context-sensitive infill development of housing in areas with established infrastructure needed to support additional development.
- 1c. Maintain municipal zoning for “fair share” housing types and mobile homes parks that meet the residential “fair share” requirements for the Region as-a-whole, as agreed upon in “The Pottstown Metropolitan Region Intergovernmental Cooperative Implementation Agreement for Regional Planning” (see Table 18 and Table 19 to the right).
- 1d. Maintain and promote revitalization of existing residential neighborhoods and villages.
- 1e. Encourage pedestrian-oriented, residential neighborhoods that foster a sense of community.
- 1f. Accommodate housing opportunities for a range of income levels and age groups.
- 1g. Ensure any future residential development on large tracts of 5 acres or more incorporates environmental protections and utilizes land efficiently to maximize open space preservation. *See pages 46-47 of the Future Land Use chapter for more information.*

**Table 18 . Municipal Commitments for Residential Fair Share**

Source: The Pottstown Metropolitan Region Intergovernmental Cooperative Implementation Agreement for Regional Planning

Municipality	Minimum Acreage
Douglass Township	156
East Coventry Township	500
Lower Pottsgrove Township	339
New Hanover Township	750
North Coventry Township	165
Pottstown Borough	550
Upper Pottsgrove Township	151
West Pottsgrove Township	74
<b>Total Acreage</b>	<b>2,685 (5% of the Region)</b>

**Table 19 . Municipal Commitments for Mobile Home Parks**

Source: The Pottstown Metropolitan Region Intergovernmental Cooperative Implementation Agreement for Regional Planning

Municipality	Use to be Permitted
East Coventry Township	Mobile Home Parks
Lower Pottsgrove Township	Mobile Home Parks
New Hanover Township	Mobile Home Parks
Upper Pottsgrove Township	Mobile Home Parks





# Economic Development

This chapter will analyze the status and character of the Pottstown Metropolitan Region's economy, and recommend strategies for economic development. Recognizing the critical role the economy plays in residents' quality-of-life, this economic development plan focuses on ways to build economic diversity and encourage revitalization within the context of regional growth management goals. In particular, revitalizing existing commercial areas, supporting the Region's industrial sector, and fostering recreational and agri-tourism are explored in this chapter.

## Commercial Land Use Distribution

Map 4 on the following page shows the current distribution of commercial land uses in the Pottstown Region.

### Retail and Mixed-Use

Retail properties make up 2.5% of the Region’s land area. Large retail properties include fourteen shopping centers, totaling nearly 3 million square feet of gross floor area, that are concentrated along Route 100 (see Table 20 on page 80).

Mixed-use properties make up less than 1% of the Region’s land area. Mixed-use properties are scattered throughout the Region with the most in Pottstown Borough.

### Office and Industrial

Office properties make up only 0.2% of the Region’s land area. Industrial properties make up another 2.4% of the Region’s land area. According to county records, there are four business parks (defined as having at least 75,000 square feet of office, industrial, or flex space that is branded as a single entity) in the Region (see Table 21 below). Additional office and industrial properties are concentrated along the Schuylkill River, in the western section of Pottstown Borough, and in Gilbertsville.

### Utilities

Utilities, including power sub-stations, sewage treatment plants, the Pottstown Municipal Airport, and lands associated with the Limerick Nuclear Generating Plant, make up 1.3% of the Region’s total land area.

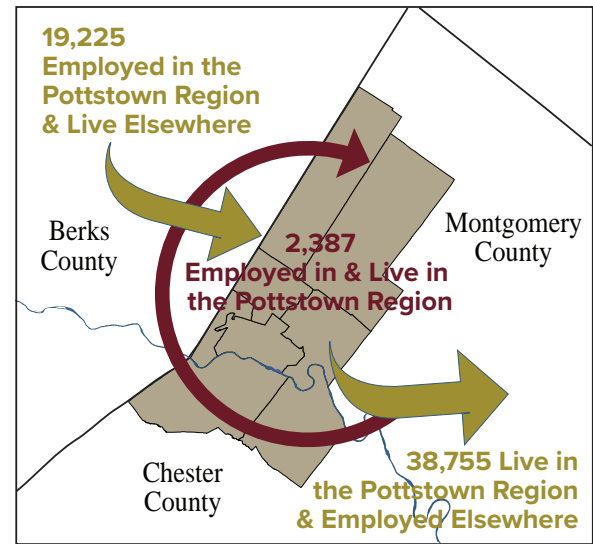
## Employment

The Pottstown Memorial Medical Center is the Region’s largest single employer (2015 data). Other large employers are public school districts, the Hill School, the Montgomery County Community College, and large retailers.

Overall, the Region is a net exporter of jobs, meaning more residents commute outside of the Region for work, than non-residents who commute into the Region for work.<sup>1</sup> In 2022, 38,755 employed residents commuted out of the Region for work while only 2,387 (5.8% of employed residents) both lived in and were employed within the Region. On the other hand, 19,225 people commuted from outside of the Region to jobs inside of the Region, which represents 89% of the people employed in the Region when analyzing only primary jobs (see Figure 25 below).

Figure 25. Inflow/Outflow Job Counts: 2022

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap, 2022



<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. "OnTheMap." 2022 Primary Jobs. <https://onthemap.census.gov/>

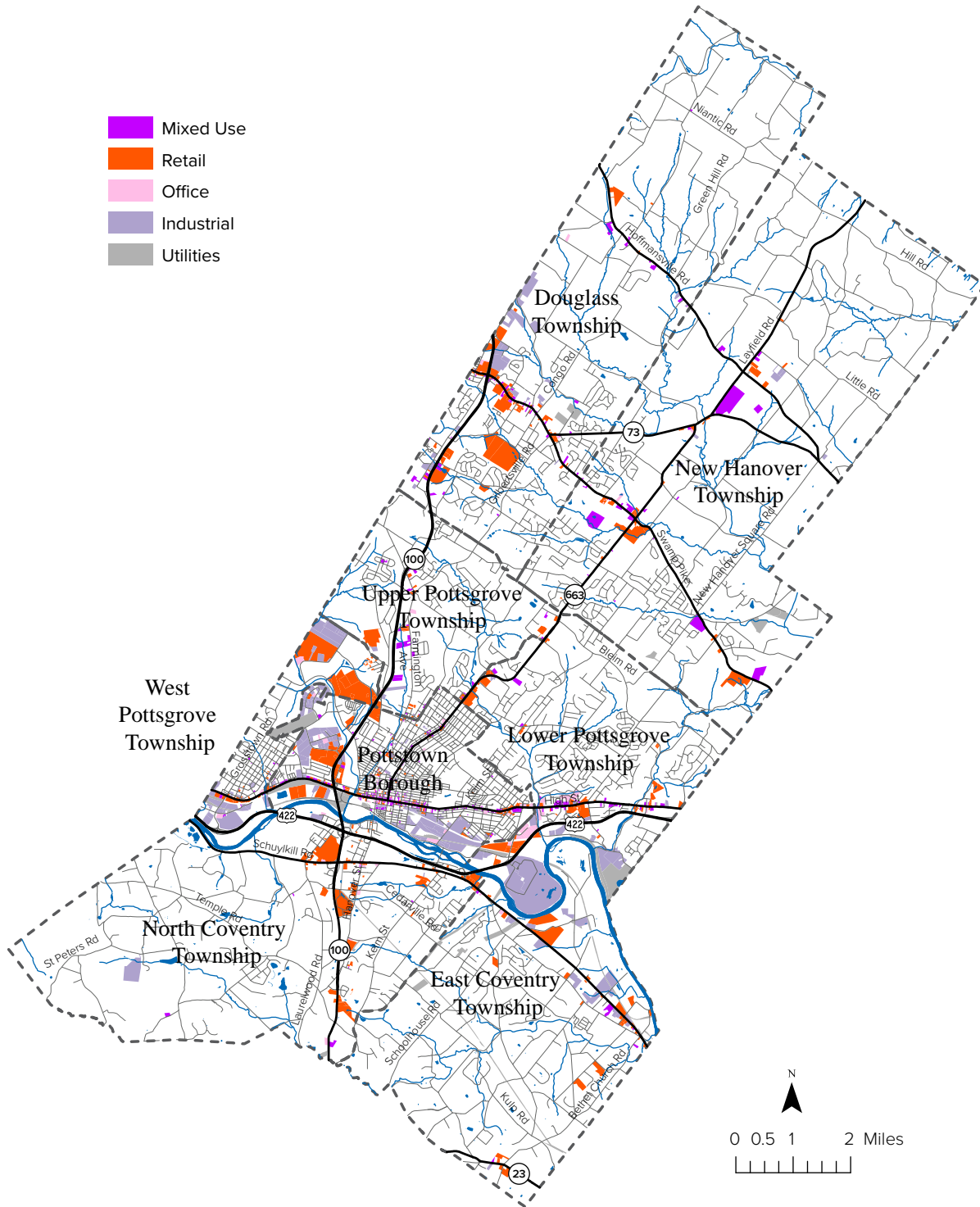
Table 20. Pottstown Region Business Parks (listed in order of gross floor area)

Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission

Business Park	Location	Land Area (acres)	Gross Building Area (sq. ft.)	
Pottstown Industrial Complex	Industrial Highway & S. Keim St.	Pottstown	139	1,479,416
TriCounty Business Campus	Shoemaker Rd. & Robinson St.	Pottstown	157	897,439
Ironstone Corporate Center	Industrial Dr. & Holly Rd.	Douglass	66	443,566
Pottstown Airport Business Campus	Circle of Progress Dr.	Pottstown	61	306,910

### Map 4. Commercial Land Use Distribution

Source: Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, Chester County Board of Assessment



**Table 21. Pottstown Region Shopping Centers (listed in order of gross floor area)**

Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission, Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, Google Maps

Shopping Center	Location		Major Tenants & Anchors	Gross Floor Area (sq. ft.)	Year Built
Upland Square	Upland Square Dr. & Route 100	West Pottsgrove	GIANT, Target, Best Buy, L.A. Fitness, AMC Theater, T.J. Maxx, Famous Footwear, Petco, Visionworks	736,042	2009
The Shoppes at Coventry (f.k.a. Coventry Mall)	Route 100 & Route 724	North Coventry	Kohl's, Boscov's, American Heritage Credit Union, Books-A-Million, Italian Restaurant, Gabe's	510,312	1967
Pottstown Center	Route 100 & Shoemaker Rd.	Pottstown	Walmart, ALDI, Michaels, Dollar Tree, UrgentVet, KeyBank, Red Lobster	289,284	1995
Town Square Plaza	Route 100 & W. Cedarville Rd.	North Coventry	Lowe's, PetSmart, Long Horn Steakhouse, Park Lane Hobbies, Nail Salon, Chinese Restaurant	215,048	2004
Suburbia Shopping Center	Route 100 & Glocker Way	North Coventry	GIANT, Great Clips, Dollar Tree, KeyBank, Pizza Restaurant, Starbucks, Urgent Care	161,035	2003
Home Depot	Armand Hammer Blvd. & Industrial Hwy.	Lower Pottsgrove	Home Depot, ALDI	154,143	1999
Pottstown Plaza	N. State St. & Wilson St.	Pottstown	Tractor Supply Co., Grocery Outlet, Goodwill, Applebee's, Fulton Bank	153,034	1988
Sanatoga Village Center	E. High St. & S. Pleasantview Rd.	Lower Pottsgrove	Landis Supermarket, Liberty Ministries Thrift	138,716	1973
North End Shopping Center	N. Charlotte St. & Mervine St.	Lower Pottsgrove	Redner's Warehouse Markets, Dollar General, Dry Cleaner, Physical Therapy	100,590	1962
Former Zern's Farmer's Market	E. Philadelphia Ave. & Bartman Ave.	Douglass	Vacant	100,000	1922
Douglass Town Center	Holly Rd. & Route 100	Douglass	GIANT, Hair Cuttery, GameStop, AT&T Store, Starbucks, Diamond Credit Union	97,091	2010
Gilbertsville Shopping Center	E. Philadelphia Ave. & Rhodes Ave.	Douglass	Weis Markets, Urgent Care, Pizza Restaurant, KeyBank, Anytime Fitness	85,804	1976
Boyertown Shopping Center (f.k.a. Town Plaza)	E. Philadelphia Ave. & Montgomery Ave.	Douglass	Big Lots, Tractor Supply Co., Verizon, Pizza Restaurant, Dunkin', Dollar Tree	85,729	1961
Planet Fitness Center	N. Charlotte St. & Kauffman Rd.	Lower Pottsgrove	Planet Fitness, CubeSmart Self Storage	81,334	1971



The Upland Square Shopping Center in West Pottsgrove Township is the largest of the Region's fourteen shopping centers.



Commercial storefronts mixed with apartments and offices on a side street in Pottstown Borough.

### Community Survey Insights

**30%** When asked what kind of initiatives they see as a priority for the Pottstown Region over the next 20 years, over 30% of respondents to the community survey selected “expand or attract retail/commercial businesses to the Region” as one of their top three selections. Additionally, 23% of respondents selected “expand employment and/or job training opportunities” as a priority.

**66%** Specific to economic development priorities, 66% of survey respondents felt that “retaining and/or improving existing businesses” is a high priority. Revitalization of Pottstown Borough’s High Street area was seen as the second-highest priority.

**70%** Regarding the desire for new types of commercial land uses, 70% of respondents feel that the Region needs more cultural facilities and entertainment uses (e.g., museum, movie theater, bowling). A majority of respondents also felt that the Region needs more coffee shops/bakeries/ice cream parlors and restaurants/taverns.

The most common location where people who live in the Region commuted to for work outside of the Region was the City of Philadelphia (5.7% or 2,225 people). Other common destinations for employment include King of Prussia and Phoenixville.

forecasts an increase of 4,079 jobs (or approximately 12.5%) between 2020 and 2050 (see Figure 26 below). This projected growth for the Region is slightly less than the percentage forecasted for Chester County as-a-whole and significantly higher than the percentage forecasted for Montgomery County as-a-whole.

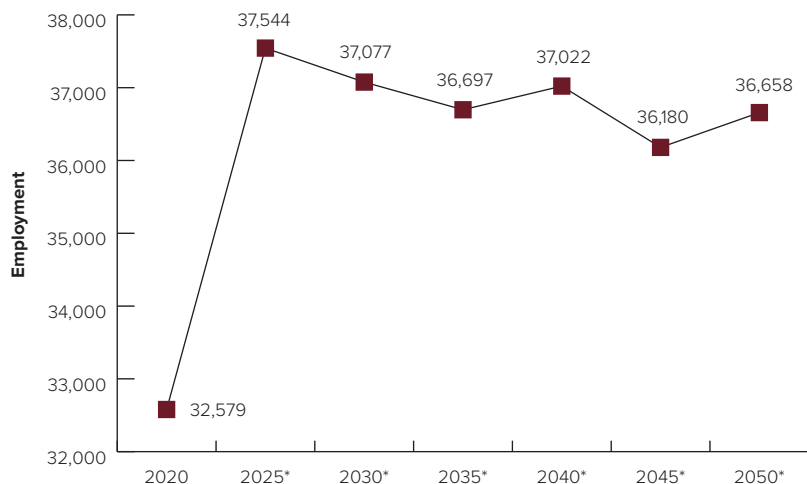
### Employment Forecasts

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) tracks and forecasts employment for municipalities and counties within the region. DVRPC

The 2020 actual employment figure was artificially low due to high employment during the early stages of the Covid pandemic; however, the Greater Philadelphia Region’s employment has since rebounded showing

Figure 26. PMRPC Region Forecasted Employment: 2020-2050

Source: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (Years with asterisks (\*) are forecasted values)





Office properties make up a small portion of the land area of the Region as-a-whole. Offices are more typically found as part of mixed-use developments (such as this one in Sunnybrook Village) and conversions of older homes.



Much of the Region's industrial land use is located in Pottstown Borough and Lower Pottsgrove Township.

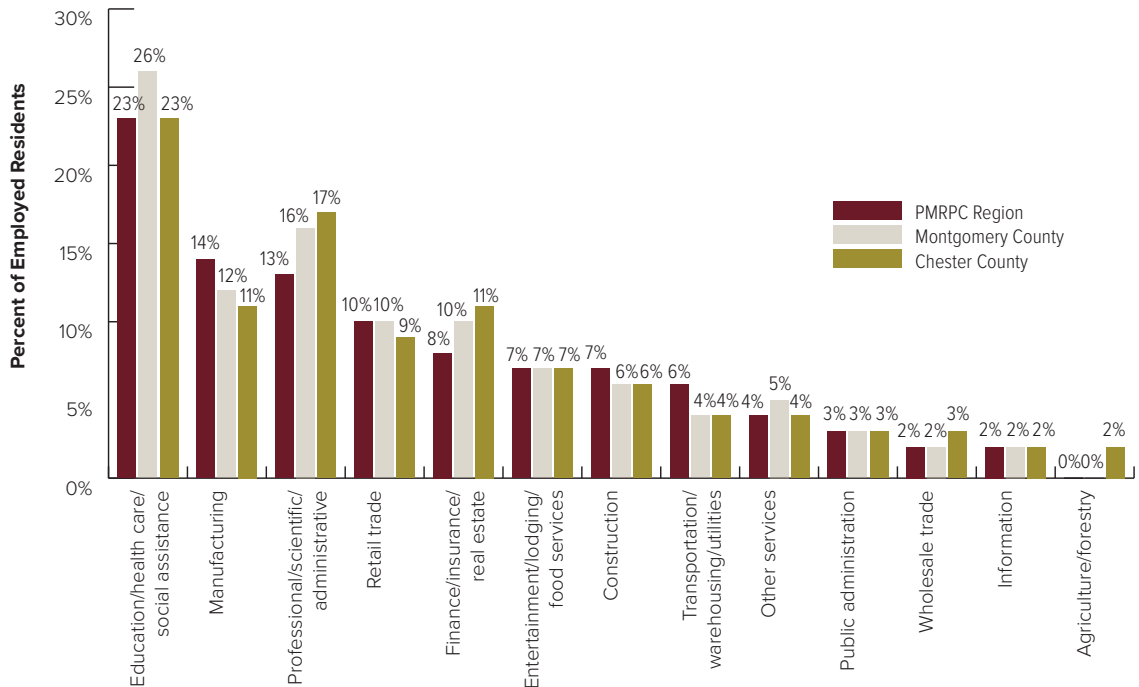
a striking increase in employment to 2025. After 2025, total employment in the Pottstown Region is forecasted to decrease slightly and remain flat, partially due to a forecasted decrease in the working age population as the population overall ages and birth rates remain low.

### Job Industry & Occupation

The American Community Survey tracks the job occupation and job industry of residents who are employed. This data for the Pottstown Region as-a-whole, as compared to Montgomery County and Chester County, is shown in Figure 27 below and Figure 28 on the following page. Pottstown Region residents are commonly employed in education/health care/social assistance, manufacturing, and professional/scientific/administrative industries; where they typically hold management/business and service occupations.

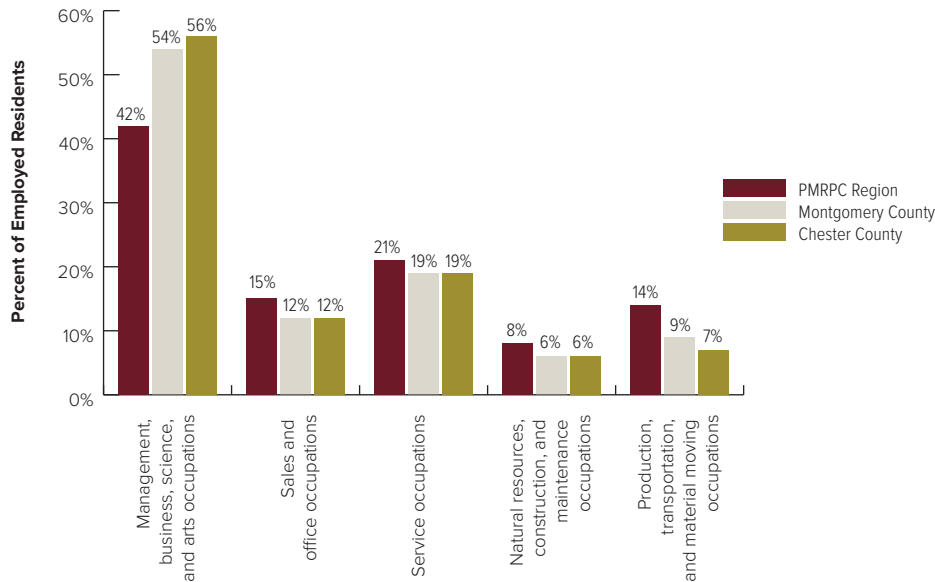
Figure 27. Pottstown Region Resident Job Industry: 2023

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



**Figure 28. Pottstown Region Resident Job Occupations: 2023**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



## Existing Economic Characteristics

In 2023, the median household income for the municipalities within the Pottstown Region ranged from \$56,174 to \$144,151 with the median household income for 5 of the 8 municipalities being lower than the median for their respective county overall. In 2023, the overall poverty rate (the percentage of persons whose income in the past 12 months is below the poverty level) was highest in Pottstown Borough and the unemployment rate was highest in Upper Pottsgrove Township (see Table 22 below).





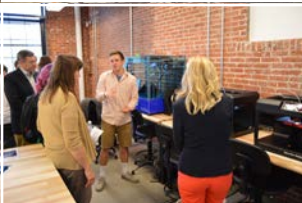





Large retailers are a major employer within the Pottstown Region.

**Table 22. Economic Characteristics: 2023**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community

	Median Household Income	Per Capita Income	Poverty Rate	Unemployment Rate
Douglass Township	\$125,688	\$49,317	2.7%	3.8%
East Coventry Township	\$117,688	\$55,517	5.0%	8.8%
Lower Pottsgrove Township	\$95,448	\$41,177	12.2%	4.7%
New Hanover Township	\$144,151	\$59,141	5.3%	4.8%
North Coventry Township	\$95,686	\$55,483	3.9%	3.1%
Pottstown Borough	\$56,174	\$30,176	19.7%	6.1%
Upper Pottsgrove Township	\$119,969	\$51,253	7.5%	9.1%
West Pottsgrove Township	\$77,305	\$37,943	7.8%	3.9%
<b>Montgomery County</b>	<b>\$111,521</b>	<b>\$60,507</b>	<b>6.5%</b>	<b>4.4%</b>
<b>Chester County</b>	<b>\$123,041</b>	<b>\$63,089</b>	<b>5.9%</b>	<b>3.8%</b>

## Trends in Commercial Land Use & Development

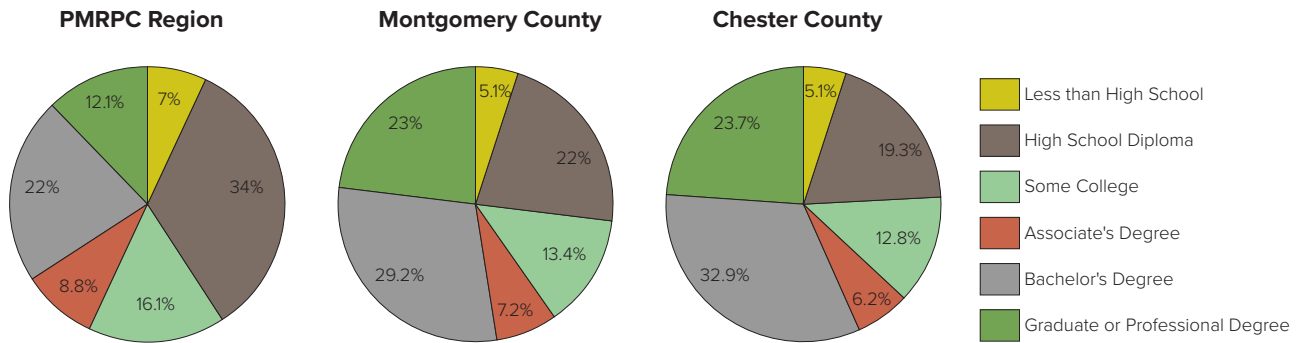
	<p><b>Flexible Commercial &amp; Office Spaces</b></p> <p>Continued technological advances and changes in working styles have created increased opportunities for working from home or working remotely. Coworking is a term for an office space configuration where amenities and resources are shared across several tenants, which can reduce the operating costs for start-ups, entrepreneurs, freelancers, and others.</p>
	<p><b>Small-Scale Industrial &amp; Manufacturing</b></p> <p>Modern industrial and manufacturing techniques can allow for new types of high-tech industrial activities to be accommodated in smaller spaces, even in retrofitted existing industrial buildings. The resurgence in interest in craft alcoholic beverages is evident in the Pottstown Region. Small-scale breweries and distilleries often incorporate tasting rooms that attract visitors and add vibrancy to commercial areas.</p>
	<p><b>Tech Incubators &amp; Life Sciences Research</b></p> <p>Tech incubators provide office space and communal amenities, along with labs and other facilities, to encourage high-tech research and development. Vacant office spaces can often be easily converted to lab space or other facilities to advance life sciences and other types of research.</p>
	<p><b>Evolving Warehouse Needs</b></p> <p>The design and physical construction of a warehouse depends on the type of function it serves, including: logistics and distribution/fulfillment centers, automated high-cube or high-bay warehousing, and e-commerce microfulfillment centers. Demand for warehousing and distribution facilities is strong in the region, as the increase in e-commerce and expectations of immediate delivery capacity has driven a recent boom in warehouse needs.</p>
	<p><b>Walkable Commercial &amp; Office</b></p> <p>A shift in workplace culture away from isolated suburban office park campuses and towards mixed-use and walkable office is a noticeable trend. In general, office environments that offer substantial outdoor space, walking opportunities, and access to public transit and nearby quality housing are likely to remain competitive.</p>
	<p><b>Mixed-Use Town Center</b></p> <p>Designing shopping centers around “main streets” or “village squares” is a growing trend. In general, by recreating the scale and mix of commercial uses found in traditional town centers, modern shopping centers can create more of a focus on pedestrian accessibility and create a unique shopping and dining experience.</p>
	<p><b>Placemaking &amp; Streetscaping</b></p> <p>Branding of individual commercial areas through cohesive streetscape design and street pole banners, as well as programming to draw visitors to the area, can also contribute to placemaking. Distinctive physical accents within the streetscape, such as landscaping and street furniture beautify the space and encourage pedestrian activity.</p>
	<p><b>Regional Recreation Centers</b></p> <p>According to a 2017 Sports Facility Feasibility Study conducted by the Valley Forge Tourism &amp; Convention Board, sports tourism is a growing segment of the tourism industry and there is additional unmet demand for regional recreation facilities within Montgomery County.</p>

## Educational Attainment

In 2023, 34.1% of the Region’s population had a Bachelor’s degree or higher, a 3.4% increase from 2018 but still much lower than either county. Overall, 7.0% of the Region’s population aged 25 and over does not have a high school diploma, a 1.3% decrease from 2018 but still slightly higher than either county (see Figure 29 below).

Figure 29. Educational Attainment of Resident Workers: 2023

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates



## Economic Assets

### Available Land

Nearly 8% of the region’s total land area, approximately 3,700 acres, is currently classified as “undeveloped” according to county property records. This represents a 5.5% decrease from 2015; however, that is partially due to open space preservation of lands classified as “undeveloped” in 2015. While further preservation of some portion of this land may be possible, some large undeveloped parcels are located within designated growth areas and may still be suitable for development.

In addition, vacant or underutilized commercial or industrial properties within the Region also present important economic development opportunities. These properties are often located within growth areas, along major roads, and where essential infrastructure exists, therefore encouraging redevelopment or infill development on these properties is appropriate.



Available land will continue to attract development in the Pottstown Region.

## Access to Rail, Air Transport, and Major Highways

The Pottstown Region has an excellent transportation network, including an active freight rail line, proximity to two airports, and several major roadways. A quality and varied transportation network is important for the Region's economic development in terms of bringing people into the Region and facilitating the movement of goods into and out of the Region.

The potential restoration of passenger rail service to Pottstown Borough presents important potential economic development benefits that should be explored by the Region's municipalities through additional planning and ordinance updates. See the *Transportation Chapter* for more information.

## A Growing Regional Population

The Pottstown Region has been and is forecasted to continue to grow in both its resident population and employment sector. With proximity to the City of Philadelphia to the east, the Pottstown Metropolitan Region is well-connected to this urban market as well as many other suburban employment areas, such as King of Prussia, Phoenixville, Reading, and Allentown.

## Existing Economic Organizations and Education Institutions

Numerous organizations whose missions help support economic development are active in the Pottstown Region, such as the Tri-County Area Chamber of Commerce and Pottstown Area Economic Development (PAED). These organizations are directly invested in revitalization and attraction of new business.

The Pottstown Region is also home to the Montgomery County Community College (MCCC) – Pottstown Campus, the Hill School, and several public school districts serving the Region's eight municipalities. In addition to the employment opportunities provided by these institutions, these schools can aid in the Region's economic development by attracting new students, and their families, to the area and providing job training opportunities.

## Historic, Cultural, and Recreation Resources

The Pottstown Region is the setting for a growing number of both cultural and historic resources as well as abundant recreational opportunities.



*There is an opportunity to encourage small retail or service shops within large historic properties.*

**Historic:** The Region offers great opportunities for visitors to learn more about its history through programming and events, including tours of Frick's Locks Village, the Pottstown Annual Holiday House Tour, and the annual Colonial May Fair and Candlelight events at the Pottsgrove Manor.

**Arts and Culture:** The Region boasts a growing arts and culture sector with destinations such as Steel River Playhouse, the Hill School Center for the Arts, the Pottstown Children's Discovery Center, ArtFusion 19464 (a non-profit community art center), and multiple art galleries.



*Sunnybrook Ballroom in Lower Pottsgrove Township*



The Region's several golf courses, including the Bella Vista Golf Course in New Hanover Township, also offer recreational and employment opportunities.

**Recreation:** Recreation opportunities in the Region are plentiful. With more than 2,800 acres of public open space in the Region, an additional nearly 2,000 acres of private open space, and the Schuylkill River Trail – there are ample opportunities for both passive and active recreation. Annual events in the Region's many parks include the Coventry Woods Festival in North Coventry, the Pottstown Rumble volleyball tournament, and the many programs offered at Upper Pottsgrove's Althouse Arboretum, among others.

## Strategic Economic Opportunity Sites

Several strategic sites and corridors were identified in the 2012 *Marketing the Pottstown Region* report as being ideal for redevelopment and economic investment. Each of the strategic opportunity sites is located within the Region's proposed primary or secondary growth areas. Additional vacant or underutilized properties within the Region's growth areas not included on this list may also be appropriate for development. The following is a summary of the eight strategic opportunity sites identified in the 2012 report as they were listed in the 2015 comprehensive plan, with implementation updates. In addition, two new strategic locations were added for this comprehensive plan update. All of the strategic economic opportunity sites are also shown in Map 5 on the following page.

### SITE 1. Pottstown Municipal Airport and Circle of Progress Boulevard (Pottstown Borough)

The Pottstown Municipal Airport already provides limited corporate, charter, and recreational flight services and also provides repair services through the private operations of Pasquale Aviation. The airport is located adjacent to Circle of Progress Boulevard, an area of land zoned to allow a variety of office and light industrial activity. The industrial park still contains several vacant parcels, the future development of which should capitalize on the proximity to the municipal airport. The 2012 report recommends the light aircraft industry as an ideal niche opportunity given the location and land availability in the area; however, this plan also recommends considering permitting other supportive commercial uses to enhance the recreational aviation experience at the airport.

#### Implementation Updates Since 2015 Comprehensive Plan:

- ◆ All surrounding municipalities should ensure consistent, up-to-date airport hazard area zoning
- ◆ Montgomery County adopted an Aviation Plan in 2024
- ◆ The borough is pursuing funding to construct additional hangar spaces

### SITE 2. "River Bend" Industrial Development (Pottstown Borough, Lower Pottsgrove Township)

The area of land located along the Schuylkill River in the east of Pottstown Borough and Lower Pottsgrove Township has been home to significant industrial development in the past. The opportunities identified for reuse of these already development sites include: alternative energy development, creation of a Research and Development campus, assemblage of consumer-oriented products, or a multi-tenant office center. The report specifies that any new industrial or office activity that is developed in this area should be restricted to the previously developed areas and preserve the riparian buffer that exists along portions of the river.

#### Implementation Updates Since 2015 Comprehensive Plan:

- ◆ Industrial development interest in "Oxy" site in Lower Pottsgrove – trail conservation area would be required with any new development
- ◆ Construction of the last remaining segment of the Schuylkill River Trail in Lower Pottsgrove is expected to be complete in 2026
- ◆ Keim Street Gateway Plan and zoning adopted by Pottstown Borough to establish a vision and reinvestment strategy for the Keim Street Gateway



area. The plan explores ways to support existing industrial uses, while adding compatible new uses and integrating circulation improvements and increased greening.

- ◆ Keim Street bridge reconstruction is expected to be complete by the end of 2027 and will reconnect Pottstown Borough and North Coventry Township

**SITE 3. Philadelphia Avenue in Douglass Township (Douglass Township)**

The area in Douglass Township along Philadelphia Avenue between Gilbertsville Road and Route 100 has the potential to be redeveloped as a linear business park, providing additional opportunities for retail, government services, medical offices, and full and limited restaurants. Incorporating design standards, streetscape, and signage improvements could significantly enhance this area which currently contains a mix of both residential and non-residential uses and several rundown properties.

**Implementation Updates Since 2015 Comprehensive Plan:**

- ◆ Township has met with PennDOT on options for traffic calming, streetscaping
- ◆ Township has explored options to relocate mailboxes from the sidewalks
- ◆ Township has initiated a revitalization plan update

**SITE 4. Keystone Boulevard (Pottstown Borough, West Pottsgrove Township)**

This area was also the subject of the 2012 *Industrial Zone Transportation Access Study*, which created a concept plan for the area of land along the Schuylkill River between Route 100 in the east and Grosstown Road in the west. The plan recommends the extension of Keystone Boulevard, and with proximity to rail, available utilities, and potential connections to both Route 100 and US Route 422, the site’s 366 acres possess many economic development opportunities. Currently, Pottstown Borough and West Pottsgrove Township are working in cooperation to create a new vibrant employment center that can maximize the area’s redevelopment potential.

**Implementation Updates Since 2015 Comprehensive Plan:**

- ◆ Memorandum of Understanding signed by Pottstown Borough and West Pottsgrove Township in 2018 with shared goals to extend Keystone Boulevard westward to Old Reading Pike and

to facilitate the creation of a vibrant, mixed-use, employment-residential area along the corridor

- ◆ Keystone Employment and Economic Plan (KEEP) – a specific plan – was adopted in 2019 and an Oversight Committee formed
- ◆ A cellulose-based gasification facility was proposed in 2020, the first use to be proposed under the KEEP zoning overlay district
- ◆ Pottstown Borough has received funding for engineering of the extension of Keystone Boulevard

**SITE 5. Station Interchange Business Park at Sanatoga (Lower Pottsgrove Township)**

The report notes that while development of the land west of the Route 422 interchange in Lower Pottsgrove is unlikely to develop at a pace and intensity previously planned for, development of these parcels should still be pursued. The report recommends development of a business technology park with space for multi-tenant office, emerging energy technology, and single-tenant office users.

**Implementation Updates Since 2015 Comprehensive Plan:**

- ◆ Development proposals around the interchange (in both Lower Pottsgrove and Limerick) have increased in recent years (apartments, hotel, hospital, fast food, Wawa)
- ◆ The municipalities continue to coordinate with PennDOT on interchange improvements in response to development – PennDOT wants a new EB off-ramp to Evergreen Road on the Lower Pottsgrove side (\$6 Million cost estimate)

**SITE 6. North Coventry’s Commercially Zoned Districts (North Coventry Township)**

With the decline of the Coventry Mall and other large-scale commercial uses and the rezoning of land along Route 100 in North Coventry for Traditional Neighborhood Development, these areas are ripe for redevelopment and should incorporate a mix of retail and office uses that are appropriately scaled for the existing conditions as well as a mix of residential uses.

**Implementation Updates Since 2015 Comprehensive Plan:**

- ◆ The mall has been rebranded as “The Shoppes at Coventry” and several outward-facing storefronts with plaza space have been created to activate the Route 724 side of the mall

- ◆ New uses have opened including a fitness center with indoor pickleball courts, a self-storage facility, and a medical center

#### SITE 7. New Hanover Recreation Corners (New Hanover Township)

Existing commercial and retail gaps in more rural New Hanover provide the opportunity for additional small-scale retail and recreation uses that highlight the unique rural character of the township.

#### Implementation Updates Since 2015 Comprehensive Plan:

- ◆ New Hanover adopted a Village Mixed Use zoning district that encourages commercial uses, such as converting houses into businesses, at important cross-road locations.
- ◆ Light industrial zoning district updated to encourage appropriately-scaled economic development, encourage smaller-scale development, and permit currently non-conforming properties to continue their use

#### SITE 8. High Street in Downtown Pottstown (Pottstown Borough)

As the historic and economic core of the region, downtown Pottstown, specifically the areas along High Street, contain significant economic development potential. In addition to streetscape improvements, *Marketing the Pottstown Region* identifies the following improvement opportunities:

- ◆ Additional non-national chain food service establishments
- ◆ Additional specialty food space
- ◆ Development of miscellaneous retail space
- ◆ Multi-tenant office space for community based professional services, outpatient medical service, and research and development activity
- ◆ Additional housing units

#### Implementation Updates Since 2015 Comprehensive Plan:

- ◆ Many new restaurants and businesses have opened in Downtown Pottstown (axe throwing, brewpubs, pop-up beer garden and event space, live music venue, etc.). Continued investment in restoration and adaptive reuse of landmark and historic buildings.

- ◆ PAED continues to work with the borough to provide unique programming and streetscape improvements. PAED received a grant from DCED and hired Simone Collins to complete a streetscape improvement plan that is expected to be released in early 2026.

- ◆ The Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority was established in 2022 to advance planning and implementation of passenger rail restoration, including a station in Pottstown Borough. Additional local planning is being pursued in partnership with PMRPC and DVRPC.

#### SITE 9. Route 100 and State Street Intersection (West Pottsgrove Township, Upper Pottsgrove Township, Pottstown Borough)

The intersection of Route 100 and State Street, while not specifically mentioned in *Marketing the Pottstown Region*, is ready for redevelopment. Located on the border between Pottstown Borough and Upper Pottsgrove and West Pottsgrove townships, the properties in this area are situated along major roadways with connections to public sewer and water. With the former Giant property vacant, among other properties nearby, these three municipalities should look to focus future large-scale commercial development in this area.

#### Implementation Updates Since 2015 Comprehensive Plan:

- ◆ Recent commercial and residential land development proposals along Upland Square Drive in West Pottsgrove Township and off of Wilson Street in Upper Pottsgrove Township
- ◆ The former GIANT property that was noticeably vacant in 2012 (Pottstown Plaza) has gained several large tenants recently (Grocery Outlet, Goodwill, Ocean State Job Lot) and is now substantially occupied

#### SITE 10. NEW: Market Street in Douglass Township (Douglass Township)

Market Street is a proposed street connecting Philadelphia Avenue to Route 100. This connection is intended to spur new mixed-use development on land that is mostly undeveloped, extending the Gilbertsville village area to the west of Route 73.

#### Implementation Updates Since 2015 Comprehensive Plan:

- ◆ Gambone (developer) designing roadway so that can begin finalizing where/how to branch off –

developer may apply for MMTF grant

- ◆ Township has been getting easements as development comes in (Grosser Road up to Route 73)
- ◆ Natural Lands Trust/Heritage Conservancy interested in transferring open space at Jackson Street to Township (would need grant funding) – would set-aside land for Market Street through the property and the rest would be passive open space

**SITE 11. NEW: Armand Hammer Boulevard Corridor (Pottstown Borough, Lower Pottsgrove Township)**

Armand Hammer Boulevard has become a more important gateway to Lower Pottsgrove and Pottstown from Route 422 since closure of the Keim Street bridge; however, it is not overly attractive at present. Consider undertaking a streetscape planning process for the corridor, from the Route 422/Industrial Highway off-ramp to E High Street. Existing issues include sidewalk gaps, sidewalk condition/width deficiency and lack of separation from roadway, lack of street trees, and lack of other amenities (e.g., benches, receptacles).

