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South Whitehall Township
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2023

**SOUTH WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP
LEHIGH COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-40
(Duly Adopted March 15, 2023)**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF SOUTH WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP
(LEHIGH COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA) ADOPTING THE
2023 SOUTH WHITEHALL TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

WHEREAS, pursuant to the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, Act 1968, P.L. 805, No. 247, as re-enacted and amended (the "MPC"), the Board of Commissioners of South Whitehall Township ("Board") has the legal authority to adopt and amend a comprehensive plan for South Whitehall Township ("Township"); and

WHEREAS, on July 1, 2009, the Board adopted a plan entitled "South Whitehall Township Comprehensive Plan: A Balanced Path Forward" dated June 24, 2009, as prepared by the South Whitehall Township Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, with the assistance of Thomas Comitta Associates, Inc., The Pidcock Company and Township staff; and

WHEREAS, in 2019 the Board recognized the need for updating the 2009 Comprehensive Plan to address the current needs and desires of the community and be consistent with MPC Section 301(c) which requires the municipal comprehensive plan to be reviewed at least every ten years; and

WHEREAS, in February 2019, the Board authorized Township staff and planning team to begin the process to update the Comprehensive Plan. This resulted in twenty-four months of public input, five months of working groups, and twelve consecutive months of public workshops; and

WHEREAS, on December 15, 2022, pursuant to MPC Section 302(a), the South Whitehall Township Planning Commission held a public meeting and recommended the draft Comprehensive Plan be released to the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, Parkland School District, and neighboring municipalities for a minimum 45-day public comment period; and

WHEREAS, a Public Hearing was held on March 15, 2023, at the South Whitehall Township Municipal Complex to take final public comments on the updated plan; and


WHEREAS, the Board is desirous of adopting the updated 2023 South Whitehall Township Comprehensive Plan, which sets the vision for how the community will grow over the next ten years, establishes the foundation for municipal planning in the Township, and outlines an extensive implementation plan; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ADOPTED AND RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners does hereby adopt the updated 2023 South Whitehall Township Comprehensive Plan along with all appended maps, charts, and textual matter, as the official Comprehensive Plan for South Whitehall Township, which is hereto attached as Exhibit "A" and incorporated herein as if fully set forth at length.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that within 30 days after adoption, the Township shall forward a certified copy of the comprehensive plan to the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission as required by the MPC Section 306.

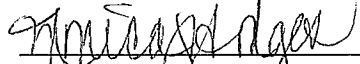
DULY ADOPTED, this 15th day of **March, 2023** by a majority of the Board of Commissioners of the Township of South Whitehall, Lehigh County, Pennsylvania, at a duly advertised meeting of the Board of Commissioners at which a quorum was present. As part of this Resolution, the Board of Commissioners has directed that the President, or Vice-President in the absence of the President, execute this Resolution on behalf of the Board.

**TOWNSHIP OF SOUTH WHITEHALL
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

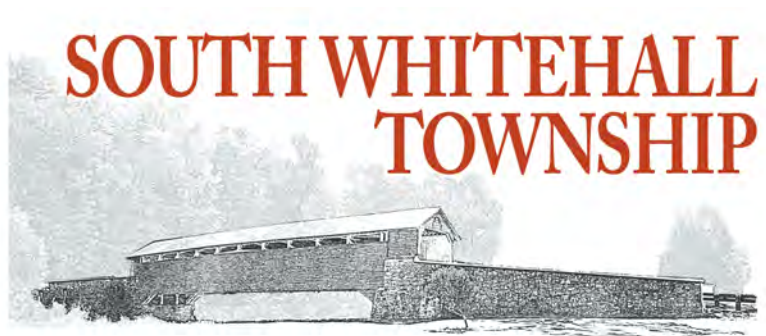


Diane Kelly, President

ATTEST:



Monica Hodges, Asst Secretary



The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) enables local jurisdictions to conduct a comprehensive planning process to identify areas where growth and development will occur so that a full range of public infrastructure services, including sewer, water, highways, police and fire protection, public schools, parks, open space and other services can be adequately planned and provided as needed to accommodate growth.

PLAN ADOPTED BY RESOLUTION BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS: **March 15, 2023**

Acknowledgements

Board of Commissioners

Diane Kelly | President
David M. Kennedy | Vice President
Monica Hodges | Asst. Secretary
Jacob D. Roth | Commissioner
Brad Osborne | Commissioner

PREVIOUS COMMISSIONERS

Matthew Mobilio
Christina (Tori) Morgan
Joe Setton
Michael Wolk

Planning Commission

Trevor Dombach
Timothy Dugan
Andrew Flagg
Brian Hite | Vice-Chairman
Diane Kelly

Mark Leuthe | Secretary

David Wilson | Chairman

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William H. MacNair
Matthew Mulqueen
Vincent Quinn
Alan Tope

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THOMAS COMITTA ASSOCIATES, INC.

KEYSTONE CONSULTING ENGINEERS

4WARD PLANNING

LEHIGH VALLEY PLANNING COMMISSION



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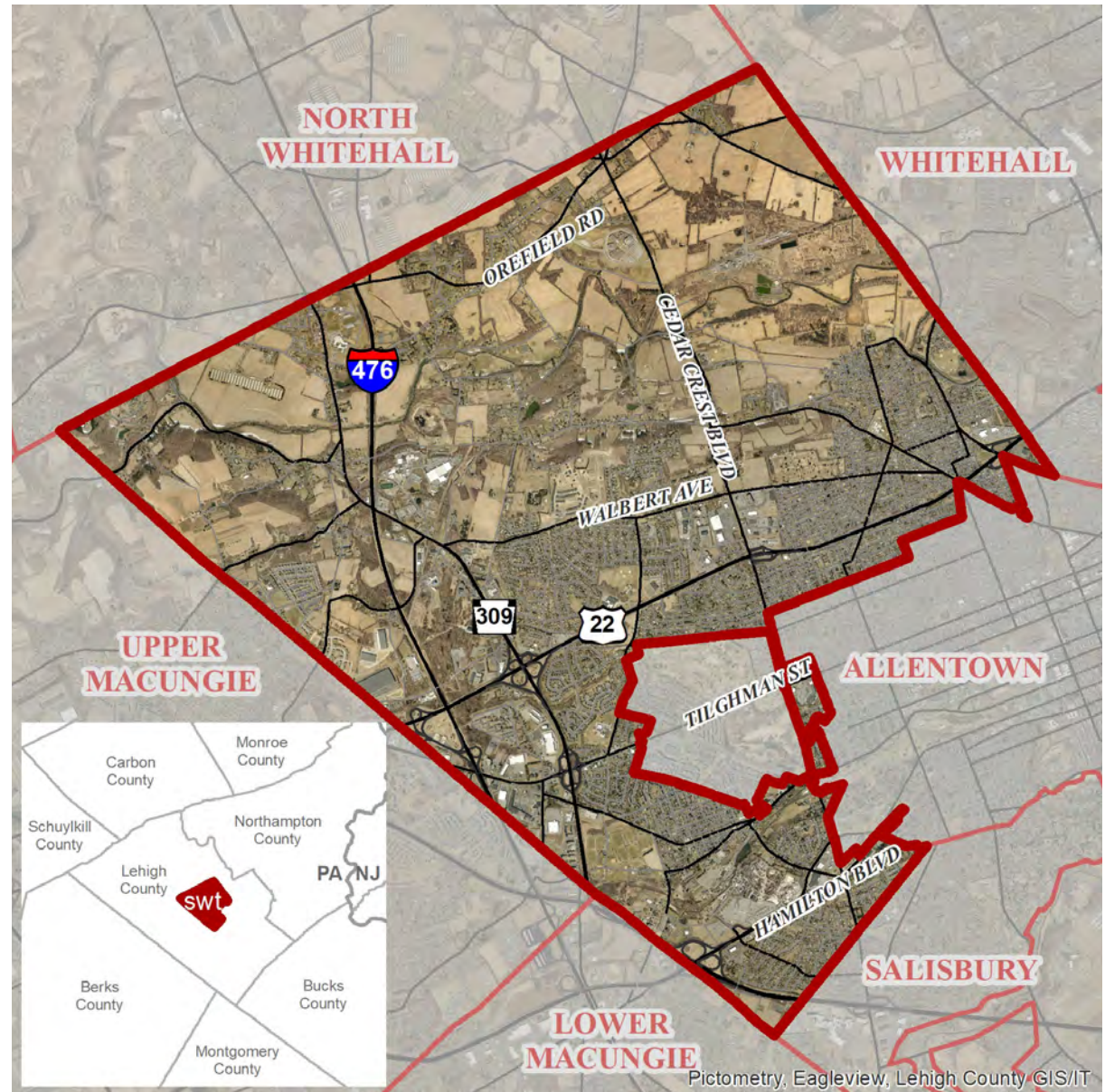
INTRODUCTION



Background

South Whitehall Township is a unique community located in the Lehigh Valley, one of the fastest growing regions in Pennsylvania. Conveniently situated in the center of Lehigh County, South Whitehall is easily accessible by major interstates including State Route 309, US Route 22, US Route 222 (Hamilton Boulevard), and the Northeast Extension (Interstate 476). South Whitehall is located approximately one hour north of Philadelphia and 90 minutes west of New York City, making it very accessible to some of the largest populations in the Mid-Atlantic.

