VALLEY TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

August 18, 2020

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

GLOSSARY AND ABBREVIATIONS

Access Management – A set of transportation planning techniques used to control access to high volume roadways, increasing the capacity of these roads, manage congestion and increase safety.

Adaptive Reuse – The repurposing of an existing building for a new use that it was not originally intended for in order to maintain the building's viability.

BMP – Best Management Practices – Practices that are used to improve the quality of stormwater prior to discharge to receiving waters including utilization of artificial wetlands, stormwater quality inlets, detention basins, etc.

CASD – Coatesville Area School District

Chester County Planning Commission (CCPC) – The entity responsible for providing overall county-wide planning and oversight in Chester County.

Complete Streets – Streets designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities.

Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) – The regional planning entity responsible for nine counties in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. DVRPC is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Greater Philadelphia Region.

Form Based Code- A zoning code that concentrates on the form of development as well as uses.

Infill development – new development that is located in an area already built up with development and typically using existing infrastructure.

Landscapes3 – The county-wide growth management plan updated in 2009. Linking Landscapes is the open space and recreation component of the Plan. Watersheds is the water resources component of the plan. The Plan also includes the Chester County Public Transportation Plan.

LERTA (Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance Law)- LERTA was created under the authority of Article VIII, Section 2(b)(iii) of the Pennsylvania constitution, and allows a municipality and school district to "establish special tax provisions" to a taxpayer for a period of no more than 10 years in order to "encourage improvement of deteriorating property or areas by an individual, association or corporation."

Multi-modal Transportation – A transportation system that accommodates all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transportation users, as well as the vehicle.

Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) – The legal code that governs actions of Pennsylvania municipalities relating to land use, planning, and zoning.

Official Map – A map that depicts a municipality's interest in acquiring lands for public purposes, such as street connections, parkland, trails, sidewalks, and open space, and notifies developers and property owners of this interest. Use of the Official Map is regulated by Section 107(b) of the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) and is similar to a Zoning Map in that it is officially adopted by a municipality's elected board.

OSRER – the Valley Township 2019 Open space, Recreation and Environmental Resources Plan

Paper Streets – Streets depicted on an approved subdivision plan, but never built or dedicated.

Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) – The state agency governing state roads and other forms of transportation within the state.

Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) -The maximum amount of a pollutant allowed to enter a waterbody so that the waterbody will meet and continue to meet water quality standards for that particular pollutant.

Traffic Calming – Design techniques utilized to slow traffic on residential streets.

Universal Design – A method of designing the built environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability.

Wayfinding – A system of signage, logos, and directional markers that guide people through a physical environment and enhance their understanding and experience of the place.

I. INTRODUCTION

Valley Township's Comprehensive Plan dates back to 2003. Since then, development pressure has continued its steady westward march and the Township has become more suburban residential and less agricultural in character. While the overall goals for the township have not changed significantly these last 17 years, there is a keen desire to actively shape development to the township- and its residents' – advantage. This Update to the 2003 Comprehensive Plan outlines the tools and strategies needed to direct new growth, redevelop gracefully, and better meet the challenges of the future.

WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

The Comprehensive Plan is a process and policy document that creates a VISION for the future;

Defines Township PRIORITIES;

Produces an ACTION PLAN; and is

Intended to guide Township RESOURCES for the next 10+ years.

From a legal standpoint, the Comprehensive Plan is enabled and regulated by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (PA MPC), which specifies that a plan should be reviewed at least once every ten years. While the plan is adopted by the Board of Supervisors, it is not a regulatory document like a zoning map or zoning ordinance.

Why is Comprehensive Planning important?
- It develops and states the community's overarching priorities and outlines the steps to achieve them
- It provides rationale for Ordinances and Amendments to them
- It provides rationale for decisions on a requested rezoning
- It supports requests for improvements (i.e., asking a developer for a trail connection, sidewalk, or open space)
- It is a tool for building community support; and
- It is strong tool for supporting GRANTS

PLAN ORGANIZATION

This Comprehensive Plan Update is organized into the following parts:

Part I Introduction provides an overview of the planning process, planning context, and major demographic trends that could impact the Township in the near future.

Part II, Planning Policies and Key Implementation Strategies describes the Township's goals and objectives, and the key strategies for the next ten years.

Part III, Priority Focus Areas, highlights priority planning topics and their significance to the Township's future. While the Comprehensive Plan covers many areas, the Township has limited resources and must make choices on what it will focus on over the coming years. Priority planning areas for this Plan include: West Lincoln Highway and Airport Road, economic development, reinvestment in older neighborhoods, and parks and recreation.

Part IV General Policies and Practices summarizes the overall policies and actions intended to guide Land Use, Housing, Transportation, Community Character, Resource Conservation, Community Facilities, and Energy Conservation.

Part V Implementation summarizes the framework for action in the short, medium,

and long term, prioritizing recommendations, and lead agencies.

THE PLANNING PROCESS AND PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The development of this Plan was guided by a multifaceted ten-month planning process intended to maximize stakeholder input and result in a detailed action plan. The public involvement components included a Township Planning Committee, Public Participation, and Public Adoption Process.

Planning Committee: The Valley Township Board of Supervisors appointed a 6 member Committee to assist in formulating this Comprehensive Plan Update. This Committee is comprised of Township officials from the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors, representatives from the Airport Authority, and small business segments of the Township. Members attended monthly meetings from February 2019 through November 2019 to discuss the Township's vision and provide direction on the major plan elements.

Public Participation: The public was invited to participate in several stages of the Plan's

development. Early in the process, the Township hosted a Community Open House at Rainbow Elementary School. In addition, the Township distributed a survey seeking resident input on various aspects (open space, traffic, Township services, etc.) impacting their everyday lives. Finally, the Board of Supervisors hosted a public presentation at their May 19, 2020 meeting. The results of these outreaches were used to direct potential recommendations on the goals and objectives and priorities of the residents. A summary of these efforts is included in the Technical Appendices.

Adoption: The Township Planning Commission held a Public Meeting on the draft Comprehensive Plan Update on March

10, 2020. The final plan was refined to respond to suggestions and concerns expressed by the public and Township officials. After a Public Hearing before the Board of Supervisors on August 18, 2020, the Plan was adopted on August 18, 2020.

REGIONAL PLANS AND STUDIES

Several regional plans have included Valley Township as part of larger growth management, conservation, and recreational efforts. While each plan has a specific focus and theme, this plan is intended to be consistent with them. These Plans include:

Landscapes3: Chester County's Comprehensive Plan designates Valley
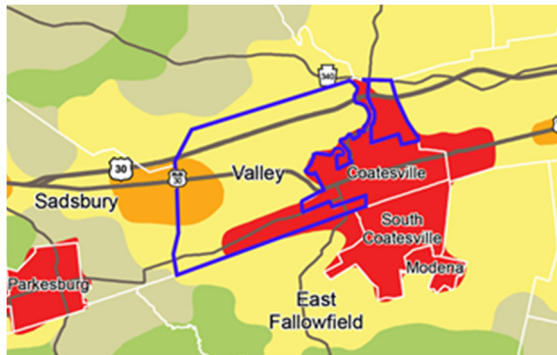
Township as a primarily suburban landscape with a suburban center focused on the GO Carlson Airport and urban landscape along the border with Coatesville. This Comprehensive Plan Update is intended to be consistent with this vision.

Brandywine Creek Greenway Strategic Action Plan: The Brandywine Creek Greenway is envisioned as a 30-mile long corridor of conservation lands that stretch from the Delaware state line to the Pennsylvania Highlands near Honey Brook. This multi-functional greenway is intended to provide recreation and conservation of natural, scenic, and cultural features. Valley Township has endorsed the Strategic Action Plan, completed in 2014. The Brandywine Creek borders the Township's eastern boundary with Coatesville.

Route 30 Multimodal Transportation Study (2015): to develop a coordinated multimodal transportation and future land use plan for the 6 municipalities along the Route 30 corridor in Western Chester County. The study area, including Valley Township, focuses on the US Route 30 Bypass, Business Route 30, and Regional Trail Connections.
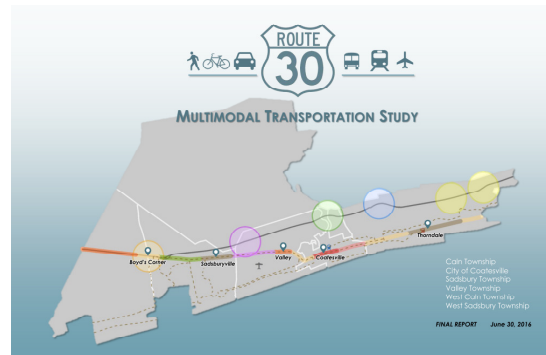
Chester Valley Trail West Feasibility Study/Master Plan (2019): The purpose of this study is to develop a preferred alignment for the Chester Valley Trail from Downingtown to the Enola Low Grade Trails. The study envisions a trail aligned to the south of the AMTRAK rail line in Valley Township. The Chester Valley Trail is part of a planned 750 miles of interconnected trails in the Greater Philadelphia region.

Mill Trail Study (2018): The Mill Trail Study defines bike and pedestrian facilities connecting Valley Township, Coatesville, South Coatesville and the Borough of Modena with the intention of joining neighborhoods and allow residents and guests of all ages to walk and bike to various destinations, including the regional trail network.

Western Chester County Future Focus (2011): This goal of this Study was to develop an overall economic development strategy for the nine municipalities in Western Chester County. Strategies focus on downtowns, brownfield sites, transportation issues, non-traditional development, and building on the area's, including affordability, educated workforce, natural, agricultural, and cultural resources, and regional coordination.

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II. GOALS, OBJECTIVES, & KEY IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Goals	Objectives
Land Use & Housing	
1. **Valley Township seeks to promote high quality development and redevelopment that supports vibrant neighborhoods, a strong economy, meaningful open spaces, energy efficiency, and that is compatible with the Township's suburban character and critical natural areas.** 2. **Facilitate the creation of walkable neighborhoods (new and existing) that meet the needs of people of all ages through a variety of housing options and safe access to public open spaces, recreational facilities, and the goods/ services needed in daily life.**	• Promote the development and redevelopment of West Lincoln Highway and Airport Road into a cohesive, mixed use suburban center characterized by: An attractive, unified streetscape; A continuous, safe, and convenient pedestrian network; Anchored by a thriving GO Carlson Airport and airport compatible/supportive businesses; A varied mix of residences, recreation, civic and commercial uses; and Improved and safe flow of traffic. • Increase the continued viability and attractiveness of the Township's established neighborhoods (Rock Run, Hayti, Westwood, Rainbow and Quiet Village) • Enable adaptive reuse, redevelopment and infill development outside of the Township's natural resource areas. • Provide for a wide variety of neighborhood and housing types.
Parks and Recreation	
3. **Provide a variety of park and recreational facilities and programming that appeal to and are accessible for all ages and abilities now and in the future.**	• Identify opportunities to expand walking and biking trails. • Improve access to community parks and facilities, and natural areas. • Expand the variety of recreational facilities and programming for all ages. • Pursue development of the pipeline trail. • Work with regional partners to develop the Brandywine Creek Trail; Chester Valley trail West.
Economic Development	
4. **Build and maintain a diverse, innovative, and sustainable economic base in the Township that continues to support a stable tax base, provides local employment opportunities, builds on the Township's unique assets, and contributes to overall quality of life.**	• Promote the development and expansion of the GO Carlson Airport. • Promote commercial development supportive of the GO Carlson Airport. • Promote business opportunities along West Lincoln Highway, Airport Road, and Highland Corporate Center. • Promote more mixed use opportunities throughout the Township. • Partner with the Western Chester County Chamber of Commerce to increase regional business attraction.

Community Character & Resource Preservation	
5. **Value and protect the Township's environmental, scenic, and historic resources and reinforce their roles in supporting the community's health, identity, sustainability, and infrastructure.**	• Protect remaining open space and natural resources. • Improve water quality of Township streams by protecting headwaters and stream banks and increasing forested riparian buffer areas. • Increase awareness and appreciation for historic resources in the Township. • Increase private landowner awareness and participation in natural and historic resource protection efforts.
Transportation & Circulation	
6. **Promote a safe and effective circulation network that optimizes vehicular and non-vehicular mobility for all, supports economic and community development, and compliments the character of Valley Township.**	• Work cooperatively with Chester County, PennDOT and adjoining municipalities to identify and implement regional highway improvement projects that enhance mobility, safety, and reduce congestion. • Improve traffic flow and traffic calming on select roads and intersections. • Consider new road connections to improve circulation. • Increase access to public transportation • Promote the extension of regional rail to Coatesville and Parkesburg. • Expand opportunities for walking and biking in the Township. • Continue to provide safe, well maintained Township owned roads and bridges.
Community Facilities & Utilities	
7. **Ensure community facilities, utilities, and services are provided to satisfy current and long-term needs in a logical, modern, environmentally sound, and cost- effective manner consistent with the Township's values.**	• Promote and participate in efforts to increase regional cooperation and coordination. • Explore options for creating a multi-functional community center. • Promote the reliability of existing on-lot septic systems. • Explore creative solutions for meeting stormwater management mandates. • Monitor and maintain adequate sewer and water systems. • Assess other public infrastructure needs. • Provide effective and modern Township communications, services and administration. • Proactively pursue grant funding related to these Township issues.

KEY IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

The following list of projects represents the top "to-do" items resulting from this Comprehensive Plan. These projects and actions have been selected from the complete list of implementation strategies found in Part V. However, it does not represent an exclusive list of the township's planned accomplishments, but those that will receive more immediate attention and resources. The strategies are all considered to be critical next steps and are therefore listed in no particular order.