**Implementation Updates Since 2015 Comprehensive Plan:**

- ◆ Pottstown Region Traffic Study looked at three intersections along Armand Hammer Boulevard
- ◆ Royal Farms development across from Home Depot

## Recommendations

**Recommendation 2.** Foster economic development in a way that encourages infill and redevelopment within established growth areas, such as vacant industrial sites and other underutilized commercial parcels, while ensuring new development complements existing conditions in the surrounding area.

**Implementation Strategies:**

- 2a. Evaluate ordinance updates to ensure appropriate reuse options for existing office and flex/industrial buildings are available.
- 2b. Evaluate ordinance updates to ensure all appropriate commercial uses are provided for within reasonable areas of the Region.
- 2c. Prioritize and attract commercial development that will meet the needs of the Region’s population, including entertainment and family-friendly activities, grocery stores and specialty food stores, local restaurants and nightlife, coffee shops and ice cream parlors (suggested uses identified through 2024 community survey)
- 2d. Preserve and enhance village areas that support a mix of uses in a pedestrian-friendly environment.

**RECOMMENDATION 3.** Prioritize economic development in locations where adequate transportation access and necessary utilities are available and planned for, with a focus on the following targeted strategic economic opportunity sites (see pages 87-91 for more information on each individual site):

1. Pottstown Municipal Airport and Circle of Progress Boulevard
2. Schuylkill Riverfront
3. Philadelphia Avenue in Gilbertsville
4. Keystone Boulevard/Schuylkill River Trail Area
5. Sanatoga Interchange Area
6. North Coventry’s Commercially Zoned Areas
7. New Hanover Recreation Corners
8. High Street in Downtown Pottstown
9. Route 100 and State Street Intersection
10. Market Street in Douglass
11. Armand Hammer Boulevard Corridor

**RECOMMENDATION 4.** Actively promote tourism, capitalizing on the Region’s recreation opportunities, agricultural industry, and numerous historical resources.

**Implementation Strategies:**

- 4a. Work with PARRC, PAED, and other organizations to continue to market existing and new events in the Region’s many parks and continue to encourage the development of a new regional recreation center(s) and supporting amenities and access improvements.
- 4b. Promote the development of agri-tourism in the Region (e.g., pumpkin patches, pick-your-own flowers, farm-to-table events) through ordinance amendments and other means.
- 4c. Continue to support the completion of the Schuylkill River Trail and continue to highlight the trail as a recreational and transportation amenity for the Region.
- 4d. Work with local economic development organizations to market the Region’s growing number of cultural resources and destinations to position the Region as a cultural center for the larger area.
- 4e. Work with local economic development organizations to explore the design and implementation of a distinctive regional wayfinding signage system. Signage should direct people to key areas such as public parking, the municipal airport, historic sites, large commercial and employment centers, and educational institutions. A uniform and comprehensive signage system would contribute to the Region’s sense-of-place while also reinforcing the identity of the individual municipalities.

**RECOMMENDATION 5.** Explore ways to support the development of niche industrial markets and job training opportunities that respond to evolving trends in manufacturing and other job sectors.

**Implementation Strategies:**

- 5a. Continue to encourage and support partnerships and programs with the Montgomery County Community College that incorporate job training and educational programs that help to meet the needs of the Region’s workforce.
- 5b. Explore ordinance amendments and strategic partnerships that encourage the development of niche industrial opportunities for the Region. Some of the opportunities recommended in

the 2012 *Marketing the Pottstown Region* study included:

- ◆ **Light Aircraft** was identified as a growing market segment that could capitalize on the Region’s proximity to two airports, available industrial-zoned land, and accessibility to both highway and rail transportation infrastructure.
- ◆ **Bicycle production and assemblage** could take advantage of the Region’s location along the Schuylkill River Trail and further build its image as a recreational hub.
- ◆ The **manufacturing of kayaks and canoes** could build on the Region’s location along the Schuylkill River and further develop its recreational tourism industry. The report suggests that development of these products could also incorporate tours on the Schuylkill River as a way to attract visitors to the Region.



# Transportation

A region's transportation network allows for the daily movement of people and goods. Driving, walking, bicycling, and taking public transit are the most commonly used "modes" of transportation; however, this chapter also evaluates the freight transport and aviation infrastructure in the Region. Evaluating and appropriately planning for all of these "modes" of travel is important to maintaining the Region's safety, community character, and economic development. In addition, having safe and efficient access to a variety of transportation options can also make an area more attractive to new residents.

A safe and efficient transportation system is essential to the Region’s accessibility, safety, economic development, and quality of life. Residents of the Region must be able to reach their jobs, as well as access community facilities such as medical services, stores, parks, and schools. Area businesses must also have an adequate road network in order to move their goods and provide services. This chapter will discuss existing conditions and planning for the Region’s highways, public transit, bicycle and pedestrian mobility, aviation, and freight transport to serve the transportation needs of the entire Pottstown Metropolitan Region.



Route 100 is one of the busiest roadways in the region with over 25,000 vehicles per day.

## Community Transportation Patterns

Over 65% of households in the Pottstown Region own two or more vehicles (see Table 23 below). Less than 6% of the Region’s households do not own a vehicle, which is slightly higher than both Montgomery County and Chester County overall. Pottstown Borough (11.8%) and West Pottsgrove Township (6.1%) have the greatest percentage of households without access to a vehicle.

Commute to work characteristics for the Region’s municipalities are shown in Table 24 on the following page. Approximately 74% of workers that reside in the Region drove alone during their commute to work in 2023, which is a 9.3% reduction from 2018. Pottstown

Borough has the greatest share of commuters that use public transportation to commute to work (2.1%). Region-wide there was a 10% increase in the percentage of workers who work from home between 2018 and 2023. The average commute to work time ranges from a low of 25.2 minutes for North Coventry Township residents to a high of 36.8 minutes for Upper Pottsgrove Township residents. On average, the Region experienced a 2.3 minute decrease in the mean commute time for resident workers between 2018 and 2023, likely due in part to the significant increase in work from home..

Table 23. Number of Vehicles per Household: 2023

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Municipality	% of Households by # of Vehicles per Household			
	No Vehicle Available	1 Vehicle Available	2 Vehicles Available	3 or More Vehicles Available
Douglass Township	3.6%	19.1%	46.1%	31.2%
East Coventry Township	0.5%	24.3%	44.6%	30.6%
Lower Pottsgrove Township	3.7%	30.1%	44.7%	21.5%
New Hanover Township	1.1%	17.7%	47.7%	33.6%
North Coventry Township	4.7%	25.2%	42.5%	27.6%
Pottstown Borough	11.8%	43.0%	31.1%	14.1%
Upper Pottsgrove Township	1.4%	15.2%	57.2%	26.2%
West Pottsgrove Township	6.1%	37.1%	31.2%	25.6%
<b>PMRPC Region</b>	<b>5.5%</b>	<b>29.2%</b>	<b>41.2%</b>	<b>24.1%</b>
<b>Montgomery County</b>	<b>5.4%</b>	<b>31.9%</b>	<b>42.6%</b>	<b>20.1%</b>
<b>Chester County</b>	<b>4.2%</b>	<b>27.1%</b>	<b>45.0%</b>	<b>23.7%</b>

**Table 24. Commute to Work Characteristics: 2023**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019-2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Municipality	% of Workers 16 Years and Over by Commute Mode						Average Commute Travel Time to Work (Minutes)
	Drive Alone	Carpool	Public Transportation	Walk	Other (including bicycle)	Work from Home	
Douglass Township	80.8%	4.9%	0.3%	3.4%	0.1%	10.4%	26.9
East Coventry Township	70.9%	5.6%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	22.8%	29.0
Lower Pottsgrove Township	75.3%	8.6%	0.2%	0.9%	0.5%	14.4%	27.4
New Hanover Township	75.6%	3.6%	0.2%	0.4%	0.9%	19.2%	31.9
North Coventry Township	76.2%	6.9%	0.0%	0.0%	2.7%	14.2%	25.2
Pottstown Borough	71.2%	7.8%	2.1%	4.5%	4.0%	10.4%	26.4
Upper Pottsgrove Township	66.5%	6.6%	0.4%	0.6%	0.0%	25.9%	36.8
West Pottsgrove Township	79.3%	9.7%	0.4%	0.4%	2.2%	8.0%	27.7
<b>PMRPC Region</b>	<b>74.3%</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>14.8%</b>	-
<b>Montgomery County</b>	<b>66.6%</b>	<b>6.1%</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>21.1%</b>	<b>27.9</b>
<b>Chester County</b>	<b>66.9%</b>	<b>6.6%</b>	<b>1.4%</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>21.7%</b>	<b>27.4</b>

## Previous Transportation Studies

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) regularly conducts transportation-related studies for the Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Planning Committee. In addition to the recently-completed and active studies summarized below, in mid-2024 DVRPC started station area planning for the proposed Pottstown Train Station in support of the Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority’s efforts to restore passenger rail service through Pottstown. Recent transportation-related studies completed by other entities are summarized in the following sections as well.

## Pottstown Region Safe Routes to School Study<sup>1</sup>

DVRPC completed a regional safe routes to school study in 2025 that explores the potential for improving active transportation options throughout the area, specifically looking at six schools in six different municipalities and representing all four school districts within the Region. The final report identified challenges and barriers to walking and biking to school currently and recommended location-specific concept designs to address and overcome the identified obstacles.

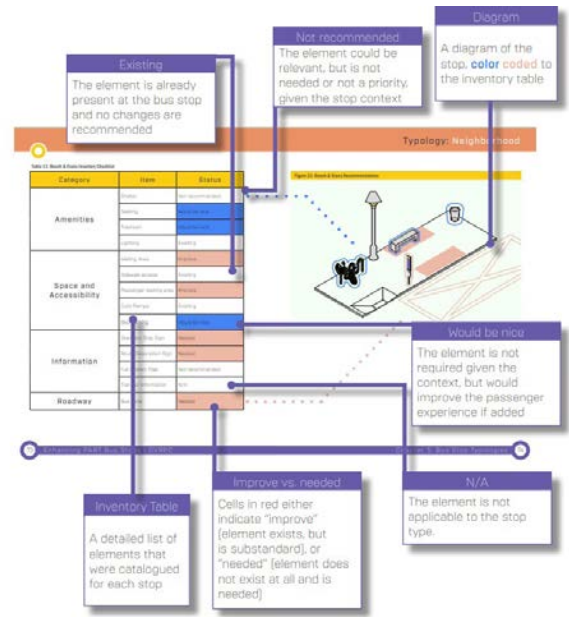
1 DVRPC. 2025. “Safe Routes to School Pottstown.” <https://www.dvrpc.org/reports/24152.pdf>.



Example graphic illustrating recommended improvements for pedestrian access to West Pottsgrove Elementary School. Source: DVRPC, 2025.

## PART Bus Stop Enhancement Study<sup>2</sup>

The goals of the 2023 *Enhancing PART Bus Stops in the Pottstown Area* study were to identify and prioritize bus stop and access improvements to increase ridership on the local transit service, Pottstown Area Rapid Transit (PART). The final report includes both system-wide and stop-specific recommendations for the system’s dozens of individual stops in a wide-range of contexts. In late 2023, \$850,000 was allocated to PART through the Carbon Reduction Program to begin implementing the recommendations identified in this study. See page 114 for more information on PART.



Graphic explaining how to interpret the stop-specific recommendations. Source: DVRPC, 2023

## High Street Corridor Study<sup>3</sup>

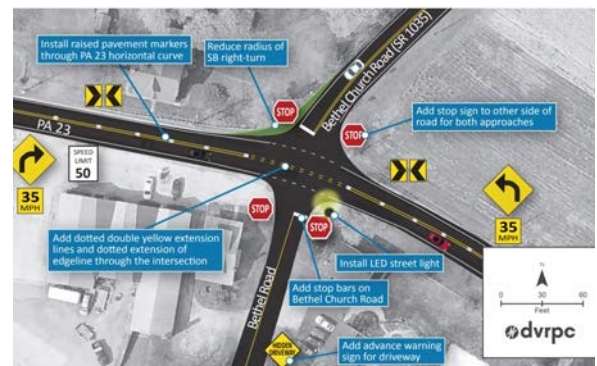
In 2022, the *High Street Corridor Study* was completed which identified multi-municipal design improvements for High Street through West Pottsgrove Township, Pottstown Borough, and Lower Pottsgrove Township. The study provides recommendations for pedestrian and motorist safety, beautification, wayfinding, signage, and placemaking.



High Street corridor study area map showing the five subcorridors. Source: DVRPC, 2022

## Pottstown Region Traffic Analysis<sup>4</sup>

The *Pottstown Region Traffic Analysis* was completed in 2019 and studied 18 critical locations that were identified by PMRPC, primarily on local roads, that they felt may be impacted by potential traffic increases from anticipated 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 identified low-cost roadway improvements to support future traffic and have a positive impact on the traffic safety and mobility of the Region as-a-whole.



Example graphic illustrating recommended improvements. Source: DVRPC, 2019

2 DVRPC, 2023. “Enhancing PART Bus Stops in the Pottstown Area.” <https://www.dvrpc.org/reports/23120.pdf>

3 DVRPC, 2022. “High Street Corridor Study.” <https://www.dvrpc.org/reports/tr21042.pdf>

4 DVRPC, 2019. “Pottstown Region Traffic Analysis.” <https://www.dvrpc.org/reports/19016.pdf>





roadways to manage congestion and accommodate economic development along the corridor. The study recommended improvements to the existing signalized intersections of Moyer Road, Grosser Road, and Jackson Road with PA 100 and recommended two new access roads: a right-in, right-out access road 480 feet north of Grosser Road (constructed with the Wawa development) and a full signal access road 2,300 feet north of Jackson Road.

### Montgomery County Roads

Montgomery County owns Old Reading Pike in West Pottsgrove Township; Swamp Pike through Douglass Township and New Hanover Township; and parts of Kulp Road, Deep Creek Road, and Henning Road in New Hanover Township. The Montgomery County Roads and Bridges Department maintains county-owned roads, and also reviews any Highway Occupancy Permit (HOP) applications for new developments that will have vehicular driveways on a county-owned road.

### Montco Pikes

Swamp Pike was recently studied as part of the *Montco Pikes*<sup>8</sup> study which created a long-term vision for the corridor, both in terms of character and function, and identified future transportation needs. The study did not find a need for additional through travel lanes but did suggest that additional turning lanes be considered at key intersections, such as Swamp Pike and Leidy Road. Between Gilbertsville Road in Douglass Township and Leidy Road in New Hanover Township, sidewalks and bike lanes are



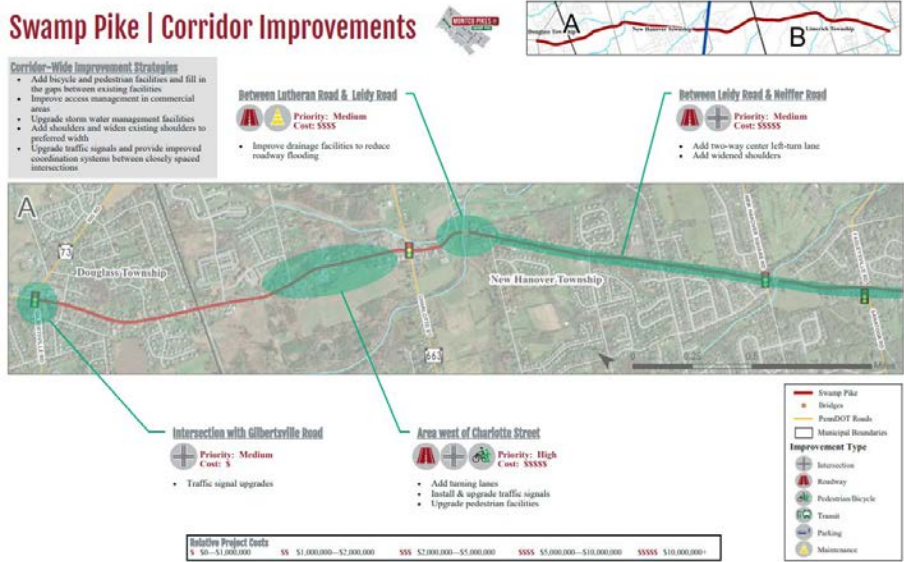
This stretch of High Street in Pottstown has sidewalks, street trees, bike lanes, and on-street parking.

recommended, whereas east of Leidy Road, where little development is anticipated, a consistent shoulder width should be developed.

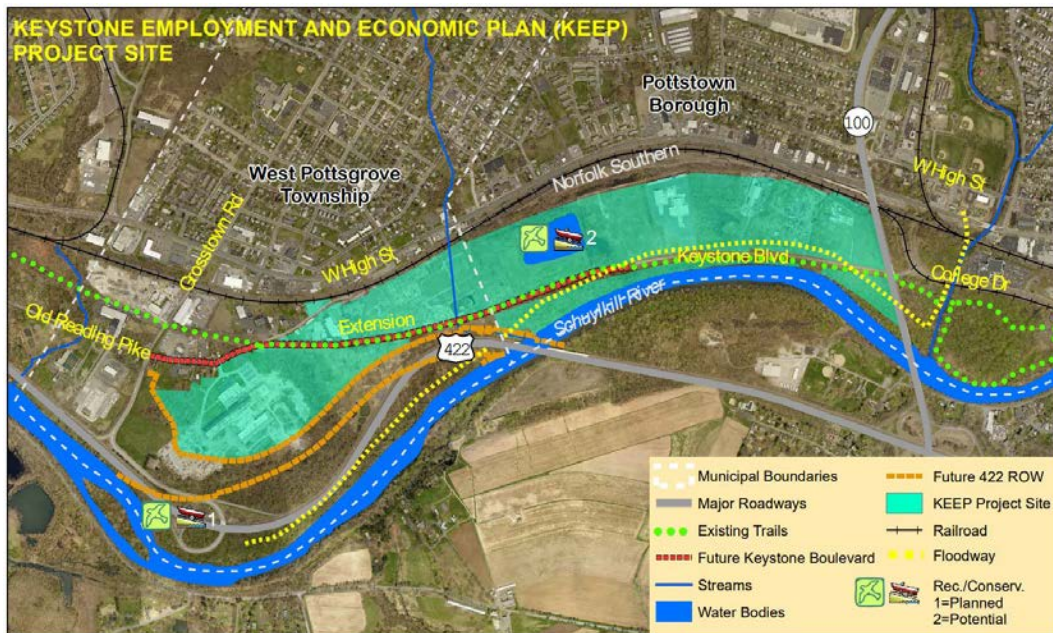
### Complete Streets Policy

A complete streets policy aims to balance the needs and comfort of, and enable safe access for, all roadway users. Examples of complete streets strategies might include:

- ◆ Widening sidewalks along individual blocks, or installing corner bump-outs to increase pedestrian safety and comfort
- ◆ Adding bicycle amenities at destinations such as schools, commercial areas, and parks to encourage residents and visitors to bike to these locations rather than driving



8 Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. 2022. *Montco Pikes: A Vision Plan for Six County Corridors*. <https://www.montgomerycountypa.gov/montcopikes>



Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission. 2018, "Specific Plan: Keystone Employment & Economic Plan (KEEP)."

- ◆ Providing dedicated and prioritized space for alternative transportation modes such as buses and carpool vans

In 2019, Montgomery County adopted a complete streets policy for all county-owned roads,<sup>9</sup> including Swamp Pike and Old Reading Pike in the Pottstown Region. The county's complete streets policy can be used as a model for municipalities considering adopting a policy for local roads.

### Chester County Roads

Chester County does not own any roads; however, in 2021, Chester County adopted a complete streets policy for all public roadways in the county.<sup>10</sup> Similar to Montgomery County, Chester County encourages municipalities to adopt complete streets policies, and offers a sample resolution.

### Local Roads

The majority of roads within the Region are municipally-owned and maintained. Typically, the municipal public works department is responsible for many road maintenance tasks, including pothole repair and snow removal on local roads.

### Keystone Employment & Economic Plan

Pottstown Borough and West Pottsgrove Township collaborated on a specific plan for the Keystone Boulevard corridor. The *Keystone Employment & Economic Plan (KEEP)*<sup>11</sup> was adopted in 2018 and envisions the extension of Keystone Boulevard from its current terminus in Pottstown Borough to Grosstown Road in West Pottsgrove Township (red line in the figure above).

### Act 209 Transportation Impact Fees

In order to help fund off-site road improvements necessitated by new land development, several Pottstown Region municipalities have enacted a Transportation Impact Fee ordinance, as authorized by the Municipalities Planning Code. Douglass Township, East Coventry Township, Lower Pottsgrove Township, New Hanover Township, and North Coventry Township have adopted Transportation Impact Fee ordinances.

### Municipal Liquid Fuels Program

Municipal Liquid Fuels funds can be used to pay for maintenance, repair, construction, and reconstruction of public roads. The amount of funding each municipal receives is based on its population and miles of road

<sup>9</sup> "Montgomery County Complete Streets Policy & Health in all policies." Montgomery County, PA. <https://www.montgomerycountypa.gov/3277/Montgomery-County-Complete-Streets-Polic>

<sup>10</sup> "Chester County Complete Streets." Chester County Planning Commission. <https://www.chescoplanning.org/transportation/CompleteStreets.cfm>

<sup>11</sup> Montgomery County Planning Commission. 2018, "Specific Plan: Keystone Employment & Economic Plan (KEEP)." [https://www.montgomerycountypa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/22470/Keystone-Employment-and-Economic-Plan-Date-6-25\\_reduced](https://www.montgomerycountypa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/22470/Keystone-Employment-and-Economic-Plan-Date-6-25_reduced)

on their approved Liquid Fuels Inventory. The gross allocation under this program for each of the Region’s municipalities based on the 2024 Municipal Liquid Fuels Allocations Report, is summarized in Table 25 below.

**Table 25. Municipal Liquid Fuels Program Allocations: 2024**

Source: PennDOT. 2024 Municipal Liquid Fuels Allocations Report. <https://www.penndot.pa.gov/Doing-Business/LocalGovernment/LiquidFuels/MunicipalLiquidFuelsProgram/Documents/2024%20MLF%20Allocation.pdf>

Municipality	2024 Municipal Liquid Fuels Program Allocation
Douglass Township	\$377,148.46
East Coventry Township	\$266,492.04
Lower Pottsgrove Township	\$333,113.18
New Hanover Township	\$436,756.85
North Coventry Township	\$290,808.89
Pottstown Borough	\$616,999.76
Upper Pottsgrove Township	\$188,477.05
West Pottsgrove Township	\$109,265.14
<b>PMRPC Region</b>	<b>\$2,619,061.37</b>

**Private Roads**

Some more recent residential developments incorporate roads that are owned and maintained privately, often by a homeowner’s association. In addition, many of the alleys in Pottstown Borough are considered private roads.

**Road Classification**

Functional classification is the grouping of roads into a hierarchy by the character of service and function they provide as part of the overall roadway network (see Map 7 on the following page). PennDOT uses functional classifications as a way to provide design guidelines that are appropriate for each road and coordinate road functions and improvements among neighboring communities and throughout the state. Characteristics of each of the road classifications are outlined in Table 26 to the right.



View from Swamp Pike (a Montgomery County road classified as a principal arterial) in New Hanover Township.

**Table 26. Road Classification Descriptions**

Classification	Primary Purpose	PMRPC Region Examples
Expressway	Provide limited access routes to move higher volumes of traffic at higher speeds, while providing high levels of safety and efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Route 422</li> </ul>
Principal Arterial	Serve major activity centers and provide longer-distance inter-area travel; carry high proportion of area travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Route 100</li> <li>High Street</li> <li>Route 663</li> <li>Route 73</li> </ul>
Minor Arterial	Interconnect with principal arterials and accommodate trips of moderate length; spaced at intervals consistent with population density; link area not connected by principal arterials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Route 724</li> <li>Route 23</li> <li>South Hanover Street</li> <li>Hoffmansville Road</li> <li>Swamp Pike</li> </ul>
Collector	Distribute trips from arterials through residential areas, collect traffic from local roads, and connect to arterial roads; typically serve trips up to four miles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gilbertsville Road</li> <li>Sanatoga Road</li> <li>Temple Road</li> </ul>
Local Road	Provide direct access to individual homes and businesses and not meant to accommodate thru-traffic or long-distance traffic; typically serve trips not exceeding one mile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>St Peters Road</li> <li>Kulp Road</li> <li>Pine Ford Road</li> </ul>





*Although the Region has several major highways and arterials, many of the Region's roads are low-volume, rural roads*

## Traffic Counts

Traffic count data from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) for the last ten years is shown in Map 8 on the following page. DVRPC collects traffic count data using several different methods and time frames. Adjustment factors are applied to calculate an estimated Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT).

Route 422 (48,000 and 55,000 cars per day through the Region) and Route 100 (nearly 29,000 cars per day) are the two busiest roads in the Region. The Evergreen Road interchange with Route 422 sees heavy volumes of traffic of nearly 16,500 cars per day. Other busy roads in the Region include Big Road (approximately 16,500 cars per day), Swamp Pike (nearly 14,000 cars per day), Philadelphia Avenue (nearly 13,000 cars per day), and Schuylkill Road and High Street (both nearly 12,000 cars per day).

## Traffic Calming

Traffic calming refers to a range of techniques that are meant to encourage motorists to drive at a speed which residents of the area consider compatible with surrounding land uses; enhance community character;

and promote pedestrian, cycle, and transit use within the neighborhood.<sup>12</sup>

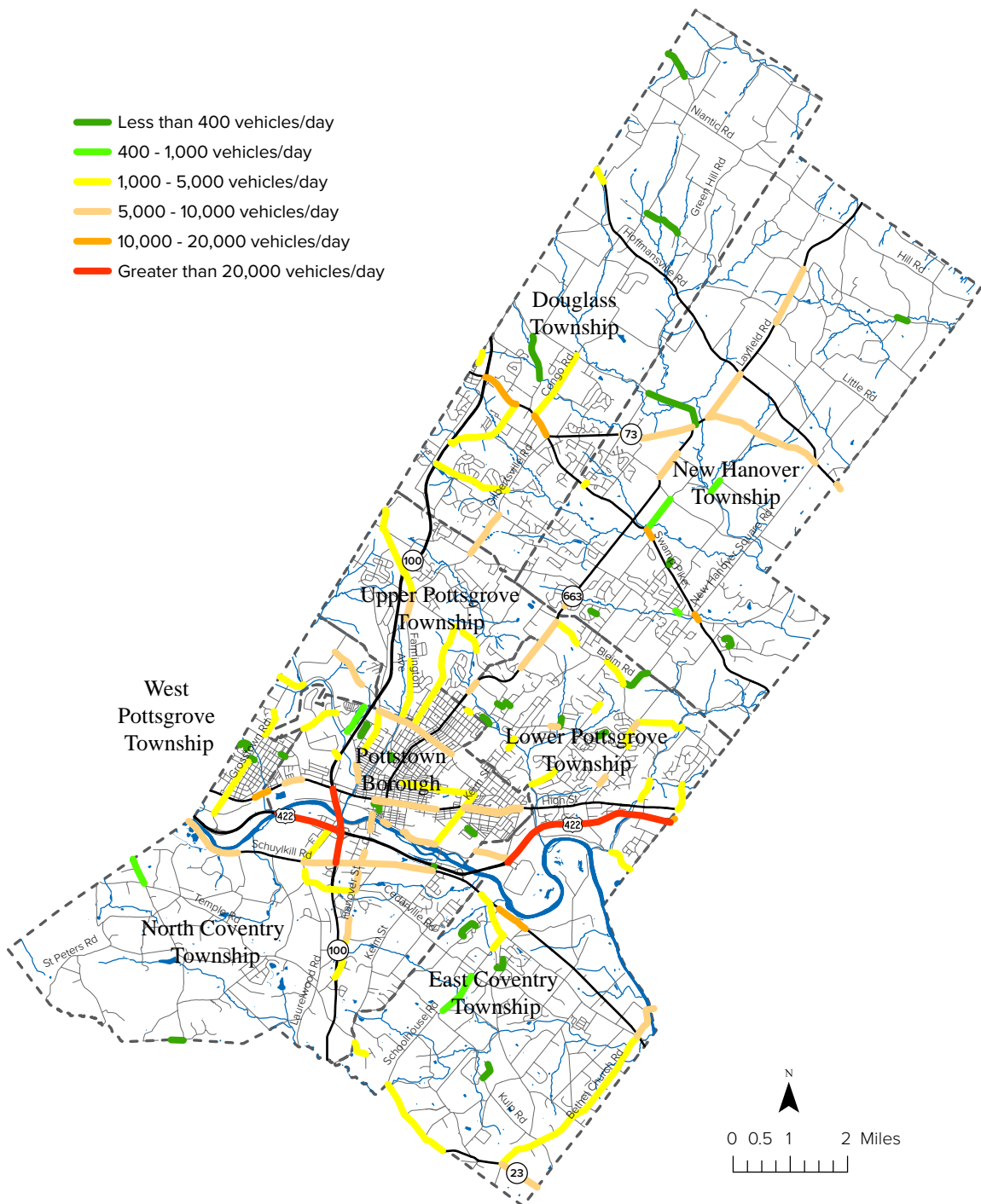
Streetscape elements such as street trees, pedestrian-scaled lighting, and on-street parking can have traffic calming, as well as placemaking, benefits. Other traffic calming efforts, such as narrowing overly-wide roadways or installing bulb-outs at wide intersections can discourage cut-through traffic because they encourage drivers to travel at slower speeds through neighborhoods. Bulbouts at pedestrian crossings can also improve visibility of pedestrians and reduce crossing distances.

Overall, encouraging slower driving speeds in areas where more pedestrians and bicyclists are present can reduce the likelihood of severe injuries as the result of crashes. Therefore, traffic calming efforts are typically focused in residential areas and in proximity to pedestrian destinations such as libraries, parks, and schools.

<sup>12</sup> Institute of Transportation Engineers. "Resources – Traffic Calming." <https://www.itte.org/technical-resources/traffic-calming/>

### Map 8. Traffic Counts

Source: DVRPC



## Crash Data<sup>13</sup>

In 2024, there were a total of 820 reportable crashes<sup>14</sup> in the Pottstown Region (see image to the right). Although the majority of the crashes were property damage only, there were at least 342 injuries and 7 fatalities. In addition, 32 of the crashes involved a pedestrian (29 in Pottstown Borough) and 20 of the crashes involved a bicyclist (17 in Pottstown Borough).

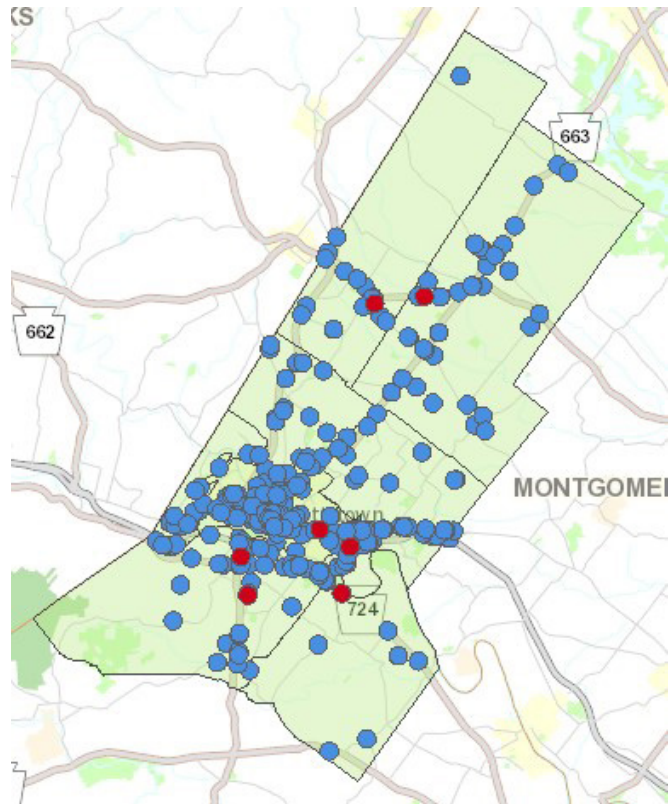
## Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Both the Montgomery County and Chester County planning commissions maintain lists of proposed transportation projects that are used, along with municipal suggestions, to make recommendations for future transportation improvements. Projects with top priority are passed on to DVRPC and PennDOT to include in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to the extent allowed by fiscal constraints.

The TIP is a list of priority transportation projects that the Delaware Valley Region has agreed upon, as required by federal law. Any projects that intend to use federal funds, as well as State-funded capital projects and any projects that are regionally-significant even if they are non-federally funded, must be included in the TIP. Many types of projects can be listed, including highway, public transit, bicycle, pedestrian, intelligent transportation systems (ITS), and freight-related projects.

These include projects that are in the TIP for a specified phase (preliminary design, final design, right-of-way acquisition, or construction) or have funding committed for that phase through some other source, such as private development. By definition, these projects are ranked high as they are already funded for at least one phase of the project development process.

Table 27 on the following page lists projects in the Pottstown Region that are listed on either the FY2023 – FY 2026 TIP or on the draft FY 2025 – FY 2028 TIP.



Blue dots represent a reportable crash involving an injury and red dots represent a reportable crash involving a fatality (Source: PennDOT, 2024).

In addition to projects listed on the TIP with dedicated funding, Chester County has developed a Transportation Improvement Inventory that catalogs all known transportation needs. These projects as they relate to the Pottstown Region are shown in Figure 30 on the following page. Similarly, Table 29 on page 107 lists projects in the Pottstown Region that are shown in *Montco 2040: A Shared Vision* which includes vision roadway projects that are high priority projects but do not currently have dedicated funding.

<sup>13</sup> Crash data is available online through PennDOT's "Pennsylvania Crash Information Tool": <https://crashinfo.penndot.pa.gov/PCIT/welcome.html>

<sup>14</sup> A reportable crash is defined as "a crash resulting in a death within 30 days of the crash; or injury in any degree, to any person involved; or crashes resulting in damage to any vehicle serious enough to require towing" (PennDOT).

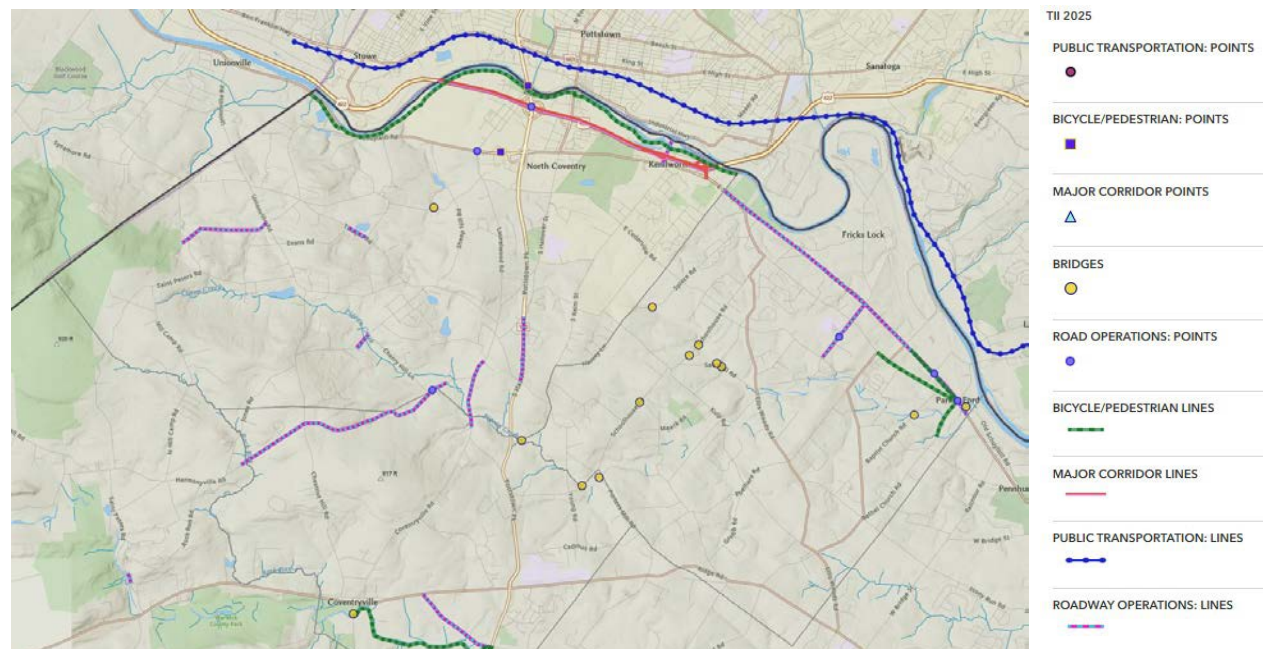
**Table 27. Transportation Improvement Program Projects**

Source: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. FY2025 TIP for PA (FY25-FY28). <https://www.dvrpc.org/tip/pa/map/>

Project #	Project Name	Project Category	Municipalities	Description
98037	Niantic Road over Perkiomen Creek	Bridge Repair/ Replacement	Douglass Township	Removal and replacement of an existing poor condition bridge
110761	Gilbertsville Road over Branch of Ministers Creek	Bridge Repair/ Replacement	Douglass Township	Rehabilitation or replacement of a bridge
16738	US 422 Expressway Reconstruction (Section M1B)	Roadway Rehabilitation	Lower Pottsgrove Township	Reconstruction of approximately 1.7 miles of expressway, including two bridges; replace and extend culvert at Sprogels Run
92637	Pleasant View Road/ Sanatoga	Bridge Repair/ Replacement	Lower Pottsgrove Township	Rehabilitation or replacement of a bridge
83742	Keim Street Bridge over Schuylkill River	Bridge Repair/ Replacement	Pottstown Borough, North Coventry Township	Replace South Keim Street bridge with minor approach roadway work; widening of Industrial Highway to accommodate an EB right turn lane and WB left turn lane
64220	US 422 Expressway Reconstruction (Section M03)	Roadway Rehabilitation	North Coventry Township	Reconstruction of approximately 1.0 miles of expressway, including one bridge; acceleration/deceleration lanes at Keim Street and PA 724 interchanges will be improved
14698	US 422 Expressway Reconstruction (Section M2B)	Roadway Rehabilitation	North Coventry Township	Reconstruction of approximately 1.5 miles of expressway, including three bridges; acceleration/deceleration lengths will be increased

**Figure 30. Chester County Transportation Improvement Inventory Projects**

Source: Chester County Transportation Improvement Inventory (2025). <https://www.chescoplanning.org/transportation/tii.cfm>



**Table 28. Montco 2040 Vision Roadway Projects in Pottstown Region**

Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission. "Montco 2040: A Shared Vision – The Comprehensive Plan for Montgomery County," 2015. <https://www.montgomerycountypa.gov/1666/Montco-2040-A-Shared-Vision>

Project Name	Project Category	Municipalities	Description
PA 100 at King Street, High Street	Intersection	Pottstown Borough	Eliminate NB cloverleaf to High Street; College Drive extension
US 422 at Sanatoga Interchange	Interchange	Lower Pottsgrove Twp.	Improvements to the Sanatoga Interchange of 72 422 at Evergreen Road
PA 100 at Shoemaker Road	Intersection	Pottstown Borough	Create double left turns from NB PA 100 onto Shoemaker Road
Keystone Boulevard Extension	Major Capital	Pottstown Borough West Pottsgrove Twp.	Extend Keystone Boulevard from its current terminus to Grosstown Road
Market Street	Major Capital	Douglass Twp.	Construct new connector roadway between Grosser Road and PA 73
PA 100 at PA 73	Interchange	Douglass Twp.	Modify interchange into single-point urban style interchange
PA 663 at PA 73	Intersection	New Hanover Twp.	Improve the intersection
PA 663 at Hoffmansville Road	Intersection	New Hanover Twp.	Regrade to improve alignment and sight distance; allow for future turn lanes

Many major roadway and bridge projects have been completed or made significant progress since the 2015 comprehensive plan, including:

- ◆ Pottstown area traffic signals upgrade (approximately 50 signals in the entire region)
- ◆ King Street road diet east of PA 100 and bridge replacement
- ◆ High Street bridge replacement west of Hanover Street
- ◆ Schuylkill River Trail section along Industrial Highway in Pottstown Borough
- ◆ Removal of Old Reading Pike bridge (county-owned) in West Pottsgrove Township
- ◆ US 422 improvements including replacement of two bridges over the Schuylkill River, reconstruction of the Armand Hammer and Stowe interchanges, rebuilt pavement and overhead bridges between Armand Hammer Boulevard and Evergreen Avenue
- ◆ Replacement of several Montgomery County-owned bridges, notably along Swamp Pike in New Hanover Township
- ◆ West High Street repaving west of College Drive
- ◆ Grosstown Road bridge replacement in West Pottsgrove Township
- ◆ Intersection improvements on either side of the Hanover Street bridge
- ◆ Schuylkill Road bridge replacement in North Coventry Township post Hurricane Ida
- ◆ Began reconstruction of the Keim Street Bridge connecting Pottstown Borough and North Coventry Township, that has been closed since 2010.