South Whitehall can be best described as a transitional landscape between the urban fringe of Allentown and the rural character of northwest Lehigh County. The southern part of the Township benefits from a strong commercial core, allowing the northern region to remain predominately agricultural and undeveloped. Suburban development has shaped the growth of the Township over the past fifty years and continues to be a dominating land use in South Whitehall Township.





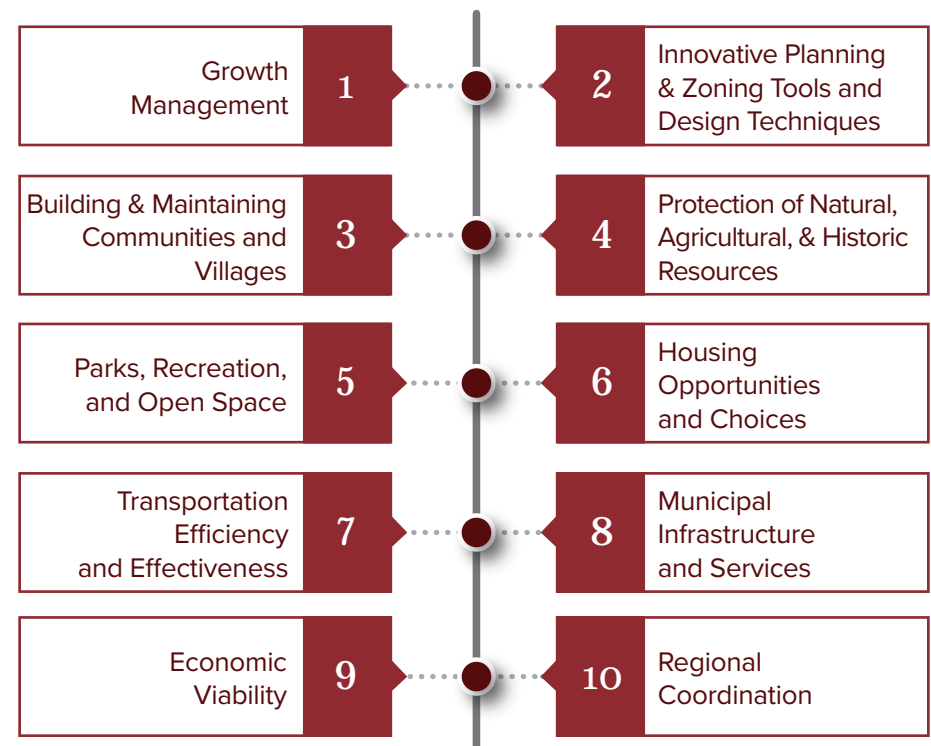
2009 Plan Goal Themes

The Comprehensive Plan

In Pennsylvania, the power to plan and regulate land use is delegated to local municipalities through Act 247, the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). The MPC provides a framework for how planning procedures should be handled and guidance on the use of planning tools. One of the most important tools for community planning is the Comprehensive Plan, which is used to help craft the vision for a community and guide future land use decisions. The Comprehensive Plan is more than just a plan, it's a process that includes direct engagement with the public and considers how all elements of a municipality can shape the future of how it is developed.

Past Planning

The Township's first Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1969 and was not officially updated until 2009. The 2009 plan entitled *A Balanced Path Forward* focused on ten concentrated themes and set the vision for the Township at that time.



2009 Comprehensive Plan

The 2009 plan made significant improvements to how development occurred and was handled in South Whitehall Township. This plan identified the need to manage growth in a more balanced way, which is reflected in the current statement of objectives for community development.

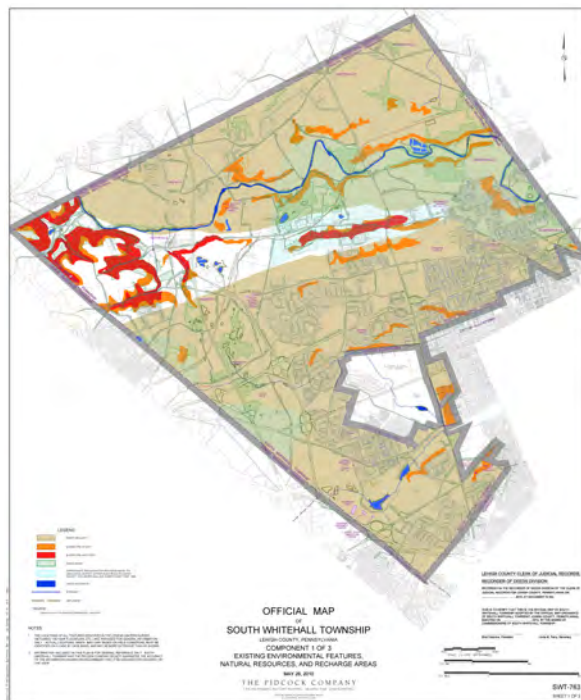
This plan also encouraged the need to identify and prioritize infrastructure improvements and preservation opportunities, which were identified in the Township Official Map.

OFFICIAL MAP

An Official Map is a combined map and ordinance that identifies the location of planned public lands and facilities.

MAP 1 (2010)

Existing Environmental Features, Natural Resources, and Recharge Areas



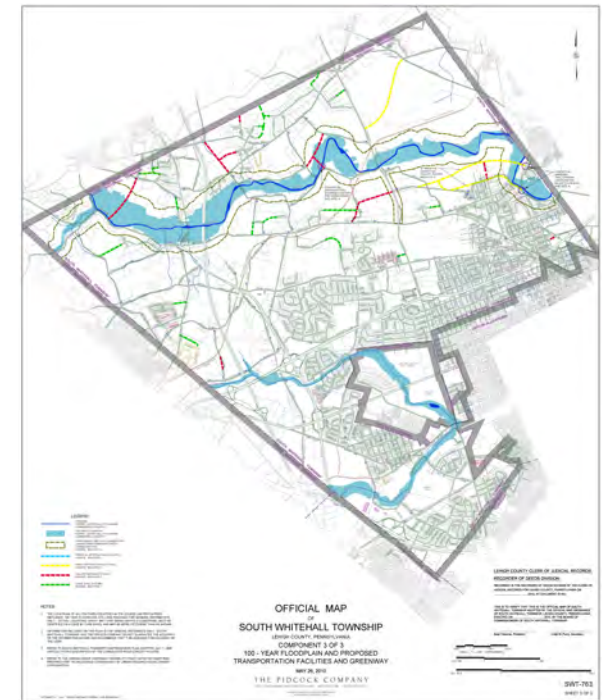
MAP 2 (2010)

Community Facilities, Conservation Lands, Historic Resources, and Existing Transportation Facilities



MAP 3 (2010)

Floodplain, Proposed Transportation Facilities and Greenway



South Whitehall Yesterday

The history of South Whitehall is a complex story of boundary disputes, settlement, and growth. This region and most of eastern Pennsylvania was first home to the native Lenni Lenape tribes, also referred to as the Minsi Delaware. The Native Americans who occupied South Whitehall inhabited the areas along rivers and creeks, taking advantage of the region's fertile soils for crops, reliable water supply, and steep ridges for protection.

Pennsylvania became a colony of England in 1681 when King Charles II granted the land to William Penn. Historically, Penn was praised for his fair treatment of Native Americans, attempting to peacefully offer fair payment for land purchases. In the late 1680s Penn had made a deal with the Lenni Lenape to purchase a large portion of land surrounding the Lehigh and Delaware Rivers, but the deal was never consummated during his lifetime. Years later, Penn's sons revived this deal with the Lenape but did not honor the terms of the agreement, causing tension with the Lenape. This deal was famously known as "The Walking Purchase of 1737" and expanded European settlement in the Lehigh Valley.



South Whitehall Township 1876

South Whitehall Yesterday

Early Settlements

The first European settlers to the area were primarily German emigrants from the Oley Valley in the early 1700s. The first organized settlement was established by Nicholas Kern in 1735 between what would later be called Guthsville and Guth's Station. More villages and settlements continued to pop up over a twenty-year period while the region remained predominantly agrarian for the next fifty years. The Township was originally just known as "Whitehall" and encompassed what we now identify as Coplay Borough, Whitehall Township, South Whitehall Township, and North Whitehall Township. Historians argue whether the name Whitehall was derived from another settlement in England like other village names in the area, or if it was inspired by Lynford Lardner's Grouse Hall a large white hunting lodge located near the Jordan Creek.

Township Independence

In the early 1800s, most of the Lehigh Valley was considered part of Northampton County, including the larger area of Whitehall. In November of 1810, a petition was filed with the Northampton County Court to divide Whitehall into Townships, but South Whitehall was still considered part of Northampton County. It wasn't until two years later in March of 1812 that the area west of the Lehigh River was divided from Northampton County to form a new county. This act established South Whitehall Township as an independent Township in the center of the newly established *Lehigh County*.

Industrial Age

Leading into the early 20th Century, small villages and communities developed slowly around agriculture and growing industries including the mining of iron ore and stone or slate quarries. Many settlements were built around the Catasauqua and Fogelsville Railroad which served these industries from the 1850s through the 1940s. Industry and agriculture shaped the development of South Whitehall, concentrated around crossroad villages and access to the railroad. Family-run feed mills were also prominent in the Township and played a major role in the economics of the agricultural community.



Construction of the Iron Bridge

South Whitehall Yesterday

Pre-War Development

Development continued to be centered around industry throughout the early 20th Century, until the expansion of roadways and construction of trolley lines allowed for more residential neighborhood development such as Greenawalds and Bungalow Park.