Key Strategies
Policies & Programs
1. Continue to work with PennDOT and regional entities on the Township's priority transportation improvement projects: US Route 30 and the Airport Road interchange. (A1/T1)
2. Consider amending the Zoning Ordinance, Zoning Map, and SALDO to: • Adopt a streetscape overlay district and incorporate design controls.(A2/T3); • Reflect the Future Land Use plan (FLU1); • Permit accessory dwelling units, adaptive reuse, residential conversions, and more diverse housing types in the Township (NR3/FL5); • Allow mixed use along Valley Road in Westwood (NR4); • Encourage the reforestation of riparian buffers of private lands (CC2); • Consider recreation-fee-in-lieu provisions for residential and commercial uses (P6); and • Increase flexibility at the Highland Corporate Center (E3).
3. Consider incentives for redevelopment, such as streamlined permitting and decreased fees, etc. (A5)
4. Evaluate the potential for a business improvement district. (A7)
5. Involve the neighborhoods in developing improvement priorities and implementing improvement strategies, such as new street lights, street signs, clean-up days, considering one-way streets with striped pedestrian paths, and exploring the use of paper streets for pedestrian connections. (NR1,8, 10))
6. More actively enforce property maintenance codes. (NR6)
7. Develop a Corridor Master Plan for West Lincoln Highway and Airport Road. (A3)
8. Implement the recommendations from the Joint Economic Development Plan. (E5)

Key Strategies & Policies (Continued)

9. Work with the County and other partners to develop planned regional trails and trail connections. (P8)

10. Encourage reforestation of riparian buffers on private lands through education and cooperation with community partners. (CC2)

11. Partner with the Chester County Historic Resources Coordinator to develop an inventory of historic resources in the Township. (CC6)

12. Consider creating a historic committee. (CC7)

13. Develop a Master Trails Plan. (P4)

14. Consider utilizing an email marketing and communications platform (i.e., Constant Contact, MailChimp, etc.) to build a community email list and communicate digital newsletters, emergency information, email reminders on community events, etc. (CF1)

15. Explore partnership options for opening a multifunctional community center. (CF2)

16. Actively enforce on-lot septic system inspections, as required every three years. (CF6)

17. Consider developing and adopting an Official Map depicting: (P5/T4/A4/FLU2)
    - Planned future active recreation and parkland; and
    - Existing and future sidewalks and crosswalks.

Capital Improvements

18. Acquire parkland from Valley Suburban as designated on the land development plan. (P2)

19. Partner with Coatesville Area School District to accommodate recreation on the parcel between Rainbow Elementary and the Township building through a 25-year lease. (P1/A9)

20. Develop and maintain a 5-year Capital Improvements plan for road and bridge maintenance in order to maintain safe Township roads and bridges. (T8)

21. Plan and pursue funding for the design and construction of the collapsed portion of Wagontown Road. (T8)

22. Explore options for a storm sewer system in the Westwood neighborhood. (NR11)

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A. West Lincoln Highway & Airport Road

West Lincoln Highway (Business Route 30) is the defining corridor within Valley Township. As the primary east–west spine and the Township's "main street", this busy roadway is home to the G.O Carlson Airport (Chester County's largest and busiest airport), the Township's only shopping center, former and new Township municipal complexes, Rainbow Elementary, and a variety of commercial enterprises. Running the nearly 2.35 mile length of the Township from the City of Coatesville to Sadsbury Township, the character along the corridor transitions from an urban landscape in the east to rolling fields and an increasingly suburban landscape in the west.

Given the corridor's vital role in the Township's past and future- for economic development, transportation, community character, and identity, it is not surprising that guiding its development and redevelopment over the coming years is a priority for the Township.

The Route 30 Bypass which also runs through the Township parallel to, but north of, West Lincoln Highway is a major regional corridor slated for reconstruction, widening, and general improvements over the coming decade. A new interchange is planned for Airport Road, which will result in a full four-way interchange and increasing the role and importance of Airport Road in the Township's future. Twenty years ago, Country Club Road and Washington Avenue represented the dividing line between suburban and rural in the Township. Over time, however, suburban development has crept to the west. Looking forward, with better access to Route 30 and planned improvements at the airport, the western end of the West Lincoln Highway is envisioned to be a hub of development and activity.

Existing Land Use

Legend

Valley Township Land Use

Commercial	
Community Services	
Industrial	

Open Space/Vacant

Residential: Mobile Home

Residential: Row Home

Residential: Multi-Family

Residential: Single-Family Deta

Transportation

Utility

Key Locations
1 Airport Shopping Center
2. New Township Complex
3. Rainbow Elementary School
4. Existing Township Building
5. Expanded US 30 Interchange

KEY ISSUES

1. Congestion

West Lincoln Highway, Business Route 30, is a major arterial connecting central Chester County with the City of Lancaster. For most of its length, there are two travel lanes with a center turn lane. The center turn lane converts to a second travel lane going west in two specific areas. In Valley, West Lincoln Highway has an average annual daily traffic of 8,100 vehicles per day with posted speed limits ranging from 35 mph to 45 mph.

While reconstruction of the US Route 30 Bypass and the completion of the Airport Road interchange is anticipated to reduce the amount of through traffic on the roadway, the Township is expected to continue to grow in the future, particularly surrounding the Airport Road and Lincoln Highway intersection, resulting in increased traffic volumes and further contributing to congestion and delay.

2. Barriers to pedestrians, cyclists, and public transit riders.

West Lincoln Highway does not accommodate pedestrians, cyclists, or public transit users well. Sidewalks are only present in the most recent of developments, and there is only a single poorly marked crosswalk. This is especially a challenge for those who need to use public transit.

3. Haphazard and lackluster appearance

As with most corridors that have developed over long periods of time West Lincoln Highway appearance is a bit piecemeal. There are no unifying elements that create a cohesive identity or positive impression to those driving through.

While the western end is a mix of rolling farm fields, small industry, and converted residences, the eastern side of the corridor consists of older homes in modest neighborhoods, and a mix of businesses.

GOAL

Promote the development and redevelopment of West Lincoln Highway and Airport Road into a cohesive, mixed use corridor characterized by:

- An attractive, unified streetscape;
- A continuous, safe, and convenient pedestrian network;
- The thriving GO Carlson Airport surrounded by airport compatible/supportive businesses;
- A varied mix of residences, recreation, civic, and commercial uses; and
- Improved traffic flow and reduced congestion.

FUTURE POLICY ACTIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Promote higher intensity mixed use development surrounding the planned Suburban Center at the Airport Road and West Lincoln Highway intersection, leveraged by the Chester County Airport.

Consistent with Chester County's Landscapes3 Plan, the area surrounding the Airport Road and West Lincoln Highway intersection is envisioned to be a compactly developed "suburban center". This area is the primary focus for future growth in the township with development of a variety of complementary employment and residential uses that are of a higher intensity than the remainder of the township. The new municipal complex, planned recreational area, Rainbow Elementary, approved Valley Suburban development, and the Airport all help to set the stage for a vibrant residential and employment center that is transit supportive and walkable.

2. Promote mixed use development and infill along the entire corridor in order to support economic development.

Similar to the Suburban Center, the remainder of the corridor is intended to also be a mix of uses, but with a smaller scale in keeping with the surrounding neighborhoods. In lieu of a hotel, this area of the corridor would permit a bed and breakfast. In lieu of a forty-five-foot tall mixed use building, this area would have a converted residence with a home based business on the first floor and apartment or office above.

Whereas the western end of the corridor has open land for new development, the remaining sections are more built out. Encouraging new investment means enabling redevelopment and adaptive reuse. Redevelopment is challenging due to the large number of individually owned small lots, older buildings, and topography, especially closer to Coatesville. The consolidation of multiple parcels into one tract could result in more viable redevelopment opportunities. The Township can help this process in several ways, such as

GO CARLSON AIRPORT

The Chester County Airport, also known as the G. O. Carlson Airport, is a C-II reliever airport located approximately 0.5 miles south of the US 30 Bypass Airport Road Interchange. The airport serves as a hub for small private planes and corporate jets in western Chester County, with approximately 50,000 takeoffs and landings annually. It is managed by the Chester County Airport Authority, who owns the land.

The Authority received a $1.1 million grant from the Commonwealth in 2019 to upgrade its terminal, with additional plans to add hangars and eventually extend the runway to accommodate larger aircraft.

zoning ordinance incentives, and buying and consolidating parcels.

3. Implement design controls for development/redevelopment along the corridor.

Despite having different development intensities along the corridor, the overall vision is one with cohesive elements that create a more positive and forward-looking impression of the Township. In addition to Zoning regulations, design guidelines can be used to guide the visual contributions of both the suburban center and the remainder of West Lincoln Highway. This cumulative visual impact is created by the buildings, parking areas, open spaces (both private and public), and streetscape formed along the corridor. An overlay district would allow the underlying uses permitted by the base zoning district to remain distinct and in place while promoting a unified streetscape with street trees, sidewalks, and street lights. Included in the Appendix of this Plan is a set of design guidelines that demonstrate the township's desired outcomes for elements such as building and parking location, on-site pedestrian connectivity, landscaping,

signage and billboards, and building design and materials.

4. Improve mobility for everyone through sidewalks, crosswalks, and bus stop enhancements.

The Township envisions a comprehensive pedestrian network along West Lincoln Highway. This network would consist of sidewalks along both sides of the entire length of the corridor, with marked crosswalks across side streets, and signalized north-south crosswalks in key areas. One such area is at Rainbow Elementary where signage and lighting alerts motorists to the potential presence of school children, but there is no designated crosswalk. Monitoring demand for such a crosswalk will make the corridor safer for pedestrians.

In addition, bus stops enhanced with shelters and lighting in accordance with TMACC specifications (similar to SEPTA) will help to make the corridor and township safer and more convenient for the increasing number of people using public transportation. Demand would be expected to rise with the reopening of the Coatesville Train Station.

5. Consider undertaking a Corridor Master Plan for the West Lincoln Highway.

The US 30 Interchange project at Airport Road is partially intended to alleviate congestion along West Lincoln Highway between Coatesville and Airport Road. As a result, there may be room to re-envision West Lincoln Highway as more of a "complete street" that is safe and convenient for a variety of users, not just an auto-centric thoroughfare. The addition of sidewalks over time will assist in making the road more pedestrian friendly, as well as safer for transit users.

A master plan can help to layout these improvements and more clearly define how the corridor could change over time. Through public input, traffic studies, and close coordination with PennDOT, such a plan can pursue a "road diet", reducing the number of travel lanes, and creating a slower, more mobility friendly roadway. It can also assess the potential for access management to reduce driveway entrances and the where the center lane could be converted to a striped median and serve as a pedestrian refuge.

Finally, a Master Plan could evaluate the potential and desirability of bike lanes. While originally included in the Route 30 Multimodal Transportation Plan, there are significant challenges to bike lanes along the corridor, including traffic speeds and varying right-of-way widths.

6. Promote a cohesive and attractive streetscape.

The streetscape is a priority element of this Plan and can create a cohesive and inviting appearance. Ideally, the streetscape consists of a curb, grass strip, 5 foot sidewalk, street lights (with banners in the Suburban Center), and street trees for the entirety of the corridor. Bus shelters with lighting and trash receptacles would be an integral part of all bus stops. Street lights, sidewalk and amenities should be of a consistent color and model to add to the unified look of the Township.

In addition, gateways at the west and eastern end of West Lincoln Highway would present a welcome sign with landscaping and potentially lighting.
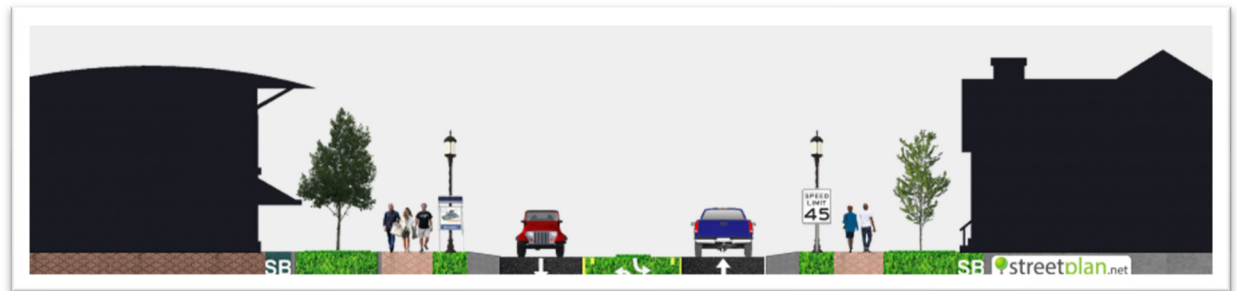
7. Improve traffic flow and reduce congestion through access management and key intersection improvements.

Access management is the practice of managing entrance and exit points onto a roadway in order to reduce conflicts and improve traffic flow and safety. Such strategies also enhance safety for cyclists, pedestrians and transit riders. Strategies include consolidating driveways, converting select driveways to right-in/right-out only operations, providing cross access easements (for shared access to multiple properties from one access point), and providing a center left-turn lane or center medians. Where available, some access points may be relocated to side streets.

Above: Conceptual cross section with green median in lieu of a center turn lane, grass strip, sidewalk, street trees and street lights.

Center: Landscaped median and gateway

B. Neighborhood Reinvestment

Valley Township is a community of neighborhoods, new and old. Many older neighborhoods were established in the early 20th century, while others developed in the post-war era, but all have unique stories to relate about the Township.

Today the neighborhoods of Hayti, Rainbow, Quiet Village, Westwood, and Rock Run remain important to the health and vitality of the Township overall, but are facing challenges that are common with age and underinvestment. Since these neighborhoods contribute to the quality of life and the overall appearance of the Township and thus impact property values, safety, and community pride, this Comprehensive Plan is taking a closer look at the challenges and opportunities facing these areas, and how to improve their vitality and potential for the future.
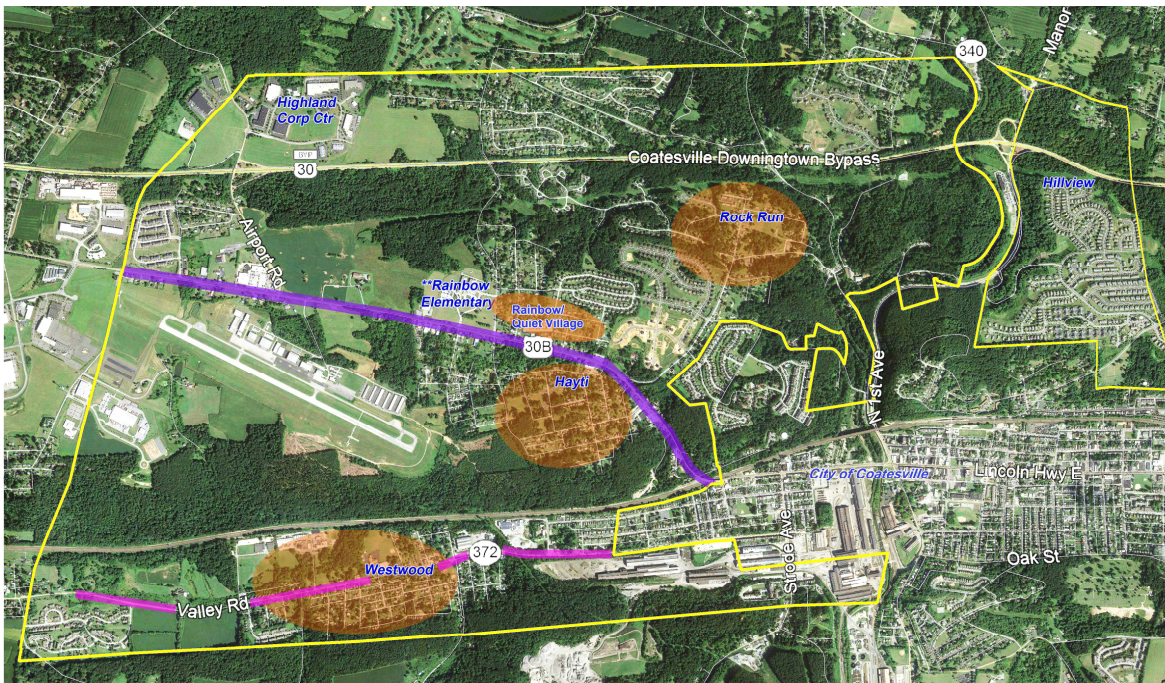
KEY ISSUES

1. Increased attention to overall appearance and maintenance is needed. In some areas of these neighborhoods, the overall appearance is lackluster and some signs of neglect are visible. Trash and abandoned cars are visible along some streets. These can be issues of resident safety and neighborhood peace. However, the overall impression can also spill over into other areas such as the West Lincoln Highway corridor. Improved attention to these areas can add to the attractiveness of the corridor for businesses and patrons alike.