## Pedestrian and Bicycle Mobility

Pedestrian and bicycle circulation is an essential part of a regional transportation network, especially for short distance trips, and within Pottstown Borough and the Region's villages. People also may use the network, including the Schuylkill River Trail, for longer-distance bicycle or pedestrian trips for recreation or commuting. Pedestrian and bicycle networks in the Region include sidewalks, crosswalks, bike lanes, and off-road trails. Pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure can promote healthy lifestyles through increased walking and biking, but can also provide economic benefits including increased property value.



*Sidewalks in Gilbertsville Village.*

### Sidewalks

Existing sidewalks, as well as existing and planned trails, are shown in Map 9 on the following page. Sidewalks are paved areas, typically located along the roadway frontage of properties, intended for use by pedestrians. Sidewalk connectivity, maintenance, and the presence of marked crosswalks and ADA curb ramps all contribute to the general walkable feel of a community.

Expanding the sidewalk network where connections are currently missing was identified as a high or medium priority in terms of pedestrian and bicycle improvements by approximately 67% of community survey respondents (see Appendix A for more information). However, installing sidewalks everywhere they are absent and improving existing but inadequate sidewalks can be challenging and will require long-term implementation and prioritization.

As new development or redevelopment occurs, sidewalks should be installed wherever people might be expected to walk, which could include main street areas, shopping centers, office parks, industrial complexes, and higher density residential areas. Filling sidewalk gaps where they would connect to walking destinations such as shopping centers, bus stops, schools, parks, and libraries should also be prioritized. Where traditional sidewalks are infeasible due to constraints such as right-of-way and steep slopes, off-road trails should be considered.

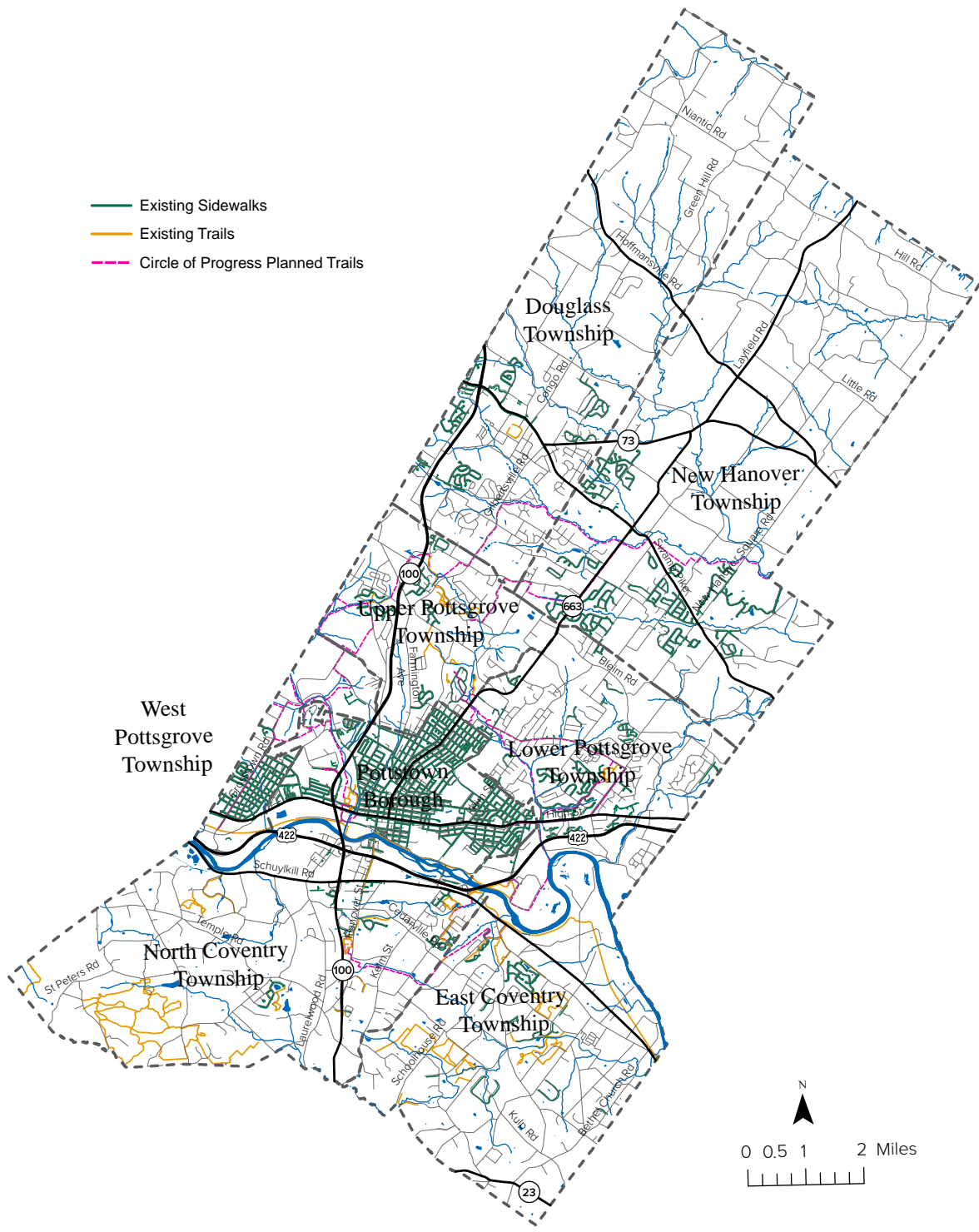


*In some cases, trails can provide alternative pedestrian access in a context-sensitive way.*

Depending on the land use context and community vision, sidewalks could be installed in conjunction with other amenities and placemaking features such as planting strips between the sidewalk and curb, street trees to shade the sidewalk, and pedestrian-scale lighting. Suggested sidewalk and planting strip widths based on the land use context are shown in Table 29 on page 110.

### Map 9. Existing Sidewalks & Walking Trails

Source: DVRPC, Montgomery County Planning Commission



**Table 29. Streetscape Dimension Recommendations**

Land Use Context	Sidewalk Width	Verge Width (can be landscaped or hardscaped)
Central Business District	8' or wider	8' or wider
Commercial, office, industrial areas outside of the Central Business District	5' or wider; 7' with no planting strip; or 5' with 2' planting strip	4' to 8' preferred
Residential areas along arterial or collector roads	5' or wider	4' to 8' preferred; 2' acceptable
Residential areas along local roads with densities greater than 4 du/ac	5' or wider	Min. 2' wide; wider preferred
Residential areas along local roads with densities less than or equal to 4 du/ac	4' or wider	Min. 2' wide; wider preferred

Note: All sidewalk widths should be measured exclusive of any obstacle (e.g., street lights, trees, benches, trash cans). In addition, in Central Business Districts, two feet should be added to the width of the sidewalk wherever pedestrians may be window shopping, or doors may be opening onto the sidewalk area.

### Crosswalks

In addition to installing sidewalks where the land use context or proximity to walking destinations warrants it, ensuring pedestrian crosswalks are clearly marked within priority walking areas is also important. Many communities are increasingly installing continental, or ladder, style crosswalks as they have been shown to be more visible to approaching motorists, especially during inclement weather (see Figure 30 below).



*East Coventry Township has installed several high-visibility pedestrian crosswalks to improve access to public trails and trail easements.*

**Figure 31. Common Crosswalk Types**



*Continental, or ladder, style crosswalks (right) with solid white blocks parallel to the motorist's line of sight have been shown to be more noticeable to approaching motorists than traditional crosswalks (left) which consist of two parallel lines which can blend into other roadway markings and are less visible, especially during inclement weather.*

Source: SRTS Guide: "Marking and Signing Crosswalks," [http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/engineering/marked\\_crosswalks.cfm](http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/engineering/marked_crosswalks.cfm)

#### Pocket Guide to Active Transportation-Friendly Code

*With many photos and specific guidance, the Pocket Guide to Active Transportation-Friendly Code is a helpful resource for municipalities considering ways to make their zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances more supportive of active transportation modes, particularly walking and bicycling.*

More information: [https://www.montgomerycountypa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/45273/2024-SupportingActiveTransportationBooklet\\_Rev02](https://www.montgomerycountypa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/45273/2024-SupportingActiveTransportationBooklet_Rev02)

Although traditional-style crosswalks may be adequate in some locations, higher-visibility crosswalks should be installed at intersections where pedestrian safety issues have been identified, adjacent to pedestrian destinations such as schools and parks, and on roadways where high levels of pedestrian activity and/or high volumes of vehicular traffic have been observed. In general, all of the crosswalks at an intersection should be painted in the same pattern or style and should be repainted, as needed.

## Safe Routes to School

Safe Routes to School generally refers to programs that expand and improve opportunities for school children to safely and conveniently access their schools by walking or bicycling. Typically, children who walk or bicycle to school are able to incorporate additional physical activity into their school day, which can contribute to their overall health. A combination of programming, educational, and infrastructure improvements can be implemented to advance the goals of a Safe Routes to School program.

## Bikeability

### Bicycle Routes

*Bike Montco: The Bicycle Plan for Montgomery County*<sup>15</sup> includes recommended design improvements

<sup>15</sup> Montgomery County Planning Commission. 2018, "Bike Montco: The Bicycle Plan for Montgomery County." <https://www.montgomerycountypa.gov/26884/Bike-Montco>

and key policies for bicycle safety. *Bike Montco* also establishes a county-wide network of strategic planned bicycle improvements.

The county-wide planned bicycle network, which was identified using an analysis of level of traffic stress data and other best practices, consists of 783 miles of roadway where on-road bicycle infrastructure is recommended in order to connect citizens to the county trail network and other destinations.

Map 10 on page 113 shows the *Bike Montco* planned bicycle network, which highlights those roads where bicycle facilities should be installed. Several options for the most appropriate type of bicycle facilities (e.g., bike lane, sharrows, paved shoulder) on each roadway segment shown on Map 10 are summarized in Figure 31 on the following page. The recommended bicycle facility type is based on the roadway type and speed limit.

Swamp Pike is identified as part of the priority route in Map 10. These high-priority segments should be targeted for improvement as soon as possible. Once completed, the priority route will connect the county trail system and create long-distance, on-road bicycle routes in parts of the county where there are no planned trails.



Schuykill River Trail crossing of Grosstown Road in West Pottsgrove Township.

Figure 32. Recommended Facility Type for the Bike Montco Planned Bicycle Network

Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission

Average Daily Trips (ADT)	Roadway Type	SPEED LIMIT		
		25 MPH	35 MPH	40-55 MPH
Least ↑ ↓ Most	Local Rural/Scenic	Marked shared lane	Paved shoulder	
		Shared lane (no provisions)	Marked shared lane Shared lane (no provisions)	
	Local Urban	Bicycle lane	Buffered bicycle lane	
		Bicycle boulevard	Bicycle lane	
		Marked shared lane	Marked shared lane	
	Collector Rural/Scenic	Buffered bicycle lane	Buffered bicycle lane	
Bicycle lane		Bicycle lane		
Paved shoulder		Paved shoulder		
Wide outside lane		Wide outside lane		
Collector Urban	Protected bicycle lane	Protected bicycle lane		
	Buffered bicycle lane	Buffered bicycle lane		
	Bicycle lane	Bicycle lane		
	Paved shoulder	Paved shoulder		
	Wide outside lane	Wide outside lane		
Minor Arterial	Protected bicycle lane	Protected bicycle lane	Protected bicycle lane Buffered bicycle lane Paved shoulder*	
	Buffered bicycle lane	Buffered bicycle lane		
	Bicycle lane	Bicycle lane		
	Paved shoulder*	Paved shoulder*		
Principal Arterial	Wide outside lane	Wide outside lane		
		Protected bicycle lane	Protected bicycle lane	
		Buffered bicycle lane	Buffered bicycle lane	
		Paved shoulder*	Paved shoulder*	
	Shared-use Paths are suitable for all roadway types and speeds but need to be considered carefully as they can create other potential conflicts when located adjacent to streets.			

\*Paved shoulders on arterial roads should be at least 6 feet wide.

NOTE: This table lists the suggested bicycle facilities in order of most protection to least protection. Whenever possible, the facility that provides the most protection should be utilized.

### Bicycle Amenities

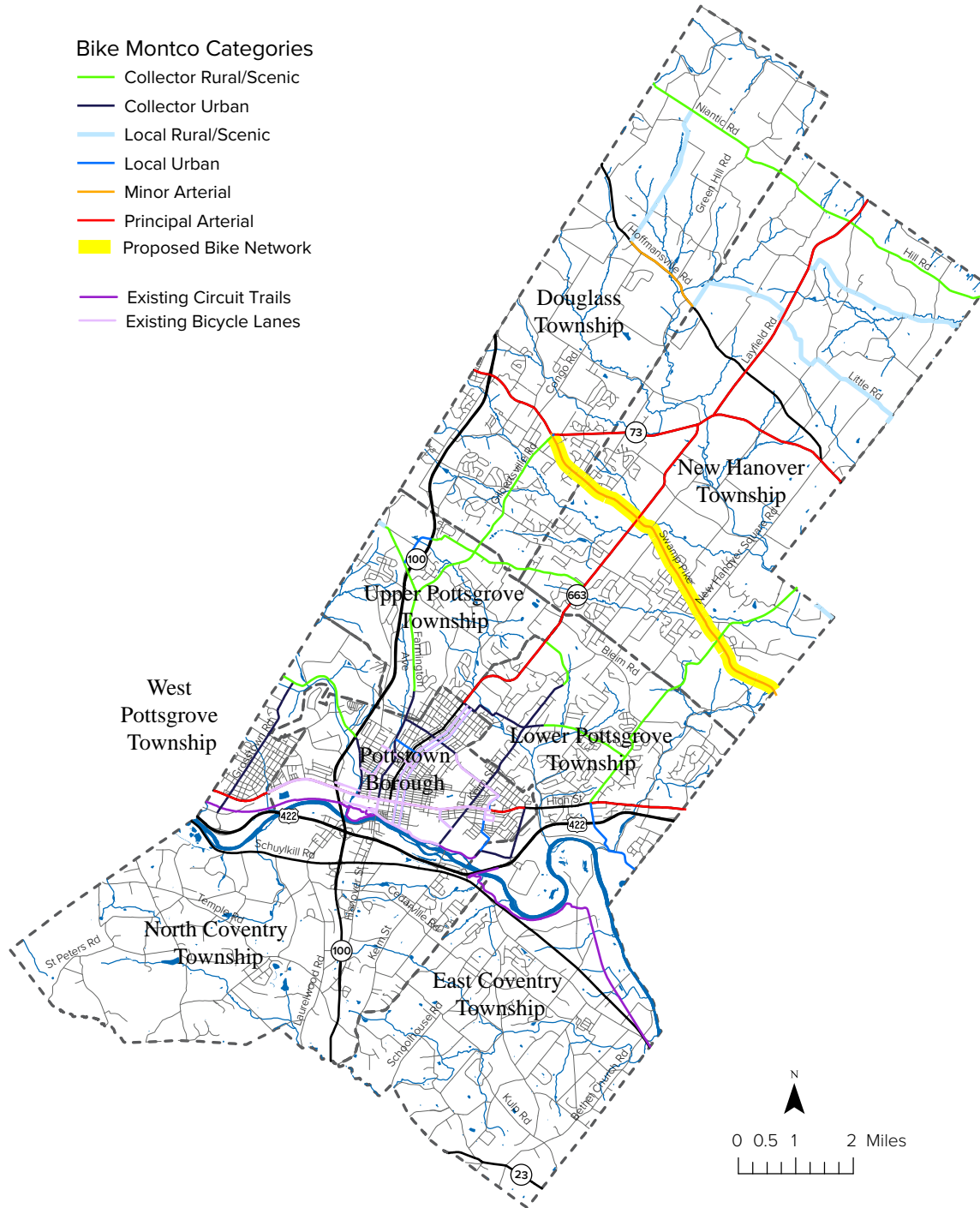
Providing amenities such as secure, convenient, and covered bicycle parking at strategic locations throughout a community has been shown to encourage greater bicycle activity. Promoting designated bike routes and connections to paved trails through signage and public outreach, combined with bicycle-friendly amenities, can also have economic development benefits.



A road diet was implemented on King Street in Pottstown Borough to calm traffic speeds and provide bicycle lanes.

## Map 10. Existing & Planned Bicycle Network

Source: DVRPC, Montgomery County Planning Commission





*Multi-use path in Upper Pottsgrove Township.*

## Off-Road Trails

Trails can help serve the recreation needs of a region while also contributing to the viability of bicycling as an alternative transportation option depending on their pavement material and width. Trails can be used to connect destinations that may be too far apart for sidewalks to link. Trails have also been shown to enhance the quality of life and offer community health benefits to communities.

The Pottstown Region's bicycle-friendly trail network ("Circuit Trails") currently primarily consists of the Schuylkill River Trail which, when fully completed, will connect East Coventry Township, Lower Pottsgrove Township, Pottstown Borough, and West Pottsgrove Township to destinations to the east and west. For the most part, existing trails located within municipal parks and open space are not intended for bicycle use and are therefore shown in Map 9 of sidewalks and walking trails.

## Public Transportation

Having greater transportation options including public transportation, such as buses and commuter rail, can improve mobility for those without access to a vehicle or those with physical disabilities who cannot drive. Use of public transit can also conserve energy and improve air quality, especially when it is used as an alternative to single-occupancy vehicles. Furthermore, an expanded public transit network can better connect workers to jobs and consumers to commercial areas, thus enhancing economic development. The current bus routes through the Region are shown in Map 11 on the following page.

## Southeastern Pennsylvania Transit Authority

The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) operates the Route 93 bus which connects Pottstown Borough with the Norristown Transportation Center with stops at the Philadelphia Premium Outlets and in Collegeville Borough. The bus runs seven days a week, at approximately one-hour intervals, along the Ridge Pike/High Street corridor. The Route 93 bus line stops along High Street in downtown Pottstown and at the Montgomery County Community College; however, SEPTA typically does not pick-up or drop-off passengers between Sanatoga and downtown Pottstown, so as not to compete with PART. In 2023, the Route 93 bus had an average weekday ridership of 716 riders, ranking it 17<sup>th</sup> of all of the routes in SEPTA's system.<sup>16</sup>

## Pottstown Area Rapid Transit

The Pottstown Metropolitan Region also has a local transportation agency, Pottstown Area Rapid Transit (PART), which provides bus service from downtown Pottstown to Coventry Mall and four other routes. PART is the largest municipally-owned transit system in the county. It is different than a typical municipally-owned transit provider in that it is an actual transit agency. PART buses operate six days a week (Monday through Saturday), except for major holidays, from 6 am to 6 pm. Three of the five routes also operate in

<sup>16</sup> SEPTA Service Planning Department. "SEPTA Route Statistics 2023." <https://planning.septa.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/2023-ROUTE-STATS-WEB-1.pdf>

the evenings from 6 pm to 10 pm. Following a transit development plan that was completed in 2019, service changes were implemented to “simplify bus routes, maximize service, and add new destinations including Boyertown and Gilbertsville.”<sup>17</sup>

## Paratransit Services

Both SEPTA and PART offer paratransit services. Paratransit services provide low-cost transportation access to seniors and individuals with physical challenges that reduce their ability to use regular public transportation. SEPTA’s Customized Community Transportation (CCT) Program is a door-to-door service available to individuals that are functionally unable to use regular, accessible public transportation or some or all of their transportation needs. Service is provided within ¾-mile of all regular, fixed-route buses and rail services, only during the hours that the regular transit service is provided.

## Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority

Although there has not been active passenger rail service serving the Pottstown Metropolitan Region since 1981, restoring this service is supported by 73% of community survey respondents. Restring commuter rail connections between Reading, Pottstown, and Philadelphia could help reduce congestion on US 422 by providing an alternative means for the Region’s residents to commute along that corridor.

Although this opportunity has been discussed since the mid-1990s, it took on new energy when in early 2022, the County Commissioners of Montgomery, Berks, and Chester counties authorized the creation of the Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority (SRPRA).<sup>18</sup> The SRPRA was established in order for the counties to jointly oversee the further planning for and implementation of the restoration of passenger rail service between Philadelphia and Reading. Recent planning studies have demonstrated that restoring passenger rail service along this line, including a station in Pottstown Borough, could have a significant positive impact on mobility options, economic development, and equitable transportation access.



Two PART buses on Hanover Street in Pottstown Borough.



In the future, the Charles W. Dickinson Transportation Center could potentially serve as a transportation hub between PART buses and passenger rail.

The Amtrak Connects US Program and PennDOT’s State Rail Plan both support the restoration of passenger rail service along the Schuylkill River corridor, including Pottstown. Under the guidance of an executive director and a 9-member board with equal representation from all three counties, SRPRA is actively working to restore this service by coordinating with Amtrak, SEPTA, local governments, and state and federal agencies. Specifically, SRPRA has been accepted into the Corridor Identification and Development (Corridor ID) Program which is the Federal Railroad Administration’s program for guiding development of intercity passenger rail projects throughout the country.

<sup>17</sup> Pottstown Area Rapid Transit. “Schedules.” <https://pottstownarearapidtransit.com/schedules/>

<sup>18</sup> Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority. <https://gosrpra.com/>



## Freight Rail

There are several freight rail lines that run through the Region. The rail infrastructure consists of the former Reading main line and a small segment of the former Pennsylvania West Shore Line which are both currently owned by Norfolk Southern Railway Company. Norfolk Southern operates freight rail service within and through Pottstown Borough, along the former Conrail track near the borough's southern border. The other line, a rail spur to the Oxychem site in Lower Pottsgrove, is minimally utilized and its future is uncertain; in recent years the line was being used only once per week. Previous plans have recommended that the line be removed to facilitate redevelopment.

A third line, the Colebrookdale Branch Railroad, was purchased by Berks County in 2009, after its former owner (East Penn Railroad) sought federal approval to abandon the line. In January 2012, a conceptual plan was completed for transforming the line into a Tourist Railroad, now called the "Colebrookdale Railroad" or the "Secret Valley Line". The Colebrookdale Railroad, which began service in 2014 between Pottstown Borough and Boyertown Borough in Berks County, has helped expand heritage and recreational tourism in the Region.

## Aviation

The Pottstown Metropolitan Region is also served by various airports. The one airport located in the Region, Pottstown Municipal Airport, was built in 1952 and is located along Glasgow Street in the borough's West End.

Pottstown Municipal Airport provides limited corporate and charter service, and emphasizes personal service to recreational pilots. Its paved runway is 2,704 feet long and 75 feet wide. Due to obstructions, the functional length of the runway is shorter than its actual physical length, suggesting the need for master planning, including an obstacle plan. The airport had 14,775 annual flight operations in 2023, a significant decline from 22,275 annual flight operations in 2012, but still higher than the 7,250 flight operations counted during 2003. A total of 50 aircraft were based at Pottstown Municipal Airport in 2023.<sup>19</sup>



*Freight railroads pass through the region, generally following the Schuylkill River corridor.*



*Pottstown Municipal Airport is a full-service, public-use airport that is owned by Pottstown Borough.*

Another nearby and important airport facility is the Heritage Field Airport in Limerick Township, which through its classification as a "regional reliever" airport helps to reduce corporate and general aviation air traffic at the Philadelphia International airport. There are also three major commercial airports in close proximity to the Pottstown Region that serve high volumes of passengers and freight: Reading Regional, Philadelphia International, and Lehigh Valley International.

<sup>19</sup> Montgomery County Planning Commission. DRAFT 2024. "Montgomery County Aviation Policy Plan."

## Recommendations

**RECOMMENDATION 6.** Maintain and improve the existing road network in the Region.

### Implementation Strategies:

- 6a. Identify problematic traffic congestion areas and develop mitigation strategies.
- 6b. Support planned improvements to major roads, such as Route 422 and Route 100, and associated interchanges, in the Region.
- 6c. Prioritize transportation improvements in new development that enhance the Region's road hierarchy and increases connectivity.
- 6d. Support the extension of Keystone Boulevard, as identified in the *Keystone Economic & Employment Plan*, and the development of Market Street, as identified in the *PA 100 Modified Point of Access Study*.
- 6e. Improve connections between Montgomery County and Chester County, including enhancements to the Hanover Street Bridge, completion of the Keim Street bridge, completion of the Schuylkill River Trail, and the conversion of the existing unused railroad trestles into pedestrian bridges.

**RECOMMENDATION 7.** Expand and enhance the Pottstown Municipal Airport, due to its long-term importance to the local economy and aviation network.

### Implementation Strategies:

- 7a. Support the development of an airport master plan for the Pottstown Municipal Airport, including an airport layout plan. The airport master plan could explore opportunities such as providing charter and other aviation transportation services at the Pottstown Municipal Airport.
- 7b. Support any updates to municipal-level compatible land-use ordinances and regulations based on the airport master plan, including incentivizing revenue-generating land uses to support general aviation enthusiasts and the public.

**RECOMMENDATION 8.** Develop a local and regional pedestrian and bicycle network to connect growth areas within the Region.

### Implementation Strategies:

- 8a. Within higher density areas, municipal zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances should provide language that requires sidewalks

along all streets, major driveways, and parking areas. Sidewalks should be located anywhere there is a potential for pedestrian-vehicle conflicts and crosswalks should be clearly-marked and connect to adjoining sidewalks.

- 8b. Continue to support municipal- and regional-level trail feasibility studies, design, and construction to work towards a regional trail system that connects the existing trail networks, parks, and other points of interest. Also see the Parks, Recreation & Open Space Chapter.
- 8c. Support the implementation of *Bike Montco* and the expansion of the bicycle network within the Region by exploring road improvements that enhance bicycling, as opportunities arise.

**RECOMMENDATION 9.** Continue to support the expansion of public transportation options.

### Implementation Strategies:

- 9a. Support improvements to bus stops in the Region, as identified in *Enhancing PART Bus Stops in the Pottstown Area*.
- 9b. Support the restoration of passenger rail service that would connect the Pottstown Region with Philadelphia and Reading, including station area planning and transit-oriented development guidelines.



# Environmental Sustainability

Proactively understanding and managing the Region's natural features and essential infrastructure will help the communities of the Region plan for a future that balances conservation of these resources with sustainable growth. This chapter looks at stewardship of the Region's ecology and natural resources, conservation and protection of water resources, planning for essential infrastructure, and waste reduction.

## Ecological Stewardship

### Geology

A region's geology can have a major influence on features such as topography, soils, hydrology, and vegetative character, making it the base of the region's natural systems. The region's underlying bedrock geology is shown in Map 12 on the following page. A region's bedrock, which is the parent material for the local soils, can impact other site-specific factors such as infiltration rates, soil nutrient content, and agricultural capacity. Ultimately, all of these factors impact the locations and patterns of land use and site suitability for certain types of development. The rock formations that make up the bedrock of the Pottstown Region are:

- ◆ The **Brunswick Formation**, which is the most significant rock formation across the entire region, is characterized primarily by mudstone, a reddish-brown sedimentary rock deposited during the Triassic era. Secondary rock types include siltstone, shale, and argillite.<sup>1</sup> The topography of this formation is characterized by rolling hills.

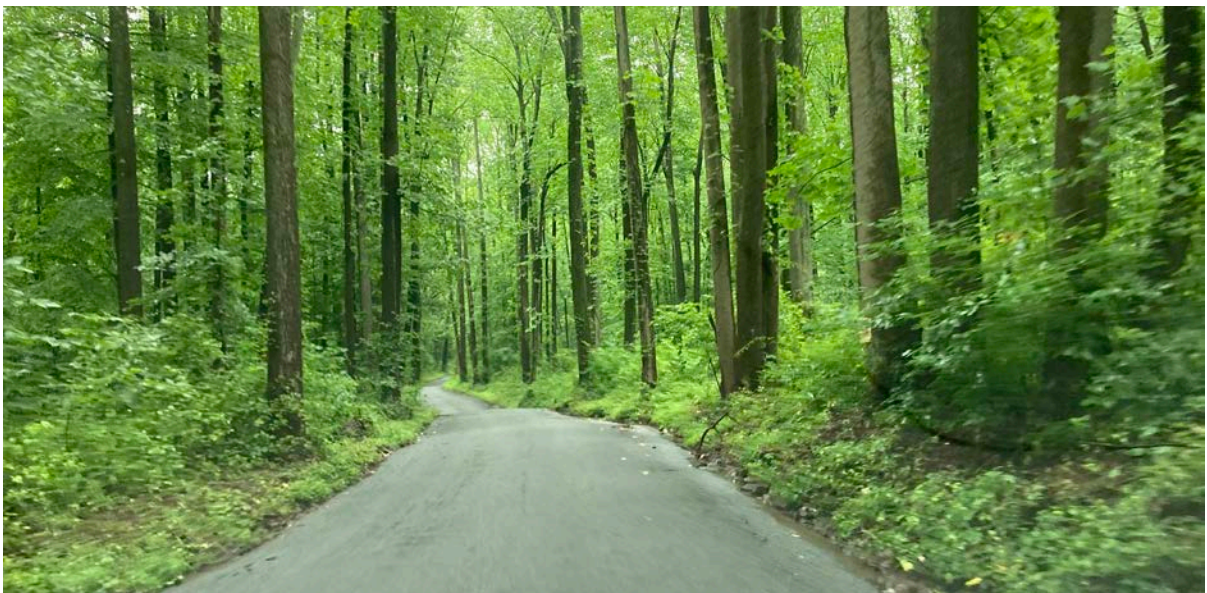
This is a relatively porous formation that is considered a reliable source of groundwater; however, groundwater yields are highly variable. It is considered to be a good to fair source for road material and fill, and part of the formation can be

an excellent source of lightweight aggregate and material for common brick.

- ◆ Several prominent **Diabase** ridges, which were formed when molten rock extruded through large cracks in the Brunswick Formation, divide the region into two main watersheds. This formation, also referred to as "black granite," is very resistant to erosion, weathering, water infiltration, and groundwater movement. Areas underlain by diabase rock are more challenging to develop because the soil layer above the bedrock is often thin, making excavation for utilities and building construction more difficult.

One diabase ridge is located just south of North Coventry Township. Another diabase ridge line runs through the northern portions of Upper and Lower Pottsgrove townships, including the Ringing Rocks area. This same ridge line arcs back in Western Montgomery County and crosses the northern sections of Douglass and New Hanover townships in the Deep Creek area.

- ◆ Several fingers of **Hammer Creek Conglomerate** bisect the Brunswick formation in North Coventry and East Coventry townships creating a series of hills and valleys across the area. This slower-eroding formation is characterized by very coarse quartz conglomerate with abundant pebbles and cobbles of gray quartzite and minor interbeds of coarse red sandstone.

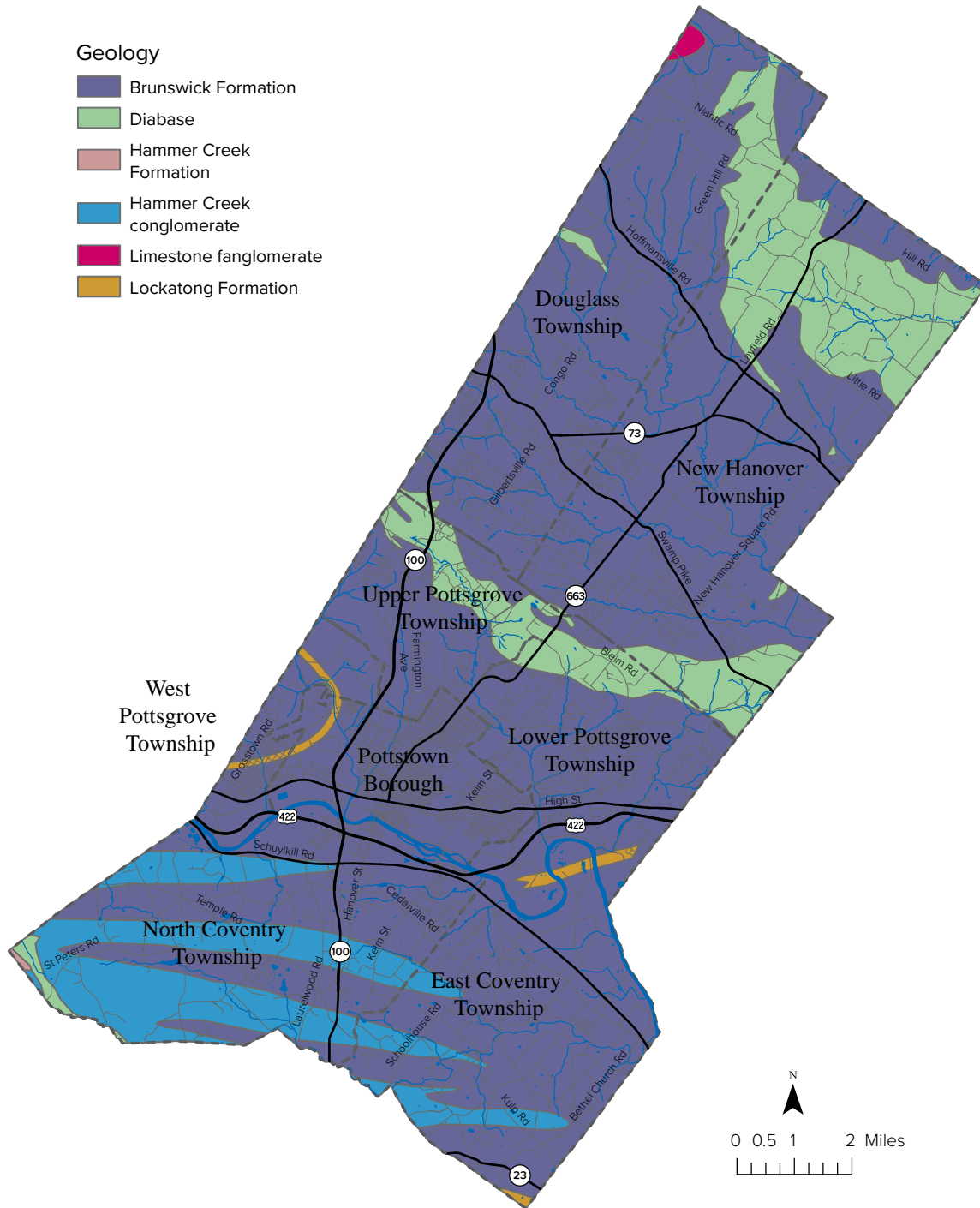


*The Coventry Woods area of North Coventry Township is characterized by the hills and valleys created where the Brunswick formation and Hammer Creek Conglomerate intersect.*

<sup>1</sup> "Brunswick Formation." USGS. <https://mrdata.usgs.gov/geology/state-sgmc-unit.php?unit=PATRb%3B3>

## Map 12. Geology

Source: U.S. Geological Survey



The topography is rough terrain with natural slopes that are steep and stable. The Hammer Creek formation is difficult to excavate but groundwater yields of this formation are considered sufficient to support low-density residential development.

- ◆ The **Locketong Formation** is characterized by dark-gray to black metamorphic and sedimentary rocks including argillite, shale, and limestone that were formed as mud and silt deposited in layers on river floodplains and in shallow lakes during the Triassic era.<sup>2</sup> Two different Locketong formations are present in East Coventry and West Pottsgrove townships, forming high points in those communities.

These rocks are hard, resist weathering, and have poor groundwater supplies. The Locketong formation also has very poor septic absorption capacity.

- ◆ A small area of the **Limestone Fanglomerate Formation** is located in northern Douglass Township. This formation is primarily composed of

limestone and dolomite pebbles and fragments. Because of the limestone content in this formation, sinkholes have occurred and should be investigated. This formation is moderately resistant to weathering and creates topography of rolling hills.

## Soils

The soils of the Pottstown Region have formed over time by the continual interaction between the region's weather, rock formations, and organisms. As development occurs, human activity also influences the soil type and composition. Soils are characterized based on many factors, including their color, mineral characteristics, and depth to groundwater. In rural areas of the Region, the suitability of soils for productive agriculture and on-lot sewage disposal are very important characteristics.



*The Pottstown Region has a rich history of farming and many preserved farms that are active today, such as this one in Douglass Township.*

<sup>2</sup> "Locketong Formation." USGS. <https://mrdata.usgs.gov/geology/state/sgmc-unit.php?unit=PATRI%3B3>

### Important Agricultural Soils

The agricultural potential of soils is determined by measuring fertility, depth to bedrock and groundwater, texture, erodibility, and slope. The Region has a rich history of farming and contains substantial soils that are important for sustaining agriculture. In particular, places where the Brunswick rock formation is located may contain important agricultural soils due to the extensive concentrations of soils having a high water table and shallow depth to bedrock.

Important agricultural soils are further divided into two categories (see Map 13 on the following page). Agricultural use of soils not in one of these categories is generally limited to pasture and woodlands.

- ◆ **Prime Agricultural Soils** are deep, well-drained, and moderately-sloped soils that can support high yields of crops with little management.
- ◆ **Agricultural Soils of Statewide Significance** include soils that support cultivation but require careful crop management.

### Hydric Soils

Hydric soils (see Map 13 on the following page) are soils that are periodically wet and are often located in areas that support the growth of wetland vegetation. Hydric soils are concentrated along the stream corridors, as well as in northern Douglass and New Hanover townships. These soils constrain the effectiveness of on-lot sewage disposal because of their wet characteristics, but may otherwise be developable with appropriate engineering and construction practices.

### Steep Slopes

Map 14 on page 125 illustrates the topography of the Pottstown Region and highlights areas of greater than 8% slope. Areas with slopes in excess of 25% are considered environmentally-sensitive areas that are less suitable for development because of the increased risk of erosion and runoff, and the amount of grading needed for building site stabilization. Minimal disturbance of these sloped areas is preferred in order to prevent erosion, increased flooding, and water pollution.

Concentrations of steep slopes, particularly in North Coventry, Upper Pottsgrove, and Lower Pottsgrove townships, as well as the northern portions of Douglass and New Hanover townships, create dramatic terrain and high points throughout the Region

that support unique plants and wildlife and offer striking viewsheds that define the local community character and offer recreational opportunities.

### Tree Cover

Trees provide many social and environmental benefits to the Region, including improving air quality, providing shade cooling, soil and streambank stabilization, and enhancing the visual appearance of a neighborhood or viewshed. Trees also help infiltrate rainwater which can reduce stormwater runoff and localized flooding. Tree canopy can also provide essential habitat for a variety of birds, insects, animals, and other plants. Map 15 on page 126 shows areas of higher tree cover based on the National Land Cover Database 2021 data.

Over hundreds of years, the higher-density development pattern in the communities of Pottstown Borough and West Pottsgrove Township, as well as land clearing for agricultural production in the surrounding townships, has significantly reduced the woodlands of the Region. However, large swaths of remaining woodlands run across the region, corresponding somewhat to the diabase formations and stream corridors.