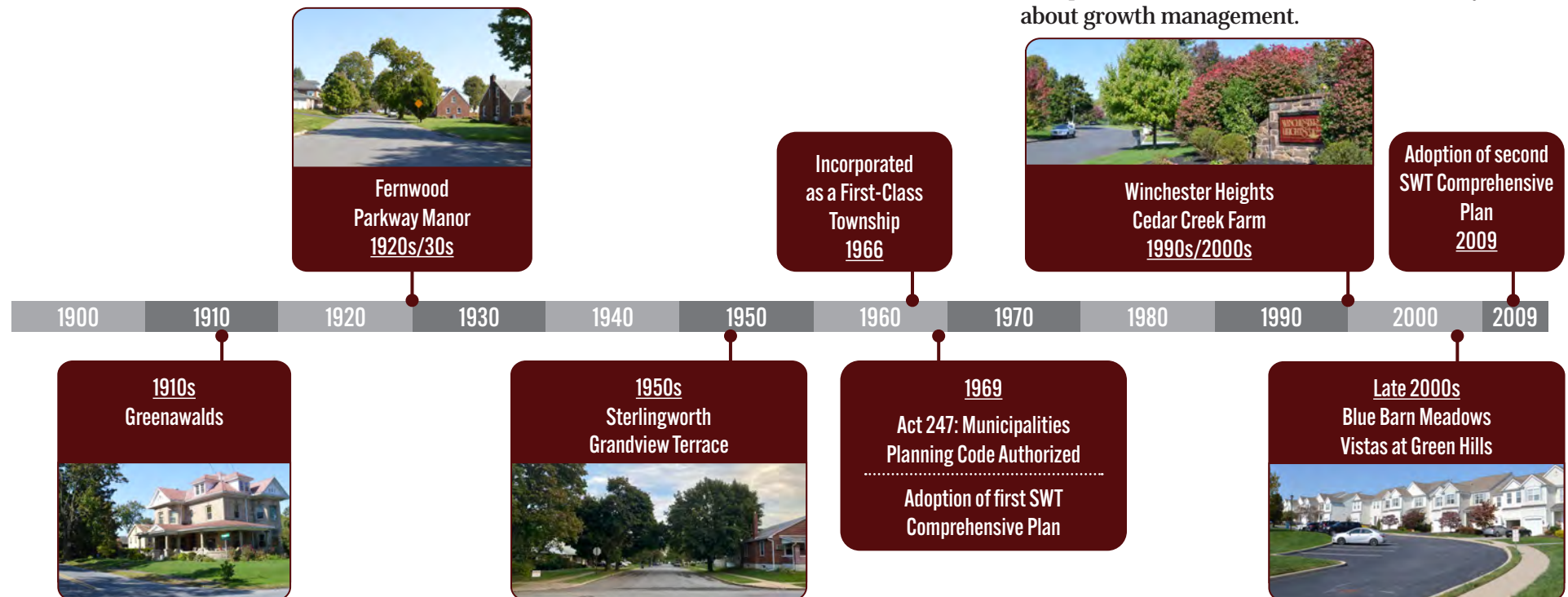
The Allentown to Slatington Line ran a trolley through the Township until service discontinued beyond Greenawalds in the 1930s. Many trolley lines were later replaced by bus service, but this access to reliable transit helped expand suburban development away from Allentown and other industrial centers.

Post-War Suburbanization

Population in the Township nearly doubled between the 1950s and 1960s during the post-war building boom. The construction of the interstate highway system made South Whitehall a very attractive and accessible bedroom community for employees in the Allentown area. Sporadic development over the 1950s and 60s would greatly contribute to issues associated with suburban sprawl and emphasize the need for more coordinated planning and regulations. South Whitehall petitioned to become a First-Class Township in 1966.

1970s to 2009

The Township adopted its first Comprehensive Plan in 1969, helping to establish a better framework for growth and development. Population continued to rise steadily in the 1970s and 80s with suburban development being the predominant land use in the Township. Population began to stabilize in the 1990s, but residential development continued to increase, indicating a shift to smaller households and family sizes. During this period more larger lot single family residences were built, contributing even more to suburban sprawl and causing the Township to update the Comprehensive Plan and think more carefully about growth management.

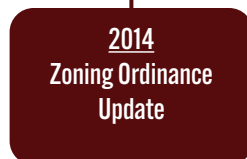
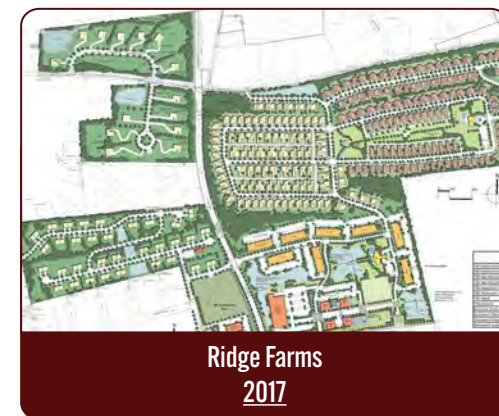
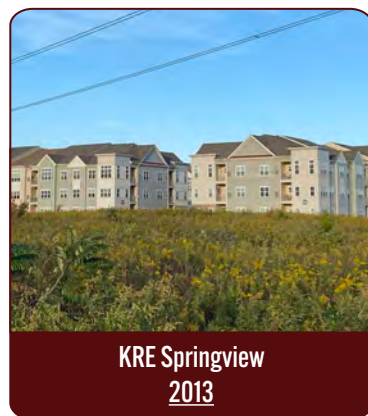


South Whitehall Today

South Whitehall Township has certainly changed from the early settlements and continues to be one of the faster developing Townships in the Lehigh Valley. Proximity to major interstates, employment centers, and a highly-ranked school district has made the Township a very desirable location to live.

Development Changes

Following the 2008 Housing Crisis, the Township (along with many other suburban communities) saw a shift from single-family housing to more specialized residential development including more apartments, senior facilities or age-restricted developments, and mixed-use residential. Commercial and redevelopment overshadowed new residential development projects during this time. These shifts in development types and priorities prompted major changes to the Township Zoning Ordinance between 2014 and 2017.



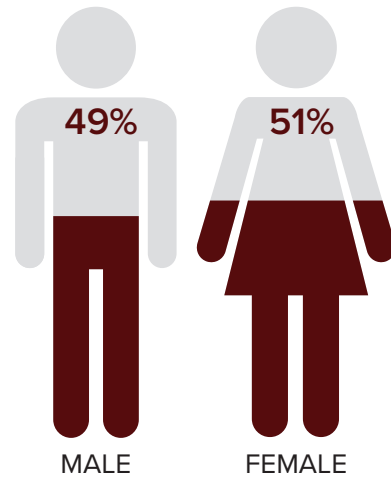
South Whitehall Snapshot

Population

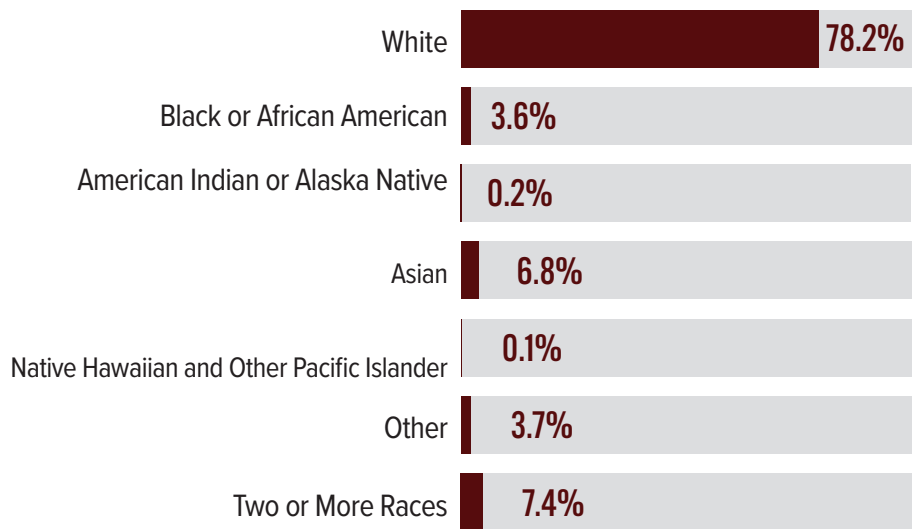
POPULATION:
21,080

MEDIAN AGE:
44.3

UNDER 19	24%
20 TO 39	22%
40 TO 59	24%
60+	30%



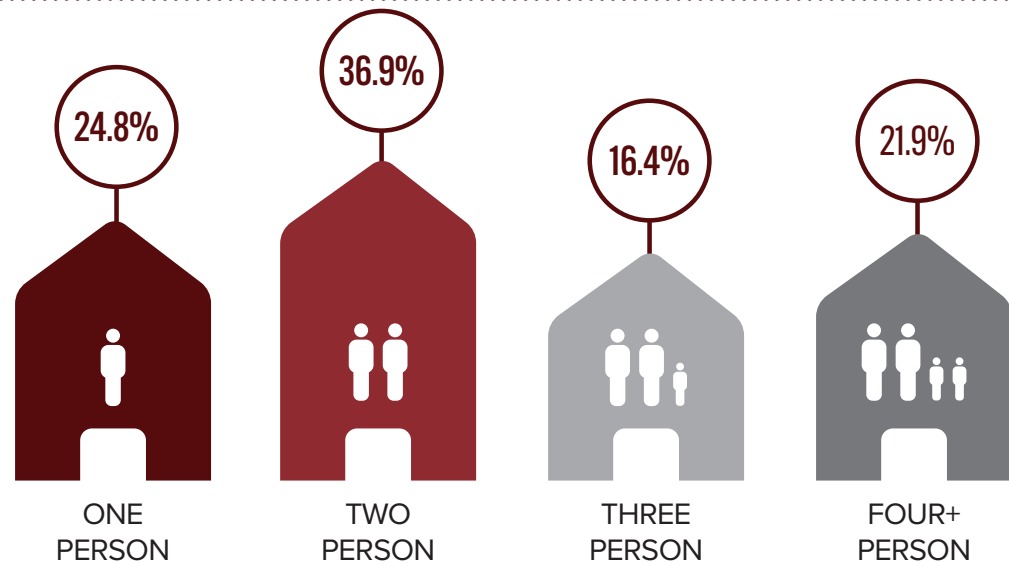
Race



Households

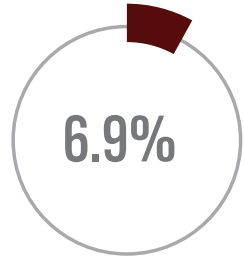
MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME:
\$85,540