2. Older housing can create challenges for existing and future residents. Older housing typically requires more maintenance and is less energy efficient. Regular maintenance and/or replacement of roofs, windows or other large systems may be a challenge for older residents as they age in place, as well as lower income residents. While these neighborhoods are a strong source of affordable housing, the houses are also generally smaller and may lack amenities desired by the current market, and therefore, may be less attractive to buyers.

3. Older neighborhoods have older infrastructure, or may lack certain infrastructure completely.

Infrastructure issues such as failing septic systems, cracked and leaking pipes, or complete lack of sewer or stormwater infrastructure can lead to issues with ground water pollution, flooding, or overburdening the treatment system. Westwood, in particular, is lacks stormwater infrastructure that leads to flooding, for instance, can make the park and playground unusable for days after a storm.

4. There is a lack of sidewalks.

The residents of Hayti, Rainbow, and Quiet Village are within convenient walking distance of businesses, bus stops, school, and parkland located along West Lincoln Highway. However, despite having narrow streets, short connected blocks, and on-street parking, (all hallmarks of traditional development patterns and a walkable place), the neighborhoods lack sidewalks that could allow residents of all ages to safely and conveniently access the businesses, open spaces, and institutions along West Lincoln Highway .

5. Minimal open space and/or recreational opportunities and poor access to what is there.

Each of these neighborhoods is within close proximity to a modest but vital playground and park area. While there are existing recreational facilities within each of these neighborhoods, these modest parks cater only to younger residents, and therefor do no offer much of interest to the recreational needs and wants of other age groups. In addition, because of the lack of sidewalks, access to these sites is not always safe or convenient for residents.

GOAL

In partnership with the current residents, work to promote the continued viability and attractiveness of the Township's older neighborhoods.

Above right: Sidewalk gap along Franklin Street (in red); Center: Westwood neighborhood; Bottom: Hayti Park

FUTURE ACTIONS & POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Involve the residents in creating plans for safer, healthier, and more complete neighborhoods.

The Township should partner with the residents and institutions that are the backbone of these neighborhoods to identify priority needs and improvements. Community involvement could start with individual meetings in each neighborhood to identify priorities and pinpoint specific needs of different groups, especially older residents aging in place, children and adolescents, as well as those with disabilities.

Additional strategies could include:

- Encouraging an annual community clean-up day;
- Increasing awareness of property maintenance codes and procedures; and
- Creating "friends" groups to become stewards and leaders for individual parks and neighborhoods

2. Promote rehabilitation and renovation of existing housing and increased energy efficiency.

The Township can help promote resources available to assist in rehabilitation and renovation of the existing housing, such as the Housing Partnership of Chester County. HPCC has programs to assist with rehabilitation as well as new homebuyer assistance. Information on these programs can be included in the Township newsletter and given to neighborhood groups to encourage participation.

3. Improve pedestrian access, especially to open space, community facilities such as Rainbow Elementary, and parks and recreation.

While challenging, there are opportunities to creatively incorporate walking paths into older neighborhoods. Hayti, in particular, has several "paper streets" or streets that were mapped, but never built. Exploring the potential to use these for walking paths could help connect the neighborhood to the Hayti Park and Rainbow Elementary School.

In other neighborhoods, the Township could consider reconfiguring the narrow two-way

Top: Paper streets in Hayti;

Bottom: Striped pedestrian path and sign along a neighborhood street

streets into one-way streets, allowing space for a sidewalk or striped path on one side of the road.

Finally, identifying gaps in existing sidewalks, such as the gap along Franklin Road in Rainbow Village and researching grant opportunities, such as "Safe routes to Schools", could provide safe passage to important community destinations.

4. Invest in neighborhood park and recreational opportunities.

Neighborhood playgrounds and recreational spaces are important assets to the health and identities of these communities. The Township's Open Space, Recreation and Environmental Resources Plan provides specific recommendations for improving the safety, variety, and relevance of these opportunities and includes:

- Considering the best use of the Westwood Fire Company property and planning for access to the future Chester Valley Trail West;
- Develop a master plan for Hayti Park; and
- Consider extending the proposed "pipeline trail" to connect with Rock Run.

5. Allow neighborhood commercial uses along Valley Road in Westwood.

Westwood neighborhood in the southern tier of the Township is separated from West Lincoln Highway by the steep slopes and the rail line. Existing commercial uses and higher density apartments adjacent to Westwood Fire Company form a neighborhood center.

Further to the east along Valley Road are additional commercial and institutional uses, as well as an historic farmhouse, currently abandoned and in disrepair. Allowing for mixed uses along this stretch could offer opportunity for small businesses and a community hub. In addition, greater flexibility in zoning, could encourage the farmhouse to be adaptively reused for offices on the ground floor, or converted to apartments, therefore promoting a viable future for the structure.

6. Address stormwater and other utility needs.

While the majority of the residences in these neighborhoods are connected to public sewer, there are small areas that remain on septic and have been identified as being at risk of failure. The Township should continue to monitor these for proper care and maintenance (an inspection and pumping is required every three years, with certification sent to the Township) and have a plan for connecting these properties into the public system when it becomes necessary.

In addition, Westwood completely lacks a storm water system, which leads to issues with flooding along Sucker Run. The Township can explore grant funding for the design and construction of a future stormwater system in Westwood.

7. Improve general appearance and more actively enforce property maintenance codes.

Studies have shown that allowing graffiti, trash, and abandoned cars to remain sends signals that the community is not being monitored and can lead to a downward trend and more egregious violations and crimes. Whereas, immediately removing such signs of neglect, can help build community pride and responsibility.

Property maintenance is regulated by the Township's Property Maintenance Code and, as is common in most Townships, enforcement is primarily complaint driven. By partnering with community members and leaders to identify the most egregious violations and threats to community wellbeing, the Township may be able to encourage better compliance with existing regulations and more active participation from neighbors. Other improvements could include:

• Improvements such as new street signs or street lights may be important to the residents.

• Identifying challenges with trash pick up and promoting creative solutions, such as running one "free" bulk pick up per year to support community clean up days, may improve unsightly areas.

C. Economic Development

KEY ISSUES

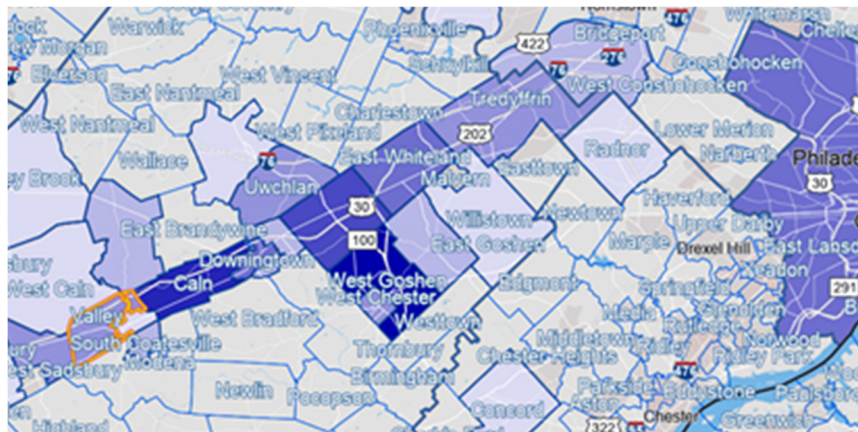**1.** The Township is a bedroom community where 97% of residents commute beyond the immediate area for employment, contributing to congestion, and a tax base heavily reliant on residential property taxes.

2. There is a lack of commercial establishments within the township that meet the daily needs of residents. For example, there is one small discount grocery store in Valley Township and the closest mainstream chain grocery is in Thorndale.

3. The Township is looking to grow its tax base and invest in desired services and amenities. As the township continues to grow, new nonresidential development can help to balance its tax base and support new initiatives that support a high quality of life.

4. Valley Township has a lower than average (for the County) median household income and higher than average poverty rates. Employment opportunities closer to home could help to increase access to employment and training in the Township.

Left: Employment destinations for Valley Township residents
Dark blue areas represent primary employment destinations for Valley Township residents.

COATESVILLE AREA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STUDY (DRAFT 2020)

Concurrent with the Comprehensive Plan update, the Township is undergoing an economic development study with Coatesville and South Coatesville. The goal of this effort is to develop a cohesive strategy for identifying and recruiting suitable businesses to the area. Key findings pertaining to Valley Township in the report include:

- There is a need to create a more positive public perception of the region.
- Housing in Valley Township should focus on empty nesters looking to downsize and opportunities to retain younger households.
- The number of primary jobs in Valley Township grew between 2002 and 2017, but the share of workers living and working in the area declined, most likely due to the lack of jobs paying a living wage.
- Highland Corporate Center has potential for redevelopment, but the demand for new industrial space is low.
- There is a limited demand for retail and restaurant space and new businesses

should be focused on the West Lincoln Highway corridor and around the Coatesville train station.

- The office market appears to be tight locally, with little growth and low vacancy rates and is expected to grow through 2029, with the greatest demand being for medical and professional space.

GOAL

Build and maintain a diverse, innovative, and sustainable economic base in the Township that continues to support a stable tax base, provides quality, local employment opportunities, builds on the Township's unique assets, and contributes to overall quality of life.

- Promoting development and expansion of the GO Carlson Airport.

- Promoting commercial development compatible with and supportive of the GO Carlson Airport.

- Promoting business opportunities along West Lincoln Highway, Airport Road and Highland Corporate Center.

- Promoting mixed use development in appropriate locations in the Township.

- Partnering with the Western Chester County Chamber of Commerce and other regional partners to increase business retention and attraction.

FUTURE ACTIONS & POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Continue to plan and advocate for infrastructure improvements that will support the attractiveness and capacity of the region to accommodate new growth.

Planned transportation projects such as the Route 30 Bypass Reconstruction and Airport Road interchange, improving the intersection of Airport Road and West Lincoln Highway, constructing the Coatesville Train Station, and enhancing the GO Carlson Airport, and improving bus service in the area are ongoing projects that can enhance Valley's Township's attractiveness to businesses. The Township should continue to work closely with regional partners to support these projects.

2. Strengthen the partnership with the Chester County Area Airport Authority to advance the master plan for the GO Carlson Airport.

The airport has long been considered a potential economic driver for the Township, but one whose potential is still developing. From an employment and business perspective, the airport hosts companies such as Sikorsky Global Helicopter, Global Air Sales and Service, and Bald Eagle Aviation and attracts other businesses who indirectly support airport operations. From a revenue perspective, the airport contributes to Valley Township through employee contributions to the local services and earned income taxes from airport employees, as well as the same, plus real estate taxes on businesses that locate in the township because of the airport.

The County and Township's plans envision and encourage airport dependent businesses to locate in the Township, whether in the industrial park to the south of the airport or in Highland corporate Center. In addition, airport supportive industries such as hotels, car rental, and restaurants are anticipated for the W. Lincoln Highway Corridor, where the

Township has zoned for commercial uses in its suburban center.

Strengthening the partnership between the airport and the Township so that both entities receive support and cooperation from the other could help to advance mutually beneficial plan for economic development.

3. Support land uses and development patterns within the West Lincoln Highway/ Airport Road area that are consistent with a suburban center anchored by the Chester County Airport.
(See section regarding West Lincoln Highway)

4. Take a flexible approach to modernizing Highland Corporate Center.
A 2017 report published by the Chester County Planning Commission, predicts that traditional suburban office parks, such as Highland Corporate Center, may struggle in the near future due to changing demands and demographics. [1] While demand for office space is relatively tight in western Chester County, desired new office spaces will be located in lively, urbanized locale with a mix of uses, access to public transportation. A future vision for Highland Corporate Center could build on the strengths of its location and access to Route 30, the educated work force, and housing affordability, while strengthening multimodal access, recreational opportunities, and overall design.

Even as Highland Corporate Center will benefit from the upgrades to the US Route 30 Bypass and Airport Road interchange, there are additional ways to bolster its long-term viability. These include:

- Evaluating the zoning requirements for industrial uses with 150,000 square feet or less to consider allowing wholesaling, warehousing, and distribution as a by-right use, so long as performance standards are met. Uses which do not meet such standards should be considered a Conditional Use.

- Ensuring that some convenience retail and services, including daycare, for the employees is easily available and potentially within walking distance; and

- Allowing non-traditional and "makerspace" uses, whether as permitted, accessory, or temporary uses, in vacant spaces, such as small scale industrial, craft brewery/distillery, as well as indoor recreation.

5. Allow greater flexibility and more opportunities for mixed use development in appropriate locations. Encouraging mixed use in locations such as West Lincoln Highway, Airport Road, Valley Road, and the business parks can help support small businesses and decrease vehicle trips. Attention to design is necessary in order to ensure compatibility with surrounding areas

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[1] Commercial Landscapes: Reinventing Office Parks for the 21st Century. Chester County Board of Commissioners, 2017.

6. Encourage opportunities for recreational businesses as the trail system in the Township develops, especially along the Brandywine Creek Greenway. The planned Brandywine Creek Greenway and Chester Valley West Trail offers an opportunity for visitors, tourists and locals to enjoy the recreation and history of the area and support new related retailers. Coordinated efforts with adjoining municipalities and Greenway planners can inform appropriate locations and uses.