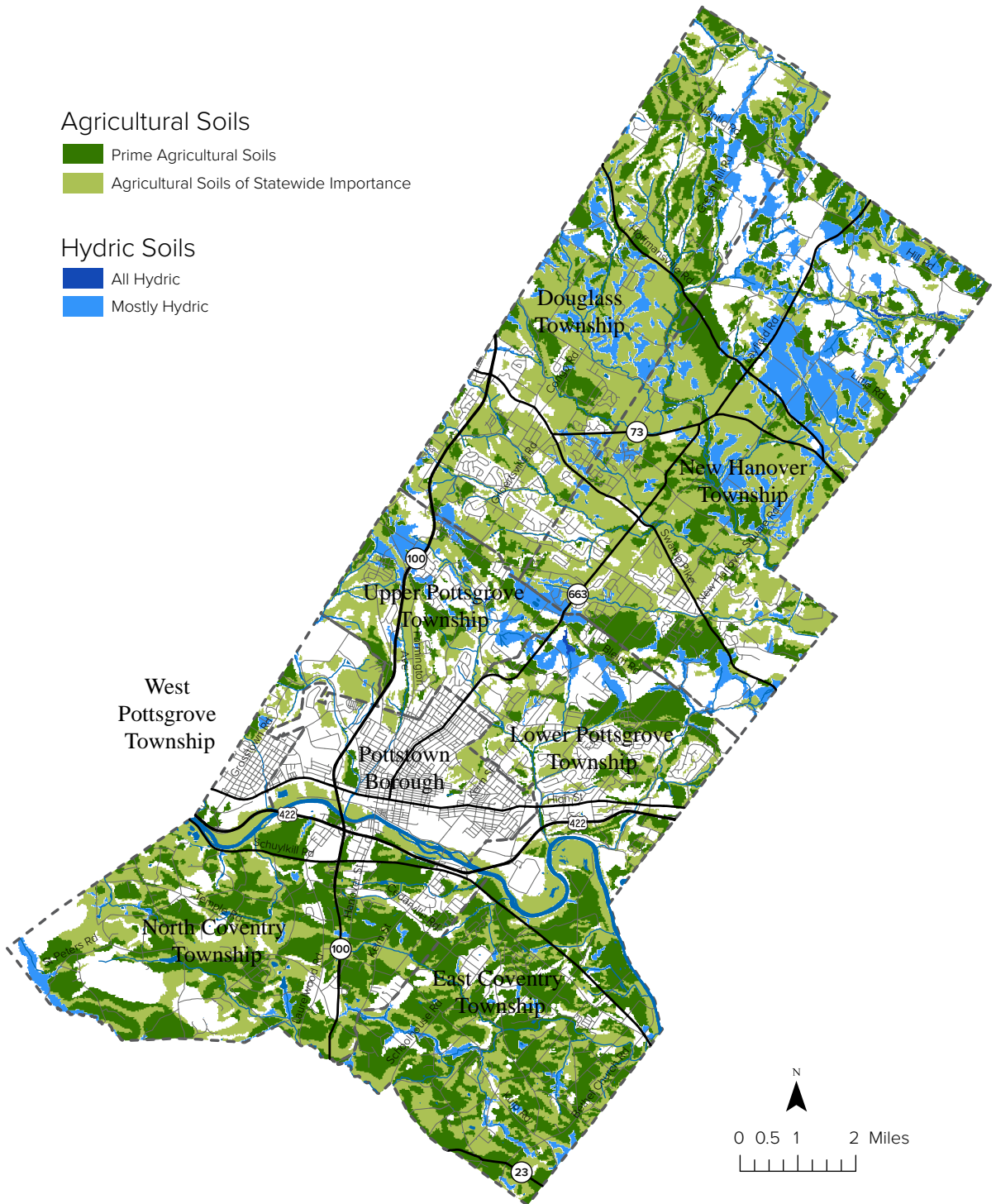
Due to the region’s agrarian history, some of the remaining areas of woodland are somewhat fragmented, which can result in an “edge effect.” Edge forests and fragmented woodlands can degrade the quality of the forest habitat and encourage invasive plants and nest parasites. Deer are also known to thrive in edge forests where they can overbrowse native vegetation and cause public health and safety issues when they enter more heavily-populated areas.



Reforestation efforts in Hickory Park, New Hanover Township.

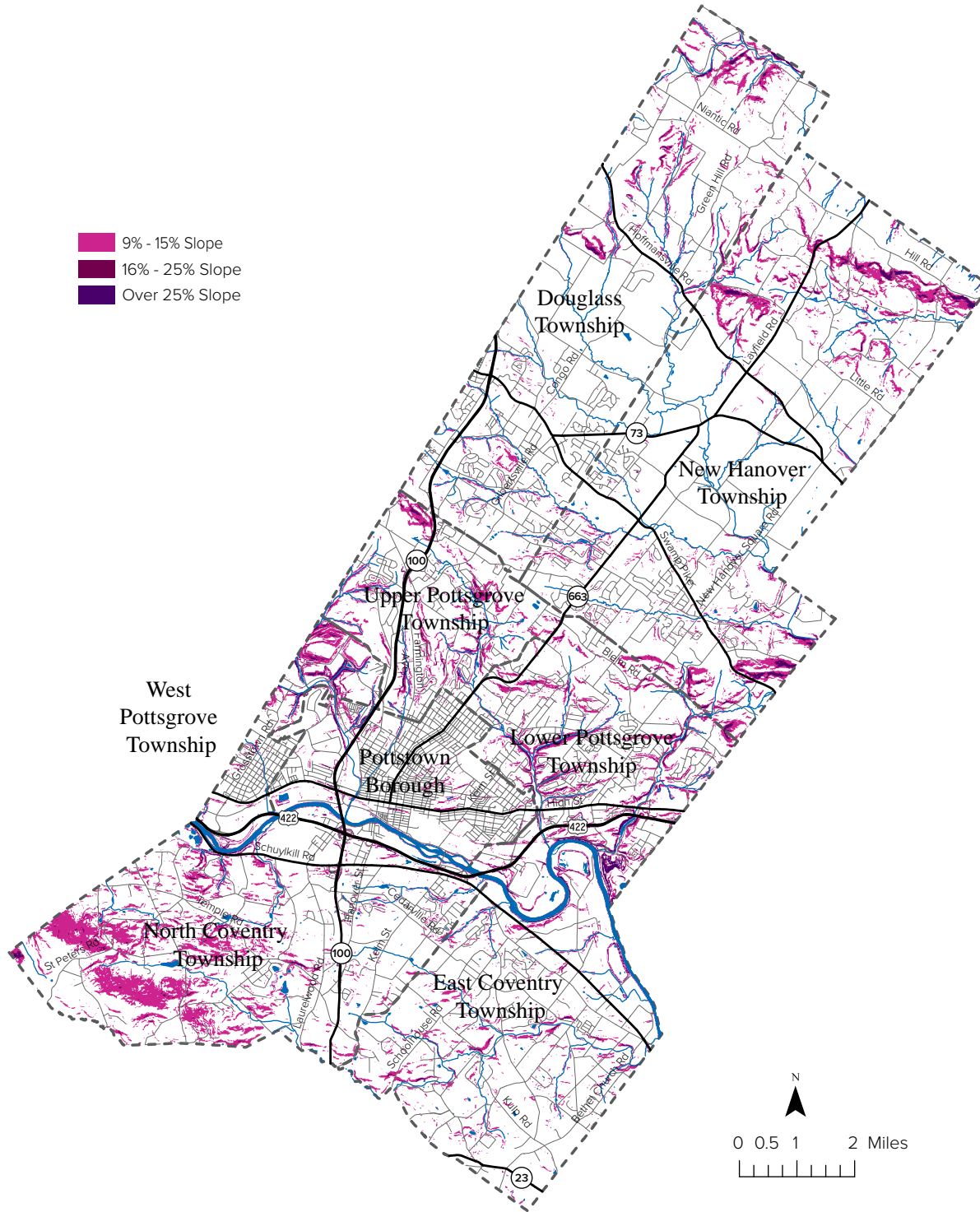
### Map 13. Soils

Source: Natural Resources Conservation Service



### Map 14. Topography

Source: U.S. Geological Survey



### Map 15. Tree Canopy Cover

Source: National Land Cover Database



## Riparian Corridor Protection

That area of land located adjacent to stream corridors and other water bodies is known as the “riparian corridor.” Existing woodlands within the riparian corridor provide many benefits such as filtering stormwater runoff, stabilizing streambanks, and providing important habitat. Therefore, the preservation and enhancement of vegetated buffer zones within riparian corridors is important to water quality and habitat protection.

Many of the regions’ stream corridors have significant tree canopy (see Map 15 on previous page). For example, Upper Pottsgrove has preserved open space and tree canopy cover along long stretches of the Sprogels Run. However, some stream corridors, especially along the Swamp Creek could benefit from additional tree canopy.

The actual make up of plant communities within the riparian corridor also influences the stream’s health. For example, replacing invasive plants with native vegetation that is suited to the riparian habitat can help further stabilize streambanks and attract native animals.



*The Region’s waterways, such as the Manatawny Creek through West Pottsgrove Township, are home to many species of birds.*

## Natural Areas Inventory

Many of the region’s important natural features have been identified and studied through a series of natural heritage inventories. Sites identified as being significant through the inventory process (see Map 16 on the following page) often contain species (plants or animals) of concern (rare, threatened, or endangered), high-quality habitats and significant geologic features. Sites with uncommon vegetation types for the county, or sites with potential to recover to natural community status are also highlighted (e.g., a forest that is returning to a more natural state after selective logging). Table 30 on page 129 summarizes the sites identified in the most recent inventories for Montgomery County and Chester County. This list is not exhaustive, and other important natural features, such as the Hopewell Big Woods, should continue to be protected and managed using best practices.



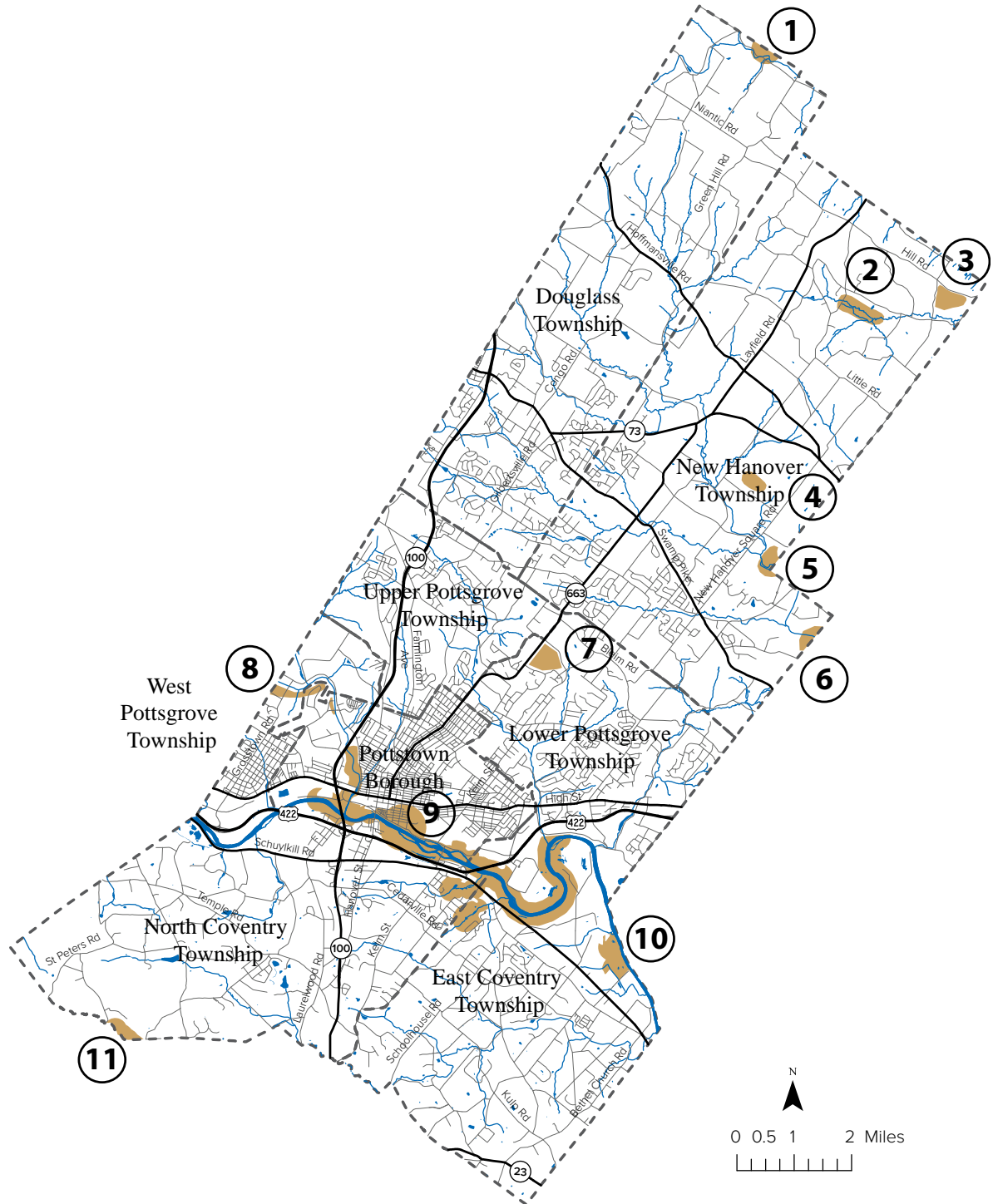
*The Schuylkill River is a distinctive natural feature for the Region.*



*Some areas of wetlands are found along the Schuylkill River.*

### Map 16. Natural Areas Inventory Sites

Source: Montgomery County Natural Areas Inventory Update (2007);  
Chester County Natural Heritage inventory Update (2015)



**Table 30. Natural Areas Inventory Sites**

Sources: Montgomery County Natural Areas Inventory Update (2007); Chester County Natural Heritage Inventory Update (2015)

Map Key	Site Name	Municipality	Description
1	Niantic Northeast Woods	Douglass	A high diversity of native spring wildflowers and tree canopy characterize this forested, south-facing diabase slope along the West Branch of the Perkiomen Creek. Management should include deer control and removal of invasive plants.
2	Deep Creek Marsh	New Hanover	A population of rare brown sedge was found in the wet meadows and marshland along Deep Creek. These areas are also likely good amphibian breeding habitat. Change in hydrology or water quality would be detrimental to the habitat.
3	Henning Road Woods	New Hanover	This site within the Deep Creek drainage basin contains a well-developed, mixed-hardwood forest community on steep slopes strewn with diabase boulders. The site also contains a well-defined shrub strata and diverse herb layer and includes a section of younger forest that serves as a buffer to the older hardwood section.
4	New Road Swamp	New Hanover	Located west of New Hanover Square Road, this site is a locally-significant example of a bottomland oak-hardwood forest community. It provides habitat for pin oak, elm, white ash, and red maple, with a well-developed shrub and herb layer. The site also provides good breeding habitat for a variety of amphibian species.
5	Laughing Waters Hemlocks	New Hanover	This site includes older-growth hemlocks on steep slopes along Swamp Creek within the Laughing Waters Girl Scout Camp. Additional trail maintenance and rerouting of the high-use trails could help to protect this natural area. The site also includes a young but healthy hardwood forest of sugar maple, shagbark hickory, and ash.
6	Camp Joy	New Hanover	This site along the Swamp Creek is characterized by a diverse forest with dozens of native species observed. Deer overbrowsing and invasive species are potential threats.
7	Ringin Rocks	Lower Pottsgrove	This “boulder belt” is identified as a significant scenic geologic feature in the state. It gets its name from the fact that various boulders ring out different sounds when struck with a hammer. The site is bordered by woodland which enhances the scenic and educational value of the site.
8	Glasgow Railroad Woods	Pottstown West Pottsgrove	These woods are identified as two separate sites with locally-significant flora along the Manatawny Creek and an adjacent railroad. The woodland buffer should be retained to discourage further encroachment of weedy species.
9	Schuylkill River – Kenilworth	North Coventry East Coventry Pottstown	Aquatic habitat at this site supports a sensitive species of concern and wells on the Pottstown side of the river were historically known to support the northernmost population of Pizzini’s cave amphipod.
10	Linfield Siltation Basin	East Coventry	Forested wetlands along the Schuylkill River support populations of two plant species of concern: Schweinitz’s flatsedge and tooth-cup.
11	Rock Run Thicket	North Coventry	Wetlands at this site support a population of sweetbay magnolia, an imperiled tree species in Pennsylvania, and a sensitive species of concern.

## Water Resource Management

The geology and climate of the Pottstown Region combine to create surface and groundwater systems that are essential to all forms of life. As part of the comprehensive plan, it is important to understand the naturally-occurring water resources within the region, and factors that influence the quality and quantity of those water resources.

### Watershed Protection

A “watershed” is defined as that area of land where water resources drain into a common water body, either overland or underground. Within each watershed, managing water resources helps to maintain healthy waterways by preserving the ecological health of an area and ensuring water supplies remain unpolluted.

The Pottstown Region is divided into two main watersheds (see Map 17 on the following page) by a large, diabase ridge located in the northern sections of Upper Pottsgrove and Lower Pottsgrove townships.

#### *Perkiomen Watershed*

Douglass and New Hanover townships, mostly north of the ridge, are located in the Perkiomen Watershed, which includes the Swamp Creek and its tributaries. Covering an area of over 360 square miles, the Perkiomen Watershed is the largest tributary of the Schuylkill River. Founded in 1964, the Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy works with the communities within the Perkiomen Watershed to conserve and protect the land and water resources and provide environmental education opportunities.

Streams of the Pottstown Region located in the Perkiomen Basin are designated Trout Stocking Fisheries, which can support stocked trout, other fish species, and additional flora and fauna that are indigenous to cold-water habitat for a limited period of time.



*Signage at Hanover Meadows Park in North Coventry Township teaches about the stormwater benefits of rain gardens.*

#### *Schuylkill Watershed*

The area south of the diabase ridge is primarily located within the Schuylkill River Watershed. The Schuylkill Watershed covers an area of 2,000 square miles and includes several major tributaries within the Pottstown Region including Manatawny Creek, Sprogels Run, and Pigeon Creek.

The Schuylkill River and unnamed tributaries are considered Warm Water Fisheries, as are the Sprogels and Sanatoga Sub-Basins. The Manatawny Creek is a Cold Water Fishery. In Chester County, the quality of

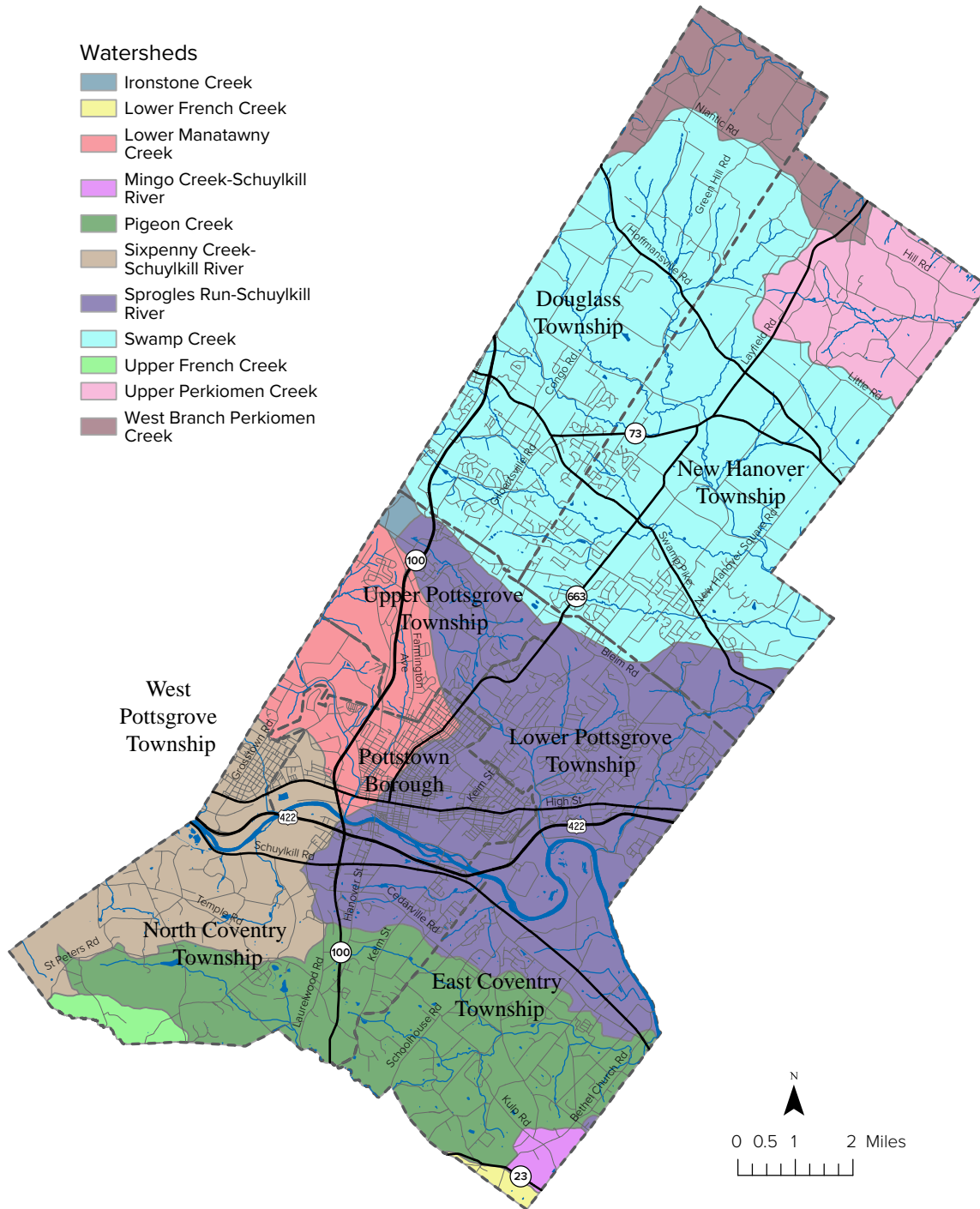
### **Perkiomen Mapping & Flood Mitigation Study**

*The Perkiomen Mapping & Flood Mitigation Study represents the first phase of a long-term effort to evaluate flooding in the Perkiomen Watershed. Extensive data collection and modeling will help identify solutions and guide future flood mitigation efforts.*

*More information: <https://www.perkiomenwatershed.org/perkiomen-flood-study>*

## Map 17. Watersheds

Source: U.S. Geological Survey





*The Schuylkill River in the winter, as viewed from Lower Pottsgrove Township.*

the streams is higher most likely due to more limited development in those drainage basins. The Pigeon Creek and Stony Run are both designated High Quality-Trout Stocking Fisheries.

## Groundwater Recharge

Maintaining the infiltration of water into the groundwater supply is a significant planning issue for conserving the quantity and quality of the Region's groundwater and surface water resources. Large areas of impervious surfaces created by development, such as parking lots and building roofs, can substantially lower infiltration compared to undeveloped land. Prime aquifer recharge areas, such as faults and seeps in the bedrock, are often in areas that are steeply-sloped, heavily-wooded, or located in areas of hydric and alluvial soils. Measures should be taken to preserve these sites in their natural state and minimize new impervious surface coverage.

The "Montgomery County 2022 Hazard Mitigation Plan"<sup>3</sup> found that Upper Pottsgrove Township and New Hanover Township are among the most vulnerable communities to groundwater supply loss, especially during times of drought because these communities have a higher number of individual on-lot wells and/or are served by water companies that rely on groundwater wells for their source water.

<sup>3</sup> Montgomery County Planning Commission. "Montgomery County 2022 Hazard Mitigation Plan." <https://www.montgomerycountypa.gov/Document-Center/View/39270/Hazard-Mitigation-Plan>

The Stafford Act (P.L. 106-390, the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000) requires state and local governments to develop and adopt a mitigation plan as a condition for receiving certain federal disaster grants and loans. The 2022 Montgomery County, Pennsylvania Hazard Mitigation Plan provides the county (and each of the municipalities in the county that adopt it) with a strategy for mitigation of natural, human, and technological disasters.

## Stormwater Management

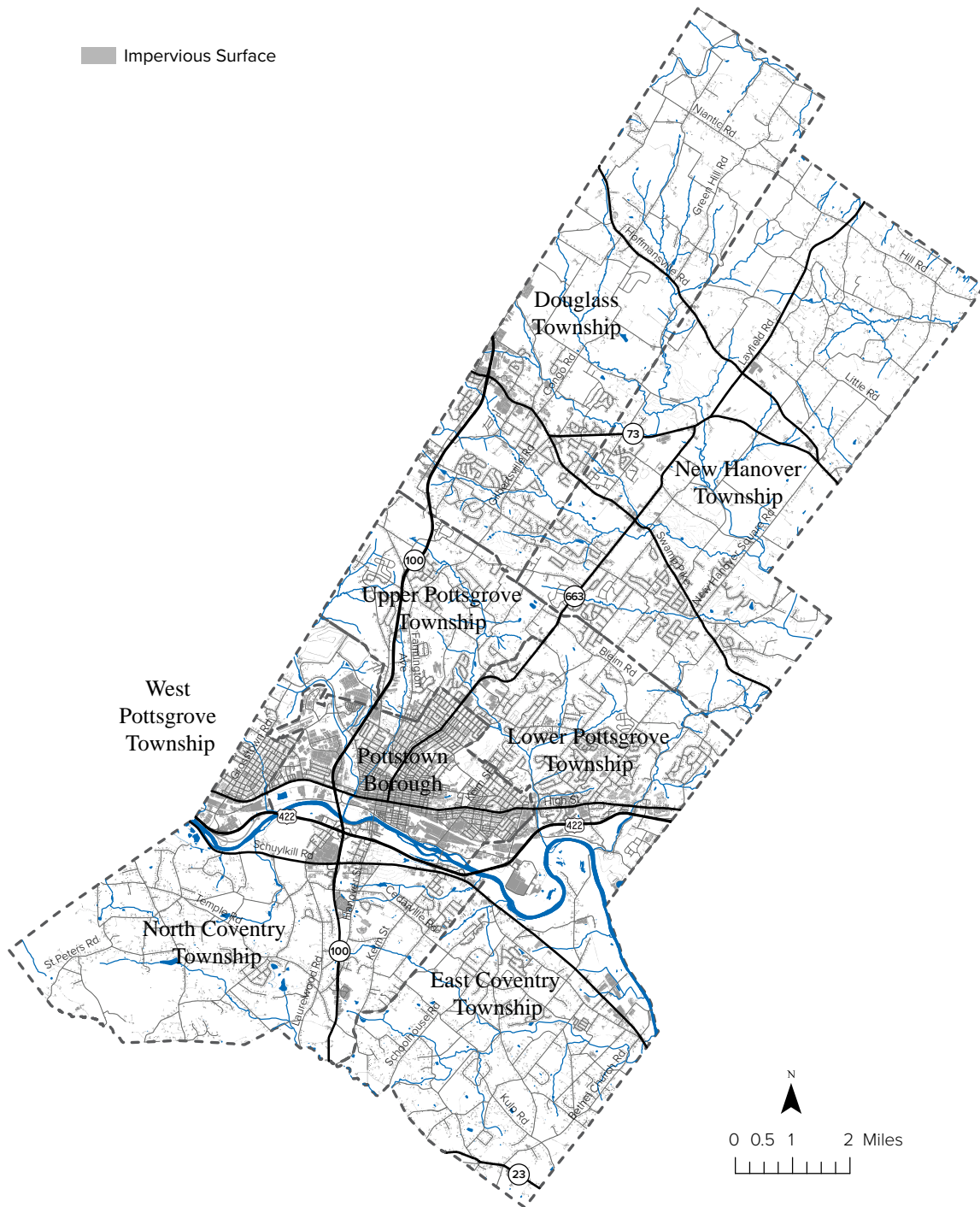
Areas with higher percentages of impervious coverage, can experience greater volumes of runoff during and after storm events, which can also result in greater erosion and sedimentation issues downstream. Map 18 on the following page shows areas of existing impervious coverage within the region, including roads, parking lots, and rooftops. Golf courses, farms,



*The parking lot for the Pottstown Carousel features a green parking area where stabilized grass pavers were used for a portion of the parking spaces.*

### Map 18: Existing Impervious Coverage

Source: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (2015)





*The Pottstown campus of the Montgomery County Community College includes green stormwater features in its parking lot.*

parcs, and low-density residential areas tend to have less impervious cover, while office and industrial campuses with large building footprints and parking lots have greater amounts of impervious cover.

Because the region's stormwater runoff drains into local streams, individual municipalities are required to maintain a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) who administers the program as part of the requirements of the Federal Clean Water Act. Every five years, DEP evaluates the MS4 program and makes adjustments as needed. One recent change requires that municipalities prepare a Pollution Reduction Plan (PRP) for impaired streams, and a TMDL plan for streams with a designated Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL).<sup>4</sup> A common reason for stream impairment within the Pottstown Region is siltation. In addition, the Schuylkill River watershed has had a TMDL in place for polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) since 2007.

## Wetlands

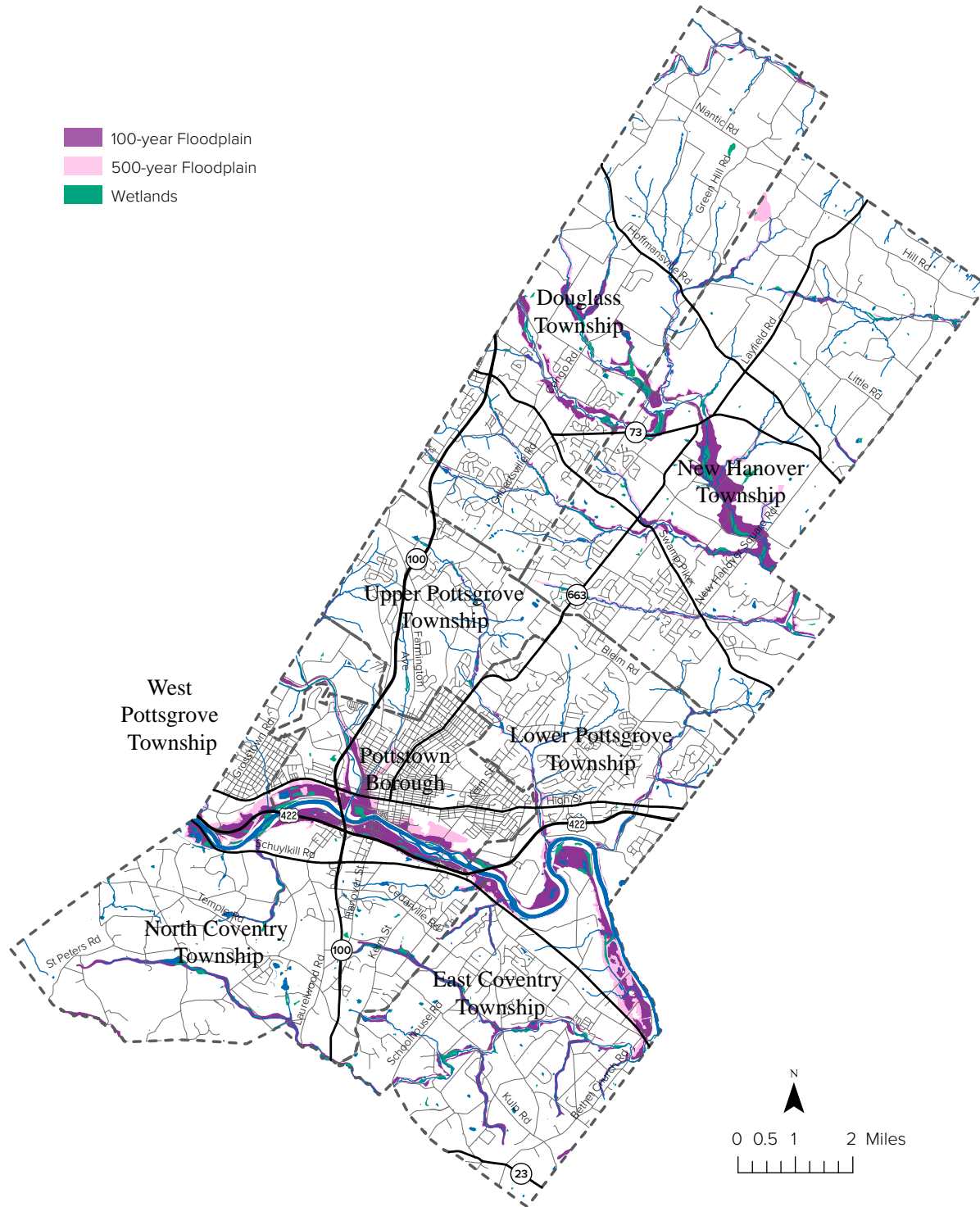
Wetlands are defined as areas of land that are either permanently or seasonally saturated with water. Wetlands provide valuable ecological benefits including riparian habitat, flood and erosion control, groundwater recharge, and filtration of pollutants and sediment from runoff. In addition, certain aquatic and amphibious animals; and different species of grasses, sedges, and wildflowers are part of the unique wetland ecosystem.

Map 19 on the following page shows the location of wetlands in the Pottstown Region, according to the National Wetlands Inventory. Wetlands are located primarily along the Schuylkill River and Swamp Creek corridors, with scattered wetlands located elsewhere within the Region. Riverine, or palustrine, wetlands are typically wetlands adjacent to rivers and streams in the region. These types of wetlands are important since they filter out impurities in stormwater before it flows into local streams.

<sup>4</sup> A TMDL is the total maximum amount of a pollutant that can be present in a water body before it is considered to be impaired. This is determined by the EPA and it establishes the necessary reduction of one or more pollutants in order for that stream to meet water quality standards.

### Map 19: Floodplains and Wetlands

Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency





*A view of South Hanover Street in North Coventry Township during a flooding event.*

## Floodplain Protection

Map 19 on the previous page also shows both the 100-year floodplain (that area of land with a 1% chance of being flooded in any given year) and the 500-year floodplain (that area of land with a 0.2% chance of being flooded in any given year), based on the 2015 Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood insurance rate maps.

The Pottstown Region's largest floodplains are located along the Schuylkill River and along the Swamp Creek and its tributaries. Other areas of floodplain are located along the many smaller stream corridors, including the Manatawny Creek and Pigeon Creek. According to the "Montgomery County 2022 Hazard Mitigation Plan," Pottstown Borough and New Hanover Township have experienced the most flood-related losses.<sup>5</sup> The "Chester County 2021 Hazard Mitigation Plan"<sup>6</sup> also noted a history of repetitive flood damage in both East Coventry and North Coventry townships. In particular, a significant flooding event caused the destruction of four homes in North Coventry Township.



*This photo shows the impact of flooding from the Manatawny Creek in Pottstown Borough in 1972.*

<sup>5</sup> The Stafford Act (P.L. 106-390, the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000) requires state and local governments to develop and adopt a mitigation plan as a condition for receiving certain federal disaster grants and loans. The 2022 Montgomery County, Pennsylvania Hazard Mitigation Plan provides the county (and each of the municipalities in the county that adopt it) with a strategy for mitigation of natural, human, and technological disasters. More information: <https://www.montgomerycountypa.gov/Document-Center/View/39270/Hazard-Mitigation-Plan>

<sup>6</sup> "Chester County Hazard Mitigation Plan," July 2021. <https://www.chesco.org/DocumentCenter/View/63888/Chester-County-HMP-July21>

## Infrastructure & Energy

Infrastructure systems that provide drinking water and convey and treat wastewater are essential to the safety and comfort of the Pottstown Region’s residents, workers, and visitors. Energy, typically in the form of electricity or natural gas, is another essential component of the region’s infrastructure.

### Water Infrastructure

A clean, reliable water supply is critical to protecting the health of the region’s residents as well as the continued economic vitality of the region. Public water suppliers currently provide service to a majority of the region’s population; however, some less developed portions of the region rely heavily on groundwater via individual wells and private community water supply systems.

#### Public Water Suppliers

The Pottstown Region is served by five different public water suppliers. Table 31 below details these suppliers, their service areas, and water sources.

### State Water Plan

*The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection is charged with maintaining a State Water Plan which studies the water resources supply within the Commonwealth and plans for the projected water needs of the population.*

*The State Water Plan outlines the regional priorities for the Delaware River drainage basin as: (1) strengthen the link between land use and water resources management; and (2) regional planning and land use coordination and collaboration, such as conducting integrated water resource planning on a holistic watershed-wide basis.*

*More information: <https://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/Water/PlanningConservation/StateWaterPlan/Pages/default.aspx>*

**Table 31: Public Water Companies Serving the Pottstown Region**

Source: Water Supply Facilities in Montgomery County, PA, 2018 Status Report. Montgomery County Planning Commission.  
[https://www.montgomerycountypa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/27739/2018WaterFacilitiesStatusReportUpdate\\_October2020\\_WEB](https://www.montgomerycountypa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/27739/2018WaterFacilitiesStatusReportUpdate_October2020_WEB)

Public Water Company	Municipalities Served in the Pottstown Region	Service Connections (2017)		Water Sources
		Residential	Non-Residential	
Boyertown Municipal Water Works	Douglass	Unknown	Unknown	Manatawny Creek
Aqua Superior Main System	Douglass	1,235	86	Groundwater wells in New Hanover and Douglass
	Lower Pottsgrove	560	72	
	New Hanover	37	7	
	Upper Pottsgrove	1,888	210	
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>3,720</b>	<b>375</b>	
Pottstown Water Authority	Lower Pottsgrove	2,001	101	Schuylkill River
	Pottstown	7,310	660	
	Upper Pottsgrove	524	20	
	West Pottsgrove	1,120	78	
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>10,955</b>	<b>859</b>	
North Coventry Water Authority	North Coventry	Unknown	Unknown	Schuylkill River (via Pottstown Borough Water Authority)
Pennsylvania American Water Company	East Coventry	Unknown	Unknown	Schuylkill River, groundwater wells
	Lower Pottsgrove	17	5	
	<b>Totals</b>	<b>Unknown</b>	<b>Unknown</b>	

### Areas Not Served by Public Water

Many residents and businesses in the Region, especially in Douglass, New Hanover, North Coventry and East Coventry townships, rely on individual sources of groundwater for their water supply. Individual on-lot wells are directly affected by a community’s natural features and the intensity of surrounding development.

The use of individual on-lot wells by more intense development in North Coventry Township in the past created concerns about the depletion of groundwater in those areas. Following an assessment of its ground water resources and capacity in 2008, North Coventry established a Water Budget Impact Zone Overlay District. The Water Budget Impact Zone applies to all areas in the township that rely on private on-lot wells for water supply. Any significant water users that are proposed within the Overlay District are required to perform a Water Budget Impact Analysis in order to guarantee that appropriate water resource standards, quantity, and quality are not violated and that the proposed development will be designed to maintain hydrologic balance and prevent significant adverse impact to overall water quality.

### Sewer Infrastructure

The foundation for sewage facilities planning in Pennsylvania is the Sewage Facilities Planning Act (Act 537 of 1966). This law requires every municipality to develop and maintain an up-to-date sewage facilities plan. The purpose of a sewage facilities plan is to correct existing threats to public health and safety,

prevent future sewage disposal problems, and protect the surface and groundwater resources of the municipality. These plans are also important tools for implementing the Comprehensive Plan by matching designated growth areas with sewer growth areas, and by adopting policies to maintain the viability of on-lot systems outside the growth areas. Every municipality in the Pottstown Metropolitan Region has adopted an Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan and is responsible for keeping the plan updated (see Table 32 below).

**Table 32: Act 537 Plan Dates**

Municipality	Plan Year
Douglass Township	2017
East Coventry Township	2003
Lower Pottsgrove Township	2010
New Hanover Township	2004
North Coventry Township	2011
Pottstown Borough	2005
Upper Pottsgrove Township	2011
West Pottsgrove Township	1991

### Sewage Treatment Plants

There are four public sewer service companies that currently serve municipalities in the Pottstown Region. Table 33 below lists the sewage treatment plants and each plant’s permitted treatment capacity and the treated water discharge locations. Map 20 on the following page shows the areas of the Region currently served by each public sewer service company.