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE: (PERSONS)
2.49

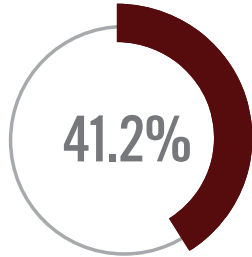


South Whitehall Snapshot

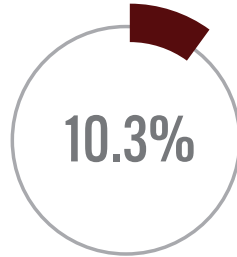
Education



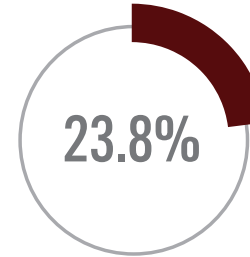
LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL DEGREE



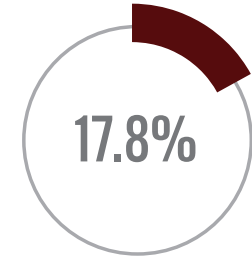
HIGH SCHOOL OR GED



SOME COLLEGE OR ASSOCIATES DEGREE



BACHELOR DEGREE



GRADUATE OR PROFESSIONAL DEGREE

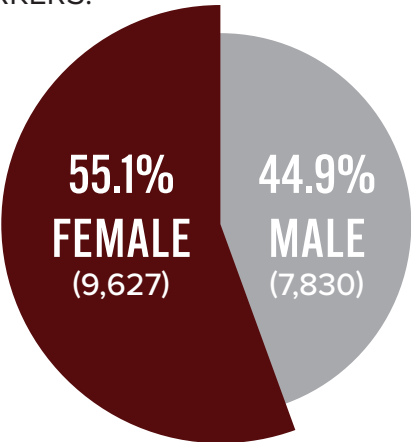
LEHIGH VALLEY	9.7%	WORKERS	49.8%	9.2%	19.3%	12.0%
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Workforce

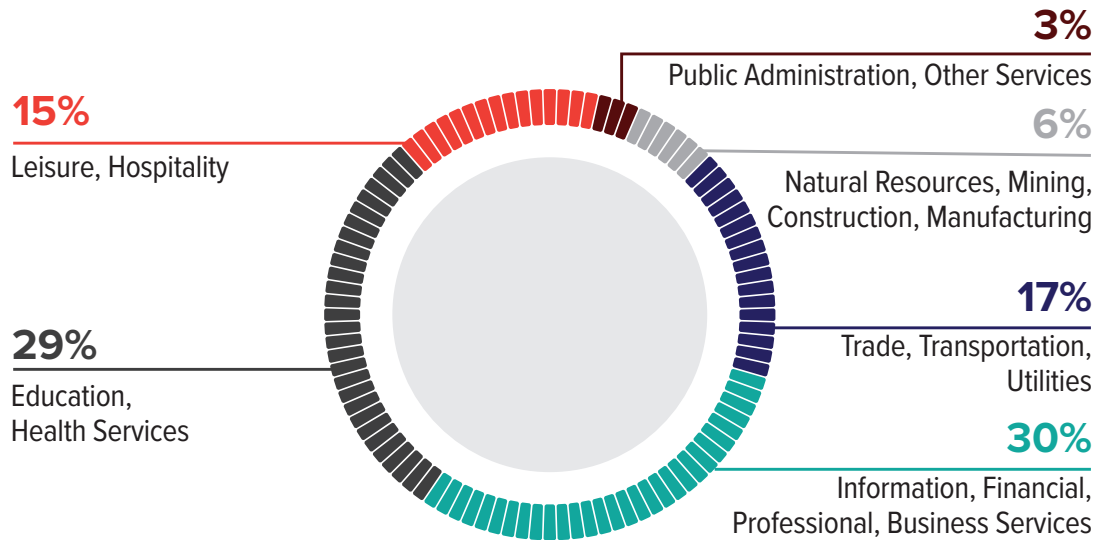
WORKERS:
17,457

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE:
2.6%

WORKERS:



Employment Sectors



Changes Since 2009



DEMOGRAPHICS

- Population increased ~10%
- Residents are younger
- Household sizes are smaller



DEVELOPMENT

- Over 500 housing units constructed
- Shift to more commercial/industrial development



EMPLOYMENT

- 23% increase in jobs added
- 5% increase in resident workforce

South Whitehall Tomorrow

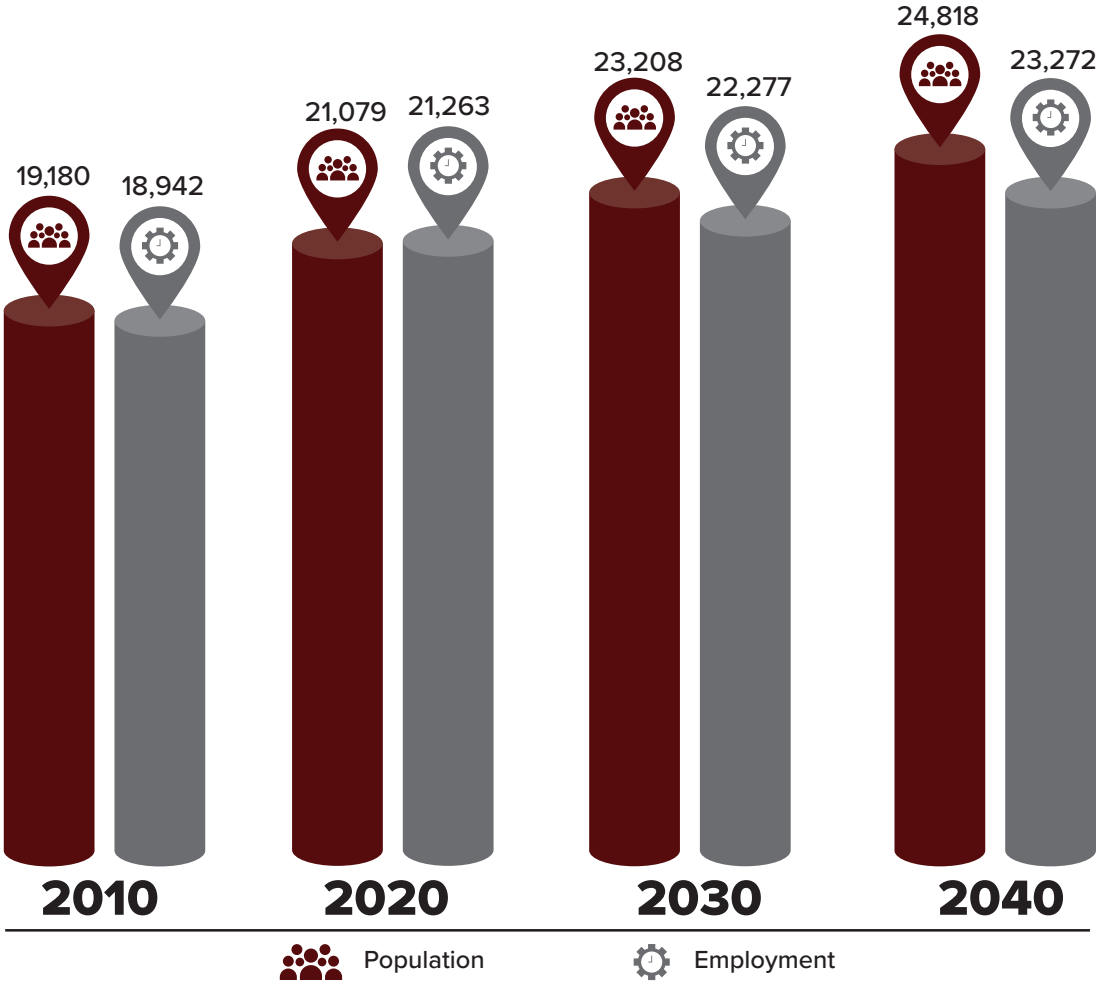
The future of South Whitehall is hard to predict, but past trends and future projections can offer a peek into what we can expect to see over the next few years. The MPC suggests that the Comprehensive Plan should not only plan for the current residents of the community, but also for the future individuals and families anticipated to reside in the municipality. The following regional projections are important to consider throughout the planning process.