7. Help retain existing businesses and attract new ones by offering incentives for redevelopment and infill development and streamlining the review process. Incentives such as LERTA (see sidebar), an accelerated review process, and reduced permit fees can help attract desired businesses. Placing performance standards into by-right uses in lieu of lengthy and unpredictable conditional use procedures are another consideration.

Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance

(LERTA)

LERTA, or The Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance Law, 72 P.S. § 4722 et seq., was created under the authority of Article VIII, Section 2(b)(iii) of the Pennsylvania constitution, and allows a municipality and school district to "establish special tax provisions" to a taxpayer for a period of no more than 10 years in order to "encourage improvement of deteriorating property or areas by an individual, association or corporation."

LERTA assists commercial property owners who improve their properties by delaying the increased tax on the improvements for a period of time, up to 10 years, allowing them to offset the cost of the improvement. Since the lion's share of real estate taxes fund school districts in Pennsylvania, LERTA is a much stronger incentive if the School District is on board.

In pursuing LERTA, the Township would conduct a feasibility study to determine the parcels to be included in the district, as well as package of tax provisions that would provide the greatest incentive to the first developers willing to create a positive change in line with the Township's vision.

D. Parks and Recreation

2019 OPEN SPACE, RECREATION, AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES PLAN

The township recently adopted an update to its Open Space, Recreation, and Environmental Resources (OSRER) Plan in fall of 2019. The Open Space Plan comprehensively documents and evaluates the existing conditions and needs for parks and recreation in the township. While these details are not reproduced within this plan, the goals, priorities and recommendations are summarized for continuity and consistency.

GOAL

Provide a variety of park and recreational facilities and programming that appeals to and is accessible for all ages and abilities now and in the future.

FUTURE ACTIONS & POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Partner with the Coatesville Area School District to accommodate and plan for recreation on the parcel adjoining the new municipal complex and Rainbow Elementary School.

The OSRER identified the need for more parkland, and particularly more active recreation spaces in the township. As the township looks to the future and continues to grow, the opportunities for adequate open space and recreation diminishes.

The School District currently owns vacant land along West Lincoln Highway that is adjacent to both the new municipal complex and Rainbow elementary School. This land represents a significant opportunity to provide active recreation and preserve open space along the developing corridor and adjacent to the suburban center. The township would like to pursue a 25 year lease of the land from CASD.

Concept plan for Recreation adjoining the new municipal complex

2. Acquire additional parkland, particularly that designated on the Valley Suburban development site.

The Valley Suburban development proposed and approved for the northeast corner of West Lincoln Highway and Airport Road has committed to dedicating a portion of the property for open space. This land forms an integral part of the recreational and open space network to the north of West Lincoln Highway and including the proposed trail along the pipeline easement, the municipal complex, and proposed recreational park adjacent to it.

3. Develop a Township-wide Master Trail Plan.

In response to resident demands and long term recreational vision, the township is beginning to pursue the development of a trail network. Several east-west corridors are available to form a framework or spine, including the planned Brandywine Creek Greenway Trail and recently planned Chester Valley West extension alignment. To the north, an existing pipeline easement runs the length of the township and offers another possibility for trail easements in that quadrant of the Township. The next step in development of this network is a formal Trail Plan that focuses in on types of trails, users, feasibility, and connections. One specific challenge for this plan will be to identify potential north south linkages in the western section of the township to connect neighborhoods otherwise isolated from these opportunities.

4. Explore the potential for a trail along the Pipeline easement in the northern section of the township.

In the near term, the Township can begin discussions with Williams Transcontinental Pipeline Company to explore the potential for trail easements along this corridor.

Potential Opportunities

Passsive Recreation and Trails
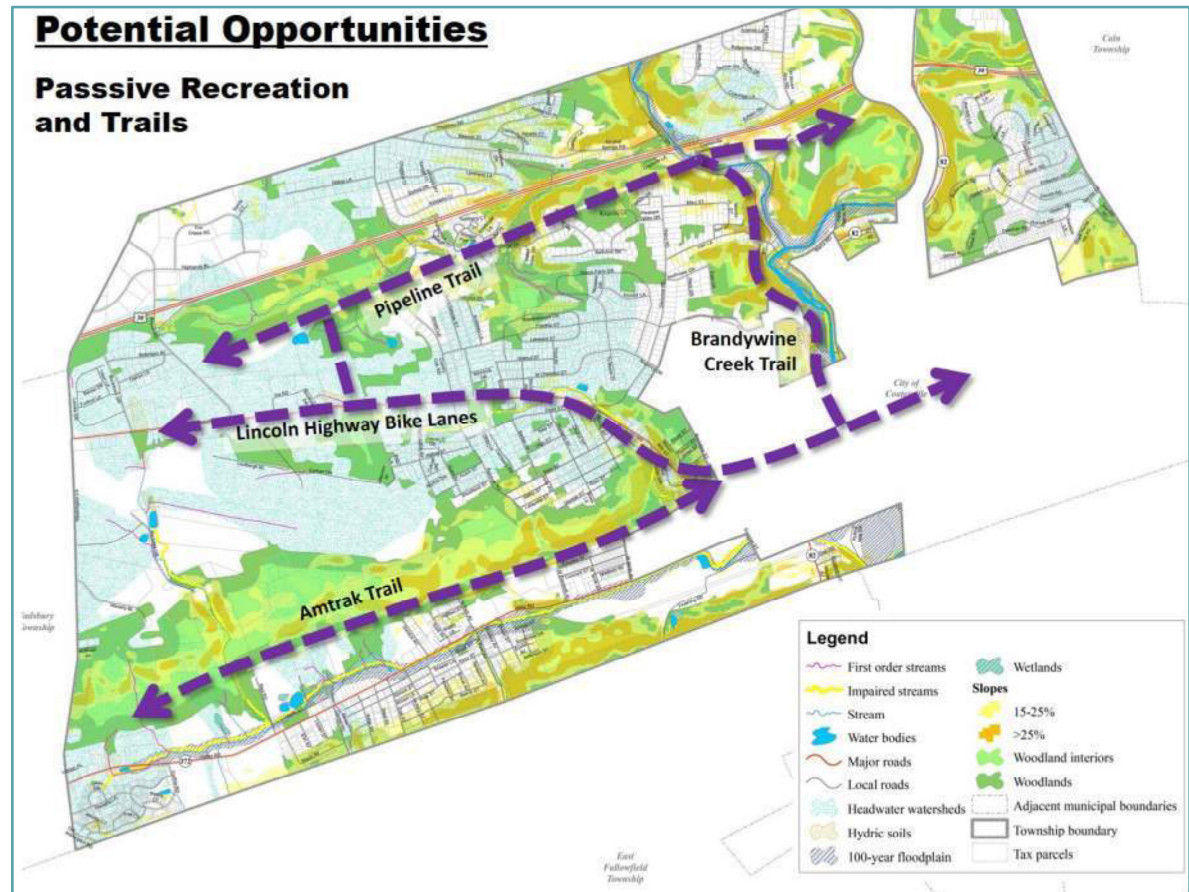
5. Develop and adopt an Official Map that depicts future parkland and trails.

An official map is an important tool for municipalities with an interest in designating land for public purpose. The official map provides municipalities the opportunity to negotiate the potential for easements and other improvements on land only after a landowner expresses an interest in development. Other purposes for which an Official Map can be used include road connections, sidewalks, trails, public utilities, parkland, and conservation.

6.   Work with the County, Brandywine Creek Greenway and other partners to advance plans for regional trails and trail connections.

Valley Township is fortunate in that it is the beneficiary of two planned regional trails within its borders. The Brandywine Creek Greenway Trail and the Chester Valley Trail West will provide broad regional connections for recreation and transportation once completed.

Working cooperatively with these partners to continue studies, access funding, and maximize the potential for these trails is key to their long-term success.

7.Consider amending the recreation fee-in-lieu ordinance to address commercial properties.

Funding the acquisition and maintenance of recreational amenities is a challenge for most municipalities. Municipalities are authorized under the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code to require developers to dedicate public open space within proposed subdivision and land developments. A developer may also agree to pay a "fee-in-lieu" of dedicating land. Such fee-in-lieu funds can be used to support recreational needs. Many municipalities only assess these fees-in-lieu on residential properties. However, there are some that also utilize these on nonresidential development.

8. Implement the recommendations from the Township's Open Space, Recreation and Environmental Resources Plan.

The newly adopted OSRER Plan further defines many site-specific improvements aimed at enhancing the recreational opportunities for current and future residents of the township. This plan is intended to be fully consistent with those recommendations and strategies.

Previous Page: Trail map from 2019 Open Space, Recreation, and Environmental Resources (OSRER) Plan

Below: Final recommended alignment of the Chester Valley Trail West in Valley Township (shown in green) (Source: Chester County Planning Commission)

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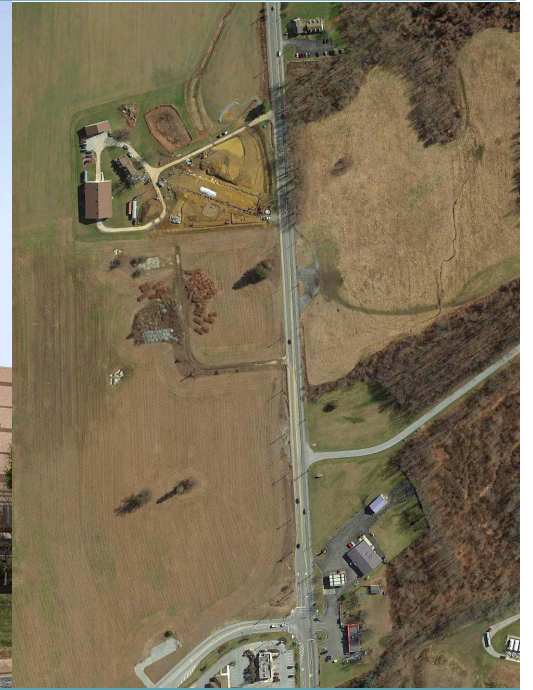
A. Resource Preservation and Community Character

Valley Township residents value the natural setting, rural properties, and beauty of the area. Woodlands, streams, farmland, and rolling fields all contribute to the character of Valley Township as well as the health and wellbeing of the community. This section examines the natural and historic resources in the Township, analyzes issues, and recommends strategies for maintaining quality of life through protection and preservation.

The Township recently adopted an Open Space, Recreation, and Environmental Resources Plan. Since this plan provides a full inventory of natural resources, including soils, steep slopes, woodlands, hydrology (floodplains, wetlands, streams and water bodies) as well as a summary of Ordinance regulations from the Zoning and Subdivision and Land Development that impact protections for these features. The following map summarizes the natural features of the Township and the existing protection levels.

**VALLEY TOWNSHIP
NATURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY**
Source: Brandywine Conservancy, 2014

Legend

First order streams
Impaired streams
Stream
Water bodies
Major roads
Local roads
Headwater watersheds
Hydric soils
100-year floodplain
Wetlands
Slopes
15-25%
>25%
Woodland interiors
Woodlands
Adjacent municipal boundaries
Township boundary
Tax parcels
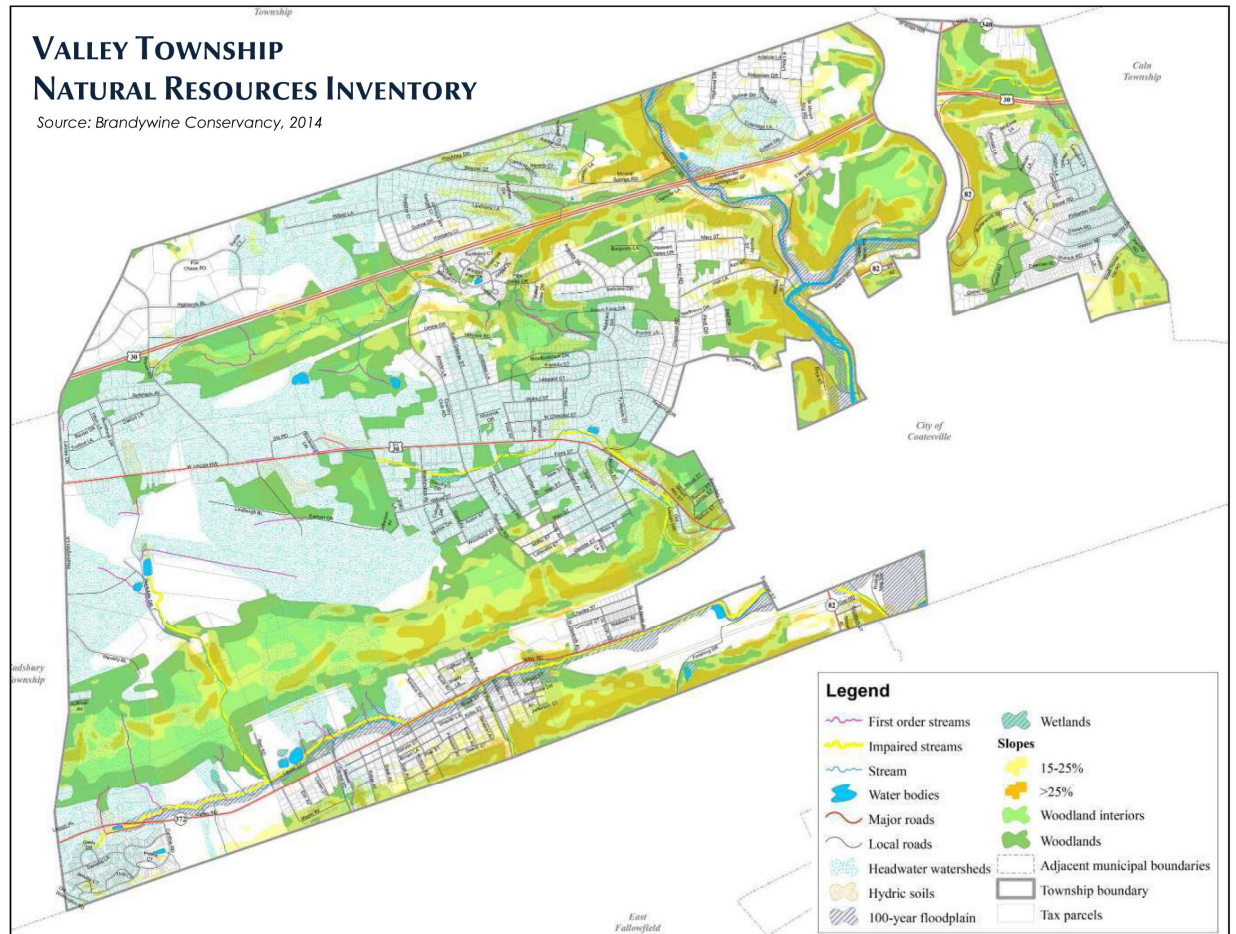
The Township updated its Zoning Ordinance in 2015 to better protect natural resources. In addition, the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance was updated in 2019 to protect woodlands, PNDI sites, and riparian buffers, incorporate tree replacement standards, and require riparian buffer restoration plans.