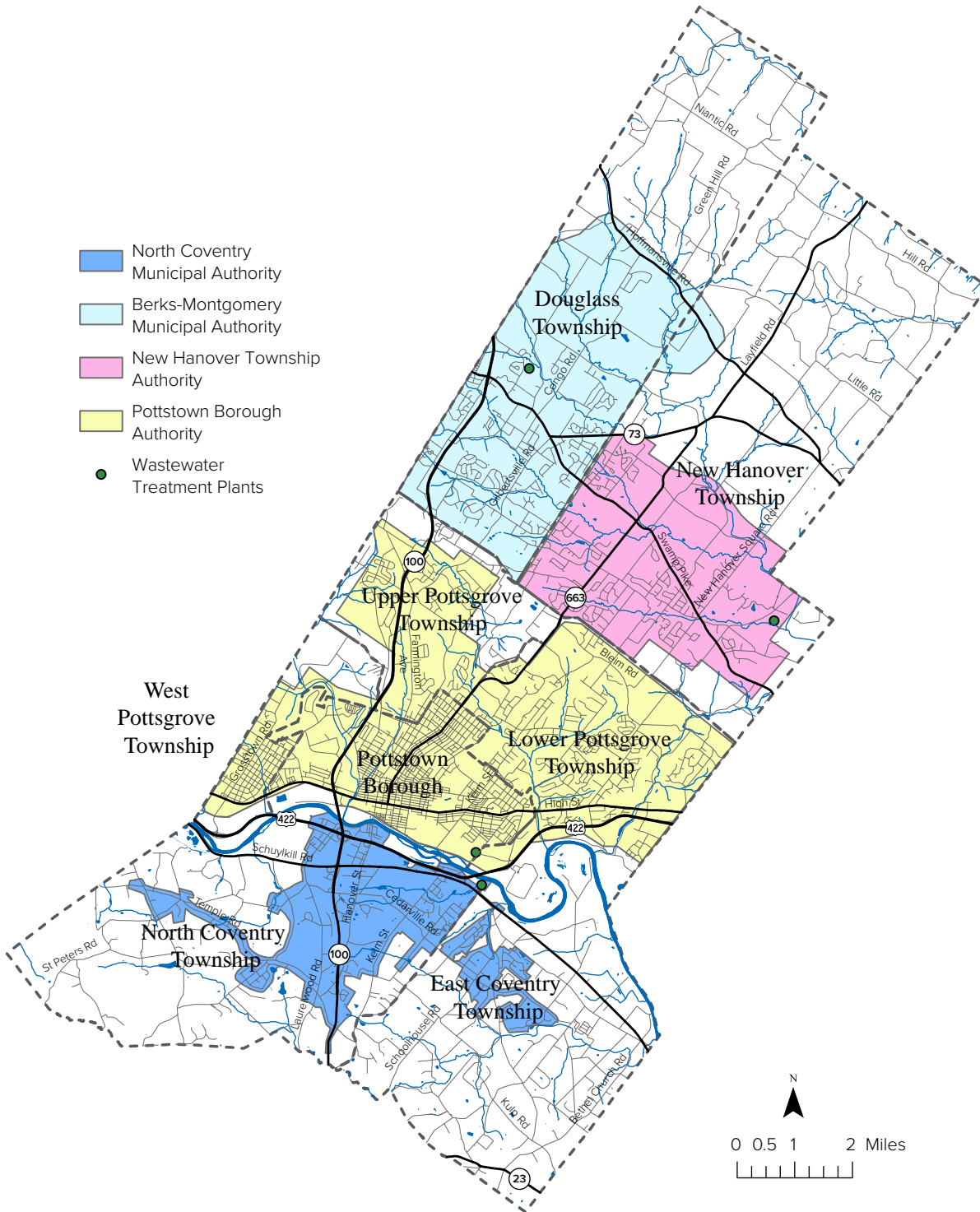
**Table 33: Sewage Treatment Plants Serving the Pottstown Region**

Source: “Sewage Treatment Facilities in Montgomery County,” Montgomery County Planning Commission (2018). <https://www.montgomerycountypa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/4343/2015-Sewage-Treatment-Facilities-Update>

Sewage Treatment Plant	Public Sewer Company	Municipalities Served in the Pottstown Region	Treatment Capacity	Excess Capacity	Treated Water Discharge Location
Pottstown Wastewater Treatment Plant	Pottstown Borough Authority	Pottstown Lower Pottsgrove Upper Pottsgrove West Pottsgrove	15.6 MGD	None	Schuylkill River
New Hanover Wastewater Treatment Plant	New Hanover Township Authority	New Hanover	3.080 MGD	2.285 MGD	Swamp Creek
Swamp Creek Sewage Treatment Plant	Berks-Montgomery Municipal Authority	Douglass	31 MGD	None	Swamp Creek
North Coventry Sewage Treatment Plant	North Coventry Municipal Authority	North Coventry East Coventry	2.01 MGD (2015 plan)	Unknown	Schuylkill River

## Map 20. Public Sewer Service Areas

Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission; Chester County Planning Commission



### *Private Sewer and On-Lot Disposal Systems in the Region*

Large portions of the region outside of Pottstown Borough, West Pottsgrove Township, and Lower Pottsgrove Township rely on either private sewage treatment facilities or on-lot sewage disposal systems. On-lot sewer systems treat and dispose of domestic wastewater through natural processes and are located on the property of the homeowner. Typically, these systems are installed in rural and semi-rural areas because of the isolation of the property they serve or because of the lack of available public sewer.

As in previous regional comp plans, this plan advocates that public sewer and water infrastructure be directed towards areas of existing developed land and identified regional growth areas, rather than undeveloped rural areas. The extension of public water and sewer service to rural areas is not only costly, these utilities, when provided, could encourage development of the Region's Conservation Areas. While public sewer and water are generally not encouraged in Conservation Areas, there are a few locations in rural areas for which provision of these services would be more appropriate, including existing rural villages, locations requiring service to protect public health, and conservation subdivisions located within ¼ mile of an identified regional growth area.

Some portions of the Region are experiencing problems with on-lot sewage systems. For those areas located within sewer growth areas, public sewer could be extended to those lots to alleviate the problem, protect local water quality, and avoid regulatory fines. However, whenever the case involves on-lot system failures in the Conservation Areas, a public sewer solution should be carefully measured against this plan's policy of limited growth and the preservation of open space in these areas. In the Conservation Areas, a public sewer solution to failing on-lot systems should be considered only as a last resort, and if used, the sewage facility infrastructure should be appropriately sized so as not to incentivize additional development.

## Energy Infrastructure

Residents and businesses in the Pottstown Region can choose to purchase electricity from a number of different companies, including renewable energy sources. However, the electric transmission system that carries the electricity in the Region is owned and maintained by either PECO or Metropolitan Edison. The Limerick Nuclear Power Station produces 40% of the electricity used in the Region. Gas supplies are obtained from interstate gas transmission companies. In addition, two liquid petroleum pipelines cross through the Region.

## Sustainable Building Design

Buildings are a major source of energy demand for heating, cooling, lighting, and ventilation. Designing and constructing buildings and building renovations with green building practices in mind can help reduce a building's energy use. Finding ways to increase the use of renewable energy is one way to help reduce the environmental impact of generating, transmitting, and using energy.



*Vertical wind turbines capture renewable energy in the parking lot of the Montgomery County Community College.*

Renewable energy refers to energy that can be harnessed from natural processes which help reduce reliance on fossil fuels and nuclear power for the region’s energy needs. Interest in constructing facilities to generate renewable energy on individual properties, such as solar panels, wind turbines, and geothermal wells, may increase as the cost of energy rises, or in response to concerns regarding the environmental impact of non-renewable sources of energy. Each municipality should have clear regulations to encourage and accommodate the appropriate and safe installation of renewable energy infrastructure.

### Renewable Energy Ordinances

*Renewable energy ordinance frameworks have been prepared by DVRPC’s Alternative Energy Ordinance Working Group that can be used as a resource for municipalities as they evaluate ordinance language relating to the construction and operation of small renewable energy infrastructure consistent with state laws, while promoting sound community development.*

*More information: <http://www.dvrpc.org/EnergyClimate/AEOWG/>*

*It is also important to keep in mind that the Montgomery County Public Health Code (Chapter 17: Individual Water Supply, Irrigation Well, and Geothermal Well System Regulations) contains regulations relevant to geothermal well installation and operation.*

*More information: <https://www.montgomerycountypa.gov/533/Individual-Water-Supply-Well-Permitting/>*



*Solar panels can be roof-mounted or ground-mounted, such as these in East Coventry Township.*

### Vehicle Emissions

According to DVRPC, a quarter of the Greater Philadelphia region’s greenhouse gas emissions come from on-road transportation. In addition to lifestyle changes that reduce vehicle miles traveled and fuel efficiency changes, electric vehicles are another way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transportation.

Battery-operated electric vehicles are increasingly becoming a popular vehicle choice due to lower maintenance and fuel costs and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. Individuals with electric vehicles can charge their vehicle’s battery by plugging it into the electric grid. Although most individuals with electric vehicles install chargers at their homes, also being able to charge your vehicle at your place of employment or while you are running errands is helpful. Therefore, incorporating EV charging infrastructure into all new development is important.



*Example of an electric vehicle charging station.*

## Waste Reduction

### Trash and Recycling

Trash, or “solid waste,” includes daily discards from residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional establishments. Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) refers only to discards from commercial and residential establishments. Act 101 of 1988, the Municipal Waste

Planning, Recycling, and Waste Reduction Act, addresses recycling, planning, permitting, and operation of facilities for municipal waste. Counties, instead of townships and boroughs, are given the responsibility of municipal waste planning and disposal.

While the 276-acre Pottstown landfill closed in 2005 after more than 70 years of operation, there are seven active municipal waste facilities located in the county as well as numerous out-of-county facilities that waste haulers can use to process municipal solid waste from the county.

#### Recycling Grant Programs

*The Act 101 Recycling Performance Grant Program provides grants to municipalities that offer recycling programs. Grant amounts are based on the weight of approved recyclable materials collected annually, as well as the municipality’s population. Both residential and commercial recyclables can count towards the municipality’s grant amount. Therefore, detailed and accurate reporting of recyclables collected by all haulers that operate within a municipality is important.*

*The Pennsylvania DEP also offers Recycling Program Development and Implementation Grants that reimburse counties and municipalities 90% of eligible recycling program development and implementation expenses, such as educational programs, curbside recycling bins, and leaf waste processing programs.*

*More information: <http://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/Land/Waste/Recycling/Municipal-Resources/FinancialAssistance/Pages/Recycling-Performance-Grants.aspx>*

*<https://www.dep.pa.gov/Business/Land/Waste/Recycling/Municipal-Resources/FinancialAssistance/Pages/902-Recycling-Grant-Application-Guidelines.aspx>*

### Yard Debris and Composting

In general, food waste accounts for up to 40% of solid waste by weight. By encouraging households and institutions to compost their kitchen scraps, the total weight of solid waste generated can be greatly reduced. Reducing the amount of food waste in a community’s trash can also reduce the unpleasant odors associated with trash collection and improve overall recycling rates.

Many of the Region’s residential lots are large enough to accommodate on-site composting of food waste and smaller yard debris, such as leaves. Offering educational programs and low-cost compost bins to residents could help increase the practice of residential composting.

#### Residential Composting Guidelines

*The Montgomery County Planning Commission publication “Suburban Homestead: A Primer on Best Practices and Management” provides guidance and resources for residential agriculture practices, including backyard composting.*

*More information: [https://www.montcopa.org/DocumentCenter/View/21788/Suburban-Homestead\\_web](https://www.montcopa.org/DocumentCenter/View/21788/Suburban-Homestead_web)*

## Recommendations

**RECOMMENDATION 10.** Preserve and enhance the Region’s natural resources, including streams, floodplains, riparian corridors, and wooded areas.

**Implementation Strategies:**

- 10a. Encourage preservation of sensitive natural resources areas, including the Schuylkill Highlands and Hopewell Big Woods, as well as all other woodlands, stream systems, wetlands, steep slopes, and wildlife, especially along the Schuylkill River.
- 10b. Promote the stewardship of natural lands and pursue best management practices that will limit fragmentation and restore links between forests, reduce invasive plant species in the Region, promote wildlife diversity, and improve water quality.
- 10c. Protect existing groundwater resources and provide for groundwater recharge in the designs of new development.
- 10d. Maintain updated municipal-level floodplain ordinances to comply with any changes in federal floodplain regulations and/or mapping.
- 10e. Consider adopting consistent riparian corridor conservation zoning district language.
- 10f. Evaluate ways to protect critical infrastructure (e.g., wastewater treatment plants) from flood risk.
- 10g. Require street trees and other landscaping as part of all new development.

**RECOMMENDATION 11.** Encourage stormwater best management practices as part of each municipality’s MS4 permit requirements.

**Implementation Strategies:**

- 11a. Maintain updated Act 167 plans and work towards implementing recommendations.
- 11b. Work to implement any adopted TMDL or pollution reduction plans to address identified sources of contamination within the Region’s waterways and work to avoid future regulatory requirements through implementation of stormwater best management practices.
- 11c. Evaluate municipal ordinance updates to encourage the proper application of stormwater best management practices.

- 11d. Educate homeowners on ways they can naturally control stormwater runoff on their individual properties (e.g., rain barrel distributions, rain garden workshops).

**RECOMMENDATION 12.** Encourage the use of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies.

**Implementation Strategies:**

- 12a. Consider ways to encourage the proper installation and use of renewable energy facilities.
- 12b. Consider ways to encourage the installation of electric vehicle charging stations.
- 12c. Consider conducting municipal or regional-level energy management audits to identify opportunities to improve energy efficiency within municipal operations.

**RECOMMENDATION 13.** Coordinate water and sewer infrastructure at the regional level.

**Implementation Strategies:**

- 13a. Use public sewer and water facilities efficiently by extending these systems concurrently only within designated growth areas.
- 13b. Permit only low-density development in areas not served by public sewer (a minimum land area per unit is necessary for proper on-lot sewage disposal and groundwater infiltration).
- 13c. Limit individual wells in large residential subdivisions (DRBC permits for wells that withdraw more than 10,000 gallons per day provide additional protection for existing users).
- 13d. Require public water in all areas utilizing public sewer to avoid excess groundwater extraction without infiltration on-site.
- 13e. Maintain updated Act 537 plans (sewage facilities plans) and continue to monitor on-lot sewage disposal systems.

**RECOMMENDATION 14.** Increase the Region’s recycling rate and reduce the Region’s overall production of solid waste.

**Implementation Strategies:**

- 14a. Continue to pursue funding opportunities through the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to advance municipal recycling and waste reduction efforts.
- 14b. Continue to partner with Montgomery County and Chester County to encourage residents to

- participate in household hazardous waste and other special collection events that are offered annually across the Southeastern Pennsylvania area.
- 14c. Consider ways to encourage residential and institutional composting (e.g., compost bin distributions, workshops).
  - 14d. Periodically evaluate opportunities to standardize trash pickup within each municipality or between multiple municipalities.
  - 14e. Periodically evaluate opportunities to offer additional yard waste collections and/or drop-off events such as Christmas tree recycling collection events.



# Parks and Open Space

Protection of open space for use as active and passive recreation, conservation of sensitive features and natural resources, and preservation of agricultural lands is an essential component of the Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Comprehensive Plan and a priority of the Region's eight municipalities.

This chapter describes the open space, parkland, and other types of preserved lands within the Pottstown Region and identifies recommendations for increasing the acreage, function, and value of these open spaces. As additional open space is protected, these lands should be integrated into a regional green infrastructure system that can provide many recreational opportunities and environmental benefits for the Regional community.

## Community Survey Feedback

When asked to select what they think should be the priority initiatives for the Pottstown Region over the next 20 years, over 66% of community survey respondents selected “protect natural resources and open space” as one of their top three choices (the highest percentage of any selection).

Based on the community survey results, over 28% of respondents visit a local park, community center, trail, or other recreation site in the Pottstown Region daily or several times per week.

The vast majority of respondents (74%) primarily use the local parks and trails for walking, jogging, running, or hiking; followed by dog park/dog walking (30%), playground/tot lot (28%), and bicycling (21%). Although generally satisfied, respondents would like to see more recreation opportunities for teens and adults.

The most popular recreation sites across the Region include: the Schuylkill River Trail, Riverfront Park, Memorial Park, Althouse Arboretum, and New Hanover Community Park.

## Regional Parks & Open Space Inventory

Pages 149-164 include maps and tables detailing the Region’s existing parks and open spaces for each municipality. The facilities are separated into the following categories based on ownership and function.

### Municipally-Owned Parks and Open Space

The Region’s eight municipalities each own and maintain parks and open space of various sizes containing a range of recreational amenities and opportunities to experience and enjoy the Region’s unique natural features and history.

#### *Community Parks*

These parks are the Region’s “core parks” which are meant to provide for the active recreation needs for a large service area within the community and are typically around 20 acres or larger in size. Community parks all contain multiple elements of active recreation.

#### *Neighborhood Parks*

Similar to community parks, neighborhood parks include multiple active recreation elements, but are typically between 1 and 10 acres in size and are meant to serve a large neighborhood, rather than the community at-large.

#### *Tot Lots*

These parks are often small (around 1 acre or less in size), located within denser residential neighborhoods, and typically contain playground equipment and facilities meant to serve families with small children in the immediate neighborhood.

#### *Passive Open Space*

Passive open space, also referred to as greenway parks in the 2015 comprehensive plan, provide passive recreation opportunities, such as walking, hiking, and enjoyment of nature, and provide protection for significant natural resources.

### County- and State-Owned Parks and Open Space

In addition to the Region’s municipally-owned open space, there are several areas of open space preserved in the Pottstown Region by Montgomery County, Chester County, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. For example, the Historic Pottsgrove Manor in Pottstown Borough is owned by Montgomery County and French Creek State Park in North Coventry Township is state-owned. Schuylkill River Trail lands on either side of the river are part of the Montgomery County and Chester County open space systems.



*Event at Pottsgrove Manor, a Montgomery County historic site in Pottstown Borough.*

## Private Open Space

Open space set-aside as part of a land development and maintained by a homeowner’s association (HOA) is an example of private open space. Not all private open space is permanently protected, such as most golf courses, meaning that some land that might be perceived as open space could potentially be redeveloped in the future. This category also includes land preserved through conservation easements held by non-profits such as the Brandywine Conservancy.

## Preserved Farms

For the purposes of more fully visualizing the amount of “open space” within the region, Maps 21-28 also include preserved farmland.

Agriculture has historically played an important role in the Region’s history and economy and continues to influence the rural character of the Region that is valued by many residents. In fact, over half of community survey respondents selected “preserve agricultural land the Region’s rural character” as one of their top three priority initiatives for the Region.

Montgomery County and Chester County both have farmland preservation programs that permanently preserve agricultural lands, which prevents other types of more intensive development. Both the Montgomery County Farmland Preservation Program and the Chester County Department of Open Space Preservation utilize county, state, and local funding to purchase agricultural easements on productive farms. In 2024, there were 189 farms in Montgomery County and 570 farms in Chester County permanently preserved.

Within the Pottstown Metropolitan Region, there are currently 53 preserved farms in Montgomery County, totaling 3,390 acres and 11 preserved farms in Chester County, totaling 974 acres (see Table 34 below). In total, since 2014, 7 new farms have been preserved in the Region, increasing the acreage of preserved farms by 12%.

**Table 34. Preserved Farmland Inventory**

Source: Montgomery County, Chester County

Municipality	Number of Farms		Total Acreage of Farms	
	2024	2014	2024	2014
Douglass Township	35	35	2,140	2,140
New Hanover Township	19	15	1,352	1,061
<b>PMRPC Total within Montgomery County</b>	53	50	3,390	3,201
<b>Totals for All of Montgomery County</b>	189	150	10,558	--
East Coventry Township	3	2	327	241
North Coventry Township	8	6	647	552
<b>PMRPC Total within Chester County</b>	11	8	974	793
<b>Totals for All of Chester County</b>	570	378	44,002	--



*Preserved farm in Douglass Township.*

## Existing & Planned Trails

Trails are an important component of the recreation system in the Region. According to the community survey, walking-jogging-running-hiking is the most common recreational activity the region's residents participate in with nearly 74% of respondents indicating they participate in this activity.

The existing trails that help connect the region's parks, often following stream corridors and the Schuylkill River, are shown in Maps 21-28. Proposed trails from the 2018 "A Circle of Progress: The Greater Pottstown Trails Feasibility Study," as well as recent township trails studies, are also shown.



*The Schuylkill River Trail through East Coventry Township.*

### Chester County Trails Master Plan

*In 2024, the Chester County Planning Commission released the Chester County Trails Master Plan to strategically guide the future development of a public trail network connecting across the entire county. The county-wide trail network includes over 300 miles of existing and proposed trails, including an alternative conceptual alignment for the "Coventry Trail" connecting French Creek State Park and Coventry Woods in North Coventry Township to the Schuylkill River Trail in East Coventry Township.*

*More information: <https://www.chescoplanning.org/Publications/PDF/TrailsMasterPlan.pdf>*

### Table 35. Douglass Township Parks & Open Space Inventory

Sources: 2015 PMRPC comp plan, Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, *PARRC*

Name	Type	Amenities	Acres
Douglass Park	Community Park	Multi-use fields (3), soccer/lacrosse field, basketball courts (2), tennis courts (2), baseball/softball field with concession/restroom building, pavilions (2), picnic tables, playgrounds (2), walking trails, open space	19.6
Libor Tract/Congo Open Space	Passive Open Space	Mostly wooded, walking paths, pavilion, open space	38.2
Keller Woods Open Space	Passive Open Space	Wooded open space and walking trails	33.2
Moyer Open Space	Passive Open Space	Wooded open space	9.1
Merkel Open Space (f.k.a. Rhoads Property)	Passive Open Space	Wooded open space	7.5
Municipal Drive Open Space	Passive Open Space		5.2
Smith Road Park	Passive Open Space	Swings, open space, pavilion	4.6
Colonial Manor	Passive Open Space		4.0
Nelmore Park	Passive Open Space		2.2
<b>Total Municipally-Owned Parks &amp; Open Space</b>			123.6
Various	Private Open Space		204.4
<b>Total All Parks &amp; Open Space</b>			328.0



*Douglass Park picnic pavilion*



*Douglass Park soccer field*



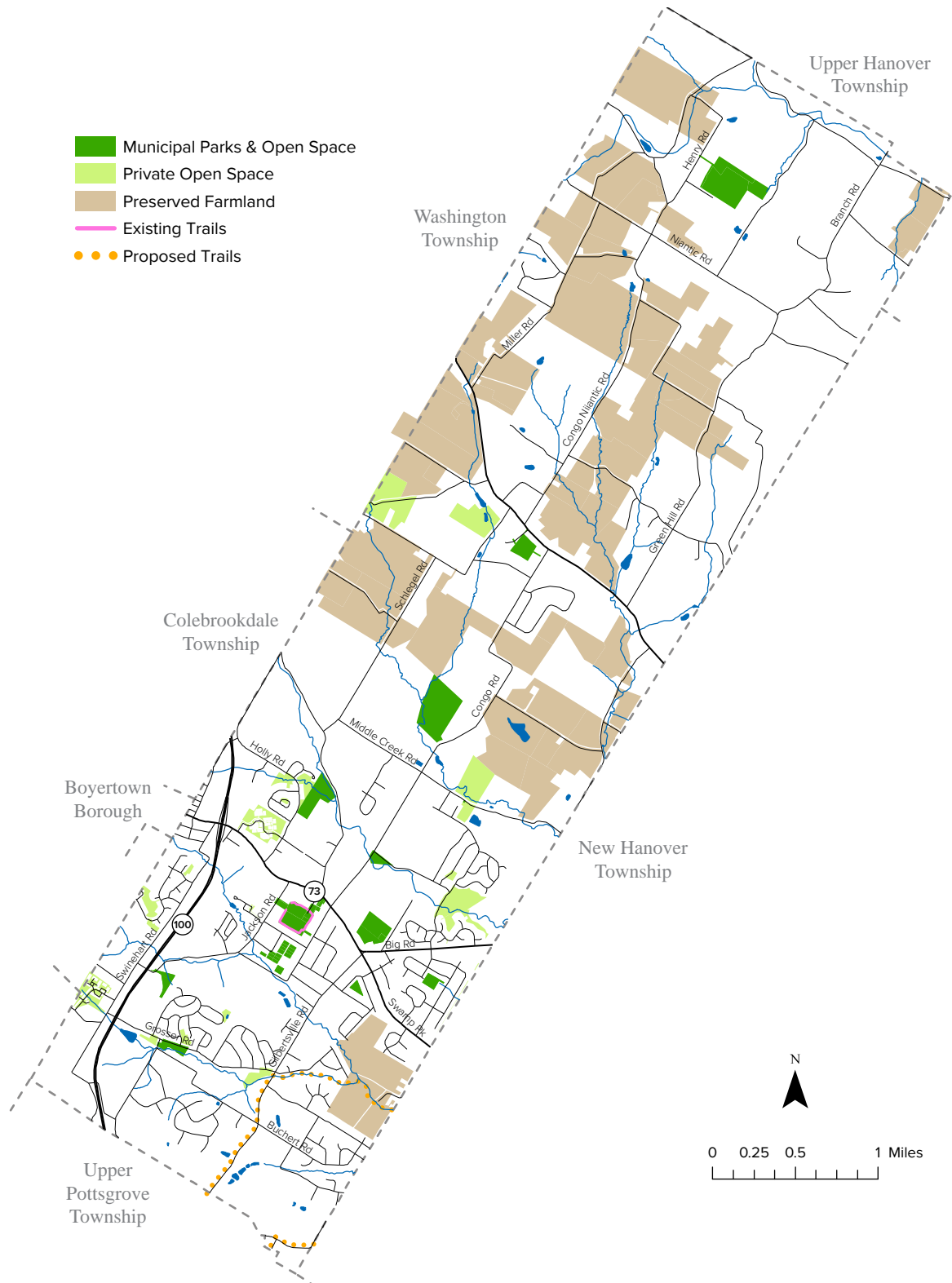
*Preserved farm in Douglass Township*



*Keller Woods Open Space*

### Map 21. Douglass Township Parks & Open Space

Sources: 2015 PMRPC comp plan, Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, *PARRC*



### Table 36. East Coventry Township Parks & Open Space Inventory

Sources: 2015 PMRPC comp plan, *Chester County Protected Open Space Map, PARRC*

Name	Type	Amenities	Acres
Ellis Woods Park	Community Park	Playgrounds (2), pickleball courts (3), half-court basketball, picnic pavilion, benches, accessible loop path, woodland, meadows, agricultural fields, earthen trails, open space	70.9
Towpath Park	Community Park	Playground, picnic pavilions (2), benches, boat dock and ramp to Schuylkill River, open space	7.5
East Coventry Nature Preserve	Passive Open Space		148.4
Heyser Tract	Passive Open Space		28.2
Faulk Tract Open Space	Passive Open Space		13.3
Wade Tract/Parker Ford Park	Passive Open Space		6.7
Fricks Lock Village	Historic District/Open Space		8.4
<b>Total Municipally-Owned Parks &amp; Open Space</b>			283.4
Linfield County Preserve	Passive Open Space		72.6
Sanatoga County Preserve	Passive Open Space		123.8
Schuylkill River Trail	Trail		4.0
<b>Total Chester County-Owned Parks &amp; Open Space</b>			200.4
Various	Private Open Space		577.8
<b>Total All Parks &amp; Open Space</b>			1,061.6



Trails at Ellis Woods



Ussler agricultural easement



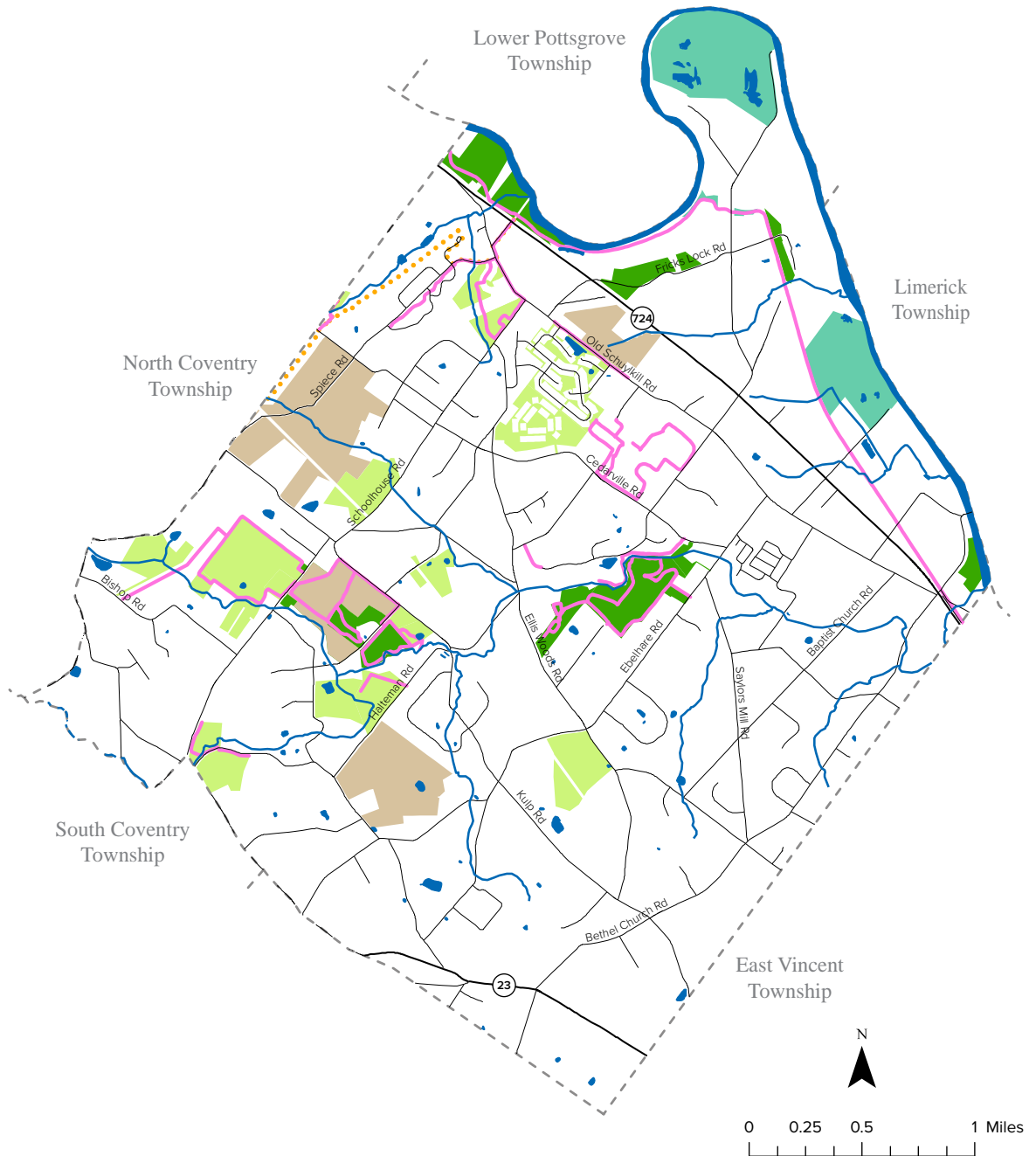
Ellis Woods Park pickleball courts



Trails at Ellis Woods signage

### Map 22. East Coventry Township Parks & Open Space

Sources: 2015 PMRPC comp plan, *Chester County Protected Open Space Map, PARRC*



### Table 37. Lower Pottsgrove Township Parks & Open Space Inventory

Sources: PMRPC 2015 comp plan, Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, Lower Pottsgrove Township 2019 open space plan updates, *Lower Pottsgrove Township, PARRC*

Name	Type	Amenities	Acres
Sanatoga Park	Community Park	Baseball field, soccer fields (2), playground, band shell, restroom building, Lake Sanatoga, wooded open space	54.0
Gerald G. Richards Park	Community Park	Paved loop path, playground, basketball court, baseball/softball fields (4), soccer fields (4), fitness stations, benches, open space, concession/storage/restroom building	30.8
Spring Valley Farms	Passive Open Space		83.8
Snell, Norton & Kelius Park	Passive Open Space		45.1
Ringing Rocks Park	Passive Open Space	Wooded open space with walking paths	38.4
Sprogels Run Park (f.k.a. Romer-Bateman Tract)	Passive Open Space	Open space, walking trails	22.2
Pleasant View Park	Passive Open Space		17.9
Schuylkill River Park	Passive Open Space	Open space, walking trails	12.3
Alfred B. Miles Park	Passive Open Space	Unpaved trail, multi-purpose open space, picnic table & natural study areas	8.9
Shaners Grove	Passive Open Space	Sub-facility of Ringing Rocks Park with pond and wooded area	2.8
Crimson Lane Open Space	Passive Open Space		0.7
Liberty Hill Open Space	Passive Open Space		0.3
Keim Street Open Space	Passive Open Space	Garden and gazebo	0.2
Pruss Hill Barn	Passive Open Space		0.8
<b>Total Municipally-Owned Parks &amp; Open Space</b>			318.2
Schuylkill River Trail	Trailhead		21.9
<b>Total Montgomery County-Owned Parks &amp; Open Space</b>			21.9
Various	Private Open Space		221.9
<b>Total All Parks &amp; Open Space</b>			562.0



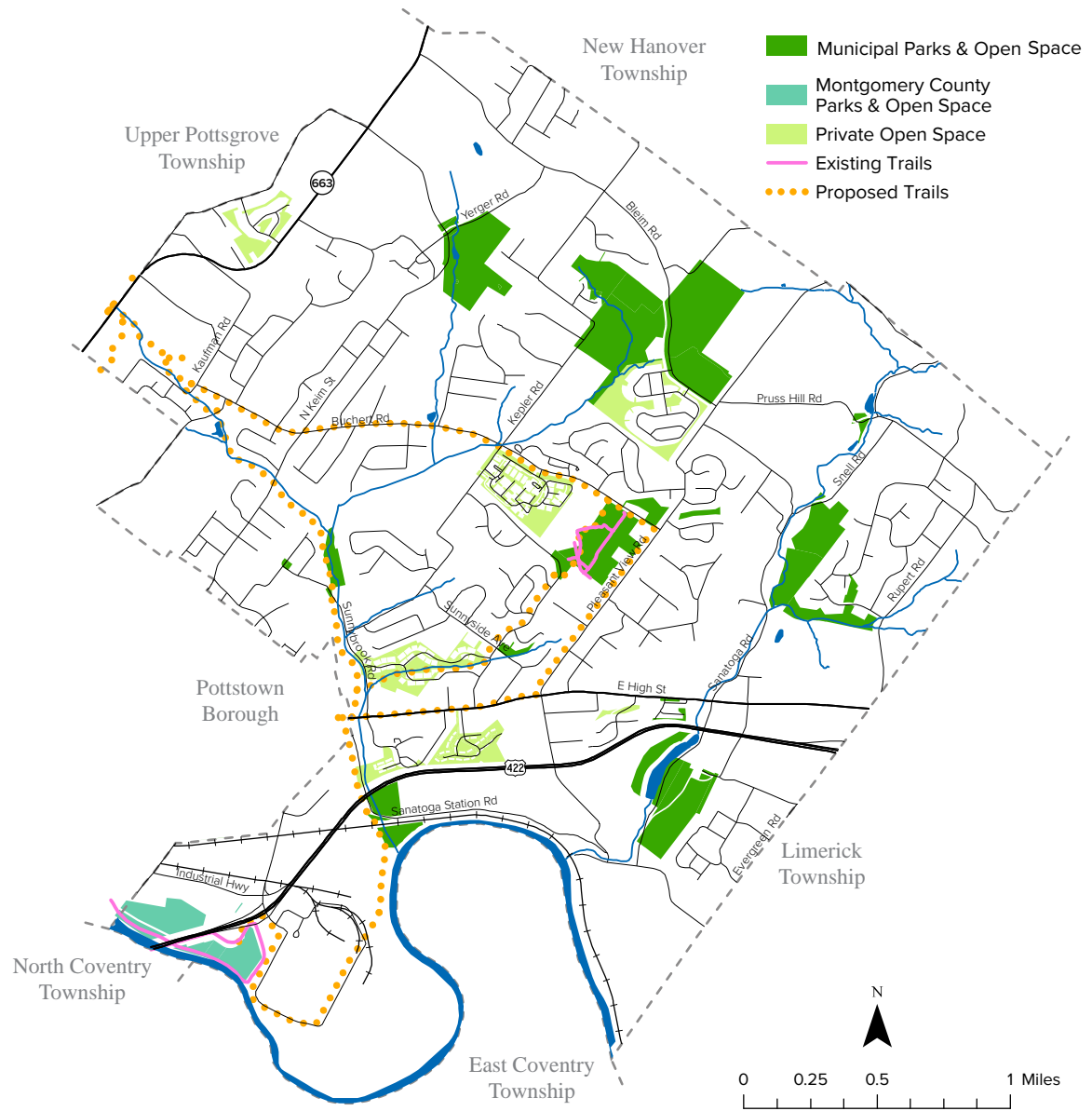
Sanatoga Park Lake



Ringing Rocks Park

### Map 23. Lower Pottsgrove Township Parks & Open Space

Sources: PMRPC 2015 comp plan, Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, Lower Pottsgrove Township 2019 open space plan updates, *Lower Pottsgrove Township, PARRC*



Gerald Richards Park playground



Community concert in township park

### Table 38. New Hanover Township Parks & Open Space Inventory

Sources: PMRPC 2015 comp plan, New Hanover Township 2021 comp plan, Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, "New Hanover Township Comprehensive Parks Map", New Hanover Township, New Hanover Township

Name	Type	Amenities	Acres
Layfield Park/Wassmer Athletic Fields	Community Park	Soccer fields (3), meadow/open space	93.4
Swamp Creek Park	Community Park	Model airplane flying, walking trail (0.8 miles), historical school house, playground, dog-friendly	32.6
New Hanover Township Community Park	Community Park	Barn rental, children's traffic garden, baseball/softball field, basketball court, disc golf, hockey court, walking trail, pavilion rental, picnic tables, grills, playground, dog-friendly	29.2
Windlestrae Park and Fields	Community Park	Multipurpose recreational fields, playground	26.5
Hickory Park	Community Park	Swimming pool, concession stand, pavilion rentals, grills, playground, volleyball, fishing, gaga ball pit, horseshoes	20.7
New Hanover Recreation Center	Community Center	Indoor gymnasium, kitchen, conference room, classrooms	12.1
Briar Ridge Park	Neighborhood Park	Playground, open space	11.3
Middle Creek Athletic Fields	Neighborhood Park	Baseball field, soccer fields (2), picnic tables	10.6
Anthony "Tony" Gambone Sports Complex	Neighborhood Park	Football fields (2)	9.4
Parestis Property	Passive Open Space		18.0
Pleasant Run Park	Passive Open Space	Fishing pond, benches	11.1
Hunter's Run Open Space	Passive Open Space	Playground, picnic table	10.6
Deep Creek Nature Park	Passive Open Space	Trails, bird watching, picnic tables	10.8
Kurtz Road Open Space	Passive Open Space		9.0
Rosenberry Road Open Space	Passive Open Space		5.5
Swamp Pike Open Space	Passive Open Space		0.9
<b>Total Municipally-Owned Parks &amp; Open Space</b>			311.7
Montgomery County Land	Passive Open Space		4.7
<b>Total Montgomery County-Owned Parks &amp; Open Space</b>			4.7
Various	Private Open Space		759.8
<b>Total All Parks &amp; Open Space</b>			1,076.2



Hickory Park



Pleasant Run Park



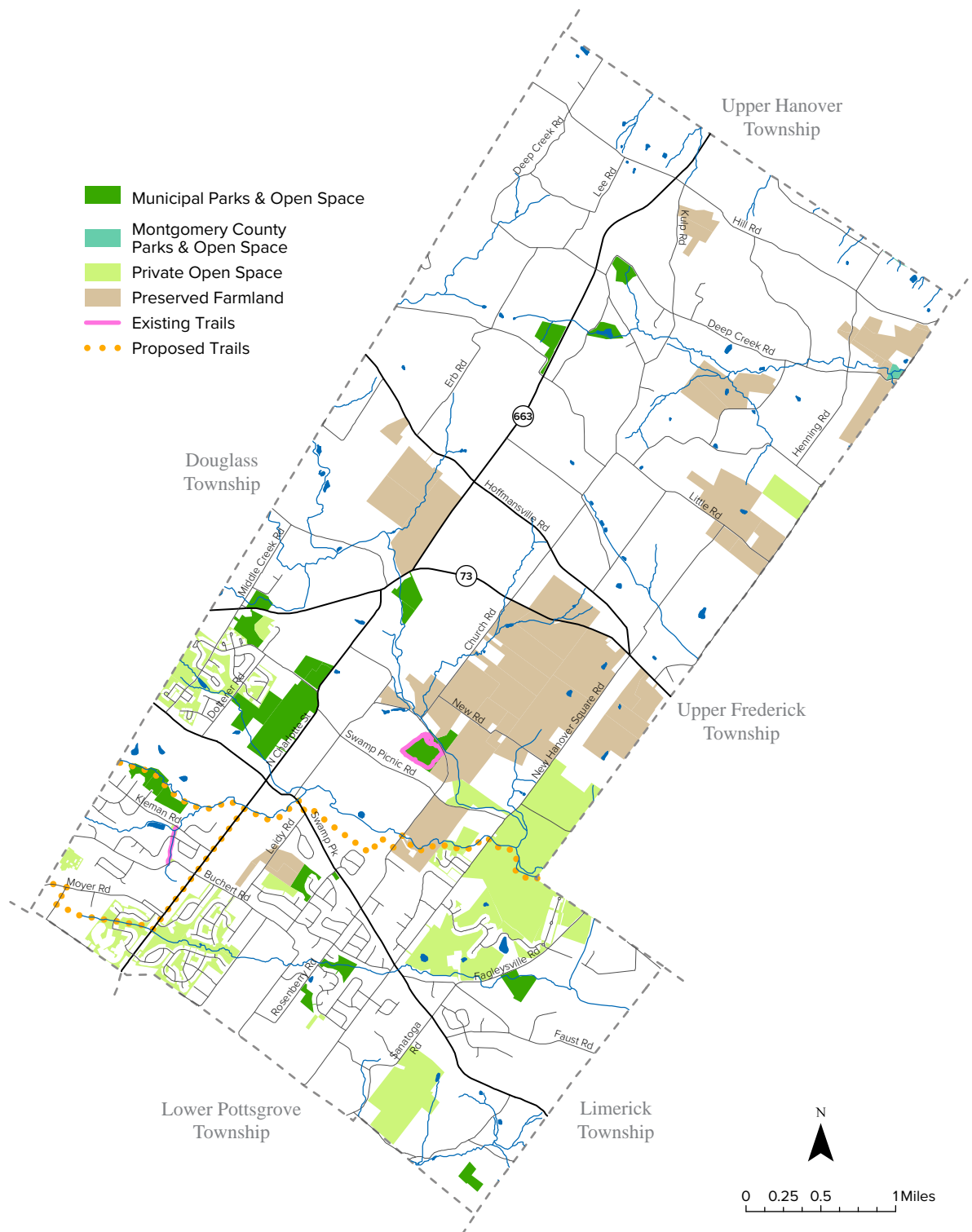
Community pool and playground at Hickory Park