Projections

LEHIGH VALLEY



SOUTH WHITEHALL



Source: Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

South Whitehall Tomorrow

There are a number of emerging trends and impacts that may influence the way our communities change over the next ten years. Many of these trends will place additional stresses on our infrastructure, natural resources, transportation systems, and land uses. Planning and policy should be adapted to accommodate the following trends that could potentially affect South Whitehall.



CLIMATE & ENERGY

Climate change is a growing concern and can negatively affect air quality and other impacts on human, animal, and plant life. More frequent and intense flooding or storm events puts stresses on infrastructure and drastic swings between heating and cooling periods affect our energy consumption. Construction of more resilient infrastructure and more energy efficient buildings need to be a priority.

RETAIL EVOLUTION

The rise in e-commerce continues to dominate the retail market and change the way we look at retail development. More brick-and-mortar stores close each year, often replaced with fulfillment centers.



AUTONOMOUS/EV VEHICLES

Autonomous Vehicles (AV) are an emerging technology that could potentially disrupt travel and transportation systems as we know it.

As AV technology continues to become more affordable and efficient it is only a matter of time until this mode of transportation becomes a viable option in South Whitehall. Policies and regulations on our local roads and parking areas should be flexible to adapt to this developing market.

COVID-19 IMPACTS

The COVID-19 Pandemic has caused drastic shifts in the workforce and employment priorities. The U.S. is seeing a drastic increase in the remote workforce, shifting the need from more construction of office space to more interest in broadband infrastructure. The Pandemic also caused major impacts to the service industry, which is still slowly trying to recover.



2023 Plan Update and Approach

The 2023 Comprehensive Plan builds upon the foundation of the 2009 plan, but takes into consideration emerging trends, current issues, and changes from the last plan. The 2023 update takes a proactive approach to engagement with the community and key stakeholders, in an effort to be both transparent and collaborative. This process has helped to highlight notable challenges and opportunities faced by South Whitehall and direct the course of this plan towards implementation and a road map for future planning on a more finite scale.

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) guided the development of this plan including the identification of individual topic areas and the interconnection between plan elements. In many cases the goals of this plan are intentionally comprehensive to address challenges and issues across multiple topic areas.

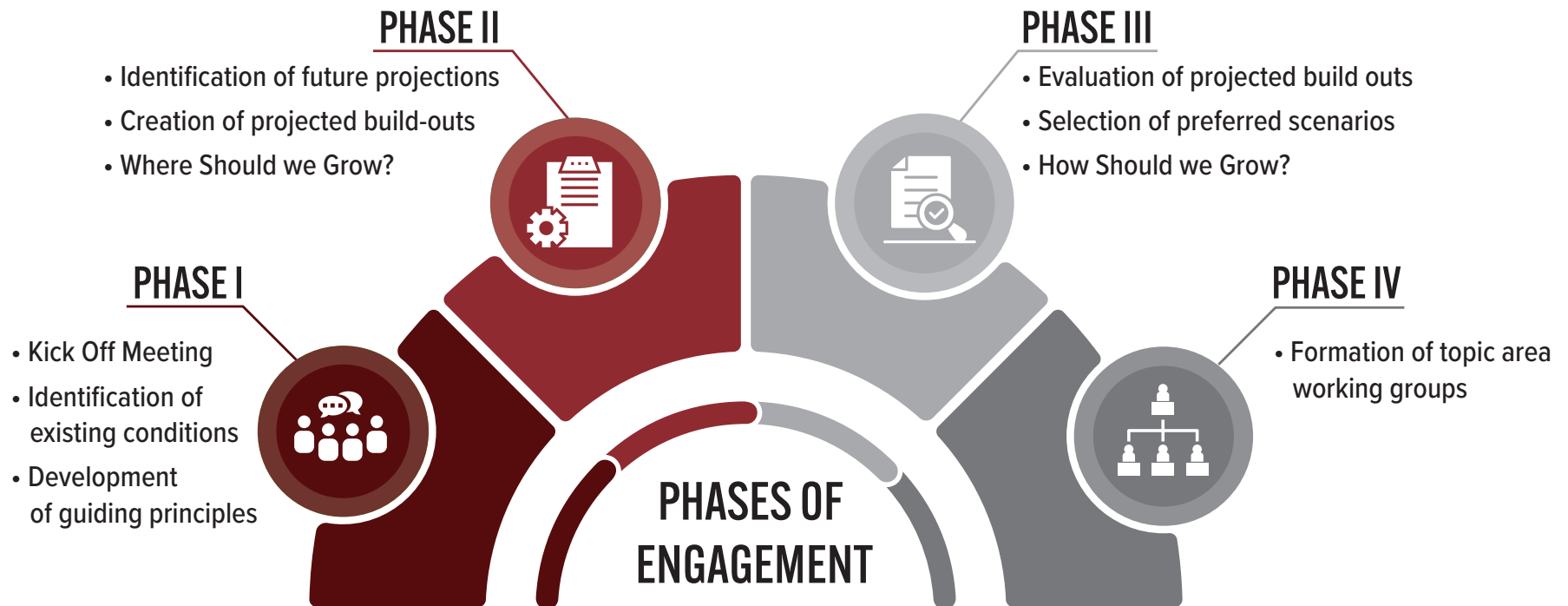
This plan sets the tone and legal foundation for future changes to policy and regulatory documents such as the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO) and Zoning Ordinance.



Public Engagement

This plan undertook an extensive public engagement process over the course of several years. The plan kicked off on March 13, 2019, with a presentation to the South Whitehall Township Board of Commissioners and Planning Commission, outlining the comprehensive planning process, anticipated timeline, and proposed elements/related sub-committees for the plan. The first half of the public engagement process involved in-person meetings and workshops, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the team shifted to a series of video meetings and online input sessions.

Public Engagement was broken down into four distinct, but interrelated phases to properly assess the varying needs of the community and develop a vision for this plan in a collaborative way.



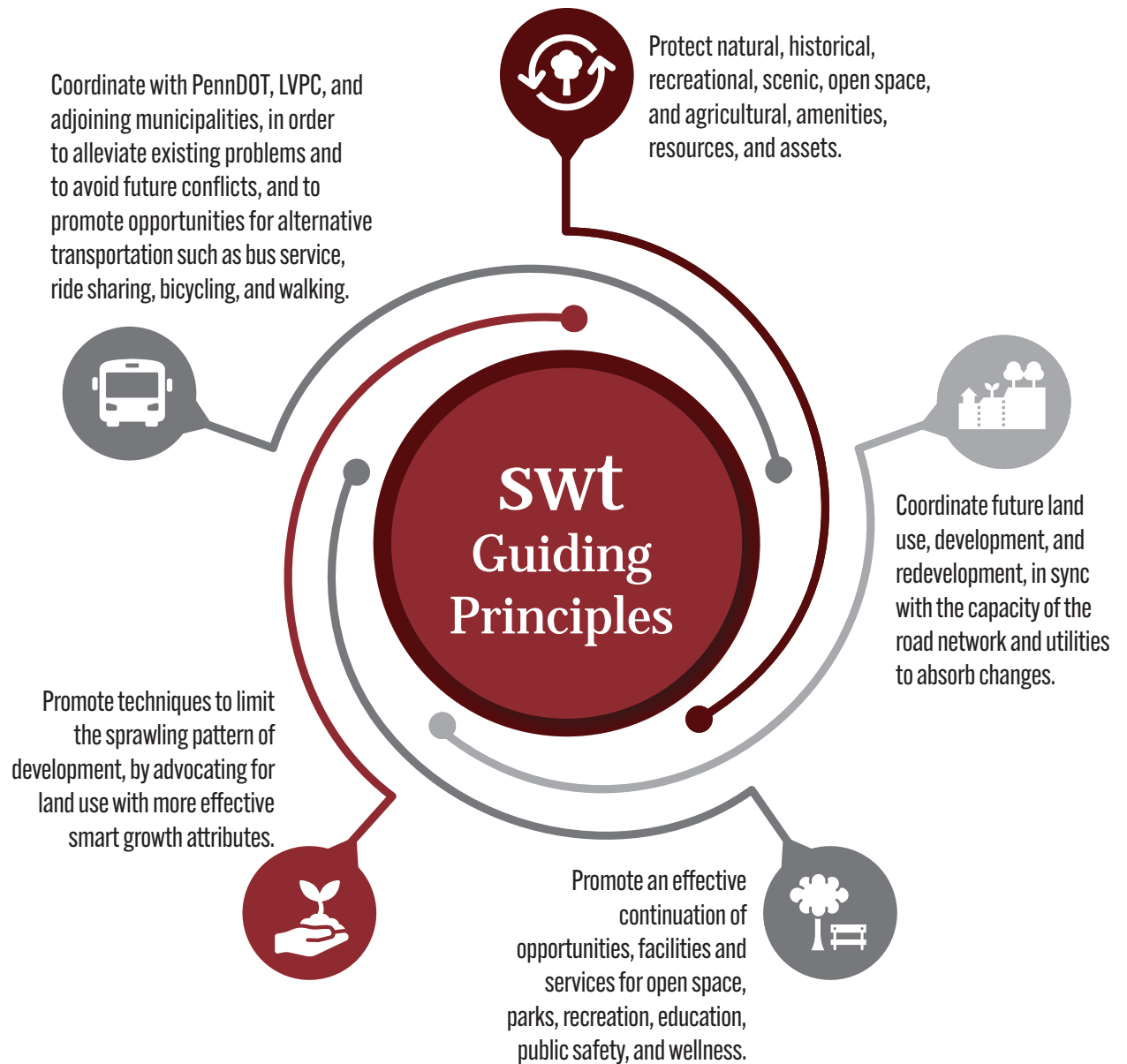
Phase I

Existing Conditions

Phase I identified current conditions in the Township to better communicate information to the public and set a baseline for future analysis. An existing conditions report was created utilizing data points from the US Census Bureau, Lehigh County, and the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission to paint a picture of the Township as it is today. The report also highlighted planning trends and changes since the 2009 plan that were taken into account during the 2023 update.