KEY ISSUES

1. Improve water quality

According to the Chester County Impaired Waters Map Series of 2016, all of the waters to the south of West Lincoln Highway are considered impaired per the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. Impaired waters may be contaminated by one or several pollutants, but are of great concern for anyone who supports clean water.

2. Fragmented open spaces could be better leveraged into continuous greenways. The benefits of open space are lessened when woodlands and other open spaces become fragmented into smaller areas. Maintaining continuous networks of green space called greenways can help to mitigate the negative effects of development and fragmentation.

3. **Avoid losing the remaining open space and character of the community.** With development planned for the West Lincoln Highway corridor, focused on the western end, many of the remaining highly visible open spaces in the Township are disappearing. The time to act to preserve additional open space and the associated recreational and natural value is now.

GOAL:

Value and protect the Township's environmental, open space, and historic resources and reinforce their roles in supporting the community's health, identity, sustainability, and infrastructure.

FUTURE ACTIONS & POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Coordinate with regional partners to achieve natural resource and open space goals, pursue funding opportunities, and implement appropriate land stewardship techniques on both public and private lands. Such partners include:

- Chester County Planning Commission;

- Local land trusts and other area conservation organizations, such as the Brandywine Conservancy
- The Stroud Water Research Center; and
- Brandywine Red Clay Alliance, Red Stream Blue program.

2. Encourage reforestation of riparian buffers in the Township by educating and engaging residents and other landowners and securing funds to support these efforts. The installation of riparian buffers is one of the most cost-effective means of managing and reducing storm water runoff and improving water quality. Riparian woodlands also provide greenways and corridors for wildlife, opportunities for passive recreation, valuable pollinator habitat, and scenic benefits.

The Township's newly updated Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance requires reforestation on land development projects. However, to many of the impaired headwaters and streams are on properties that are already developed and may not redevelop in the near future. More creative solutions, volunteer work, and partnering with private landowners will be needed to reach these areas.

3. Review and update land development and zoning regulations to ensure adequate protections of natural resources. Consider the following Ordinance enhancements:

- Consider adding regulations to protect and conserve ridgelines, hydric soils, and groundwater supply.
- Identify and enhance protection of headwaters by reducing impervious coverage permitted within these areas and increasing open space in developments proposed in these areas.
- Permit low-mow, meadow areas as part of community open space;
- Consider allowing tree replacement plantings to be done off-site and directed to priority areas, such as unforested riparian buffers.
- Encourage greater use of native species (or consider mandating a minimum percentage in the SALDO);
- Ensure the regulatory ordinances require appropriate stewardship of community open space.

4. Create continuous, connected natural corridors for the benefit of people, plants and animals. The steep slopes, open spaces, and stream valleys of the Township support diverse ecosystems and habitats for wildlife and plants. These naturally linear areas could be further enhanced by encouraging the creation and protection of continuous natural corridors or greenways. Using the existing open space network and constrained lands, the Township can identify gaps in the potential greenway network and seek funding or regulations to better protect those spaces from development. Working with partners to create a protected Brandywine Creek Greenway would be a priority in this effort.

5. Educate and encourage private landowners to participate in resource protection and conservation measures, with special attention to homeowners associations that manage open space.

Most of the open space and natural resources in the Township are under private ownership. Educating landowners on best management practices (BMPs) can help to better protect these resources. By providing up-to-date information and potential resources on topics such as removing invasive species, reforestation of riparian buffers, and managing infestations such as the emerald ash borer, spotted lantern fly can help spread the word and encourage partnership. The Township's Environmental Advisory Committee can help guide these efforts and outreach. In addition, the Township can model best management practices on Township-owned properties, engaging volunteers in stewardship opportunities through "community clean-up days", while teaching residents on these best practices or demonstration projects.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

Valley Township's landscape reflects several historical themes, including the area's rural roots, role of the iron and steel industry, the railroad, and its African American heritage. Acknowledging and documenting this history can play a vital role in creating an identity for the Township, fostering appreciation for the Township's history and the built environment, and opportunities for linking past, current and future residents.

There are many misconceptions surrounding "historic preservation" and the obligations that may come with recognizing and designating properties with historical significance. The legal basis for historic preservation can be found in the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), which states that "zoning ordinances shall provide for the protection of natural and historic features and resources". State and federal historic resource protections are focused on sites listed on or determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Local regulatory approaches can target a broader range of resources of local significance and can be specifically tailored to local preservation objectives.
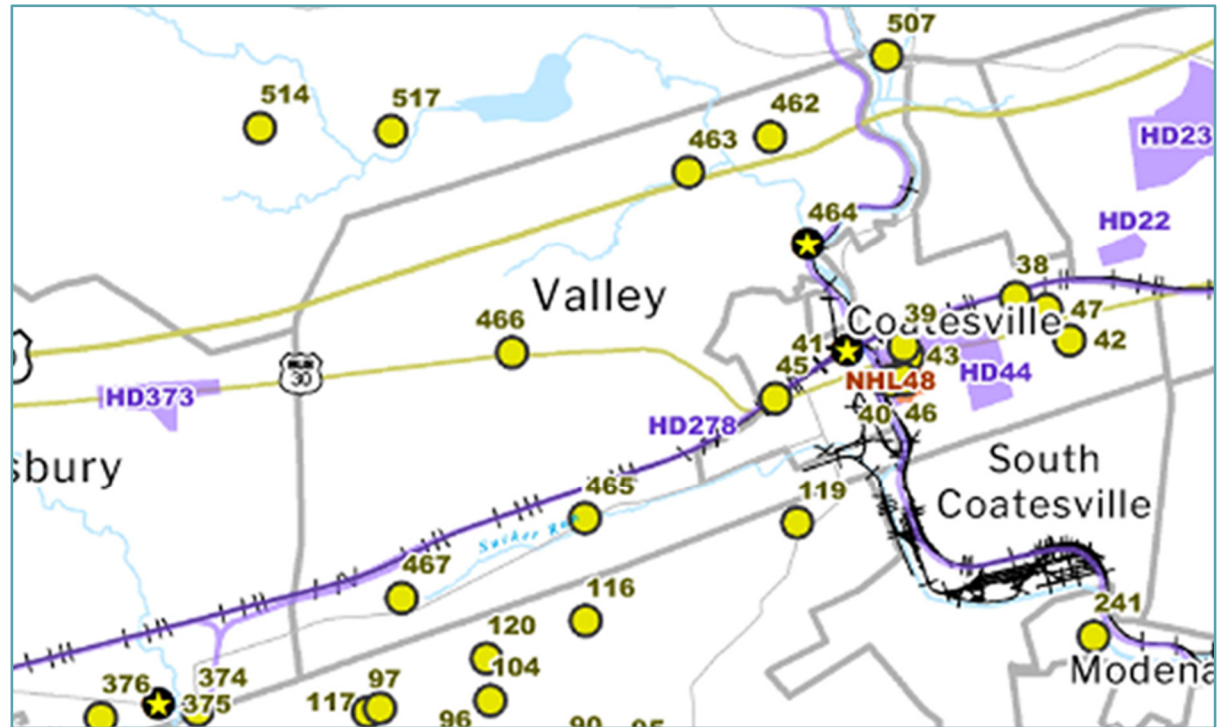
HISTORIC RESOURCES

Valley Township has 8 properties that are either Listed on (4) or Eligible (4) for the National Register of Historic Places. These were the result of the 1979-1982 Chester County Comprehensive Historic Resource Survey and are depicted in the map below. The Township currently has no regulations pertaining to historic resources, their demolition or preservation.

FUTURE ACTIONS & POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Consider developing an inventory of buildings in the Township that may be considered historic. An up-to-date inventory is the first step towards recognizing historic resources in the Township. Chester County currently has resources to assist municipalities to update their inventories and understand what significance these structures might hold for the community or region.

2. Consider a Township historic committee or commission to work with the County. The purpose of the commission is to guide the inventory, raise awareness of significant historical resources, and advise the Board of Supervisors, the Planning Commission, and the Zoning Hearing Board on matters pertaining to the Township's historic resources. The Township could consider reaching out to an existing independent historic society or advocacy group to start the committee.

3. Encourage adaptive reuse of buildings in the Township. Maintaining the viability of older structures is a proven technique in preserving older structures. Adaptive reuse allows a landowner to use a building for a purpose other

than what it was originally built. Under this approach, a barn can be converted to a bed and breakfast, apartments, office, or antique shop, as long as other provisions for parking and compatibility with surrounding neighborhood are adhered to. Other examples of reuse that are often seen today is the reuse of a farmhouse as a community center or clubhouse in new residential subdivisions.

4. Upon completion of an inventory, consider developing and adopting an historic preservation ordinance to protect priority properties.

In considering a Historic Preservation Ordinance, the Township might consider one that uses a tiered approach and thus places higher protections on structures with more value to the community. The highest tier would be comprised of National Register properties and buildings, while the mid and lower tiers would be comprised of buildings with more local significance. Ranking would be determined as part of the historic sites and structures inventory.

Provisions that might be addressed as part of a Historic Preservation Ordinance include:

HISTORIC DESIGNATIONS

National Register for Historic Places: Properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places are eligible for federal grants, tax credits, and other incentives. Federally funded projects that might impact the property must complete an assessment before any work can begin. Beyond that, being listed on the National Register does not interfere with a private property owner's right to use, alter, or sell their property and does not guarantee that the property or building will be protected or even maintained.

Local significance: Under the Historic Preservation Act 167 of 1961, municipalities have the authority to enact local historic regulations. This zoning may take the form of an overlay district, which may include regulations for adaptive reuse, permissible façade treatments, and surrounding properties. Applications pertaining to historic resources and made under the ordinance are reviewed by an Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB), which then makes a recommendation to the governing body.

- Require review prior to demolition permits.
- Prohibit demolition by neglect.
- Include provisions guiding alteration of historic resources.
- Include provisions for use and adaptive re-use of historic resources.
- Incorporation of historic resources into open space with public access.

5. *Continue working with the Hayti community to determine the future of the Old Passtown School/former Township building and its potential for reuse.*

The soon to be former Township building holds important significance for the Hayti community. Initial assessments show that it will require significant investment in order to modernize the building for continued use. The Township is currently working with the community and County to investigate options and a mutually agreeable path forward.

Above: Good example of adaptive reuse of an historic building along West Lincoln Highway. Below: Example of new construction compatible with history and existing character of the township.

B. Transportation and Circulation

Valley Township has a multifaceted transportation network featuring assets that facilitate rail, air, vehicular, and pedestrian traffic. These include:

- Regional highway access via the US 30 Interchange at Airport Road;
- 17 miles of State owned and maintained roadways;
- 45 miles of Township owned roadways;
- 10 bridges;
- Chester County GO Carlson Airport;
- AMTRAK owned and operated rail line; and
- TMACC LINK Bus service and stops along W Lincoln Highway.

KEY ISSUES

Transportation issues are widely covered throughout this plan, in the section on West Lincoln Highway/Airport Road (Part III A), Neighborhood Reinvestment (Part IIIB), and in the Parks and Recreation section, which speaks specifically to the need for trails and a

Township wide trails plan. This section therefore is intended to summarize future actions and priorities for the Township regarding transportation.

With all eyes on the reconstruction of US 30 and the Airport Road interchange, the Township's top transportation priorities for the foreseeable future are well defined and underway.

GOAL:

Promote a safe and effective circulation network that optimizes vehicular and non-vehicular mobility for all, supports economic and community development, and compliments the character of Valley Township.

Legend

Traffic Signal

Bridges ▲

Railroad ┼┼┼

Airport (red hatched)

Valley Boundary (red outline)

Bus Stops
- ● Route "A"
- ◉ Route LINK
- ◉ Route LINK and "A"

Bus Lines
- - - - Route "A"
- - - - Route LINK
- - - - Route LINK and "A"

Valley Township Roads
- —— LOCAL
- —— COLLECTOR (TWP)

PADOT Roads
- —— ARTERIAL (PADOT)
- —— COLLECTOR (PADOT)