Tot lot in residential development

### Map 24. New Hanover Township Parks & Open Space

Sources: PMRPC 2015 comp plan, New Hanover Township 2021 comp plan, Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, "New Hanover Township Comprehensive Parks Map", New Hanover Township, New Hanover Township



### Table 39. North Coventry Township Parks & Open Space Inventory

Sources: PMRPC 2015 comp plan, New Sources: PMRPC 2015 comp plan, North Coventry Township 2019 comp plan, North Coventry Township, Chester County Protected Open Space Map, PARRC

Name	Type	Amenities	Acres
Coventry Woods Park	Community Park	Mostly woodland, walking/hiking trails throughout, lodge/multi-use building, craft center building, environmental education cabins, pavilion, picnic tables, basketball court, open space	702.0
Kenilworth Community Park	Community Park	Half woodland and open space (lawn), disc golf course (18 holes), baseball fields (2), soccer and multi-use field, tennis courts (2), playground, walking paths	53.2
Hanover Meadows Park	Community Park	Open space with trees, multi-use field, meadow, walking path, restrooms	21.3
Riverbend Park	Neighborhood Park	Baseball/softball fields (2), soccer/lacrosse field, pavilion, accessible playground/swings, gaga pit, picnic tables	11.7
Riverside Park	Neighborhood Park	Playground, open space with lawn, basketball courts (2), boat ramp, picnic tables, benches	4.0
Bickle Run Open Space	Passive Open Space	Trails, open space	31.8
Shenkel Hill Park	Passive Open Space	Trails, open space	26.5
Schuylkill Corridor Lots	Passive Open Space		9.4
Cedarville Trail	Passive Open Space	Trails, open space	8.8
Riverside Avenue Play Lot	Passive Open Space		0.9
Bryton Avenue Park	Passive Open Space		0.8
<b>Total Municipally-Owned Parks &amp; Open Space</b>			870.3
French Creek State Park	Passive Open Space		274.6
<b>Total State-Owned Parks &amp; Open Space</b>			274.6
Various	Private Open Space		66.5
Various	Land Trust Easements		57.8
<b>Total All Parks &amp; Open Space</b>			1,269.2



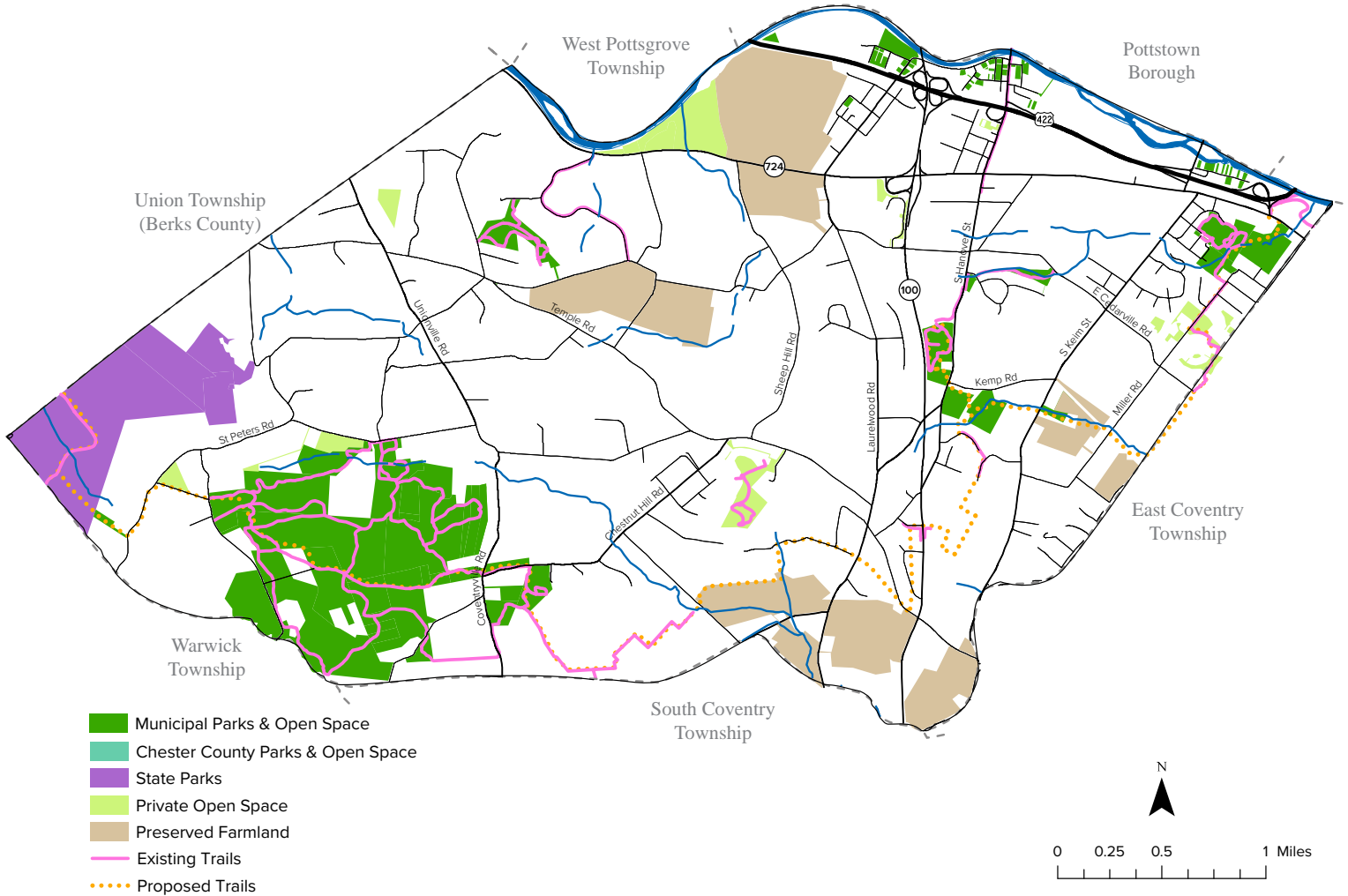
Hanover Meadows Park



River Bend Park playground and picnic pavilion

### Map 25. North Coventry Township Parks & Open Space

Sources: PMRPC 2015 comp plan, North Coventry Township 2019 comp plan, *North Coventry Township, Chester County Protected Open Space Map, PARRC*



Coventry Woods hiking trail



Laurel Locks Farm

**Table 40. Pottstown Borough Parks & Open Space Inventory**

Sources: PMRPC 2015 comp plan, Pottstown Borough 2014 comp plan, Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, *PARRC*, *Pottstown Borough*

Name	Type	Amenities	Acres
Memorial Park	Community Park	Baseball/softball fields (2), multi-use fields, playground, basketball court, pavilion, gazebo, picnic tables, spray park, BMX track, skate park, war memorials, open space, walking paths	78.0
Maple Street Park	Neighborhood Park	Playgrounds, picnic pavilion, baseball/softball fields (2), tennis courts (3), picnic tables, benches, open space	5.9
The Pottstown Carousel & Manatawny Green	Neighborhood Park	18-hole mini-golf course, concession building, carousel	2.3
Pollock Park	Neighborhood Park	In redevelopment. Soccer mini-pitch planned. Future site of dog park and playground.	2.0
Spruce Street Park	Neighborhood Park	Playground, basketball courts (2), open space, bench	1.0
Terrace Lane Park	Neighborhood Park	Playground, pavilion, half basketball court, benches, picnic tables, open space	0.9
Potts Drive Park	Neighborhood Park	Playground, basketball court, open space	0.6
Cross Street Park	Neighborhood Park	Basketball courts (2), benches, open space	0.6
Brookside Park	Neighborhood Park	Playground, half basketball court, picnic table, open space	0.5
Cherry Street Park	Neighborhood Park	Playground, picnic table, benches, open space	0.3
Chestnut Street Park	Neighborhood Park	Playground, pavilion, amphitheater, benches, open space	0.3
South Street Park	Neighborhood Park	Playground, benches, picnic table, basketball court, open space	0.3
Walnut Street Park	Tot Lot	Playgrounds, benches, picnic table, open space	0.2
Washington West Park	Tot Lot	Playgrounds, benches, picnic tables, open space	0.4
Richard J. Ricketts, Sr. Park & Community Center	Community Center	Educational/recreational/wellness programs and after-school programs	1.3
Riverfront Park	Passive Open Space	Pavilions (2), trails, amphitheater, wooded open space, picnic tables, benches	60.0
Manatawny Creek Open Space	Passive Open Space		3.7
Smith Family Plaza	Passive Open Space	Plaza, benches, fountain	1.6
Jackson Street Open Space	Passive Open Space		0.7
College Drive Park	Passive Open Space		0.4
Center Avenue Open Space	Passive Open Space		0.2
Evans Street Open Space	Passive Open Space		0.1
<b>Total Municipally-Owned Parks &amp; Open Space</b>			161.1
Pottsgrove Manor	Historic Site		1.7
<b>Total Montgomery County-Owned Parks &amp; Open Space</b>			1.7
Various	Private Open Space		87.0
<b>Total All Parks &amp; Open Space</b>			249.8

### Map 26. Pottstown Borough Parks & Open Space

Sources: PMRPC 2015 comp plan, Pottstown Borough 2014 comp plan, Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, PARRC, Pottstown Borough



Washington West Park playground



Basketball courts at Spruce Street Park



Riverfront Park



BMX track at Memorial Park

**Table 41. Upper Pottsgrove Township Parks & Open Space Inventory**

Sources: PMRPC 2015 comp plan, Upper Pottsgrove Township 2020 open space plan, *Upper Pottsgrove Township, PARRC*

Name	Type	Amenities	Acres
Hollenbach Park	Community Park	Woodland, open space, soccer fields (2), playground, walking trails	24.2
Althouse Arboretum	Community Park	Mostly wooded, stone and earthen trails, pavilion, meadow, open space, low ropes course, outdoor classrooms, administration building, recreation/camp/environmental programs	15.6
Hoffman/Kulp Fields	Community Park	Baseball/softball fields (2), open space	10.5
Chestnut Grove Park	Neighborhood Park	Soccer field, benches, woodland, walking trails	13.2
Heather Place Park	Neighborhood Park	Playground, pavilion, picnic tables, basketball court, open space	6.4
Cherry Tree Park	Tot Lot	Playground	1.5
Smola Open Space	Passive Open Space		35.2
Fox Hill Trailhead & Open Space	Passive Open Space	Walking trails, open space	30.7
Sunset Park	Passive Open Space	Woodland, small pavilion, picnic tables, walking trails	28.9
Prout Farm Park	Passive Open Space	Woodland, meadow, community garden, walking trails	27.0
Stauffer Woods Open Space	Passive Open Space		21.4
Sussell Park	Passive Open Space	Open space, pond, walking trails	19.4
Schwenk Road Open Space	Passive Open Space	Planned connection to Sprogels Run Trail via Sussell Park	18.3
Boerner Open Space	Passive Open Space		14.8
Farmington Avenue Open Space	Passive Open Space		12.1
Cherry Tree Farms Open Space	Passive Open Space		11.8
Bealer Open Space	Passive Open Space		7.0
Malmberg Open Space	Passive Open Space		6.6
Mocharniuk Meadows	Passive Open Space	Walking trails, open space	6.2
Turnberry Farms Open Space	Passive Open Space		6.2
West Moyer Open Space	Passive Open Space		6.1
O'Neill Open Space	Passive Open Space		1.3
<b>Total Municipally-Owned Parks &amp; Open Space</b>			324.3
Various	Private Open Space		85.1
<b>Total All Parks &amp; Open Space</b>			409.4



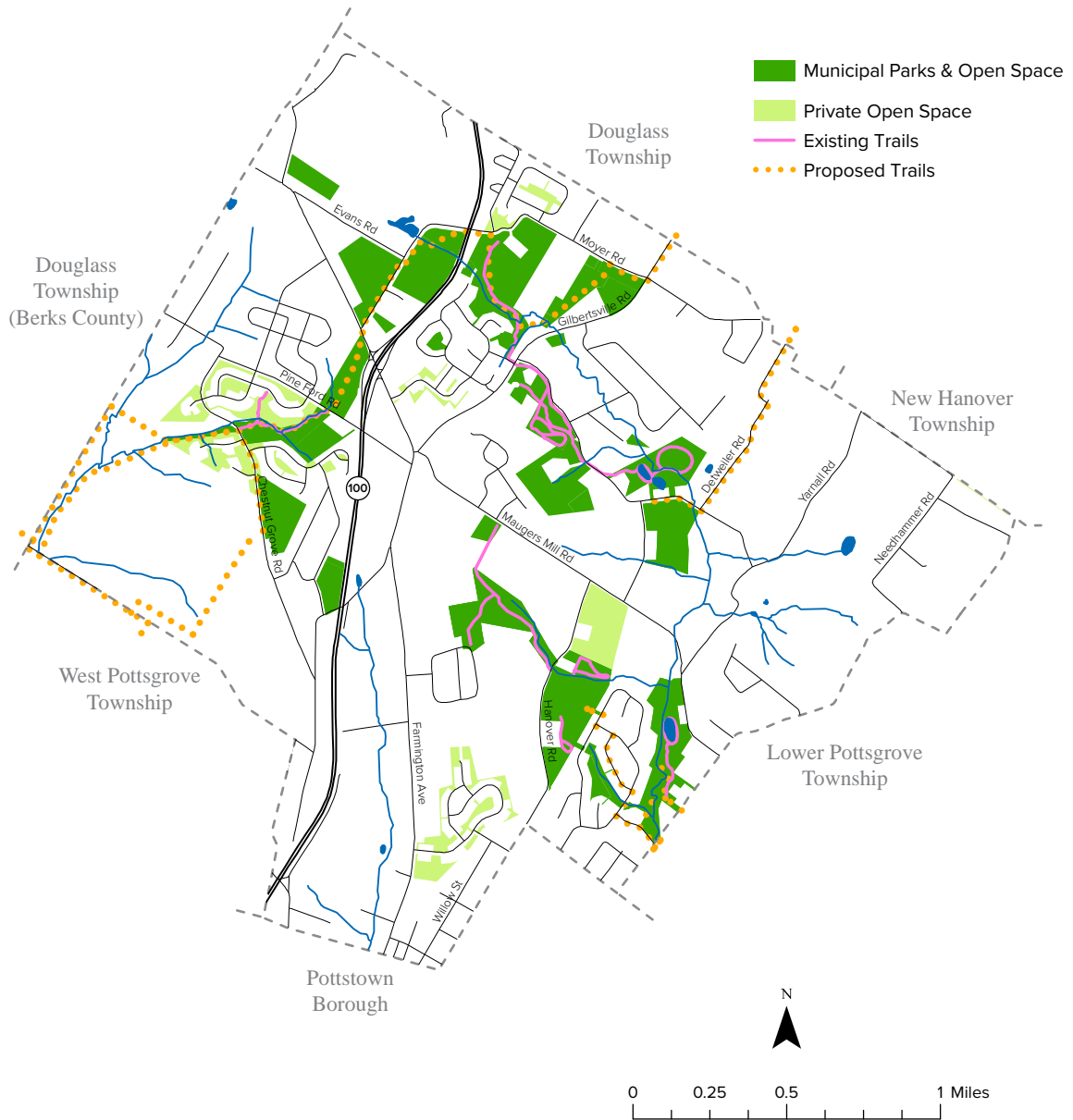
Althouse Arboretum



Fox Hill Trail map

### Map 27. Upper Pottsgrove Township Parks & Open Space

Sources: PMRPC 2015 comp plan, Upper Pottsgrove Township 2020 open space plan, *Upper Pottsgrove Township, PARRC*



Sunset Park



Maack Tract

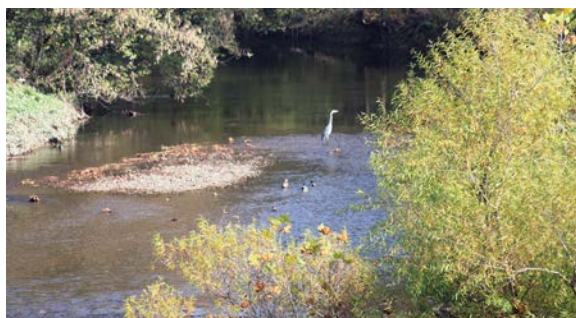
### Table 42. West Pottsgrove Township Parks & Open Space Inventory

Sources: PMRPC 2015 comp plan, Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, [PARRC](#)

Name	Type	Amenities	Acres
Old Timer's Field	Community Park	Baseball field, basketball court, playground, pavilion, picnic tables, concession/restroom building. Site also contains township administration, police, and utility buildings.	10.4
Vine Street Park	Tot Lot	Playground, picnic table	1.0
Howard Street Park	Tot Lot	Playground, picnic table	0.4
Ralph F. Murgia Park	Passive Open Space	Walking path, benches, picnic tables, open space, fishing platform	22.3
Edgewood Drive Open Space	Passive Open Space		3.7
Pulaski Street Open Space	Passive Open Space		2.5
Grosstown Road Open Space	Passive Open Space		1.0
Veteran's Memorial Park	Passive Open Space	Former pool site; master plan completed for park development	1.0
Race Street Open Space	Passive Open Space		0.7
Bowman Alley Open Space	Passive Open Space		0.4
Kristen Circle Open Space	Passive Open Space		0.3
Lemon Street Open Space	Passive Open Space		0.2
Holly Drive Open Space	Passive Open Space		0.2
<b>Total Municipally-Owned Parks &amp; Open Space</b>			44.3
<b>Total All Parks &amp; Open Space</b>			44.3



Ralph Murgia Park



Manatawny Creek through Ralph Murgia Park



Vine Street playground



Old Timer's baseball field



## Pottstown Area Regional Recreation Committee

The Pottstown Area Regional Recreation Committee (PARRC) was established as a sub-committee of the Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Planning Committee in 2012 with the support and guidance of the Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation. Soon thereafter, a five-year “Circuit Rider” grant was secured from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) to fund a full-time regional recreation coordinator position. After the original five-year grant period, the participating municipalities and PAHWF committed to fully funding the recreation coordinator position locally so that the program could continue. In October of 2020, the participating municipalities signed an intergovernmental agreement to make PARRC an independent organization and in 2023 a 501(c)(3) foundation was established to support PARRC’s mission.

Seven of the eight PMRPC municipalities, excluding New Hanover Township, participate in PARRC. Washington Township in Berks County, also joined PARRC in 2022. The participating municipalities benefit from the expertise of the Regional Recreation Planner, as well as each other, as they collaborate during regular meetings. PARRC has helped raise awareness of and support for local parks and trails through outreach, events, grant fundraising, and master planning.

## Pottstown Parks and Recreation Improvement Mini-Grant Program

The Pottstown Parks and Recreation Improvement Mini-Grant Program was created in 2012 as a way to fund park improvements that increase park usage and improve the health of area residents. The program is jointly-administered by PMRPC and the Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation (PAHWF), and is supported by grant funding from DCNR that is matched 50:50 by PAHWF. All eight of the municipalities within the PMRPC region are eligible to apply for mini-grant funding, during each grant round.

Throughout five rounds of funding since 2012, the program has awarded nearly \$900,000 in cash grants to municipalities, which has in-turn funded a total of 35 park development projects (such as trails, pavilions, basketball and pickleball courts, and ADA accessibility improvements) and 13 park planning projects.

## Parks & Open Space Planning

While guidance for the amount and type of recreation land to provide a community has shifted away from empirical measurements, such as an acreage per capita, it is important to consider other ways to ensure that the proper mix of open space and recreation opportunities exist within each municipality, or region.



Several improvements have been completed at Douglass Park in Douglass Township through the regional parks and recreation improvement mini-grant program.



*Riverfront Park in Pottstown Borough contains a portion of the Schuylkill River Trail and other recreation space while also serving as a green space to protect the riparian edge of the Schuylkill River.*



*Woodlands are one of the important natural resources studied when developing the Multi-Regional greenway and Stewardship Study.*

A new systems approach, developed by the National Recreation and Park Association and the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration, looks at the level of service provided to the users of the facilities, rather than the size of the facilities based upon population. The desired “level of service” should be determined at the local level through an evaluation of existing conditions, public input, and needs assessment. This method reflects, in part, the dual function of municipal parkland: providing recreation opportunities (passive and active) and protecting important natural features.<sup>1</sup>

Since this plan does not provide specific criteria or recommendations for municipal acquisition of new parkland and open space areas, such decisions should be made in accordance with each municipality’s individual procedures and open space priorities, which should be reflected in local parks and open space plans. As municipalities undertake updates to their parks and open space plans, consideration should be given to integrating the broad policy recommendations within this regional comprehensive plan.

## Multi-Regional Greenway and Stewardship Study

Increased focus upon inter-municipal connections (through greenways, continuous preserved open space, and trail connections) and cooperation can greatly enhance the value of existing open space and permit consideration of future acquisitions within a regional context. Natural resources and environmental assets such as floodplains, stream corridors, wetlands, groundwater, steep slopes, and woodlands cross municipal lines and benefit from regional-level analysis and protection.

Building off of the success of the four regional planning groups in Montgomery County, between 2015 and 2019 these groups collaborated with the Montgomery County Planning Commission and Natural Lands on the “Multi-Regional Greenway and Stewardship Study”<sup>2</sup>. The goals of the study were to delineate an interconnected conceptual greenway system spanning the four regions, identify issues and opportunities, develop an overarching stewardship guide, and provide specific recommendations related to particular resources.

<sup>1</sup> “A New Approach to Parks and Recreation System Planning.” National Recreation and Park Association. <https://www.nrpa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2020/november/a-new-approach-to-parks-and-recreation-system-planning/>.

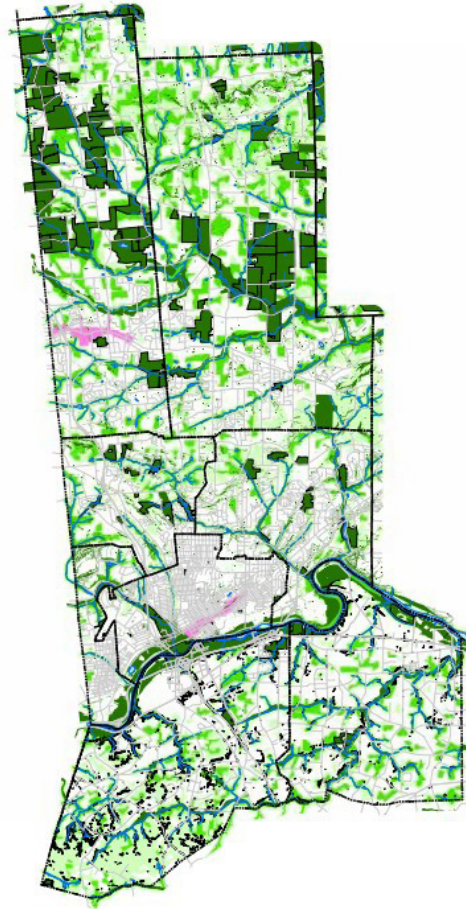
<sup>2</sup> “Multi-Regional Greenway and Stewardship Study: Pottstown Metropolitan Region,” Montgomery County Planning Commission. <https://www.montgomerycountypa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/37377/Region-4-Pottstown>

### Greenway Definition

Greenways, as envisioned through the multi-regional greenway planning effort, are “meant to focus on natural resource and habitat conservation as well as recreational, educational, and economic development opportunities provided by all kinds of conserved lands.”

The multi-regional greenway is made up of:

- **Main Street Greenways** – identified as the key town and village centers that are best positioned to take advantage of the greenway system.
- **Rural Greenways** – identified through a region-wide analysis to integrate preserved parks, farmland, conservation lands, and large tracts of privately-owned lands containing important natural resources. Rural Greenways are divided into preservation, management, and conservation zones.



- Preservation Zone
- Management Zone
- Conservation Zone
- Main Street Greenway



When all of the greenway zones are put together, a large interconnected system of natural features is established.

### Stewardship Zones and Protection Strategies

In order to tailor stewardship strategies to each unique resource, the conceptual greenway system (which was identified through a mapping analysis of floodplains, wetlands, steep slopes, riparian buffers, and adjacency to preserved land or greenway area) was divided into zones based upon the specific resource elements, each with a varying toolkit of recommended conservation strategies and policies:

**Rural Greenway – Preservation Zone.** The foundation of the rural greenway system is the preservation zone. This encompasses lands that contain the 100-year floodplain, steep slopes (25% and greater), and wetlands. This zone also includes all protected land (e.g., publicly-owned land, privately-protected conservation lands, preserved farmland). The key strategies for these lands are local resource protection regulations and ongoing stewardship of conserved lands.

**Rural Greenway – Management Zone.** The management zone within the rural greenway

is primarily those lands identified as “priority management lands,” which include many riparian corridors (100-foot wide buffer) and serve as connectors between preserved lands and other concentrations of resources. Recognizing that many of the lands within these areas are privately-owned, key strategies for this zone are focused on education and outreach regarding stewardship principles that can help guide property owners in natural resource conservation on their individual properties.

**Rural Greenway – Conservation Zone.** The final piece of the rural greenway involves the most widespread resources: the 300-foot riparian buffer and areas of woodlands that do not overlap with the previously identified zones. The larger riparian buffer (of which the first 100 feet is located in the Management Zone) and large areas of contiguous woodland are important from a wildlife habitat and biodiversity standpoint.

**Main Street Greenway.** The Village of Gilbertsville in Douglass Township and portions of High Street through downtown Pottstown Borough are both identified as Main Street Greenways because of their strategic location in relationship to the greenway system. For example, High Street in Pottstown Borough is positioned to take advantage of the natural resource tourism benefits of access to the Schuylkill River Trail. See *the Economic Development chapter for more information.*

## Stewardship Guide & Municipal Assessments

The Stewardship Guide, an integral part of the “Multi-Regional Greenway and Stewardship Study,” explains the stewardship assessment process and offers a detailed examination of specific elements that make for successful stewardship of open space and greenways. As a demonstration of the value of the Stewardship Guide, a stewardship assessment applying the recommendations of the Guide was prepared for 13 park and open space properties from across the Region’s eight municipalities (see list to right). These assessments are included in the Study Appendix.

The most common stewardship issues identified include: encroachment from neighboring properties, overabundant deer, invasive plants and exotic pests, soil and streambank erosion, tree regeneration issues, and nearby land uses which have the potential to impact water quality on-site. These individual assessment reports can act as case studies for the region and may act as an example for future efforts.

### Stewardship Assessments by Municipality

#### *Douglass Township*

- *Keller Woods*
- *Libor Property*

#### *East Coventry Township*

- *Ellis Woods Park*

#### *Lower Pottsgrove Township*

- *Ringing Rocks Park*
- *Snell & Norton Park*

#### *New Hanover Township*

- *Deep Creek Nature Center*
- *New Hanover Community Park*

#### *North Coventry Township*

- *Kenilworth Park*

#### *Pottstown Borough*

- *Memorial Park*
- *Riverfront Park*

#### *Upper Pottsgrove Township*

- *Hollenbach Park*
- *Sussell Park*

#### *West Pottsgrove Township*

- *Murgia Park*

## Open Space Preservation Techniques

### Local Funding for Open Space

A total of 8 municipalities in Montgomery County and 33 municipalities in Chester County have enacted a local earned income tax (EIT) dedicated to the acquisition and development of open space, as authorized by the Pennsylvania Open Space Lands Act. Open space EIT rates that have been enacted range from 0.05% to 0.25% in Montgomery County and 0.079% to 1.08% in Chester County. In order to enact this tax, the governing body must first provide for a referendum on the question of the open space EIT by ordinance, and a majority of local voters must vote in favor of the imposition of the tax. Within the Pottstown Region, East Coventry Township, North Coventry Township, New Hanover Township, and Upper Pottsgrove Township have all enacted an open space EIT.<sup>3</sup>

### Open Space Requirements for New Development

Municipalities can choose to use their zoning and/or subdivision and land development ordinances to require that open space be set-aside as part of land development. The zoning ordinance can specify a minimum percentage of required open space in certain zoning districts, as well as other criteria relevant to the maintenance of common open space. The municipality cannot require the open space to be dedicated or open to the public or require specific recreational facilities. However, the community can require that some of the land meet specific standards, such as being flat, open land suitable for playing fields.

The subdivision and land development ordinance can also incorporate open space standards. If a developer does not want to provide the land, the ordinance can include a fee-in-lieu option. An adopted recreation plan must be in existence in order to have this requirement and must follow the provisions within the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. Requiring developments to provide open space allows municipalities to meet the needs of new residents without needing to build and maintain additional municipal parks.



*New Hanover Township is one of four municipalities in the Pottstown Region that have enacted an open space earned income tax.*



*Open space preserved as part of a subdivision should be designed to connect to other open space and trails, such as the Fox Hill Trail in Upper Pottsgrove Township.*

<sup>3</sup> "Local Open Space Funding Programs," DVRPC (2022). <https://www.dvrpc.org/openspace/local/>.

## Conservation Subdivision

Another method to encourage preservation of open space and natural resources as development occurs, is to require that new homes be clustered within one portion of a development and reserve the rest of the tract as permanent open space. A conservation subdivision ordinance can be written so that the overall density on the development site is the same as the underlying zoning; however, individual homes are built on smaller lots. The ordinance can be written to prioritize preservation of open space areas that maintain viewsheds of historic landscapes, farmland, woodlands, steep slopes, wetlands, etc. In addition to natural resource conservation, this type of development can lower the infrastructure costs of development by reducing the amount of roads and utility lines that need to be constructed.

## Open Space Easements

Landowners can choose to permanently preserve their land by donating either the development rights or the full title of their property to a nonprofit land conservation group (such as the Brandywine Conservancy or Natural Lands). Landowners who donate development rights receive tax benefits and their land must be permanently restricted from future development. Some land conservation groups can also help local landowners to develop some of their land while keeping the majority of the land open and deed-restricted.



The Cabot Natural Area is a one-acre conservation easement area established in 2004 in partnership between Cabot Supermetals, the Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy, and Douglass Township.

## Recommendations

### Region-wide Recommendations

The following recommendations are general to the Region as a whole.

**RECOMMENDATION 15.** Provide parks and recreational opportunities to meet the needs of present and future residents.

**Implementation Strategies:**

15a. Encourage municipalities to maintain updated municipal parks and recreation plans. Suggestions for municipal parks and recreation plans, include:

- ◆ Include demographic data, recent parkland and open space acquisitions, an analysis of current community needs, an evaluation of previously-recommended acquisition sites, possible trail alignments, etc.
- ◆ Incorporate recommendations and stewardship strategies from the “Multi-Regional Greenway and Stewardship Study” and individual park stewardship assessments, as relevant.
- ◆ Prioritize park and recreation opportunities that preserve natural linkages, environmental resources and viewsheds.

15b. Encourage municipalities to maintain and enhance existing park and recreation facilities.

15c. Continue to support the Pottstown Area Regional Recreation Committee and other opportunities to coordinate park and recreational opportunities among the Region’s participating municipalities. Examples of how PARRC can help the Region’s municipalities coordinate park and recreational opportunities, including with adjacent municipalities, include:

- ◆ Continue to pursue private and public sector funding opportunities to enhance recreation in the region.
- ◆ Increase resident awareness and promote access to the Region’s parks and open space facilities through the development of consistent entrance and wayfinding signage, promotional materials, and community events.
- ◆ Explore opportunities to coordinate and connect open space areas between municipalities with trails and greenways,

including implementation of the Circle of Progress Trails Study.

- ◆ Expand recreational opportunities along the Schuylkill River

15d. Encourage parks and open space be provided with new development.

15e. Promote alternative forms of transportation, including walking and bicycling, by providing safe routes to parks and safe access within parks themselves.

**RECOMMENDATION 16.** Encourage preservation of the Region’s remaining open space in order to maintain the established rural character, allow for enjoyment of nature, and enhanced protection natural resources.

**Implementation Strategies:**

16a. Designate growth and conservation areas within the Region to encourage preservation of open space areas by directing new development to designated growth areas.

16b. Encourage municipalities to maintain updated municipal open space plans with continued emphasis on creating an integrated network of open space and natural resource conservation. Municipal open space plans should incorporate recommendations and stewardship strategies from the “Multi-Regional Greenway and Stewardship Study” and individual park stewardship assessments, as relevant.

16c. Encourage municipalities to prioritize open space acquisition opportunities that preserve natural linkages, environmental resources, and viewsheds, especially along the Schuylkill River.

**RECOMMENDATION 17.** Promote the preservation of agricultural land and encourage maintaining agriculture as a viable industry in the region.

**Implementation Strategies:**

17a. Designate growth areas and conservation areas within the region to encourage preservation of agricultural lands by directing new development to designated growth areas.

17b. Encourage farmland preservation through participation in government and private preservation programs at the local, state, and national level.

## Municipal-Level Recommendations

The following municipal-specific recommendations were developed by evaluating the implementation progress of municipal-specific recommendations in the 2015 regional comprehensive plan, reviewing any municipal-level parks and open space plans and the community survey feedback, and consulting with the Pottstown Area Regional Recreation Planner. In addition, municipal-specific parks, recreation, and open space-related recommendations that were included in the 2015 regional comprehensive plan and their implementation status is also shown, where applicable.

### DOUGLASS TOWNSHIP RECOMMENDATIONS

- D1. Continue to update and expand playground equipment, comfort facilities, and active recreation opportunities at Douglass Park.
- D2. Promote safe, efficient, and pleasant non-motorized transportation options between Douglass Park, township open space, residential areas, community destinations, and the regional trail network. Explore the creation of greenway linkages throughout the township and connecting to neighboring communities.
- D3. Maintain and enhance the historic character of E. Philadelphia Ave within the Village of Gilbertsville, furthering the area's position as a "Main Street."

### Douglass Township 2015 Recommendations

- 1. Enhance pedestrian and vehicle access and improve visibility to Douglass Park from Main Street (East Philadelphia Avenue) in Gilbertsville.  
✔ Complete
- 2. Update and expand playground equipment, comfort facilities, and active recreation opportunities at core parks and open space properties.  
🔄 Ongoing. See D1.  
*Planning documents have been prepared for Libor Tract, Rhoads Open Space, and Smith Road Park. Improvements have been installed in Douglass Park (playgrounds, pavilion, pickleball/tennis courts, basketball court renovation, etc.) and Smith Road Park (pavilion).*
- 3. Promote park use in the community by providing non-motorized access connecting core parks,

greenways, open space areas, and nearby destinations.

🔄 Ongoing. See D2.

*Specifically, accessibility improvements to Douglass Park have included ADA pathways and trail improvements.*

### EAST COVENTRY TOWNSHIP RECOMMENDATIONS

- EC1. Pursue implementation of the Towpath Park Master Plan in phases:
  - EC1a. Phase 1A priorities include revitalizing the main Towpath Park property by constructing a loop trail connecting to the Schuylkill River Trail, improving parking, improving stormwater management, and improving ADA accessibility.  
✔ Complete.
  - EC1b. Phase 1B provides for the construction of a new playground.  
✔ Complete.
  - EC1c. Phase 2 provides for the development of a new boat ramp and access drive.
  - EC1d. Subsequent phases may include a clustered sports facility for local school teams of all levels and for community recreational leagues for children, adults, and seniors.
- EC2. Implement the Master Plan for the future Parker Ford Riverside Park (currently known as the Wade Tract). In doing so, establish a land and water trailhead that serves users of the Schuylkill River Trail and the Schuylkill River Water Trail. Consider partnering with East Vincent Township to provide a larger recreational asset that crosses municipal boundaries.
- EC3. Pursue continued expansion of the East Coventry Nature Preserve.
- EC4. Continue to improve the township trail system.

### East Coventry Township 2015 Recommendations

- 1. Promote completion of the Schuylkill River Trail.  
✔ Complete.
- 2. Establishment of a trailhead at Fricks Lock Village.  
✔ Complete

3. Continue coordination with Chester County to install a restroom in the village for trail users.

✔ Complete

4. Establish local trails that are user-friendly, and connect to schools, communities, or the township building.

🔄 Ongoing. See EC4.

*Several new trails have been constructed and additional trail easements have been acquired since 2015 (e.g., Schoolhouse Trail, Ellis Woods Park, and the Maack Tract)*

**LOWER POTTS GROVE TOWNSHIP RECOMMENDATIONS**

- LP1. Conduct a master planning effort for Pleasantview Park.
- LP2. Continue to make improvements to Gerald Richards Park.
- LP3. Pursue funding to design and then build an inclusive playground at Sanatoga Park. The inclusive playground would provide a regional attraction where those with mobility issues or other disability are able to fully participate in recreational activities.

**Lower Pottsgrove Township 2015 Recommendations**

1. Improve the playing conditions at Gerald Richards Park and develop a stormwater management plan for the park.  
✔ Complete.  
*A green parking lot retrofit at the park was completed as well as trail realignment and resurfacing.*
2. Secure funds to make the Sanatoga Park restroom facility and the band shell ADA-compliant.  
✔ Complete.  
*Sanatoga Park has been updated with a new pavilion, ADA parking, a playground, and new park sign.*
3. Evaluate all special events to determine if the Township is meeting the needs of the residents.  
🔄 Ongoing.  
*The summer concert series continues to be a successful and well-attended event.*

**NEW HANOVER TOWNSHIP RECOMMENDATIONS**

- NH1. Implement the Master Plan for Wassmer/Layfield Park.
- NH2. Explore opportunities to enhance Hickory Park, including potential trail connections from nearby properties, as redevelopment progresses.
- NH3. Develop a Master Plan for Deep Creek Nature Center, Hunter’s Run Open Space, and Prestis Open Space.
- NH4. Prepare a Stewardship Plan to establish and outline specific goals for protection of natural resources
- NH5. Establish greater connectivity among parks, open space, residential areas, community destinations, and the regional trail network.

**New Hanover Township 2015 Recommendations**

*No municipal-specific open space and recreation goals were included in the 2015 regional comprehensive plan for New Hanover Township.*

**NORTH COVENTRY TOWNSHIP RECOMMENDATIONS**

- NC1. Complete design, engineering, and construction of the Coventry Trail.
- NC2. Pursue improvements to Kenilworth Park with a focus on accessibility improvements, active play facilities, and trail connectivity, specifically to include the Coventry Trail route through Kenilworth Park.
- NC3. Redevelop York Street Park as a community green space with improved landscaping, increased accessibility, increased visibility (signage), and potentially other amenities (e.g., playground).
- NC4. Consider the installation of additional amenities at Riverside Park to complement the recently installed floating dock, adaptive kayak launch, pickleball courts, and boat ramp.
- NC5. Preserve land in agricultural production and protect land with sensitive environmental features and/or historical or cultural importance.

**North Coventry Township 2015 Recommendations**

1. Form, expand, or protect strategically located active and passive recreational parks which are accessible by all residents.  
🔄 Ongoing

2. Preserve land in agricultural production and protect land with sensitive environmental features and/or historical or cultural importance.

🔄 Ongoing. See NC5.

*Two new farms have been preserved since 2015 and Coventry Woods has been expanded.*

3. Improve and expand trails to connect municipal parks with neighborhoods and regional recreation facilities, such as the Schuylkill River Trail, French Creek State Park, and other parks and trails within the region.

🔄 Ongoing. See NC1.

*The Hanover Meadows trail was complete. The township continues to secure funding for engineering for the Coventry Trail to connect Kenilworth Park to the Schuylkill River Trail.*

4. Upgrade existing park and trail facilities, signage, and equipment to create sustainable ecosystems and watersheds while providing enhanced and varied recreation opportunities for all users.