Guiding Principles

Using the existing conditions report as a starting point, the planning team worked with the public to establish guiding principles to direct the focus of this plan. These themes were shaped by reviewing what areas of the Township are working well and what areas need improvement.



Phase II

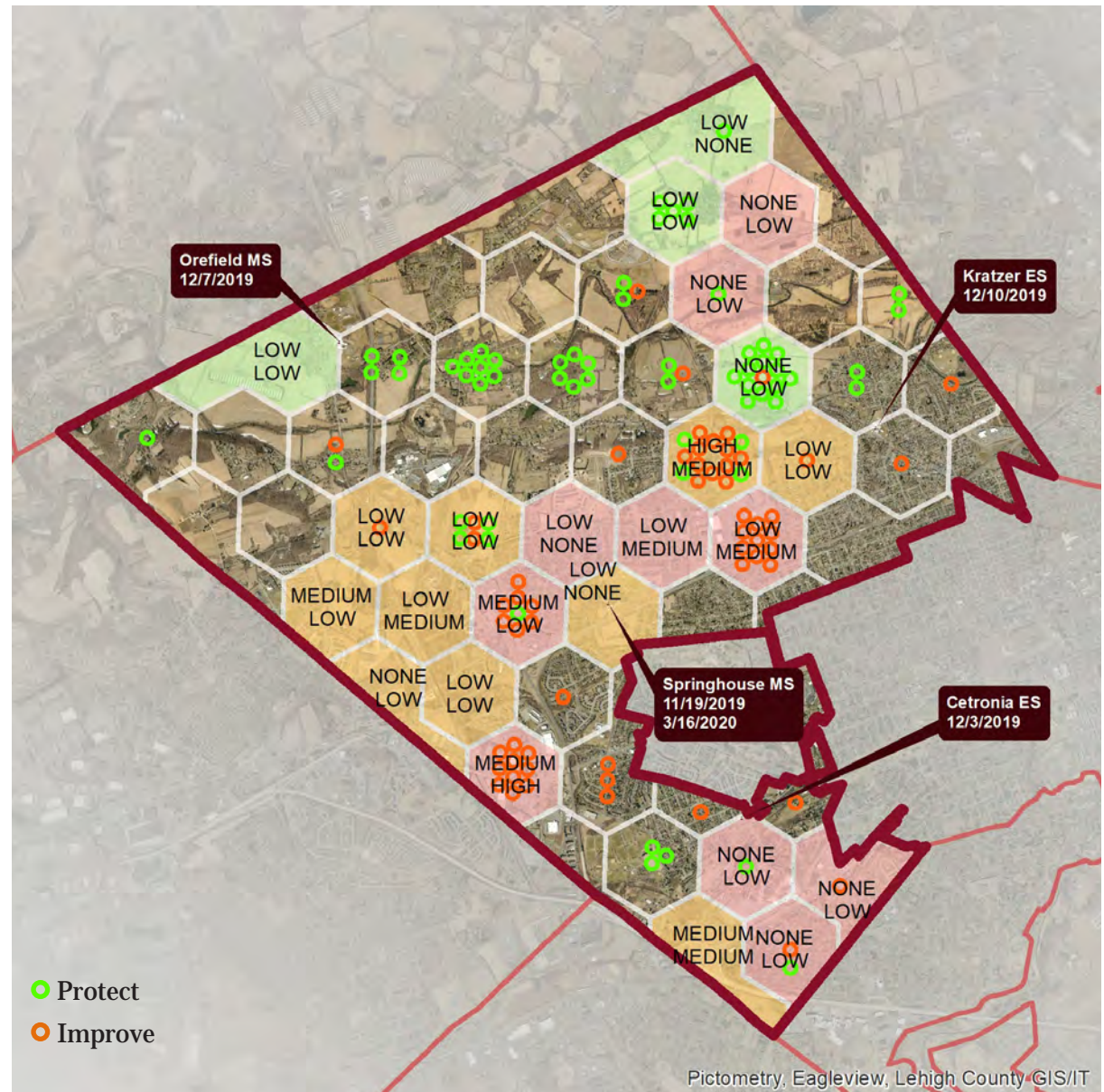
Where Should We Grow?

After the development of Guiding Principles, the process shifted to help determine where we should grow as a Township. This was accomplished through interactive group exercises during a series of public meetings at the schools shown in the map.

Participants at these meetings were asked to identify priority areas to “Protect” and “Improve” throughout the Township. Green circles show areas identified for preservation and orange circles show areas identified for improvement. Participants were also asked to identify which areas in the Township are best suited to support population and employment growth, based on future population and employment projections. The text in the top row of the hexagon indicates the preferred level of population growth and the bottom row of text represents preferred employment growth.

The color of each hexagon represents the preferred type of development/improvements that participants would like to see in this location:

-  Greenfield
-  Infill
-  Redevelopment



Phase III

How Should We Grow?

After identifying where we should grow in the Township, the community was asked the question of how we should grow. An online visual preference survey was created to measure what types of developments residents would prefer to see across three separate development categories (Greenfield, Infill, and Redevelopment). Participants were shown examples of developments and asked to indicate which images they preferred to see in South Whitehall. Some of the more popular examples are shown on the right. The online survey received 580 responses from Township residents between October 2020 and February 2021.



GREENFIELD

Single-Family Dwellings,
Compact Arrangement,
Central Green, Open Space
Preservation



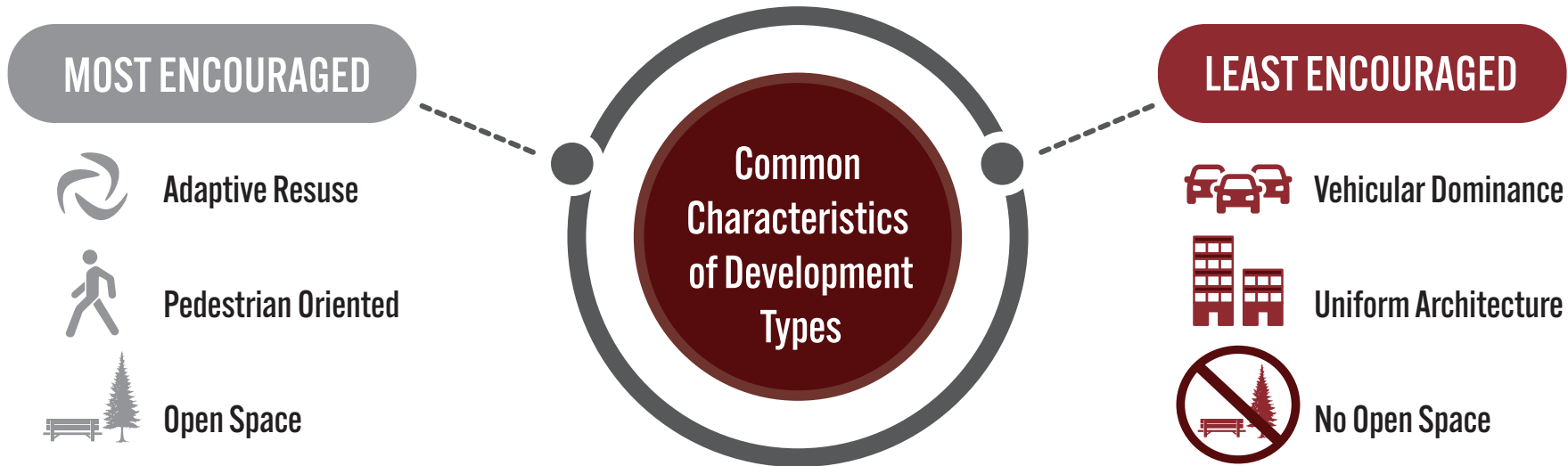
INFILL

Single Family Dwellings,
Central Green, Pedestrian
Connectivity, Alley Access



REDEVELOPMENT

Commercial/Retail Use,
Adaptive Reuse





Modeling

Models were developed through this planning process to establish baseline conditions of the Township and help evaluate potential impacts of future development. These models will be used during the implementation phase of this plan to assess potential zoning changes, transportation infrastructure improvements, and guide capital improvements planning.

Economic Impact Model

4ward Planning

South Whitehall hired 4ward Planning to create a Fiscal Impact Analysis model to examine the linkage between local government revenue generated by new development and the consequential cost of municipal services new developments would require. This model will be used to help examine which types of developments may result in a revenue surplus, revenue shortfall, or a break-even scenario for the Township.