—— Sidewalks

⬌ **Future Road Connections**

1 inch = 1,500 feet

Existing Transportation Features

Comprehensive Plan

VLTWP19001

Pennoni

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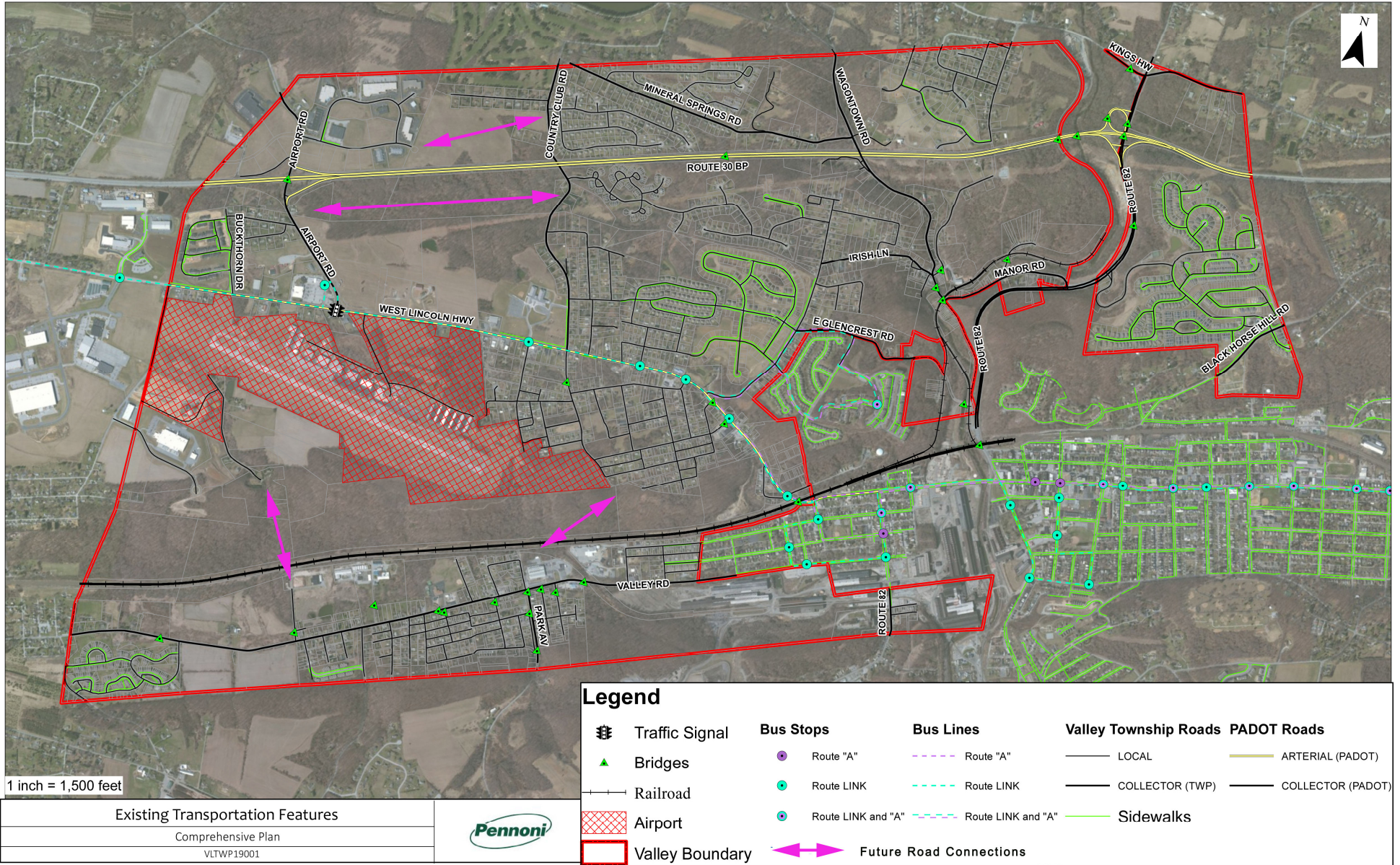
FUTURE ACTIONS & POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Continue to work cooperatively with Chester County, PennDOT and advance design and construction on the Township's priority projects:

    a. US 30 Bypass Reconstruction

    b. US 30/Airport Road Interchange reconstruction

2. Improve traffic flow and safety on other select roads and intersections:

    a. Reevaluate the intersection of Wagontown Road/Irish Lane/Mt Airy

    b. Reconstruction of the closed portion of Wagontown Road

    c. Evaluate safety improvements for East Glencrest Road

3. Consider new road connections to improve circulation.

    a. Airport Road and Country Club Road

    b. Highland Boulevard and Country Club Road

    c. Red Road and Quarry Street/Rockdale Street

    d. Washington Street/Grant Street and Valley Road.

As depicted on the Transportation Features Map, these potential road connections could help to improve connectivity in the Township by providing a local east-west connection in the north; and north-south access across the AMTRAK rail line. These conceptual connections are highly constrained by topography and/or rail lines and therefore represent a large investment, but not without benefit.

4. Promote access management along W Lincoln Highway and Airport Road. (See W. Lincoln Highway section)

5. Promote streetscape enhancements along W Lincoln Highway and Airport Road, including sidewalks, street trees, street lights, and gateways. (See W. Lincoln Highway section)

6. Increase accessibility and accommodation for public transportation including promoting the extension of regional rail to Coatesville and Parkesburg.

    a. Enhance existing bus stops as part of redevelopment.

    b. Require new development to coordinate new bus shelters in accordance with SEPTA regulations and in coordination with TMACC. Support enhanced (read: expanded and/or more frequent) service as demand increases.

Valley Township benefits from public transit services provided by the Transit Management Agency of Chester County (TMACC), which operates the Coatesville LINK and Evening LINK. The bus service is supported by Federal, County, and local funds, including Valley Township. Ridership on the LINK approached an average of 4,800 per month between July 2018 and October 2019. As the population ages, Valley continues to grow, and train service returns to Coatesville, this service will become increasingly relied upon by residents and employees.

7. Expand opportunities for walking and biking in the Township, with priority on access to schools, parks, planned trails, bus stops, W. Lincoln Highway, and other community hubs.

While also discussed in Parks, Recreation and Trails, opportunities for walking and biking go beyond recreation and have become a transportation issue for those who want or

need alternatives to the car. The Township envisions the W Lincoln Highway corridor as a key pedestrian spine, sidewalks, trails and crosswalks are a key part of a network for better pedestrian access. Most of the sidewalk network will be developed over time as part of the land development and redevelopment process, though key gaps could be developed through the use of grants or capital improvement projects. To the greatest extent feasible, trails should be designed as multi-use trails in order to accommodate the greatest variety of users.

In the short term, the Township could consider pursuing a Safe Routes to School grant to fill a sidewalk gap along Franklin Street and increasing access to the elementary school. In addition, the Township could develop and adopt an Official Map to show the location of future sidewalks and trails.

8. Continue to provide safe, well maintained Township owned roads and bridges.
Township roads and bridges are some of the most visible features impacting residents on a daily basis. They are also one of the largest categories of the municipal budget. Maintaining an up-to-date assessment and conditions inventory on all roads and bridges

helps the Township to plan for needed maintenance and improvements over time and avoid costly emergency repairs.

9. Support the continued development of the Chester County Carlson Airport.

10. Participate in regional efforts to advance transportation projects, expand public transit, and plan and construct trails.

C. Community Facilities and Infrastructure

There are a wide range of facilities, institutions, and services that support a high quality of life in Valley Township. Many of these facilities and services are under Township management (public safety, sewer, stormwater infrastructure, and recreational programs), while others are not (educational institutions, water service, and the library.) Deciding who, how, and to what degree these services are provided is a key function of local government. Balancing basic community needs with growing expectations in a fiscally responsible manner is a vital part of this plan.

KEY ISSUES

1. The Township may consider improving its electronic services, digital presence, and communications with residents.

2. There is a strong desire for an accessible, multi-use community center in the Township.

3. Municipalities are in a constant struggle to improve the cost effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery, even as demands increase.

4. Aging infrastructure needs to be maintained for the long term.

5. There is an ongoing need to meet future stormwater management mandates.

GOAL:

Ensure community facilities, utilities, and services are provided to satisfy current and long-term needs in a logical, modern, environmentally sound, and cost-effective manner consistent with the Township's values.

FUTURE ACTIONS & POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Maintain effective communications with Township residents and businesses.
Township residents have requested that the Township offer some of the modern conveniences available with today's technology. Small conveniences such as paying sewer or trash bills online are feasible and being explored by the Township and expected to be implemented in 2020.

There are many forms of effective communications with residents and business owners in today's digital world. The website is the first impression for the Township and is an opportunity to create a positive image. Regular enhancements and updates are necessary to creating and maintaining a modern image and communications strategy.

In addition, a presence on Facebook, twitter, and via email have become standard municipal practice. Email marketing platforms help build email lists of residents, business owners, and other interested parties. These lists can be used to distribute newsletters, project updates, meeting reminders, and other important community information.

2. Promote and participate in efforts to increase regional cooperation and coordination, including shared services and equipment.
Municipal governments are under increasing pressure to provide services in a cost effective and efficient manner. Sharing services can make a vital difference in municipal budgets, freeing up funds to fulfill other worthy needs.

The Township contributes to the Westwood Fire Company to offset costs of providing their services. However, there is a growing regional concern over declining rates of volunteers to staff community fire stations.

In addition, Valley Township contributes to the West Brandywine YMCA to assist in offering recreational programming to residents. This enables residents to take advantage of YMCA for a reduced cost.

Additional opportunities to cost share should be explored and evaluated. These include:

- Conducting a study to create a regional police force with an adjoining municipality;

- Consider addressing stormwater on a regional basis through joint projects;

- Support regional efforts to increase volunteerism and support for local fire stations.

Finally, land use planning, such as the Comprehensive Plan, can also be a cooperative effort. In the future, the Township could consider the benefits of a joint comprehensive plan with surrounding municipalities. Benefits include higher prioritization for funding on planning projects at the County and state levels and the ability to jointly zone for all uses.

3. Explore options for creating a multi-functional community center.

Township residents have expressed a desire for a community center which provides a welcoming place and activities for all ages, but especially geared toward younger and older residents. Other uses that residents would like to see incorporated into such a community center include:

- Historic markers and/or museum;

- Community classes and self-improvement services;

- After school program; and

- Recreation and community event space.

Such an undertaking will most likely require a public-private partnership with a nonprofit organization, such as the Boys & Girls Club of America. It will also require strong long term support from the local community, Township, and County to develop a vision, business plan, location, and funding.

4. Explore options for using the Stoltzfus farmhouse located at the new Township complex.

Located adjacent to the new Township building, the historic farmhouse needs substantial renovation prior to any use. While it may have potential as the desired community center, it is not conveniently located for the residents who most need access to such services. Located close to the suburban center and visible from Lincoln Highway, it may prove attractive as a commercial or institutional use, options more likely achieved if renovations are done first or as part of a public-private partnership.

5. Evaluate the amount and type of municipal services provided in-house by Township staff in order to ensure the most cost-effective and efficient delivery of services.

Over time the balance of services handled in-house versus by contract may evolve in response to rising demands and changing costs. This balance should be regularly evaluated to ensure that staff is being employed in the most effective manner.

6. Continue to monitor and maintain Township infrastructure and its impact on water quality.

As discussed in the natural resource section, water quality is a concern in the region and in Valley Township. Aquifers are directly impacted by actions the Township takes regarding septic system inspections and maintenance, managing stormwater runoff, and public water supply connections.

There are several areas of the Township that rely on older on-lot septic systems that if fail, present a threat to groundwater. Regular inspections are required every three years by the DEP, with proof being sent to the Township. These can lengthen the lifecycle of existing septic systems and should be strictly enforced. In the long run, many of these lots will need to be connected to the public sewer network as they are too small to accommodate replacement systems.

In addition, the collapsed portion of Wagontown Road is also the location of a sewer main. Replacement and reopening of the road is on Township's radar, but will need to incorporate plans for the long term stability of this sewer main.

7. Explore creative and long-term solutions for meeting stormwater management mandates.

Stormwater management is destined to be an escalating challenge for municipalities into the future. Communities such as Valley Township have the heightened challenge of older or nonexistent infrastructure. Seeking solutions that meet the MS4 goals enforced by DEP will required increased creativity and cooperation and a multipronged tool box.

Some strategies that the Township may explore include:

- Promote the use of best management practices and green infrastructure such as forested riparian buffers in appropriate locations throughout the Township.

- Preserve remaining open space.

- Consider a stormwater utility fee that could be imposed on all properties within the Township. These funds can then be utilized for maintenance of existing facilities, development of new ones, and public education. West Chester Borough is an example of a municipality in Chester County that has enacted such a fee.

- Consider joint projects with the City of Coatesville along the Brandywine Creek.

- Expand efforts to educate the public regarding stormwater issues.

- Consider a local or regional authority/utility to manage and monitor the performance of stormwater management facilities.

D. Energy Conservation

Though energy conservation has been an optional component in the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) for years, it is a new addition to the Valley Township Comprehensive Plan and many others throughout Chester County.

As the topics of climate change, supply and demand for energy, and the negative impacts of fossil fuels become more established in our national consciousness, there is greater concern and focus on how policies and actions at the local level can influence the bigger picture.

According to the DVRPC, the sector which consumes the most energy and emits the most emissions is the "Mobile- highway" industry – including private automobile, commercial vehicles, and public transit vehicles.

FUTURE ACTIONS & POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. *Monitor ordinances to ensure that unintended barriers to renewable energy sources are not incorporated as technologies change.*
   Valley Township's Zoning ordinance is up to date in regard to wind, solar, and other renewable energy sources. However, rapid technology changes can give rise to unintended obstacles. Regular monitoring is recommended to avoid this scenario.

2. *Reduce auto-dependency through land use patterns and bike/pedestrian connectivity.*
   This plan focuses on creating a more pedestrian and transit friendly township. These efforts to increase mobility and can help to influence future auto-dependency.

Sector	Energy Use (BBTUs)	Percentage of Total
Residential	257	33%
Commercial & Industrial	242	31%
Mobile- Hwy	274	35%
Mobile - Transit	0	<1%
Total	774	100%

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Residential	257	33%
Commercial & Industrial	242	31%
Mobile- Hwy	274	35%
Mobile - Transit	0	<1%
Total	774	100%

Energy Use (BBTUs)

3. *Increase Energy Efficiency of the Built Environment.*

   Consider providing incentives for incorporating Energy Star, LEED-ND (neighborhood development), Passive House concepts in new development or redevelopment. These standards, while not perfect, do help to increase energy efficiency. Some municipalities may provide incentives through reduced permit fees or review times, while others require a certain number of standards be met as part of a Conditional Use or rezoning application.

4. *Enhance the Township's "green infrastructure" by protecting open space, natural areas, promoting native plantings, and reducing barriers to low-mow areas, etc.*

5. *Promote energy conservation at the individual and household level through residential outreach and information campaigns, providing information on programs such as Solar City or PECO Smart House Call.*

6. *Be a Role Model.*

   The Township can plan a key role in energy conservation by creating demonstration projects on township property or within its parks such as stream or forest restoration projects, which also count towards requirements for storm water management and permits. Another strategy that could result in cost savings to the township include performing an energy audit of its buildings, vehicles and operations; or adopting a policy for replacing conventional vehicles with more fuel efficient models.

Energy Conservation & the MPC

Section 301.1. of the MPC states, "Energy Conservation Plan Element. To promote energy conservation and the effective utilization of renewable energy sources, the comprehensive plan may include an energy conservation plan element which: systematically analyzes the impact of each other Plan on the present and future use of energy in the municipality; details specific measures contained in the other Plan components designed to reduce energy consumption; and proposes other measures that the municipality may take to reduce energy consumption and to promote the effective utilization of renewable energy sources."
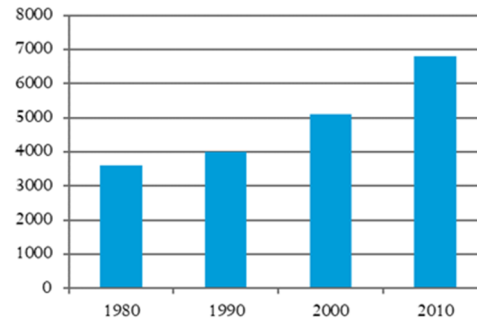
E. Land Use and Housing

Land use policy is the cumulative vision of the many elements contained within this plan. Since the 2003 Comprehensive Plan, the overall framework for land use policy has changed little but has become more refined and focused on specific areas.