🔄 Ongoing. See NC2, NC3, and NC4.

*The township has made improvements to Riverbend Park (pavilion upgrades, new play equipment, new ADA pathways, and parking improvements) and Riverside Park (new boat ramp, water trailhead, and a floating dock with adaptive kayak launch).*

5. Ensure acquisition of open space areas in the Township is in accordance with the Township's established procedures and municipal comprehensive plan.

🔄 Ongoing. See NC5.

*The township completed a comprehensive plan update in 2019.*

#### POTTSTOWN BOROUGH RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, the borough's mission for their neighborhood parks over the next ten years is to improve accessibility and inclusivity. In their larger parks, they are targeting invasives removal, biodiversity, and promoting more naturalized areas in general.

- P1. Enhance, expand, and maintain the Richard J. Ricketts Sr. Community Center facilities to serve the Pottstown community.
- P2. Provide opportunities for public engagement with arts and culture through park murals, service memorials and art installations.

- P3. Continue to update neighborhood parks with new play equipment, courts, pavilions, pathways, ADA access and amenities as needed. Focus on the redevelopment of Brookside Park and enhancing Walnut Street Park, Maple Street Park, and Cherry Street Park.

- P4. Complete the remediation and redevelopment of Pollock Park.

- P5. Enhance warm-weather recreation opportunities for residents by providing access to water resources, such as the community splash pad and by expanding access to local waterways.

- P6. Link and expand pedestrian, bicycle, and trail systems with existing recreation spaces in and amongst core parks and greenways.

#### Pottstown Borough 2015 Recommendations

1. Link and expand pedestrian, bicycle, and trail systems with existing recreation spaces in and amongst core parks and greenways.

🔄 Ongoing. See P6.

*Recent progress include a completed Schuylkill River Trail segment along Industrial Highway and implementation of Walk-Bike Pottstown. Trail connections have been restored with the replacement of pedestrian bridges in Memorial Park and Riverfront Park.*

2. Enrich and update existing active recreation opportunities and equipment in core parks.

🔄 Ongoing. See P3.

*Example achievements include:*

- New playgrounds in Potts Drive Park, Washington West Park, and Memorial Park
  - Basketball courts resurfaced in Spruce Street Park and Potts Drive Park.
  - Created a new park at Cross Street Park with two, professional-size basketball courts.
  - Parking and pedestrian access improved to the spray park in Memorial Park.
  - New playground equipment and tri-cycle path in Chestnut Street Park.
  - Redevelopment of South Street Park.
3. Expand community involvement in active recreation programs in all parks.

🔄 Ongoing. See P2.

*The Pottstown Area Regional Recreation Committee has established a volunteer program to help with park maintenance*

4. Provide a community swimming pool that is accessible to all borough residents.

Not Active.

*The spray park replaced the pool*

**UPPER POTTSBORO TOWNSHIP RECOMMENDATIONS**

UP1. Implement Hollenbach Master Plan by beginning with construction of the one-mile trail, which interconnects with nearby trails. In future phases, consider the construction of a pavilion and parking improvements.

UP2. Continue to improve and maintain existing parks, particularly through providing enhanced ADA access.

UP3. Complete master plans for Heather Place Park, Prout Farm Park, Hoffman/ Kulp Fields, Sunset Park, and Sussell Park. Study the future use of the recently acquired property at 2290 Gilbertsville Road, a roughly 10-acre property

UP4. Conduct a trail study to determine the feasibility of creating a connection between the Althouse Arboretum, the Sprogels Run Trail, and the Fox Hill Trail. Improve the Sprogel’s Run Trail road crossing at the Althouse Arboretum

UP5. Conduct a trail study to determine the alignment of the proposed Upper West Trail and Pottsgrove Trail and possible connections between existing trails, as outlined in the Greater Pottstown Trails Feasibility Study. Coordinate with Douglass Township (Montgomery County), Lower Pottsgrove Township, Montgomery County, and impacted property owners throughout this process.

UP6. Study the feasibility of constructing additional trails within the Schwenk open space.

**Upper Pottsgrove Township 2015 Recommendations**

1. Complete the planning, engineering, and construction of Upper Pottsgrove’s trail system.


 Ongoing. See UP4, UP5, and UP6.

Example achievements include:

- The Fox Hill Trail was renovated.
- The Sunset Park Trail was renovated.
- The Schwenk Road trailhead was constructed.

- A portion of the Sprogel’s Run Trail within Althouse Arboretum was paved and ADA parking was added.
- The Falcon Trail was constructed at Pottsgrove Middle School and will connect to Hollenbach Park in the future.

2. Acquire additional open space land as the opportunity arises.

 Ongoing.


*The township acquired the Stewart Tract in 2024, adjacent to Hollenbach Park, which expanded the park by 1.4 acres. The Kehl tract was purchased in 2023, adjacent to Althouse Arboretum, which expanded the park by 2.83 acres.*

3. Provide for sustainability of waterways and ponds on open space, including Sussell Park and Sunset Park ponds, as well as Sprogels Run.

 Complete


*A water quality study was completed in 2015*

4. Provide additional active recreation opportunities in partnership with local sports organizations.

 Ongoing.

*The township constructed new playfields at Chestnut Grove Park*

5. Continue to support the efforts of the SAVE Alliance.

 Ongoing. See UP4.

*SAVE Alliance refers to the group that runs the Althouse Arboretum, which continues to be a valued asset within the community. Some projects the township has undertaken to support the Althouse Arboretum include ADA upgrades and preparing a master plan.*

**WEST POTTSBORO TOWNSHIP RECOMMENDATIONS**

WP1. Implement the Master Plan for Veterans Memorial Park.

WP2. Identify ways to better connect the Township to the Schuylkill River Trail.

WP3. Prepare a Master Plan for Murgia Park.

WP4. Complete the redevelopment of Old Timer’s Field, ensuring the long-term viability of this key community asset.

**West Pottsgrove Township 2015 Recommendations**

1. Improve awareness of the Community Pool with enhanced marketing, directional signage, and community events.

Not Active.

*The pool has been removed and a master plan has been completed to redevelop the site as a park (see WP1 above).*

2. Provide security lighting at playgrounds and pocket parks.

Not Active.

3. Seek partnerships with adjacent municipalities to construct trail connections to the Schuylkill River Trail as grants and other funding sources become available.

🔄 Ongoing. See WP2.

*Trail linkages in West Pottsgrove have been started (e.g., pedestrian bridge ).*



# Community Services & Institutions

Dedicated staff throughout the Region's eight municipalities provide many administrative, maintenance, and public safety services to the Region's residents and businesses. Community facilities and institutions, including schools, libraries, and medical facilities are essential resources that contribute to the quality of life and overall well-being for all residents.

## Public Safety & Community Health

Map 29 on the following page shows the locations of the Region's police stations, fire stations, and ambulance stations. In addition, there are two hospitals and several urgent care centers in the Region that provide medical services.

### Police Departments

Each of the eight municipalities within the Region have their own police department staffed by full-time officers. The Pottstown Borough Police Department is the largest police department in Western Montgomery County, with 46 full-time officers and 13 civilian employees.<sup>1</sup>

### Fire Departments

#### *Pottstown Fire Department*

The Pottstown Fire Department serves Pottstown Borough and surrounding communities and consists of three fire companies: the Good Will Fire Company, the Philadelphia Steam Fire Company, and the North End Fire Company. The department is staffed by both volunteers and career firefighters and is responsible for hazard responses, fire prevention education, fire code enforcement, and fire investigations.<sup>2</sup>

#### *Gilbertsville Fire and Rescue Company*

The Gilbertsville Fire and Rescue Company is a completely volunteer fire department providing fire and rescue services to Douglass Township. The department also provides fire prevention and community outreach services and has a junior firefighter program. A new station building was built in 2021.<sup>3</sup>

#### *New Hanover Volunteer Fire & Rescue Services*

New Hanover Volunteer Fire & Rescue Services serves the fire and rescue needs of New Hanover Township with two stations: a main station on Swamp Pike and a sub-station in the northern part of the township on Layfield Road.<sup>4</sup>



*Ringing Hill Fire Company in Lower Pottsgrove Township*



*Good Will Fire and Ambulance Company in Pottstown Borough.*

#### *Lower Pottsgrove Township*

Two all-volunteer fire companies serve Lower Pottsgrove Township: Sanatoga Fire Company and Ringing Hill Fire Company. The Sanatoga Fire Company has been serving the community since 1908<sup>5</sup> and the Ringing Hill Fire Company was founded in 1956. The Ringing Hill Fire Company's large property contains a skating rink, baseball field, and pavilion that can be rented by the community for events.<sup>6</sup>

#### *Upper Pottsgrove Township Fire Company No. 1*

The Upper Pottsgrove Township Fire Company No. 1 has been providing fire services to the Upper Pottsgrove community since 1949.<sup>7</sup>

1 Borough of Pottstown. "Police." <https://www.pottstown.org/141/Police>

2 Borough of Pottstown. "Fire." <https://www.pottstown.org/127/Fire>

3 Gilbertsville Fire and Rescue Company. <https://gilbertsvillefireandrescue.org/>

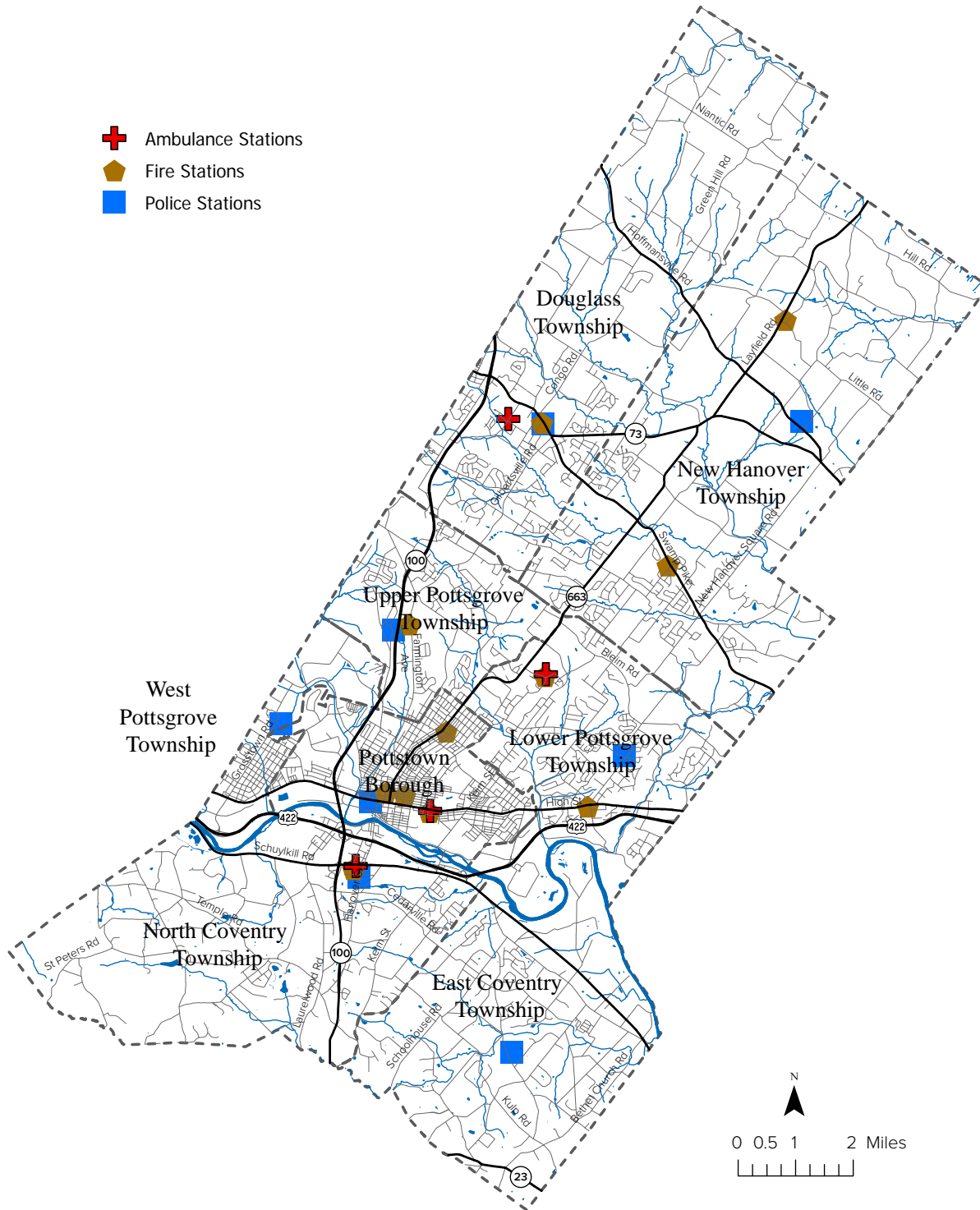
4 New Hanover Fire and Rescue. <https://newhanoverfirerescue.org/>

5 Sanatoga Fire Company. <https://www.sanatogafireco.org/>

6 Ringing Hill Fire Company. <https://www.ringinghillfireco.org/>

7 Upper Pottsgrove Township Fire Company No. 1. <https://upperpottsgrovefire.wordpress.com/>

Map 29. Pottstown Region Public Safety Facilities



### *Ridge Fire Company*

The Ridge Fire Company, founded in 1936 with a station located in Spring City, serves East Coventry Township.<sup>8</sup>

### *Norco Fire Company*

The Norco Fire Company serves the North Coventry Township Community and is staffed entirely by volunteers. The fire company hosts popular community events such as their annual fair and the Carnival of Lights.<sup>9</sup>

## Emergency Medical Services

### *Good Will Ambulance*

Good Will Ambulance stationed in Pottstown Borough provides emergency medical services to Pottstown Borough, Lower Pottsgrove Township, Upper Pottsgrove Township, and East Coventry Township. Career EMTs and paramedics station four ambulances at the Good Will Firehouse in Pottstown Borough and at two local firehouses in neighboring communities.<sup>10</sup>

### *Gilbertsville Area Community Ambulance Service (Station 332)*

Gilbertsville Area Community Ambulance was established in 1983 and is a fully-staffed advanced life support provider primarily serving Douglass Township and Upper Pottsgrove Township. They have an 8,000 square foot station with four ambulance bays.

### *Bally Community Ambulance Association (Berks County Station 505)*

Bally Community Ambulance also serves the Douglass Township community.<sup>11</sup>

## Hospitals

### *Pottstown Hospital*

The 213-bed Pottstown Hospital on Armand Hammer Boulevard in Pottstown Borough was built in 1973 and is now part of the Tower Health system. The hospital



*Pottstown Hospital, built in 1973, is now part of the Tower Health system.*

*Photo credit: Tower Health*



*In 2024, a new acute care hospital opened in Douglass Township as part of the Lehigh Valley Health Network.*

*Photo credit: Lehigh Valley Health Network*

employs 1,150 healthcare professionals and offers a wide range of healthcare services including inpatient, outpatient, diagnostic, and emergency care. The Pottstown Hospital is a primary stroke center and has a nationally-recognized cancer program.<sup>12</sup>

### *Lehigh Valley Hospital – Gilbertsville*

An acute care hospital with a full-service emergency room and 10 inpatient beds is under construction on Route 100 in Douglass Township opened in 2024. Patients arriving at this facility that require surgery or extensive care are stabilized and then transported to a larger hospital in the Lehigh Valley Health Network, which is part of Jefferson Health. Many outpatient services and physician's offices are located in the adjacent health center.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Ridge Fire Company. <https://www.ridgefirecompany.com/>

<sup>9</sup> Norco Fire Company. <https://norcofire64.com/>

<sup>10</sup> Good Will Steam Fire Engine Co. #1 of Pottstown. <https://goodwillpottstown.com/>

<sup>11</sup> Bally Community Ambulance Association, Inc. <https://ballyambulance.org/>

<sup>12</sup> Tower Health. "About Pottstown Hospital." <https://towerhealth.org/locations/pottstown-hospital/about-pottstown-hospital>

<sup>13</sup> Lehigh Valley Health Network. "Lehigh Valley Hospital-Gilbertsville." <https://www.lvhn.org/locations/lehigh-valley-hospital-gilbertsville>



Pottsgrove Middle School in Upper Pottsgrove Township.

## Institutions

### Public Schools

The Pottstown Region is served by four public school districts and there are currently 16 public schools located in the Pottstown Region (see Map 30 on the

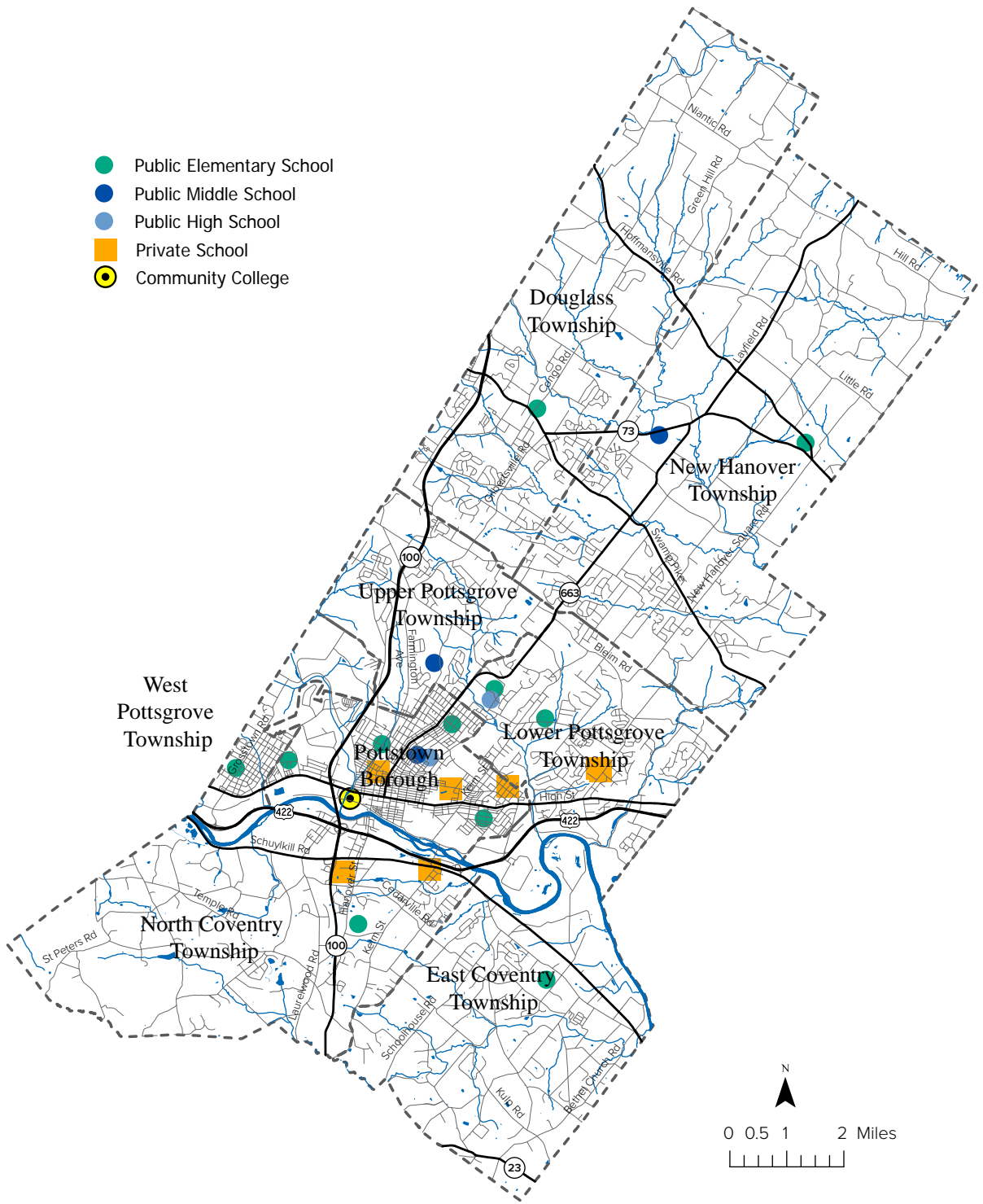
following page and Table 43 below). The service areas for the Boyertown Area School District and Owen J. Roberts School District include municipalities outside of the Region, therefore some students living within the Pottstown Region travel outside of the Region to attend school. For example, high school students living in Douglass and New Hanover townships attend

**Table 43. Public Schools in the Pottstown Region**

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education, Public School Enrollment Reports 2024-2025, <https://www.education.pa.gov/DataAndReporting/Enrollment/Pages/PublicSchEnrReports.aspx>

School District Name	School Name	Location	Grade Levels Taught	Enrollment (Students)
<i>Pottstown Region Municipalities Served</i>				
<b>Pottsgrove School District</b>				
<i>Lower Pottsgrove Township Upper Pottsgrove Township West Pottsgrove Township</i>	Ringling Rocks Elementary School	Lower Pottsgrove	K-2	383
	West Pottsgrove Elementary School	West Pottsgrove	K-2	252
	Lower Pottsgrove Elementary School	Lower Pottsgrove	3-5	646
	Pottsgrove Middle School	Upper Pottsgrove	6-8	678
	Pottsgrove Senior High School	Lower Pottsgrove	9-12	973
<b>Pottstown School District</b>				
<i>Pottstown Borough</i>	Barth Elementary School	Pottstown	Pre K-4	321
	Franklin Elementary School	Pottstown	Pre K-4	354
	Lincoln Elementary School	Pottstown	Pre K-4	322
	Rupert Elementary School	Pottstown	Pre K-4	379
	Pottstown Middle School	Pottstown	5-8	918
	Pottstown Senior High School	Pottstown	9-12	911
<b>Boyertown Area School District</b>				
<i>Douglass New Hanover</i>	Gilbertsville Elementary School	Douglass	K-5	517
	New Hanover Elementary School	New Hanover	K-5	608
	Boyertown Area Middle School East	New Hanover	6-8	841
<b>Owen J. Roberts School District</b>				
<i>East Coventry North Coventry</i>	East Coventry Elementary School	East Coventry	K-6	479
	North Coventry Elementary School	North Coventry	K-6	532

Map 30. Pottstown Region Schools



school in Boyertown Borough where Boyertown Area Senior High School is located. In addition, some students living outside the Region may travel into the Region to attend school.

Vocational technical programs for the Pottstown School District are offered at Pottstown Senior High School. Students in other school districts within the Region take vocational technical courses at the Western Montgomery Career and Technical Center (Pottsgrove School District), the Chester County Technical College High School (Owen J. Roberts School District), or the Berks Career and Technology Center (Boyertown Area School District).

Local public schools are also often seen as valuable open space and recreational assets within their respective neighborhoods. Recent efforts spearheaded by the Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation have looked at the benefits of developing partnerships between municipalities and school districts to open up school yards for community recreational use during non-school hours.

## Private Schools

In addition to the public school districts, there are six private schools in the Region (see Map 30 on the previous page).

### *Coventry Christian Schools*

Coventry Christian Schools is located in Lower Pottsgrove Township and is the only Classical Christian School in the Tri-County area. Programs include preschool through 12<sup>th</sup> grade as well as summer camps. Coventry Christian Schools also welcomes international students.

In response to recent enrollment growth, the school has recently added a new dining hall and event center and has planned construction of additional classroom space.<sup>14</sup>

### *The Hill School*

Founded in 1851, The Hill School is a preparatory boarding school and day school for grades 9 through 12 on a 200-acre campus on the east side of Pottstown Borough.



*The Hill School in Pottstown Borough*



*One of Hobart's Run's initiatives is to support the maintenance of several local community gardens, including this one on Walnut Street in Pottstown Borough.*

In addition to being a major employer within the borough, The Hill School has a long history of contributing to the local community. Hobart's Run is a neighborhood initiative that was created by The Hill School in 2016. Although focused on the area immediately around The Hill School campus, Hobart's Run supports revitalization efforts throughout the borough.<sup>15</sup>

### *Saint Aloysius Parish School*

The Saint Aloysius Parish School is a private Catholic school for students in Pre-Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade located in Lower Pottsgrove Township.

### *West-Mont Christian Academy*

West-Mont Christian Academy is a private Christian school for students in Pre-Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade located in North Coventry Township.

<sup>14</sup> Coventry Christian Schools. <https://coventrychristian.com/>

<sup>15</sup> The Hill School. "The Hill School Community Impact Statement." <https://www.thehill.org/about-us/about-pottstown/community-impact-statement>

### Wyndcroft School

Founded in 1918, the Wyndcroft School is a private co-educational day school in Pottstown Borough for students in Pre-Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade.



*Bux-Mont Christian Academy in North Coventry Township.*

## Higher Education

One of the Montgomery County Community College's (MCCC) two campuses is located in Pottstown Borough. The Pottstown campus opened in 1996 with one building and has grown to four buildings serving more than 2,000 students.<sup>16</sup>



*North Hall, which was renovated in 2022, connects the Montgomery County Community College to High Street in Pottstown Borough.*

South Hall, the main classroom facility and hub of student services on College Drive, is connected to North Hall (the former Vaughan Knitting Mill, Pottstown Brewery, and Kiwi Shoe Polish Factory on High Street) via a pedestrian underpass. North Hall, which was renovated in 2022, is a historic landmark that has been adaptively reused to include state-of-the-art classrooms, faculty offices, an art gallery, and an art studio. Two other historic buildings have been renovated and incorporated into MCCC's Pottstown campus. A former PECO generating station on College Drive is now home to the Challenger Learning Center and the former railroad baggage facility on Hanover Street is utilized for programs related to workforce development, continuing education, and veterans services.

Programs that can be completed at the Pottstown Campus include liberal studies, business administration, theatre arts, history, education in the early years, human services, psychology, mathematics, and criminal justice. Students at the Pottstown campus also have the option of taking a shuttle to the Blue Bell campus for additional courses. In addition, through a partnership established in 2023, Alvernia University and Chestnut Hill College offer several online bachelors, masters, and certificate programs at a reduced tuition rate to MCCC alumni and employees.



*The Challenger Learning Center at Montco Pottstown is part of an international network of 40 Challenger Learning Centers that provide students with hands-on experiences in simulated, space-themed, learning environments.*

<sup>16</sup> Montgomery County Community College. <https://www.mc3.edu/choosing-montco/our-campuses/pottstown-campus>

## Libraries

### *Pottstown Regional Public Library*

Founded in 1921, the Pottstown Regional Public Library (PRPL) is now located at 500 East High Street in Pottstown Borough. The library is publicly-supported by Pottstown Borough, Lower Pottsgrove Township, Upper Pottsgrove Township, West Pottsgrove Township, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. As a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, the library also receives private donations and hosts fundraisers.

In addition to its thousands of print materials, the library offers digital services; public computers and WiFi access; programs for children, teens, and adults; and other important community services. Residents of Chester County (zip code 19465) and Berks County are welcome to join the PRPL provided they have a card from the Chester County Library System or Berks County Library System, respectively. Online access to certain materials are limited to residents who live in zip code 19464. In addition, every student in either the Pottstown School District or Pottsgrove School District is eligible for a student library card.

The Pottstown Regional Public Library is an independent public library; however, the library receives additional services as part of the Montgomery County Libraries system and the Pennsylvania State Libraries system. This allows library users to access materials from around the county, state, and beyond.

### *Boyertown Community Library*

The Boyertown Community Library in Boyertown Borough may be a convenient option for Douglass Township and New Hanover Township residents. As a member of the ACCESS PA Statewide Library card program, non-Berks County residents are eligible to receive a BCL library card if they hold a valid library card from an out-of-county library or a State library card.

In addition to their growing catalog of digital and print materials, the library offers programming for all ages and meeting rooms for community use.

## Religious Institutions & Cemeteries

Religious institutional properties are often large, architecturally-distinct buildings with significant open space, and are commonly located in residential neighborhoods. The Pottstown Region is home to many active religious institutional properties that provide a range of community services.



*The Pottstown Regional Public Library is the only public library within the Pottstown Region.*



*The Edgewood Cemetery in Pottstown Borough.*

There are currently over a dozen cemeteries located within the Pottstown Region totaling approximately 145 acres. Cemeteries are relatively stable land uses and can also contribute to the sense of open space within a community and offer areas of peaceful reflection.

## U.S. Post Offices

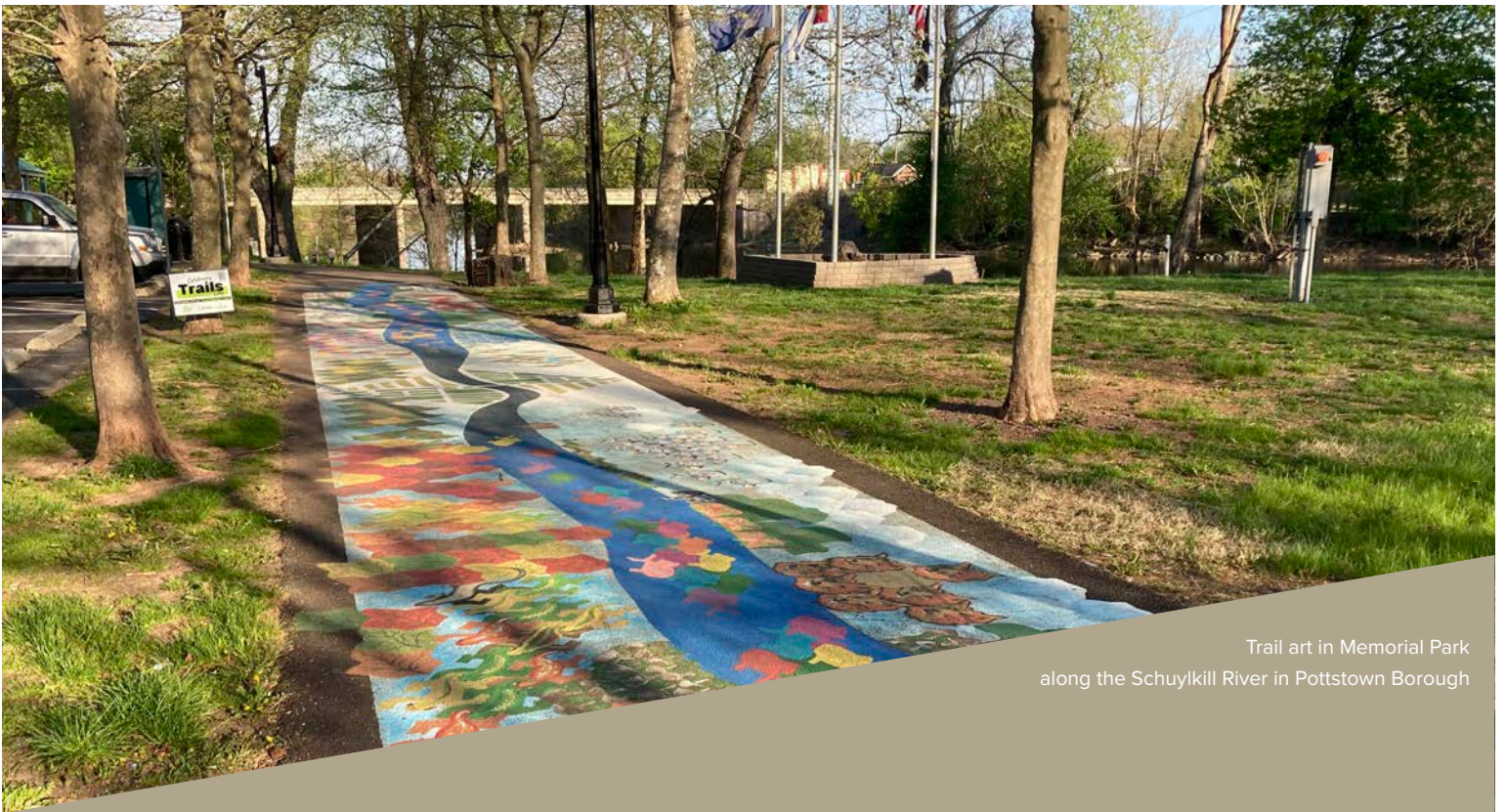
There are six post offices located within the Pottstown Region: the Pottstown Post Office (zip code 19464) located in Pottstown Borough, the Stowe Post Office (zip code 19464) located in West Pottsgrove Township, the Gilbertsville Post Office (zip code 19525) and the Sassamansville Post Office (zip code 19472) both located in Douglass Township, the Frederick Post Office (zip code 19435) located in New Hanover Township, and the Parker Ford Post Office (zip code 19457) located in East Coventry Township.

## Recommendations

**RECOMMENDATION 18.** Ensure the proper development and location of municipal services, emergency services, schools, and library facilities to address the needs of current and future residents.

**Implementation Strategies:**

- 18a. Encourage the coordination of municipal services and facilities, where appropriate.
- 18b. Cooperate with local school districts, the Montgomery County Community College, and local library systems to encourage appropriate locations for new or expanded facilities. Encourage utilization of existing buildings for expansions and locate new facilities in growth areas.
- 18c. Continue to engage the local school districts in regional planning.
- 18d. Review the existing emergency services and ensure they have capacity to serve a growing population.
- 18e. Encourage municipalities within the Limerick Nuclear Generating Station evacuation zone to maintain up-to-date emergency evacuation procedures, and communicate said procedures to residents.



Trail art in Memorial Park  
along the Schuylkill River in Pottstown Borough

# Implementation

Since the creation of the Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Planning Committee in 2005, the Region's eight member municipalities have strived to meet the goals and objectives of the 2005 Regional Comprehensive Plan, placing an emphasis on the protection of valuable open space and agricultural lands, and directing development to designated growth areas and older communities, including the Borough of Pottstown.

Along with the goals established in 2005, including natural resource protection, open space preservation, transportation improvement, and enhanced recreation options, the 2015 Regional Comprehensive Plan put an expanded emphasis on economic development. Through continued multi-municipal planning, the Region's municipalities intend to advance the original 2005 goals and objectives (which can also be found in the Intergovernmental Cooperative Implementation Agreement), while also responding to new challenges and opportunities that have arisen over the last 20 years.

The topic-based chapters in this comprehensive plan contain recommendations and implementation strategies that are consistent with the original 2005 goals and objectives; however, they are in some ways expanded to include new information such as evolving technologies, market trends, and population changes.

The charts in this chapter summarize the recommendations and implementation strategies contained in the topic-based chapters, along with implementation guidance such as potential partners and funding sources. Priority of individual strategies is indicated by a number of stars. Strategies with three stars are higher priority strategies and/or strategies that could be completed within the first few years of implementation. Strategies with one or two stars are important implementation strategies that may be dependent on the results of additional planning and/or require external coordination.