Traffic Impact Model

Keystone Consulting Engineers

A traffic impact model was developed to evaluate how critical intersections in the Township respond to current and future development scenarios. The model utilizes traffic count data and information from previous traffic impact studies to establish baseline traffic conditions on major roadways. These intersections are then evaluated on their traffic flow performance and given a rating of A through H*.

After incorporating future land use scenarios, this model will be used to help evaluate potential traffic impacts and mitigation strategies from anticipated developments.

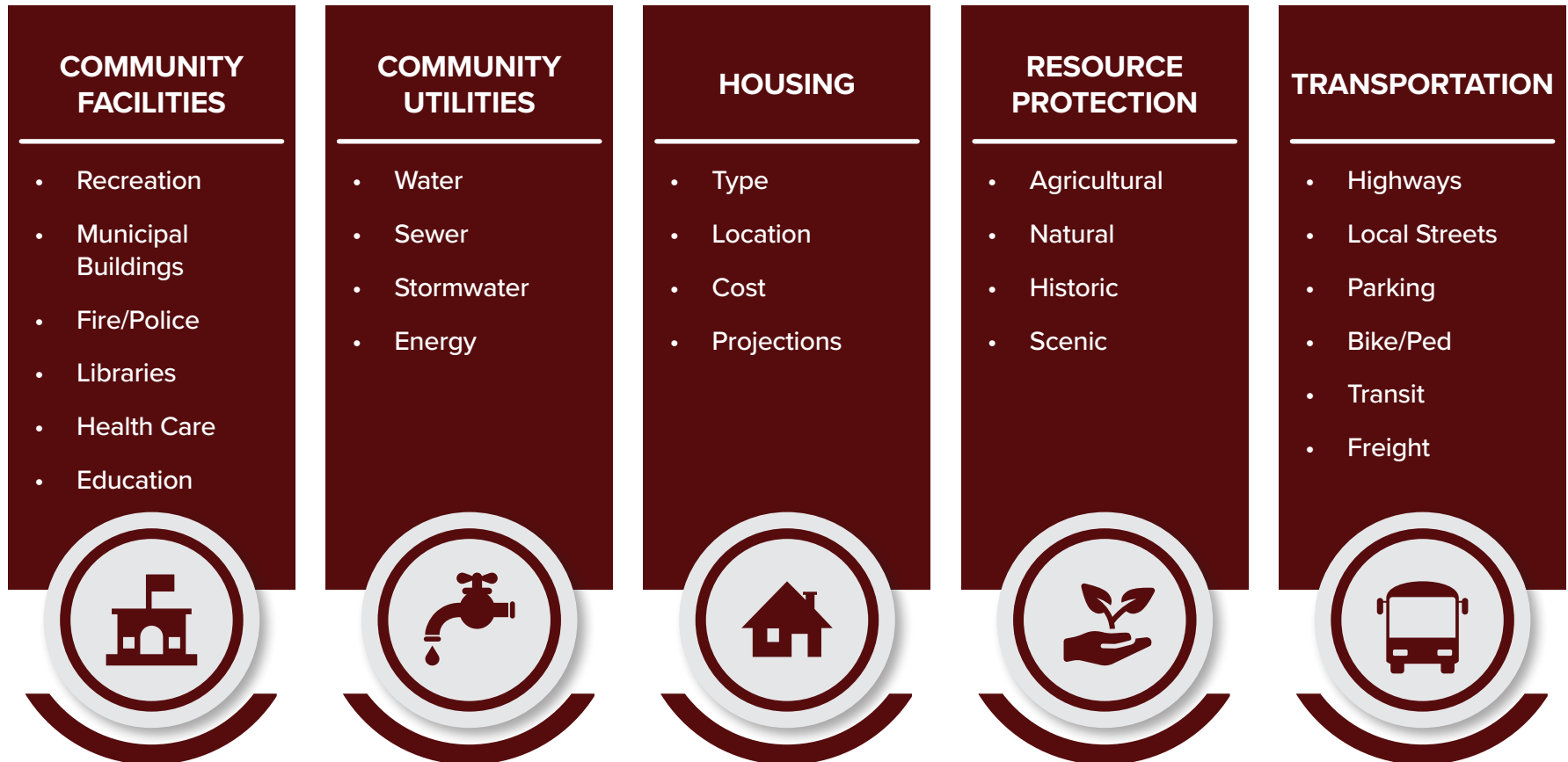
*Traffic flow was determined using the Intersection Capacity Utilization (ICU) method.

Phase IV

Working Groups

Phase IV of the public engagement process introduced five Working Groups centered around the five major elements of a comprehensive plan required by the MPC. The purpose of these Working Groups was to take a deeper dive into each element, learn about current Township strategies, and develop specific recommendations for each topic area. Working Group members were made up of staff, key stakeholders, and volunteer citizens or board members. The five Groups first met together with subject matter experts to learn about each topic and how these topics are addressed regionally through the Lehigh Valley Regional Comprehensive Plan. Over a period of several months, the Working Groups met to review the results of Phases I-III, evaluate current conditions, and provide topic-specific recommendations. The details reviewed for each major topic area are identified below.

Topic Areas



Phase IV Working Group Recommendations



COMMUNITY FACILITY

- Evaluate aging septic systems/mitigation
- Act 537 (Sewer Facilities) and Act 167 (Stormwater Management Plan)
- Explore benefits of a Capital Improvements Plan
- Evaluate Growth Areas to ensure adherence to future land use plan
- Ensure Development Follows Utilities Capacity
- Inventory of high-speed internet/5G and its expansion
- Consider Green Infrastructure Efforts



COMMUNITY UTILITIES

- Evaluate aging septic systems/mitigation
- Act 537 (Sewer Facilities) and Act 167 (Stormwater Management Plan)
- Explore benefits of a Capital Improvements Plan
- Evaluate Growth Areas to ensure adherence to future land use plan
- Ensure Development Follows Utilities Capacity
- Inventory of high-speed internet/5G and its expansion
- Consider Green Infrastructure Efforts



HOUSING

- Cluster Incentives
- Affordable Housing Incentives
- Review Zoning Ordinance to ensure all housing types are provided for
- Transfer of Development Rights
- Planning for walkable/bikeable communities
- Replicate successes of restricted age communities without age requirements



RESOURCE PROTECTION

- Preservation Toolbox (Historic, Natural, Agricultural Resources)
- Funding Sources
- Official Map Updates
- Flexible regulations for adaptive re-use and preservation of historic structures



TRANSPORTATION

- Create a Transportation Plan for the Township (Roads and Trails)
- Amend Zoning Map
- Identify safety areas and high crash areas to address
- Discuss multi-municipal planning and benefits to Township
- Traffic Impact Fees (Act 209 Study)
- Official Map Update





PLAN GOALS & OBJECTIVES



Plan Overview

MPC: A statement of objectives of the municipality concerning its future development, including, but not limited to, the location, character and timing of future development, that may also serve as a statement of community development objectives.

Objectives

The goal of this plan is to guide future growth in a sustainable and harmonious matter that preserves the character, community, and diversity of South Whitehall Township.





Plan Interrelationships

MPC: A statement indicating that the existing and proposed development of the municipality is compatible with the existing and proposed development and plans in contiguous portions of neighboring municipalities, or a statement indicating measures which have been taken to provide buffers or other transitional devices between disparate uses, and a statement indicating that the existing and proposed development of the municipality is generally consistent with the objectives and plans of the county comprehensive plan.

The 2023 South Whitehall Township Comprehensive Plan update is responsible for the creation and implementation of goals, strategies, and actions for the Township. In addition to its specific focus on the Township, the Plan considers the Township's place in the larger region. This includes exploring overall safety, asset management and maintenance, expansion and coordination of the regional transportation system, environmentally sensitive lands, facilities, current and future land use, that will have coordinated influence on the Township over the next 10 years.

The Township's accordance with local initiatives paired with a highly intertwined region has called for this plan to meld land use, community, economic, natural, agricultural, and historical resources, with housing, education, utilities, community facilities, and transportation planning. Township and regional partners have completed or are currently working on planning processes in a range of topic areas. The goals and policies of this plan are aligned with those plans and planning processes.

Relevant Plans

The following plans have been recognized for their relevance to the Township planning process:

FutureLV

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) in 2019 released the region's comprehensive plan. FutureLV establishes goals, policies and actions designed to carry the region through 2045. It will be updated every four years. This plan merges the main elements of a comprehensive plan with the transportation planning and investment policies of the regional Long-Range Transportation Plan.

Lehigh Valley Transportation Study (LVTs) Transportation Improvement Plan

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is the Lehigh Valley's four-year investment plan to maintain and enhance the transportation system in Lehigh and Northampton counties. It is updated every two years to create a network where roads, trails, sidewalks, technology and transit connect everyone to every place. The TIP is critical to the economic and social future of the region, targeting infrastructure investments that support a vibrant, inclusive, resilient and growing Lehigh Valley.

Lehigh Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan

The Hazard Mitigation Plan recommends actions at both the municipal level and the regional level. Many of the recommendations focus on tracking how the risks to different communities change over time and engaging with local officials and residents to effectively respond to these changes. The plan identifies 14 mitigation actions for South Whitehall Township to address High Priority Hazards that are present in the region. The plan identified seven high priority hazards for the Township including Flood, Windstorm/Tornado, Winter Storm, Mass Gathering/Civil Disturbance, Utility Interruption, Drug Overdose Crisis, and Invasive Species.