The township continues to grow in population and housing. The township nearly doubled its population between 1980 and 2010, growing from 3,598 to 6,794 people. This growth is projected to continue for the foreseeable future as the DVRPC projects that Valley Township will have a population of 10,524 people in 2045.

As has become common, housing units grow at a faster rate than population. This combined with people living longer, remaining single longer, and waiting to have children translates into a strong demand for housing. This is true in Valley Township where housing grew by 130% while population only grew by 88%.

Development has come primarily at the cost of agricultural land. Between 2000 and 2010, there was a 45% decrease in agricultural lands, and an increase in residential of 7.3% .

Population Growth:
88% between 1980 & 2010

Housing Unit Growth:
130% between 1980 and 2010
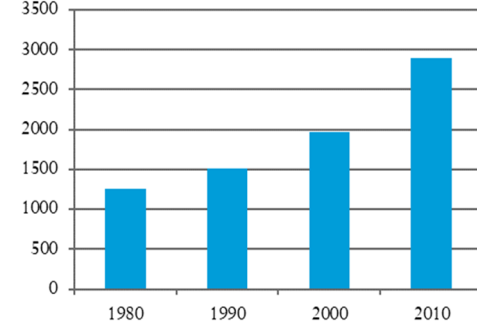
Projected Population Growth, Valley Township & Surrounding Municipalities, 2015 – 2045;

Sources: DVRPC, 2019 and US Census Bureau

Land Use, 2010

Pie chart legend:
- Single Family 18.5%
- Multi Family 6.4%
- Industrial 4.2%
- Transportation 12.6%
- Utility 0.9%
- Commercial 3.5%
- Community Services 0.8%
- Recreation 1.3%
- Agriculture 11.6%
- Wooded 32.5%
- Vacant 7.2%
- Water 0.4%

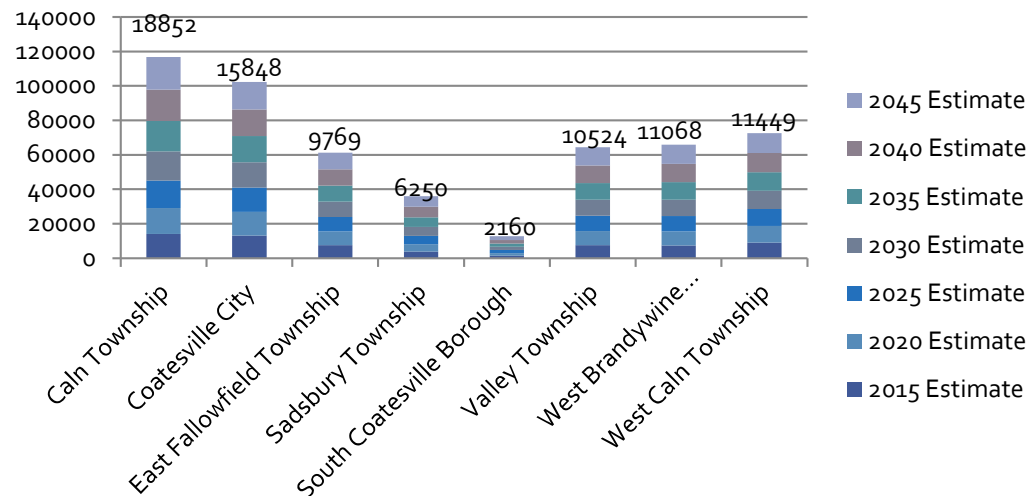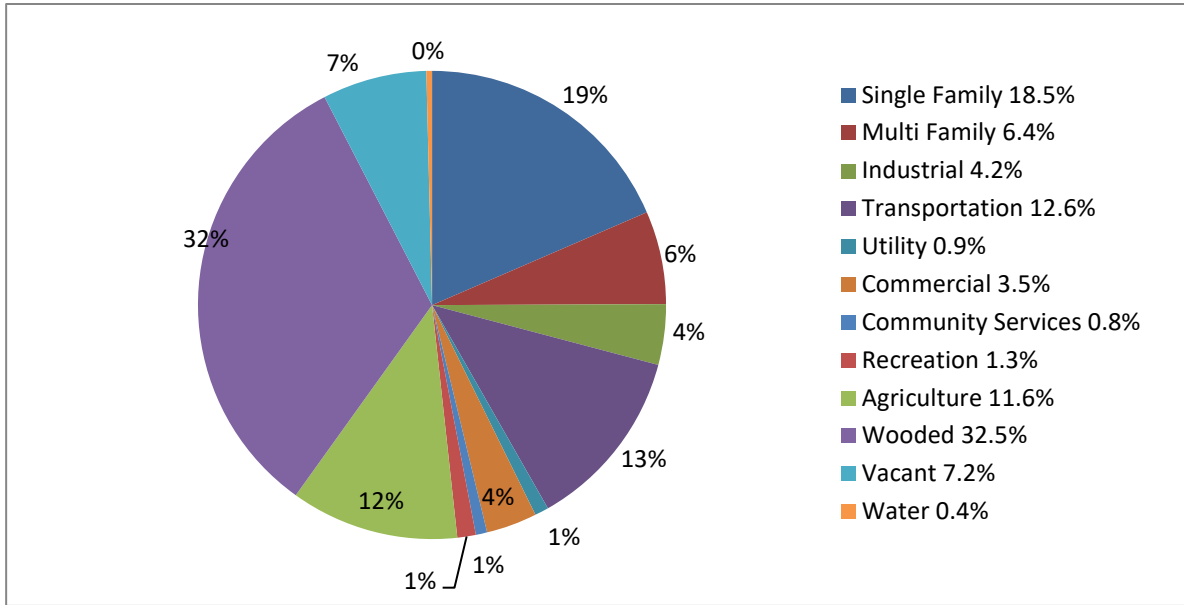**Land use changes, 2000- 2010:**

Increased acres:	Decreased acres:
2.3% Single family detached	2% Wooded
5% Multifamily	9.8% Agriculture
0.7% Commercial	

LAND USE GOALS

• Promote high quality development and redevelopment that supports vibrant neighborhoods, a strong economy, meaningful open spaces, energy efficiency and compliments the community's suburban character.

• Facilitate the creation of walkable neighborhoods that meet the needs of people of all ages through a variety of housing options, safe access to public open spaces and recreational facilities, and the goods/services needed in everyday life.

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

Overall, the Future Land Use Map reflects a continuation of established policies for:

- Cohesive and compatible infill and redevelopment along West Lincoln Highway;
- The development of West Lincoln Highway and Airport Road into a true suburban center;
- New development within the Highland Corporate Center and the Business Park adjoining the Airport;
- Preserving the steep slopes, ridgelines, and waterways that define the Valley Township valley; and
- Promoting the continued viability and desirability of the established neighborhoods throughout the township.

All future land use categories and their descriptions are shown in the table below.

Future Land Use Plan

West Brandywine Twp

West Caln Twp

US Rt 30

W Lincoln Highway

Sadsbury Twp

City of Coatesville

Valley Road

South Coatesville Borough

East Fallowfield Twp

Valley Township

Chester County, PA

Legend

- ///// Streams & buffers
- ▨ Economic Development
- ▨ Mixed Use Corridor
- ▨ Suburban Center
- ▨ Conservation Area
- ▨ Neighborhood Reinvestment
- ▨ Suburban

N

1,800   0   1,800

Feet

Data Sources: Base Layers from Chester County, GIS 2019;
Future Land Use: Thomas Comitta Associates, 2020.

Date: January 23, 2020

Land Use Category and Intent	Design Principles
Suburban Center:	
• Primary growth area in the township that results in a complete neighborhood where employment, civic uses, residential, open space, and recreation are integrated and accessible • Characterized by commercial uses that are supportive of or supported by the growing GO Carlson Airport including hotels, restaurants, and light industrial • Wide range of higher density residential, excluding single family detached dwellings • Maximum height of three stories	• Designed to be a highly walkable pedestrian environment • Avoid strip center and large format "big boxes", and isolation of commercial from residential uses • Develop and maintain a consistent streetscape with street lights, street trees, and sidewalks • Incorporates best practices for natural resource and environmental protection, stormwater management, and energy conservation • Avoid large uninterrupted areas of surface parking and minimize visibility. • Transit supportive
Mixed Use Corridor:	
• Intended to encourage the development of a cohesive, mixed use corridor that serves as the main corridor of the township, transitioning from the future suburban center at the western boundary to the redeveloped and refreshed at the eastern end. • Consider a secondary neighborhood hub surrounding Rainbow Elementary • Full range of neighborhood nonresidential uses scaled to blend in with the surrounding communities, including inns, community center, civic uses, converted residences, small scale light industrial and flex space. • Medium density residential use including single family detached, semi-detached dwellings, apartments over commercial, and small scale apartment use. • Maximum height of two-to-two and half stories (new construction)	• Promote adaptive reuse of existing buildings • Allow residential conversion to commercial or mixed use buildings • Develop and maintain a consistent streetscape with street lights, street trees, and sidewalks • Avoid strip center, large format "big boxes", and large areas of surface parking • Minimize visibility of parking • Incorporates best practices for natural resource and environmental protection, stormwater management, and energy conservation
Economic Development	
• Variety of flexible commercial, light industrial, manufacturing, office, and transportation related uses	• Commercial and industrial uses that complement and build the township's tax base

• Airport supportive industries and high tech encouraged • Encourage economic development within the township with streamlined processes and greater predictability • Larger scale and more intensive uses, intended for Highlands Corp Center and Business Park	• Includes recreational and community amenities • Designed as part of a campus environment with pedestrian links • Incorporates best practices for natural resource and environmental protection, stormwater management, and energy conservation • Maintain buffers from surrounding residences
Neighborhood Reinvestment	
• Intended to address the ongoing needs and character of established neighborhoods. • Continue to allow a variety of housing types with common open space • Medium to high density residential • Allow limited small scale neighborhood commercial uses in close proximity	• Traditional neighborhood design elements • Maintain connected road network • Enhance walkability and access to public transit, neighborhood commercial, recreation and open space • Incorporates best practices for natural resource and environmental protection, stormwater management, and energy conservation
Suburban	
• Existing suburban development of low to medium density • Limited opportunities for residential infill of similar character to existing development • Primarily single family detached and semi-detached dwellings •	• Enhance walkability through sidewalk and trail connections • Incorporates best practices for natural resource and environmental protection, stormwater management, and energy conservation
Conservation	
• Primary intent is the preservation of natural resources, particularly the steep slopes • Limited very low density residential and cluster residential • Parkland, trails, and open space • Development is intended to maximize protection of "mother nature"	• Incorporates best practices for natural resource and environmental protection, stormwater management, and energy conservation

FUTURE ACTIONS & POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. *Consider amending the Zoning Map and Ordinance to:*
    a. reflect the Future Land Use Plan;
    b. create a streetscape overlay district along West Lincoln Highway;
    c. encourage adaptive reuse;
    d. Evaluate more flexibility for industrial uses of 150,000 square feet or less as by-right uses;
    e. Permit emerging uses, such as breweries and distilleries, flex "maker spaces", and small-scale manufacturing in appropriate locations
    f. Reference or incorporate design guidelines from this plan for the Suburban Center and/or West Lincoln Highway
    g. Consider greater protections for ridgelines, hydric soils, and groundwater supplies;
    h. Encourage low-mow meadow areas as part of common open space;
    i. Encourage greater use of native species in plantings;
    j. Consider tying residential parking standards to the number of bedrooms for multifamily housing types; and providing the option to conduct a parking study; and
    k. Provide greater specificity and standards for outdoor lighting.

2. *Develop and adopt an Official Map that depicts:*
    a. Future open space and parkland;
    b. Sidewalk and crosswalk locations;
    c. Trail easements and trailheads; and
    d. Future road connections.

3. *Promote township policy to allow for reasonable accommodations which may include zoning variances and/or SALDO waivers for housing for individuals with disabilities and those who wish to age in place.*
    Permitting residents to age in place, as well as those with disabilities to remain in a house requires some flexibility and common sense in the enforcement of existing ordinances. Reviewing policies to ensure that improvements typically needed by these populations can be made without unnecessary time, expense or hassle can be an important part of the township's service to its residents.

4. *Promote universal design in new housing units.*

    Universal design is the concept of designing a house with the needs of all ages and abilities in mind. This potentially increases the viability of these dwellings for the long term.

CONSISTENCY OF LAND USE WITH ADJOINING MUNICIPALITIES

West Brandywine Township (Shared boundary: approx. 0.5 miles): West Brandywine's Comprehensive Plan update is in draft form. The future land use plan designates the area abutting Valley Township and Coatesville as "resource protection and mixed use" on the west and the east side of Coatesville as "Suburban site responsive" development. Both of these designations appear to be consistent with the "suburban" designation in Valley Township.

East Fallowfield Township (Shared boundary: 3 miles): Based on the Comprehensive Plan completed in 2015 there is great consistency between the municipal visions for land use. East Fallowfield envisions primarily residential uses along the nearly 3-mile shared boundary, with current efforts mixed use development closer to Newlinville and South Coatesville, gradually transitioning to lower density residential development moving to the west.

Coatesville (Shared boundary of 7.5 miles): The City of Coatesville's Comprehensive Plan was last updated in 2014. The neighborhoods and areas adjoining Valley Township are categorized as "lower intensity neighborhoods (Coatesville Heights), higher intensity neighborhoods (adjacent to Route 82), and Passive or Natural Areas (the steep slopes and valleys along the Brandywine Creek).

Sadsbury Township (Shared boundary: 1.7 miles): Sadsbury Township updated its Comprehensive Plan in 2013. The northern half of the border is included in the Landscapes3 designated Suburban Center and includes industrial uses such as Lockheed Martin. The southern half of the shared border is suburban and characterized by low density residential.

West Caln Township (Shared boundary: 3 miles): West Caln Township is currently undergoing an update to its comprehensive plan. *However, its current zoning map shows that the area surrounding Highland Corporate Center in the northwest corner to be designated as Multi-purpose and the remainder of the northern boundary to be Rural Center.*

South Coatesville (Shared boundary: 0.2 miles): The short length of shared border with South Coatesville lies within the industrial areas of Arcelor Mittal, where both municipalities share consistent industrial designations.

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You're invited!