## Summary of Terms

### Implementation Strategy Type

- ◆ **Additional Planning:** Strategy involves additional planning and/or public outreach to be completed
- ◆ **Capital Improvements:** Strategy involves investment of funds for construction of improvements or infrastructure
- ◆ **External Coordination:** Strategy involves coordinating with other municipalities, counties, and/or outside agencies
- ◆ **Future Land Use Plan:** Strategy involves implementation of the regional future land use plan
- ◆ **Regulatory Control:** Strategy involves amending ordinances at the municipal level (e.g., zoning)

## Potential Partners

- ◆ **Chamber:** Tri-County Area Chamber of Commerce
- ◆ **Chesco:** Chester County, Pennsylvania
- ◆ **DRBC:** Delaware River Basin Commission
- ◆ **DVRPC:** Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
- ◆ **EMS Providers:** Emergency medical services providers
- ◆ **MCCC:** Montgomery County Community College
- ◆ **Montco:** Montgomery County, Pennsylvania
- ◆ **PAED:** Pottstown Area Economic Development
- ◆ **PARRC:** Pottstown Area Regional Recreation Committee
- ◆ **PART:** Pottstown Area Rapid Transit
- ◆ **PennDOT:** Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
- ◆ **SEPTA:** Southeastern Pennsylvania Transit Authority
- ◆ **SRPRA:** Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority

## Potential Funding Sources

- ◆ **ARLE:** Automated Red Light Enforcement (PennDOT)
- ◆ **DCNR:** Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (multiple grant programs)
- ◆ **MMTF:** Multi-Modal Transportation Fund (PennDOT and DCED)
- ◆ **Montco2040:** Montco2040 Implementation Grant Program (Montco)
- ◆ **RTP:** Regional Trails Program (DVRPC/William Penn Foundation)
- ◆ **SRTS:** Safe Routes to School (DVRPC)
- ◆ **TA Set-Aside:** Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program (DVRPC)

## Housing Implementation Chart

Recommendation & Implementation Strategy	Strategy Type	Priority	Potential Partners & Funding Sources
<b>Recommendation 1. Provide sufficient housing opportunities to meet the housing needs of the forecasted population growth over the next 20 years based on population forecasts from DVRPC while continuing to provide for a variety of housing types and densities.</b>			
1a. Concentrate new housing in designated growth areas where infrastructure is currently located.	Future Land Use Plan	★★★	---
1b. Encourage the conservation of existing housing units and maintain the overall scale and character of the township’s established residential neighborhoods while allowing for context-sensitive infill development of housing in areas with established infrastructure needed to support additional development.	Regulatory Control	★★★	---
1c. Maintain municipal zoning for “fair share” housing types and mobile homes parks that meet the residential “fair share” requirements for the Region as-a-whole (see Table 18 and Table 19 on page 75).	Regulatory Control	★★★	---
1d. Maintain and promote revitalization of existing residential neighborhoods and villages.	Regulatory Control; Additional Planning	★★	---
1e. Encourage pedestrian-oriented, residential neighborhoods that foster a sense of community.	Regulatory Control; Additional Planning	★★	---
1f. Accommodate housing opportunities for a range of income levels and age groups.	Regulatory Control	★★★	---
1g. Ensure any future residential development on large tracts of 5 acres or more incorporates environmental protections and utilizes land efficiently to maximize open space preservation.	Regulatory Control	★★★	---

## Economic Development Implementation Chart

Recommendation & Implementation Strategy	Strategy Type	Priority	Potential Partners & Funding Sources
<b>Recommendation 2. Foster economic development in a way that encourages infill and redevelopment within established growth areas, such as vacant industrial sites and other underutilized commercial parcels, while ensuring new development complements existing conditions in the surrounding area.</b>			
2a. Evaluate ordinance updates to ensure appropriate reuse options for existing office and flex/industrial buildings are available.	Regulatory Control	★★★	Partners: PAED
2b. Evaluate ordinance updates to ensure all appropriate commercial uses are provided for within reasonable areas of the Region.	Regulatory Control	★★★	Partners: PAED
2c. Prioritize and attract commercial development that will meet the needs of the Region's population.	Regulatory Control; Additional Planning	★★★	Partners: PAED, Chamber
2d. Preserve and enhance village areas that support a mix of uses in a pedestrian-friendly environment.	Regulatory Control; Additional Planning	★★	---
<b>Recommendation 3. Prioritize economic development in locations where adequate transportation access and necessary utilities are available and planned for, with a focus on the targeted sites listed in the Economic Development Chapter (see pages 87-91 for more information).</b>			
<b>Recommendation 4. Actively promote tourism, capitalizing on the Region's recreation opportunities, agricultural industry, and numerous historical resources.</b>			
4a. Work with PARRC, PAED, and other organizations to continue to market existing and new events in the Region's many parks and continue to encourage the development of a new regional recreation center(s) and supporting amenities and access improvements.	External Coordination	★★★	Partners: PARRC, PAED
4b. Promote the development of agri-tourism in the Region (e.g., pumpkin patches, pick-your-own flowers, farm-to-table events) through ordinance amendments and other means.	External Coordination; Regulatory Control	★★	Partners: Montco, Chesco
4c. Continue to support the completion of the Schuylkill River Trail and continue to highlight the trail as a recreational and transportation amenity for the Region.	External Coordination; Additional Planning; Capital Investment	★★★	Partners: PARRC, Montco, Chesco
4d. Work with local economic development organizations to market the Region's growing number of cultural resources and destinations to position the Region as a cultural center for the larger area.	External Coordination	★	Partners: PAED, Chamber
4e. Work with local economic development organizations to explore the design and implementation of a distinctive regional wayfinding signage system.	External Coordination	★★	Partners: PAED, Chamber
<b>Recommendation 5. Explore ways to support the development of niche industrial markets and job training opportunities that respond to evolving trends in manufacturing and other job sectors.</b>			
5a. Continue to encourage and support partnerships and programs with the Montgomery County Community College that incorporate job training and educational programs that help to meet the needs of the Region's workforce.	External Coordination	★★	Partners: MCCC
5b. Explore ordinance amendments and strategic partnerships that encourage the development of niche industrial opportunities for the Region.	Regulatory Control	★	Partners: PAED

## Transportation Implementation Chart

Recommendation & Implementation Strategy	Strategy Type	Priority	Potential Partners & Funding Sources
<b>Recommendation 6. Maintain and improve the existing road network in the Region.</b>			
6a. Identify problematic traffic congestion areas and develop mitigation strategies.	Additional Planning	★★★	Partners: PennDOT, Montco, Chesco  Funding: TA Set-Aside, ARLE, Montco2040, MMTF
6b. Support planned improvements to major roads, such as Route 422 and Route 100, and associated interchanges, in the Region.	External Coordination; Capital Investment	★★★	Partners: PennDOT, Montco, Chesco  Funding: TA Set-Aside, ARLE, Montco2040, MMTF
6c. Prioritize transportation improvements in new development that enhance the Region’s road hierarchy and increases connectivity.	Additional Planning; Capital Investment	★★★	Partners: PennDOT, Montco, Chesco  Funding: TA Set-Aside, ARLE, Montco2040, MMTF
6d. Support the extension of Keystone Boulevard, as identified in the <i>Keystone Economic &amp; Employment Plan</i> , and the development of Market Street, as identified in the <i>PA 100 Modified Point of Access Study</i> .	Regulatory Control; Additional Planning	★★	Partners: PennDOT, Montco, Chesco  Funding: TA Set-Aside, ARLE, Montco2040, MMTF
6e. Improve connections between Montgomery County and Chester County, including enhancements to the Hanover Street Bridge, completion of the Keim Street bridge, completion of the Schuylkill River Trail, and the conversion of the existing unused railroad trestles into pedestrian bridges.	Additional Planning; Capital Investment	★★	Partners: PennDOT, Montco, Chesco  Funding: TA Set-Aside, ARLE, Montco2040, MMTF
<b>Recommendation 7. Expand and enhance the Pottstown Municipal Airport, due to its long-term importance to the local economy and aviation network.</b>			
7a. Support the development of an airport master plan for the Pottstown Municipal Airport, including an airport layout plan.	Additional Planning	★★	Partners: Pottstown Municipal Airport
7b. Support any updates to municipal-level compatible land-use ordinances and regulations based on the airport master plan, including incentivizing revenue-generating land uses to support general aviation enthusiasts and the public.	Regulatory Control	★★★	Partners: Pottstown Municipal Airport
<b>Recommendation 8. Develop a local and regional pedestrian and bicycle network to connect growth areas within the Region.</b>			
8a. Within higher density areas, municipal zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances should provide language that requires sidewalks along all streets, major driveways, and parking areas.	Regulatory Control	★★★	---
8b. Continue to support municipal- and regional-level trail feasibility studies, design, and construction to work towards a regional trail system that connects the existing trail networks, parks, and other points of interest.	Additional Planning; Capital Investment	★★	Partners: PARRC, DVRPC  Funding: DCNR, PECO, RTP

8c. Support the implementation of <i>Bike Montco</i> and the expansion of the bicycle network within the Region by exploring road improvements that enhance bicycling, as opportunities arise.	External Coordination; Additional Planning; Capital Investment	★ ★	Partners: PennDOT, Montco, Chesco  Funding: Montco2040, MMTF, TA Set-Aside, PennDOT
8d. Support the implementation of the <i>Safe Routes to School</i> study by exploring incorporating the improvements identified.	External Coordination; Additional Planning; Capital Investment	★ ★	Partners: PennDOT, Montco, Chesco, School Districts  Funding: SRTS, TA Set-Aside, Montco2040
<b>Recommendation 9. Continue to support the expansion of public transportation options.</b>			
9a. Support improvements to bus stops in the Region, as identified in <i>Enhancing PART Bus Stops in the Pottstown Area</i> .	External Coordination; Capital Investment	★ ★	Partners: PART, SEPTA  Funding: TA Set-Aside, Montco2040
9b. Support the restoration of passenger rail service that would connect the Pottstown Region with Philadelphia and Reading, including station area planning and transit-oriented development guidelines.	External Coordination; Additional Planning	★ ★	Partners: SRPRA, DVRPC

## Environmental Sustainability Implementation Chart

Recommendation & Implementation Strategy	Strategy Type	Priority	Potential Partners & Funding Sources
<b>Recommendation 10. Preserve and enhance the Region’s natural resources, including streams, floodplains, riparian corridors, and wooded areas.</b>			
10a. Encourage preservation of sensitive natural resources areas, including the Schuylkill Highlands and Hopewell Big Woods, as well as all other woodlands, stream systems, wetlands, steep slopes, and wildlife, especially along the Schuylkill River.	Additional Planning	★★★	Funding: DCNR
10b. Promote the stewardship of natural lands and pursue best management practices that will limit fragmentation and restore links between forests, reduce invasive plant species in the Region, promote wildlife diversity, and improve water quality.	Regulatory Control	★★	---
10c. Protect existing groundwater resources and provide for groundwater recharge in the designs of new development.	Regulatory Control	★★★	Partners: DRBC
10d. Maintain updated municipal-level floodplain ordinances to comply with any changes in federal floodplain regulations and/or mapping.	Regulatory Control	★★★	---
10e. Consider adopting consistent riparian corridor conservation zoning district language.	Regulatory Control	★★	---
10f. Evaluate ways to protect critical infrastructure (e.g., wastewater treatment plants) from flood risk.	Additional Planning; Capital Investment	★★	Partners: Montco, Chesco
10g. Require street trees and other landscaping as part of all new development.	Regulatory Control	★★★	---
<b>Recommendation 11. Encourage stormwater best management practices as part of each municipality’s MS4 permit requirements.</b>			
11a. Maintain updated Act 167 plans and work towards implementing recommendations.	Additional Planning	★★	Partners: Montco, Chesco
11b. Work to implement any adopted TMDL or pollution reduction plans to address identified sources of contamination within the Region’s waterways and work to avoid future regulatory requirements through implementation of stormwater best management practices.	Additional Planning; External Coordination; Capital Investment	★★	---
11c. Evaluate municipal ordinance updates to encourage the proper application of stormwater best management practices.	Regulatory Control	★★	---
11d. Educate homeowners on ways they can naturally control stormwater runoff on their individual properties.	Regulatory Control	★	---
<b>Recommendation 12. Encourage the use of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies.</b>			
12a. Consider ways to encourage the proper installation and use of renewable energy facilities.	External Coordination	★★★	Partners: Montco, Chesco, DVRPC
12b. Consider ways to encourage the installation of electric vehicle charging stations.	External Coordination; Regulatory Control	★★	Partners: Montco, Chesco, DVRPC

12c. Consider conducting municipal or regional-level energy management audits to identify opportunities to improve energy efficiency within municipal operations.	External Coordination; Additional Planning; Capital Investment	★	Partners: Montco, Chesco, DVRPC
<b>Recommendation 13. Coordinate water and sewer infrastructure at the regional level.</b>			
13a. Use public sewer and water facilities efficiently by extending these systems concurrently only within designated growth areas.	Future Land Use Plan	★★★	---
13b. Permit only low-density development in areas not served by public sewer.	Future Land Use Plan	★★★	---
13c. Limit individual wells in large residential subdivisions.	Regulatory Control	★★★	---
13d. Require public water in all areas utilizing public sewer to avoid excess groundwater extraction without infiltration on-site.	Regulatory Control	★★★	Partners: DRBC
13e. Maintain updated Act 537 plans and continue to monitor on-lot sewage disposal systems.	Additional Planning	★★★	Partners: Montco, Chesco
<b>Recommendation 14. Increase the Region's recycling rate and reduce the Region's overall production of solid waste.</b>			
14a. Continue to pursue funding opportunities through the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to advance municipal recycling and waste reduction efforts.	Additional Planning	★★	Funding: DEP
14b. Continue to partner with Montgomery County and Chester County to encourage residents to participate in household hazardous waste and other special collection events.	Additional Planning	★★★	Partners: Montco, Chesco
14c. Consider ways to encourage residential and institutional composting (e.g., compost bin distributions, workshops).	Additional Planning	★	---
14d. Periodically evaluate opportunities to standardize trash pickup within each municipality or between multiple municipalities.	External Coordination; Additional Planning	★★	---
14e. Periodically evaluate opportunities to offer additional yard waste collections and/or drop-off events such as Christmas tree recycling collection events.	External Coordination; Additional Planning	★	---

## Parks & Open Space Implementation Chart

Recommendation & Implementation Strategy	Strategy Type	Priority	Potential Partners & Funding Sources
<b>Recommendation 15. Provide parks and recreational opportunities to meet the needs of present and future residents.</b>			
15a. Encourage municipalities to maintain updated municipal parks and recreation plans.	Additional Planning	★★★	Partners: PARRC Funding: DCNR
15b. Encourage municipalities to maintain and enhance existing park and recreation facilities.	External Coordination; Capital Investment	★★★	Partner: PARRC Funding: DCNR
15c. Continue to support the Pottstown Area Regional Recreation Committee and other opportunities to coordinate park and recreational opportunities among the Region’s participating municipalities.	Additional Planning; Capital Investment	★★★	Partners: PARRC
15d. Encourage parks and open space be provided with new development.	Regulatory Control	★★	---
15e. Promote alternative forms of transportation, including walking and bicycling, by providing safe routes to parks and safe access within parks themselves.	Capital Investment	★★	Funding: DCNR, Montco2040, MMTF, TA Set-Aside
<b>Recommendation 16. Encourage preservation of the Region’s remaining open space in order to maintain the established rural character, allow for enjoyment of nature, and enhanced protection natural resources.</b>			
16a. Designate growth and conservation areas within the Region to encourage preservation of open space areas by directing new development to designated growth areas.	Future Land Use Plan	★★	---
16b. Encourage municipalities to maintain updated municipal open space plans with continued emphasis on creating an integrated network of open space and natural resource conservation. Municipal open space plans should incorporate recommendations and stewardship strategies from the “Multi-Regional Greenway and Stewardship Study” and individual park stewardship assessments, as relevant.	Regulatory Control	★★★	Partners: PARRC Funding: DCNR
16c. Encourage municipalities to prioritize open space acquisition opportunities that preserve natural linkages, environmental resources, and viewsheds, especially along the Schuylkill River.	Additional Planning; Capital Investment	★★★	Partners: PARRC Funding: DCNR
<b>Recommendation 17. Promote the preservation of agricultural land and encourage maintaining agriculture as a viable industry in the Region.</b>			
17a. Designate growth areas and conservation areas within the region to encourage preservation of agricultural lands by directing new development to designated growth areas.	Future Land Use Plan	★★★	---
17b. Encourage farmland preservation through participation in government and private preservation programs at the local, state, and national level.	External Coordination; Capital Investment	★★	Partners: Montco, Chesco

## Community Facilities Implementation Chart

Recommendation & Implementation Strategy	Strategy Type	Priority	Potential Partners & Funding Sources
<b>Recommendation 18. Ensure the proper development and location of municipal services, emergency services, schools, and library facilities to address the needs of current and future residents.</b>			
18a. Encourage the coordination of municipal services and facilities, where appropriate.	Additional Planning	★★	---
18b. Cooperate with local school districts, the Montgomery County Community College, and local library systems to encourage appropriate locations for new or expanded facilities. Encourage utilization of existing buildings for expansions and locate new facilities in growth areas.	External Coordination	★	Partners: MCCC, School Districts, Library
18c. Continue to engage the local school districts in regional planning.	External Coordination	★★	Partners: School Districts
18d. Review the existing emergency services and ensure they have capacity to serve a growing population.	Additional Planning	★★★★	Partners: Montco, Chesco, EMS Providers
18e. Encourage municipalities within the Limerick Nuclear Generating Station evacuation zone to maintain up-to-date emergency evacuation procedures, and communicate said procedures to residents.	Additional Planning	★★★★	Partners: Montco, Chesco, EMS Providers



# Appendix A. Public Outreach Summary

## **Community Survey Findings**

An online community survey for the Pottstown Metropolitan Regional Comprehensive Plan was conducted from April 2024 to October 2024 and received 733 responses. Promotion of the survey included distributing flyers to the Region's municipalities and regional community organizations, utilizing the Region's website and the websites of the Region's municipalities.

Sarahsway Farm in New Hanover Township grows elderberry, in addition to grass-fed beef and pasture-raised eggs.

## Demographics Section

The majority of survey respondents (678) were residents of one of the Region’s eight municipalities (92.5% of respondents). In addition, 26 individuals who either work in or own a business in one of the Region’s eight municipalities, as well as 29 other interested individuals (e.g., former residents, residents of adjacent municipalities, completed the survey. Figure A-1 shows the distribution of survey respondents by residency. Survey respondents were primarily between the ages of 35 and 54 (see Figure A-2).

Several survey questions were specific to residents of the Pottstown Region and only those survey respondents that indicated that they were residents were asked these questions (denoted by an asterisk (\*)). The vast majority of respondents are long-term residents of the Pottstown Region and own a single-family home (see Figures A-3 through A-5 below and on the following page).

Figure A-1. What municipality do you live in?

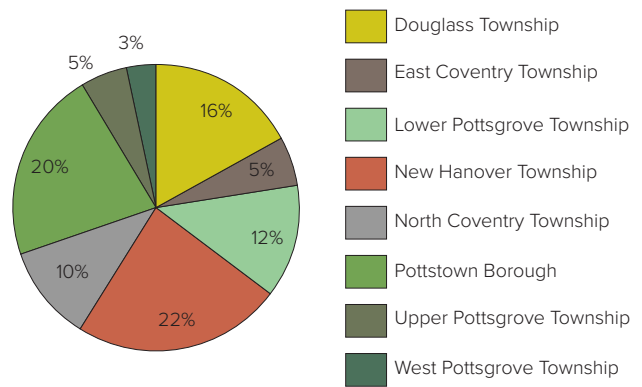


Figure A-2. Age of survey respondents

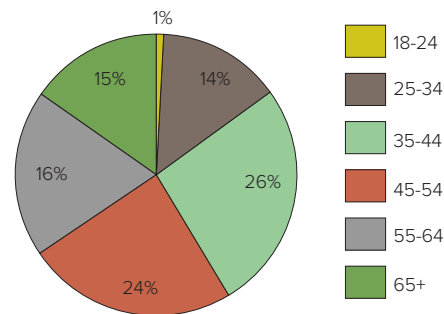


Figure A-3. How long have you lived in the Pottstown Region?\*

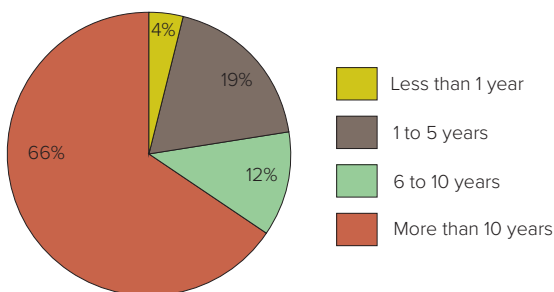
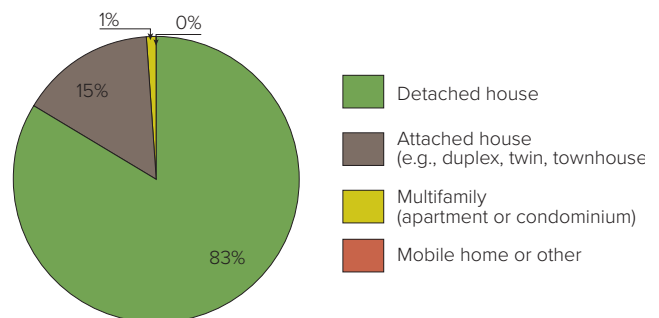


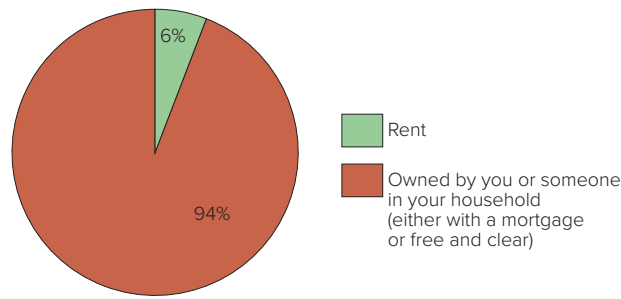
Figure A-4. What type of housing do you live in?\*



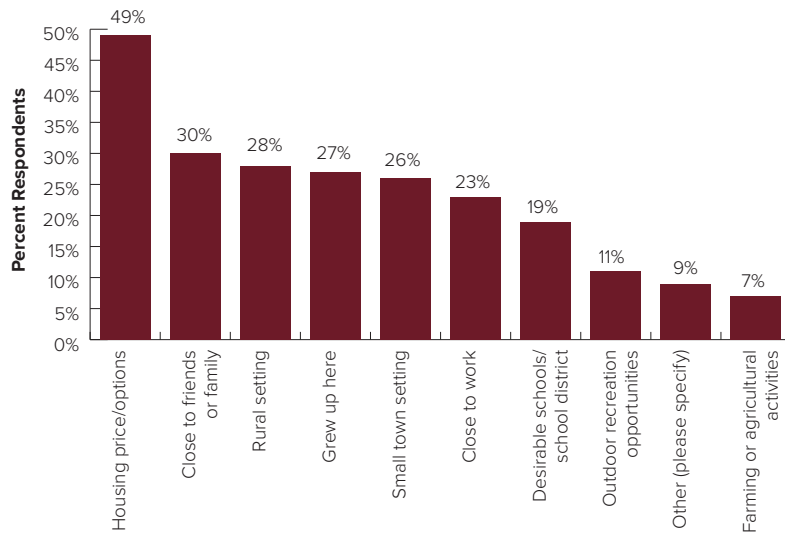
Pottstown Region residents were asked to select all of the characteristics of the Region that influenced their decision to live in or relocate to the Pottstown Region (see Figure A-6). The number one reason was housing price/options; however, proximity to friends or family, rural setting, and the fact that they grew up here were also common reasons.

Residents were asked about their opinion of the availability and relative affordability of housing in the Pottstown Region (see Table A-1). A slight majority of respondents (51%) indicated satisfaction with the variety of housing types in the Region; however, 46% of respondents feel that housing in the Region is not generally affordable for the average person or family.

**Figure A-5. Do you own or rent your home?\***



**Figure A-6. What factors most influenced your decision to live in or relocate to the Pottstown Region? Please select all that apply.**



**Table A-1. Please indicate your agreement/disagreement with the following housing-related statements.\***

	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral or Don't Know	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree
Housing in the region is generally affordable for the average person/family	13%	26%	15%	27%	19%
There is a good variety of housing types offered for sale/lease in the region	23%	28%	22%	18%	9%
There are enough apartments in the region	32%	12%	38%	10%	8%
There are enough low/moderate income housing options in the region	31%	10%	32%	14%	13%
There are enough housing options for seniors wishing to stay in their community	13%	13%	37%	18%	19%

## Community Services Section

Overall, satisfaction rates indicated in the survey for most municipal services were very high. Road maintenance was the municipal service with the highest dissatisfaction rate (47%). Schools, trash/recycling pick-up, and public water also had dissatisfaction rates greater than 15% amongst survey respondents (see Figure A-7).

Residents were asked to select the top three initiatives they would like the Region’s municipalities to focus on over the next 20 years. Protect natural resources and open space was the most common selection (66%), followed by improve road conditions or traffic concerns (54%) and preserve agricultural land and the Region’s rural character (51%) (see Figure A-8).

Figure A-7. In the last 12 months, how satisfied have you been with the following municipal services?\*

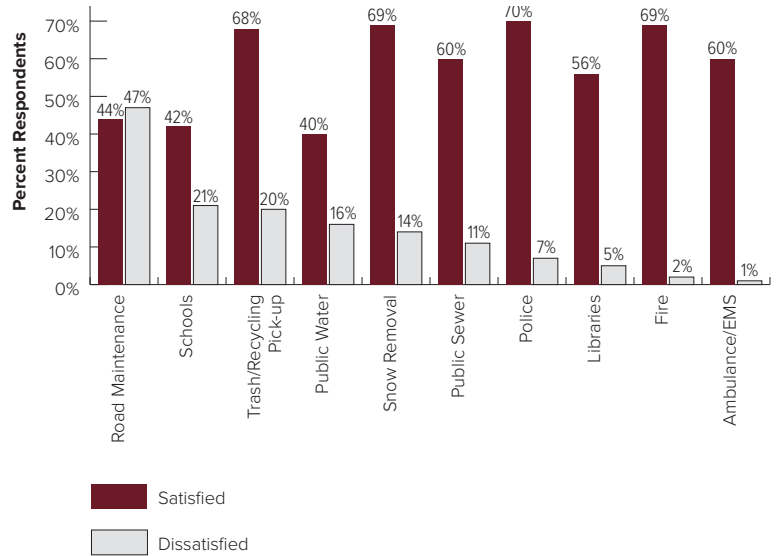
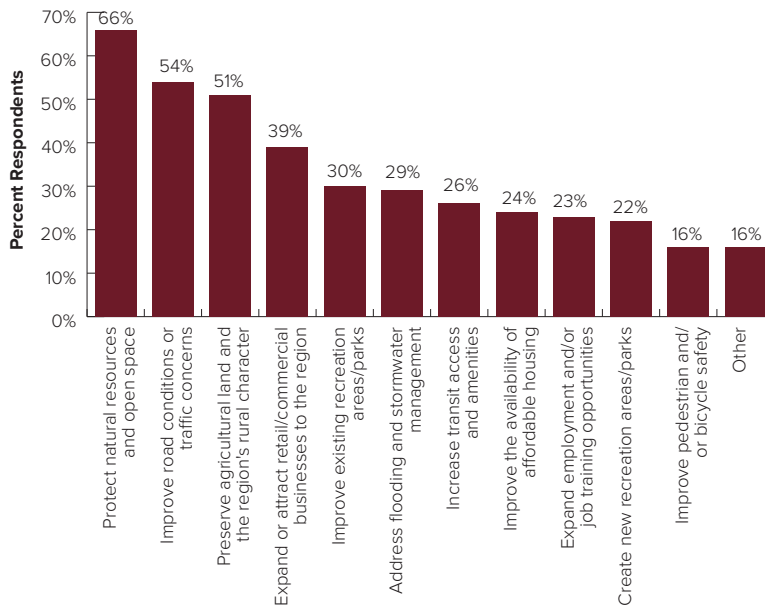


Figure A-8. What kind of initiatives do you see as priorities for the Pottstown Region over the next 20 years? Select your top three choices.\*



## Open Space and Recreation Section

Approximately 6% of respondents visit a park, community center, trail, or other recreation site in the Pottstown Region on a daily basis. Another 22% of respondents visit several times a week (see Figure A-9).

The vast majority of respondents (74%) indicated that they use the local parks, community centers, trails, or other recreation sites for walking/jogging/running/hiking. The other most common activities were: dog park/dog walking, playground/tot lot, and bicycling (see Figure A-10).

Amongst all survey respondents, the Schuylkill River Trail is the most frequently visited park, trail, or recreation site within the Pottstown Region with 37% of respondents indicating that they and their families typically go there. The survey results indicate that Riverfront Park, Althouse Arboretum, Memorial Park, and New Hanover Community Park are also popular recreation sites. Figure A-11 on the following page shows the top ten locations selected by survey respondents.

Respondents were asked whether they were satisfied with the availability of recreation resources for different age groups. In general, respondents indicated higher levels of dissatisfaction with recreation opportunities for teens and adults (see Figure A-12 on the following page).

Respondents were asked to share what amenities they would like to see within the Pottstown Region park system that are not currently offered. Common suggestions included:

- ◆ Additional trail and pedestrian connections; completing the Schuylkill River Trail – 18 comments
- ◆ More water play features (pool, splash pad) – 16 comments
- ◆ More dog parks or places for dogs to be off-leash – 15 comments
- ◆ More pickleball courts – 12 comments

Figure A-9. In the past 12 months, how frequently did you visit a local park, community center, trail, or other recreation site in the Pottstown Region?

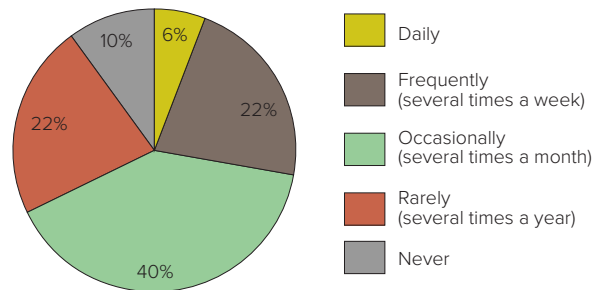


Figure A-10. In the past 12 months, which of the following activities have you participated in at a local park, community center, trail, or other recreation site in the Pottstown Region? Please select all that apply.

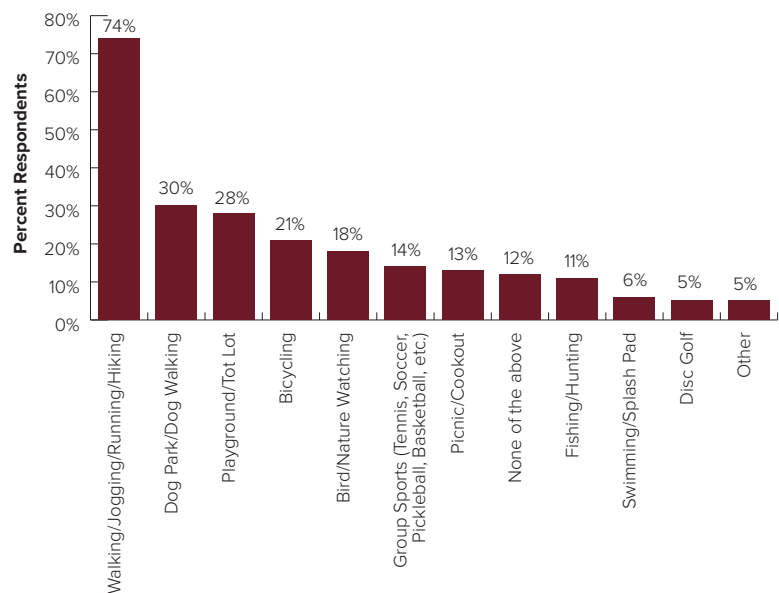


Figure A-11. Which park, community center, trail, or other recreation site(s) in the Pottstown Region do you and your family typically visit? Please select all that apply.

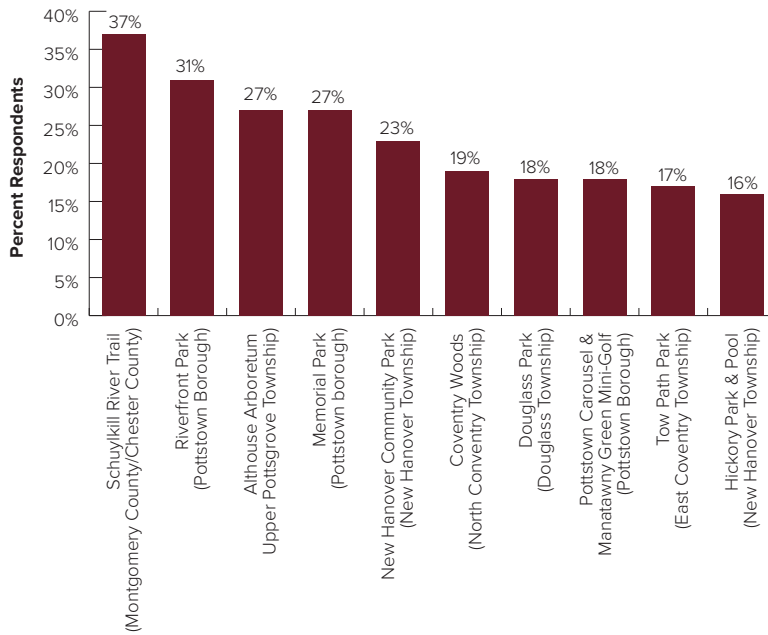
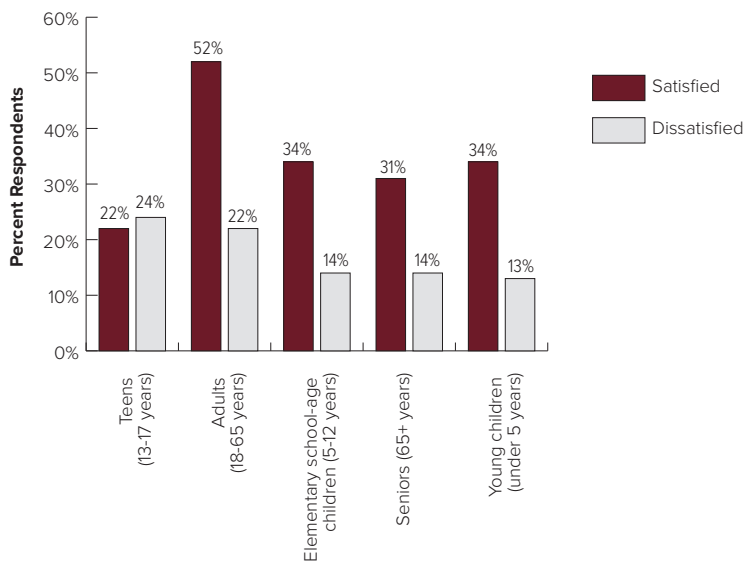


Figure A-12. Are you satisfied with the availability of recreation opportunities for each of these age groups?



## Transportation Section

When asked what their primary mode of transportation is for daily travel, the vast majority of survey respondents (96%) indicated that they drive alone. Of those survey respondents who are employed, 23% work from home and 46% commute less than 20 miles (see Figure A-13).

Less than 4% of survey respondents currently take public transportation several times per month or more frequently (see Figure A-14). However, the survey results indicated strong support for restoration of passenger rail service to Pottstown Borough with over 73% of respondents indicating that they would use passenger rail services, at least occasionally (see Figure A-15).

The full question read: “The Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority (SRPRA) was jointly created by Montgomery County, Chester County, and Berks County to advance the restoration of passenger rail service between Philadelphia and Reading, including a station in Pottstown Borough. Would you be interested in using passenger rail service, even if only occasionally, if it provided access from Pottstown Borough to Reading, Philadelphia and/ or New York City? For more information, please visit: <https://gosrpra.com/>.”

Road and bridge maintenance was identified as the highest priority roadway improvement, followed by improving signal timing (see Figure A-16 on the following page).

Roadways where the most survey respondents identified issues related to traffic safety and roadway improvements included:

- ◆ Route 100 – 30 comments
- ◆ Swamp Pike – 28 comments
- ◆ Route 422 – 23 comments
- ◆ Route 663/Charlotte Street – 20 comments

Figure A-13. If you are employed, how far do you commute for work?

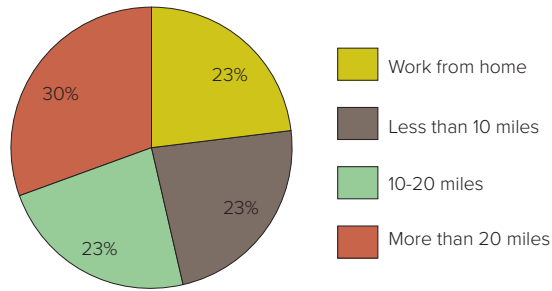


Figure A-14. How frequently do you use public transportation (e.g., PART, SEPTA) for commuting or leisure travel?

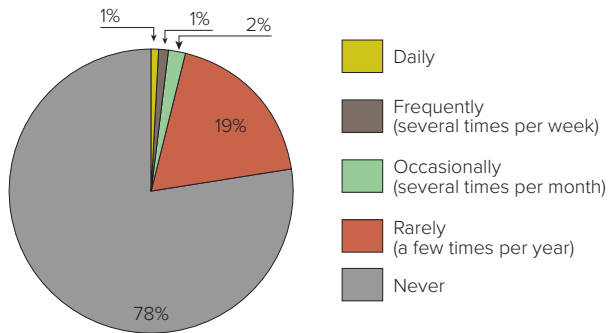
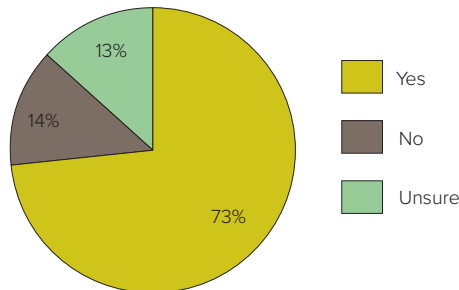


Figure A-15. Would you be interested in using passenger rail service, even if only occasionally, if it provided access from Pottstown Borough to Reading, Philadelphia and/or New York City?



- ◆ Moyer Road – 16 comments
- ◆ Hanover Street – 13 comments
- ◆ Route 724 – 13 comments
- ◆ Gilbertsville Road – 12 comments

In terms of priority pedestrian and bicycle improvements, 70% of respondents felt that improving the streetscape should be a high or medium priority, followed by installing ADA ramps at all intersections (see Figure A-17).

### The Economy Section

Respondents were asked what commercial land use development trends they see as priority opportunities for the Region’s economic development. Respondents overwhelmingly supported retaining and improving existing businesses. There was also strong support for focusing on redeveloping existing office parks and shopping centers as well as revitalizing Pottstown Borough’s High Street area (see Figure A-18 on the following page).

Survey respondents were asked about their opinion of the current availability of certain types of businesses and services in the Pottstown Region (see Figure A-19 on the following page). A majority of respondents would like to see more cultural facilities and entertainment establishments (such as museums, movie theaters, bowling alleys), coffee shop/bakery/ice cream parlor, and restaurant/tavern uses. In comparison, some respondents feel that there are too many fast food restaurant/convenience store uses and banks/financial institutions.

Figure A-16. What do you see as a priority for roadway improvements?

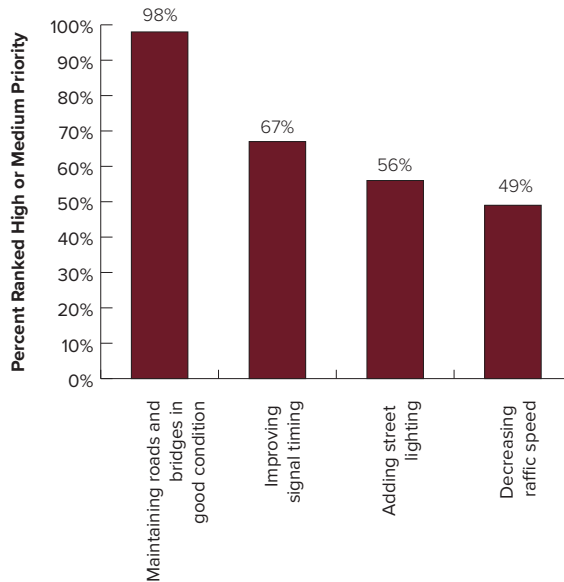


Figure A-17. What do you see as a priority for pedestrian and bicycle improvements?

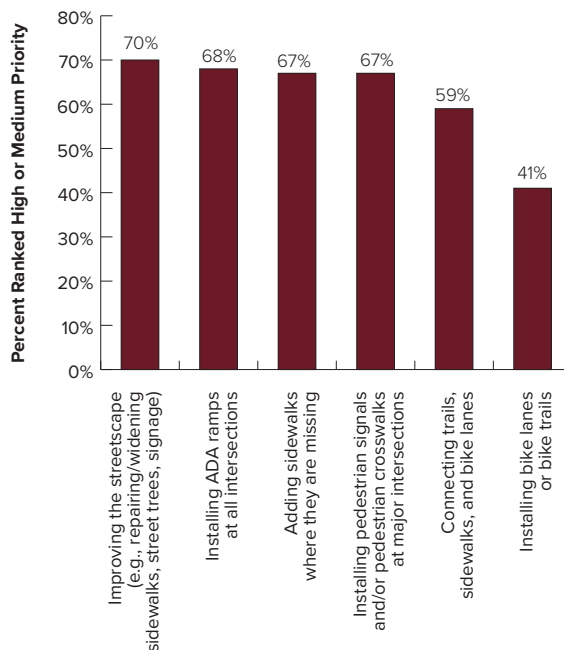


Figure A-18. What do you see as a priority for the Pottstown Region’s economy and commercial land uses?

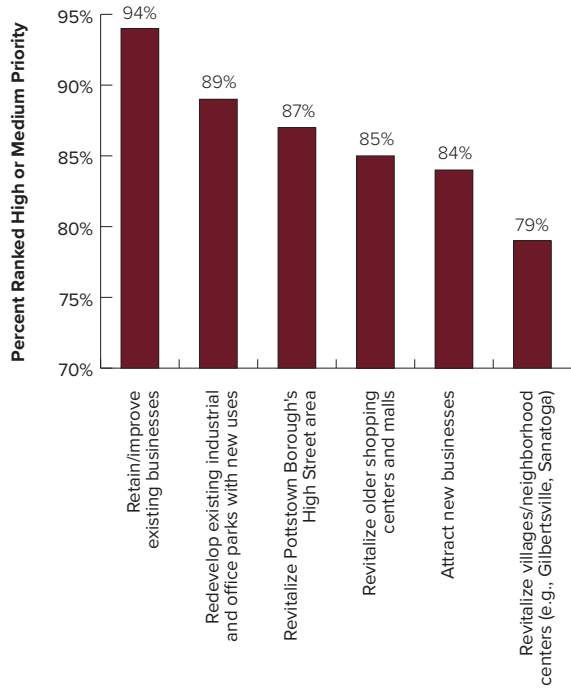
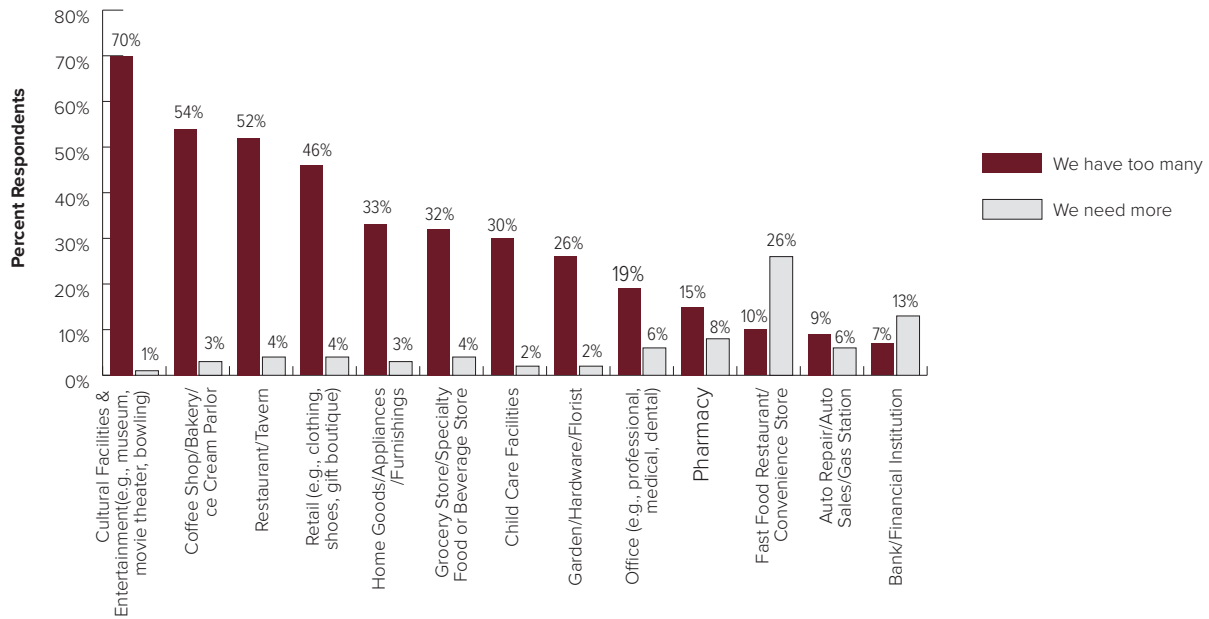


Figure A-19. How do you feel about the availability of different types of businesses and services in the Pottstown Region currently?



## Open-Ended Section

When asked what they like best about the Pottstown Region, it was clear that survey respondents really appreciate the Pottstown Region's convenient location – it's combination of rural and small town feel, while being easily-accessible to many highways for additional facilities and services. The Region's sense of community and diverse parks and recreation are also considered important; as well as its affordability, history, and growing dining and entertainment options.

When asked what they would most like to change about the Pottstown Region, survey respondents expressed concerns with addressing crime and homelessness. Downtown revitalization, controlling development to protect community character and open space, and general cleanliness were also emphasized.