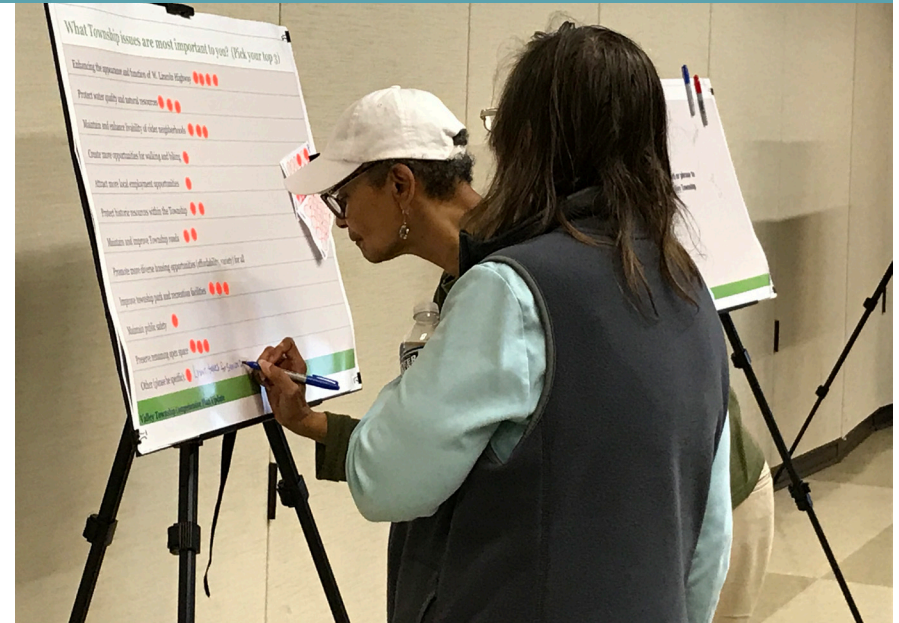## Valley Township Comprehensive Plan
Open House & Workshop

Wednesday May 29th, 6 to 8PM*
Rainbow Elementary School Auditorium
1113 W. Lincoln Hwy

Come share your thoughts about the future of Valley Township:
Land Use · Parks · Roads · Open Space · and more!

**Open House runs from 6PM to 8PM; Workshop exercises run from 6:30 to 7:30

V. Implementation

The implementation matrix below is intended to provide an action plan for the next ten years. Each strategy is given a Priority (High, Medium, or Low) and a timeline for starting the effort. Short term typically refers to the next 1 to 3 years, while medium is 4 to 7 years, and long term is considered 8 years and beyond.   Responsible parties are: TSO= Township Staff and Officials, PC= Planning Commission; EAC: Environmental Advisory Committee; CE= Code Enforcement; PW = Public Works; PR = Parks and Recreation Committee; ZHB = Zoning Hearing Board; BOS = Board of Supervisors

	Priority/Timeline	Responsible Parties
A. West Lincoln Highway & Airport Road		
A1. Continue to work with PennDOT and regional partners to advance the US Route 30 Bypass Project and Airport Road interchange	High/Short	TSO
A2. Consider amending the Zoning Ordinance and SALDO to adopt a streetscape overlay district and incorporate design controls.	High/Medium	PC
A3. Develop a Corridor Master Plan for the West Lincoln Highway.	High/Short	TSO
A4. Develop and adopt an Official Map depicting open space, sidewalks, and trails.	High/Medium	PC
A5. Consider incentives for redevelopment, such as streamlined permitting and decreased fees, etc.	High/Short	BOS
A6. Evaluate the potential for LERTA along the corridor.	Low/Medium	TSO
A7. Evaluate the potential for a business improvement district.	High/Medium	TSO
A8. Monitor the need for a north-south crosswalk at Rainbow Elementary School.	Ongoing	TSO
A9. Continue to work with Coatesville Area School District on plans to advance plans for recreation along the corridor.	High/Short	TSO
B. Neighborhood Reinvestment		
NR.1 Involve the neighborhoods in developing improvement priorities.	High/Short	TSO/PC

	Priority/Timeline	Responsible Parties
NR2. Provide information in the newsletter and Township website on property maintenance/home repair assistance and home modification programs available through organizations such as Housing Partnership of Chester County.	Ongoing	TSO
NR3. Consider amending the Zoning Ordinance to permit accessory dwelling units, adaptive reuse, residential conversions, and more diverse housing types in these neighborhoods.	High/Ongoing	PC
NR4. Consider permitting a mix of residential and commercial uses along the north side of Valley Road between Westwood Fire Company and the Victory Church.	High/Short	TSO
NR5. Reevaluate rental housing regulations to address cub appeal, inspections, and landlord/tenant education.	Medium/Medium	TSO
NR6. More actively enforce property maintenance codes.	High/Ongoing	CE
NR7. Pursue grants to support housing renovation and rehabilitation, education, and outreach.	Ongoing/Medium	TSO
NR8. Consider pursuing funding for street lights and new street signs to increase safety and wayfinding.	Medium/Short	PW
NR9. Explore one-way street configurations with on-street parking and sidewalks to alleviate narrow roads and provide pedestrian access.	Medium/Medium	TSO
NR10. Explore the use of "paper streets" for pedestrian pathways and connections and depict these on an Official Map.	Medium/Medium	PC
NR11. Explore options for a storm sewer system in the Westwood area.	High/Medium	TSO
C. Economic Development		
E1. Continue to advocate and plan for the Us Route 30 project, Coatesville Train Station, and other infrastructure improvements that increase the attractiveness of the region.	Ongoing	TSO
E2. Strengthen communications and partnership with the Chester County Airport Authority.	Ongoing	TSO
E3. Consider amending the Zoning Ordinance to increase flexibility regarding uses at the Highland Corporate Center and encourage mixed use in appropriate areas throughout the Township.	High/Short	PC/ZHB

	Priority/Timeline	Responsible Parties
E4. Consider the use of LERTA, a business improvement district, and other incentives for the redevelopment and improvement of the West Lincoln Highway and Airport Road corridors.	Medium/Medium	TSO
E5. Implement the recommendations from the Joint Economic Development Plan.	Ongoing	TSO
E6. Work with the Western Chester County Chamber of Commerce, and other partners to market available properties within the Township.	Ongoing	TSO
D. Parks, Recreation and Trails		
P1. Partner with Coatesville Area School District to accommodate recreation on the parcel adjacent to the Township building through a 25-year lease.	High/Short	TSO
P2. Acquire additional parkland, particularly that designated on the Valley Suburban site.	High/Short	TSO
P3. Explore the potential for a trail along the pipeline easement.	Medium/Short	TSO
P4. Develop a Township-wide Master Plan for Trails.	High/Short	PRC/TSO
P5. Develop and adopt an Official Map to depict future parkland and trails.	Medium/Medium	PC
P6. Consider adding recreation-fee-in-lieu provisions in the SALDO for residential and commercial properties.	Medium/Short	PC
P7. Implement the recommendations from the Township's Open Space, Recreation and Environmental Resources Plan.	Ongoing	PRC
P8. Work with the County and other partners to develop planned regional trails and trail connections.	High/Ongoing	TSO
E. Resource Preservation and Community Character		
CC1. Coordinate with regional partners to preserve community character, pursue grants, and implement better stewardship of natural and historic resources.	Ongoing	EAC
CC2. Encourage reforestation of riparian buffers on private lands in the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.	High/Ongoing	EAC

	Priority/Timeline	Responsible Parties
CC3. Consider amending the Zoning Ordinance to better protect natural resources, promote adaptive reuse of existing structures, and maintain the vitality of historic resources.	Medium/Medium	PC/EAC
CC4. Identify potential greenway networks and vital linkages as part of the Master Trails Plan.	Medium/Medium	EAC
CC5. Educate private landowners regarding appropriate stewardship and best practices for conservation and open space.	Ongoing	EAC
CC6.Partner with the Chester County Historic Resources Coordinator to develop an inventory of historic resources in the Township.	Medium/Medium	TSO/HC
CC7. Consider creating a historic committee.	High/Short	BOS
F. Transportation and Circulation		
T1. Work cooperatively with PennDOT on the Township's priority transportation improvement projects: US Route 30 and the Airport Road interchange.	High/Ongoing	TSO
T2. Improve traffic flow and safety on secondary priorities.	Medium/Ongoing	TSO
T3. Consider amending the Zoning Ordinance and SALDO to adopt a streetscape overlay district along West Lincoln Highway and Airport Road.	High/Short	PC
T4. Develop and adopt an Official Map depicting sidewalks, crosswalks, and future street connections.	Medium/Medium	PC
T5. Continue to support public transit (LINK) and increase access to bus stops.	Ongoing	TSO
T6. Advance and participate in regional coordination of transportation projects.	Ongoing	TSO
T7. Develop and maintain a 5-year capital improvements plan for road and bridge maintenance in order to maintain safe Township roads and bridges.	High/Ongoing	BOS
T8. Plan and pursue funding for the replacement of the collapsed portion of Wagontown Road.	High/Medium	BOS

	Priority/Timeline	Responsible Parties
G. Community Facilities & Utilities		
CF1. Regularly maintain and update the Township website.	Ongoing	TSO
CF2. Implement an email marketing and communications platform (i.e., Constant Contact, MailChimp, etc.) to build a community email list and communicate digital newsletters, emergency information, email reminders on community events, etc.	High/Short	TSO
CF3. Consider studying the costs and benefits of a regional police force.	Medium/Long	TSO
CF4. Evaluate in-house and contracted services to ensure best use of Township staff.	Ongoing	TSO
CF5. Explore partnership options for opening a multifunctional community center.	High/Ongoing	TSO
CF6. Actively enforce on-lot septic system inspections, as required every three years.	High/Ongoing	PW
CF7. Explore long term and regional solutions to storm water management.	Ongoing	TSO
CF8. Explore options for repurposing the Stoltzfus House and existing Township building.	Medium/Short	TSO
H. Energy Conservation		
EC1. Continue to review ordinances to ensure that unintended barriers to renewable energy are not incorporated as technology changes.	Ongoing	PC
EC2. Consider providing incentives for the incorporation of LEED-ND, Energy Star, or Passive House concepts within new construction.	Medium	PC
EC3. Enhance green infrastructure by protecting open space and natural areas, encouraging low-mow areas, and promoting native plantings.	Ongoing	EAC
EC4. Promote energy conservation at the household level by providing educational and outreach materials for programs such as Solar City and PECO Smart House Call.	Ongoing	EAC

	Priority/Timeline	Responsible Parties
EC5. Consider being a role model by integrating demonstration projects on township properties, conducting an energy audit of township buildings, vehicles and operations, and/or adopting policy to use more energy efficient vehicles.	Ongoing	TSO
I. Future Land Use and Housing		
FLU1. Amend the Zoning Map and Ordinance to reflect the Future Land Use Plan.	High/Short	PC
FLU2. Develop and adopt an Official Map.	Medium/Medium	PC
FLU3. Promote policies to allow for reasonable accommodation for individuals with disabilities.	Ongoing	TSO/ZHB
FLU4. Promote universal design in new housing units.	Ongoing	PC
FLU5. Adopt ordinance amendments to permit accessory dwelling units, additional dwelling types, and incentives for affordable housing.	High/Short	PC
FLU6. Consider hosting annual meetings of the boards and commissions to create annual workplans, share priorities, and provide policies updates.	Medium	TSO/BOS

Key Implementation Strategies

As the implementation table shows, there are numerous strategies needed to attain township goals. In addition to prioritization, these strategies can also be categorized as Capital Improvement projects or Program and Policy changes. Capital improvements tend to be more costly than programs and policies but can be implemented through partnerships with other governmental entities (PennDOT for instance, in the case of the US Rt 30 Bypass project) or incrementally through the development process and development regulations. Therefore, ordinance amendments are an important part of the implementation process.

Chapter 2 summarizes the highest priority projects from above into capital improvements and programs and policies. The following pages provide a summary of potential funding opportunities that the township can apply for in order to support the Key Implementation Strategies.

Grant/Agency	Summary	Example Valley Township Projects
Chester County		
Vision Partnership Program	• Semiannual application process (February and July) • 30% local match • Comprehensive plans, ordinances, planning studies, official maps	Ordinance Amendments Development of Official Map
Preservation Partnership Grants Program	• Annual grant program for municipalities and conservancies (Applications typically due in February) • 50% local match • Acquisition and Parks/trail improvement categories	Acquisition of easements along the pipeline Park improvements as specified in the OSRER, including riparian buffer plantings; construction of trails (outside of parks)
DVRPC		
Transportation & Community Development Initiative (TCDI)	• Biennial grant program focused on joint transportation and land use projects • 20% local match • $50,000 to $100,000 for single municipal projects; up to $175,000 for multi-municipal projects	W Lincoln Highway Corridor Master Plan
Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality (CMAQ)	• Focused on transportation projects that will improve air quality and reduce traffic congestion, such as pedestrian and bicycle projects, transit improvement programs • Approved applicant is reimbursed for costs incurred after receiving funding authorization for the project and a notice to proceed	Pedestrian and bike facilities, i.e., Sidewalks along W Lincoln Highway
Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program (With PennDOT)	• Focus on projects such as pedestrian and bicycle facilities, improving access to public transportation,	West Lincoln Highway Streetscape Sidewalks, (Franklin Street sidewalk gap)

	trails that serve a transportation purpose, and safe routes to school projects. • Minimum award of $50,000 for construction projects. The maximum award is $1,000,000. • Projects are funded at 100% of the construction cost. Project sponsors pay for project design, pre-construction permits, clearances, etc.	
Commonwealth of PA		
Multimodal Transportation Fund PennDOT/DCED/CFA)	• Application period: March 1st and July 31st of each year. • Grant foci: projects that coordinate transportation and land use, improve streetscapes, improve connectivity, or transit oriented development • Grants are available for projects with a total cost of $100,000 or more. • 30% local match	West Lincoln Highway Streetscape Improved transit connectivity to future Coatesville Train Station
Greenways, Trails & Recreation Program (through DCED & DCNR)	• Projects which involve development, rehabilitation and improvements to public parks, recreation areas, greenways, trails and river conservation. • Maximum of $250,000 grant • 15% local match	Township open space improvements, including riparian buffer plantings, and trail construction (not including parking lots)
Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) (through DCNR)	• Annual grant focused on the planning projects, land acquisition related to open space, rehabilitation and development of public parks, recreation facilities, greenways and river conservation (riparian buffer) projects. • 50% match	Trails and Recreation
PECO/Natural Lands Trust		

Green Region Program	• Improving municipal-owned open spaces, including planning costs. • Acquisition of land or easements for open space • Maximum of $10,000	Township open space improvements, including habitat improvement, riparian buffer plantings, and trail construction (not including parking lots)