South Whitehall Township Parks & Recreation Plan

The Township is currently in the process of updating its Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Plan. This plan will outline the investment needs and priorities to maintain and expand recreational opportunities within the Township. The development of the Parks & Recreation Plan has been aligned with the Comprehensive Plan update to ensure consistency between the two. The Parks & Recreation Plan received feedback from hundreds of residents and stakeholders to help direct community recreation needs.

South Whitehall Township Emergency Operations Plan

The Township's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) outlines how the Township coordinates with other local, county, state and federal agencies in the event of an emergency, ranging from a hazardous material spill to a natural disaster to a terrorist incident. In the event of a disaster, the overall responsibility for decision making within South Whitehall Township rests with the Board of Commissioners.



Neighboring Municipalities

During the course of this plan, the team also reviewed the Comprehensive Plans of neighboring municipalities to assess the consistencies along municipal borders and identify any potential conflicts to be aware of. Several neighboring municipalities have recently updated or are in the process of updating their plans.

North Whitehall Township

The current Township Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 2009, but North Whitehall is also in the process of updating a new plan for 2022. South Whitehall has reviewed and assessed the draft goals, strategies, and future land use map to measure consistency along the municipal boundary.

Upper Macungie Township

The Township completed an update of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan in 2019. The underlying theme of this plan is based on sustainability and appropriately managing growth. The adjacent land uses proposed near the Township border are generally consistent with South Whitehall.

Lower Macungie Township

Lower Macungie was included in the 2017 Southwest Lehigh Comprehensive Plan. This multi-municipal plan included the Borough of Alburtis, Borough of Emmaus, Borough of Macungie, Lower Macungie Township, Lower Milford Township, and Upper Milford Township. The goals of this plan are consistent with those of South Whitehall.

Whitehall Township

The current comprehensive plan for Whitehall Township is from 2005. The goals and concepts presented in this plan are generally consistent with the goals of South Whitehall.

Salisbury Township

The most recently adopted comprehensive plan was completed in 2012 but is intended to guide the Township for 10-15 years. The areas in Salisbury Township that are near South Whitehall are primarily built out and are not expected to change. The goals of this plan are generally consistent with South Whitehall's.

City of Allentown

The City updated its comprehensive plan in 2019, with a heightened focus on neighborhood planning. The goals for West Allentown are centered around connectivity to community assets and mobility, which are consistent with the goals of South Whitehall.

Plan Overview

The framework of this plan has been laid out to be concise, consistent, and implementable. Each chapter in this plan covers a major element of the Township, as required by the MPC. Chapters are broken down into the following components to provide the reader background information and an overview of the Township's goals, priorities, and actions associated with each element.



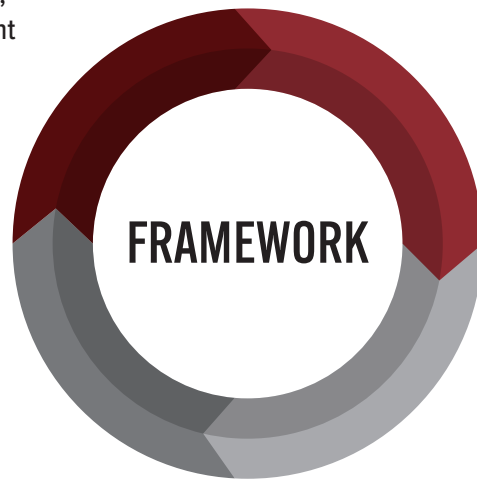
INTRODUCTION

Each chapter begins with an introduction to the topic, describing what the element entails, where it is located, and why it's important to the Township.



IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation items are designed to be specific actionable steps with measurable timelines and outcomes.



GOALS

The goals of each chapter are the broad-brush concepts for how South Whitehall address the issues, needs, and opportunities for each element



STRATEGIES

Strategies describe more actionable concepts to fulfill the broader goals. The strategies are described more generally, but in some cases highlight specific areas of focus.

Sustainability/Resiliency

Sustainability can be described as improving the quality of people's lives while living within the capacities of supporting natural and human systems. The three pillars of sustainability include the environment, the economy, and society, all of which have been the foundation for this plan.

Resiliency is the capacity to adapt to changing conditions and prepare for, withstand, and rapidly recover from disruptions. The goals, strategies, and implementation items proposed have been developed with careful consideration of both sustainability and resiliency for the Township.

CALLOUTS

Callouts are used frequently throughout this plan to note emerging trends, introduce new ideas, or note related topics.

Comprehensive Goals & Strategies



GOAL

Identify areas based on existing neighborhood, natural characteristics, and existing physical boundaries to strategically plan for potential growth that is harmonious within the identified area.



GOAL

Plan for future land use, development, and redevelopment to remain within the capacity to install and maintain infrastructure in a fiscally responsible manner.

STRATEGY

Promote Planning, Zoning, and Design techniques to remain within the capacity to install and maintain infrastructure in a fiscally responsible manner.

STRATEGY

Work with regional agencies and neighboring municipalities to coordinate and share services where feasible.

STRATEGY

Develop measures and benchmarks for municipal services and utilities to help guide future refinements and expansions to municipal functions.

STRATEGY

Periodically re-examine the Comprehensive plan to identify progress, major problems, significant changes, and areas requiring revision or adjustments for the Comprehensive Plan and/or development regulations of the Township.





RESOURCE PROTECTION

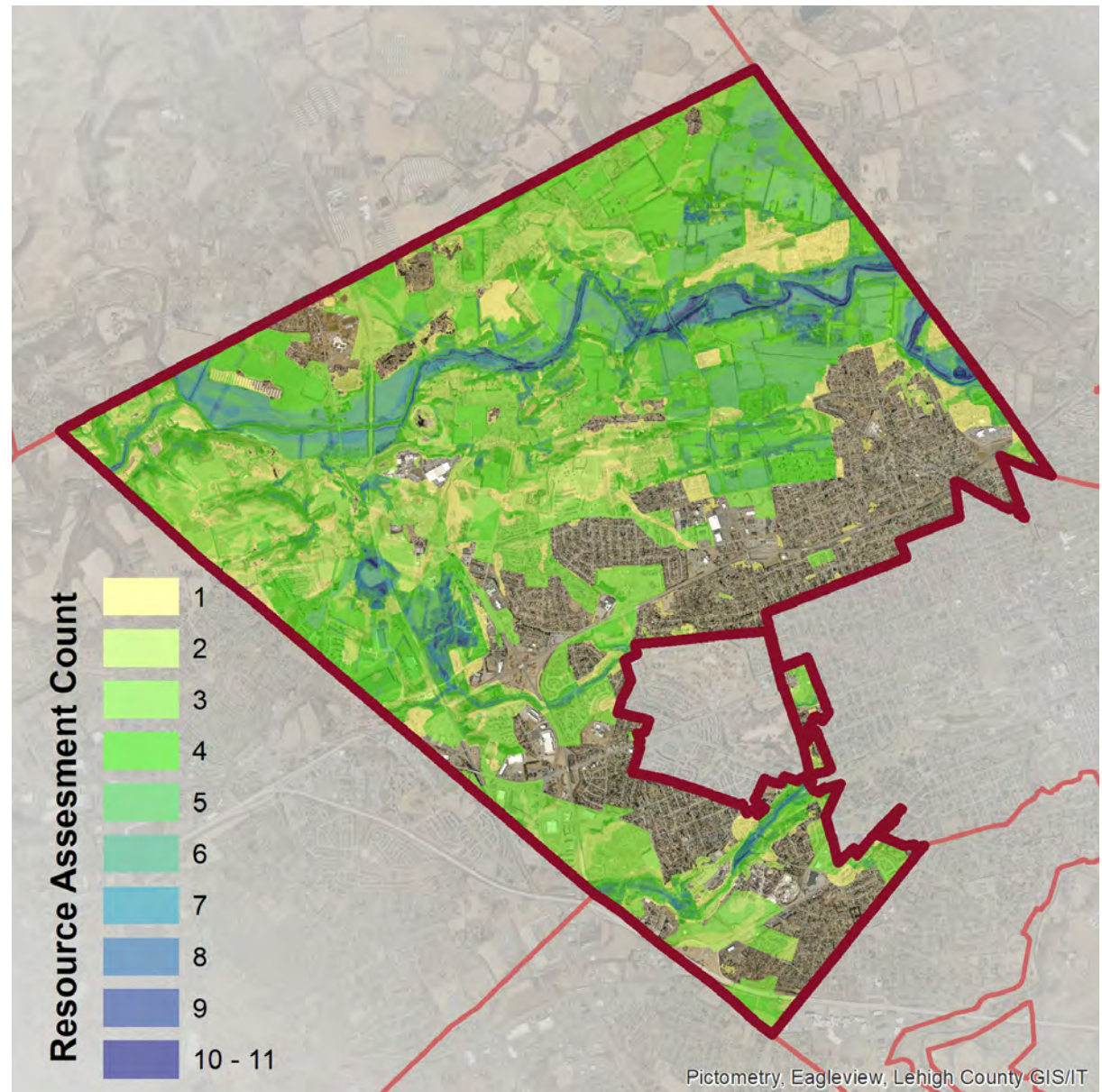
Resource Protection

MPC: A plan for the protection of natural and historic resources to the extent not preempted by federal or state law. This clause includes, but is not limited to, wetlands and aquifer recharge zones, woodlands, steep slopes, prime agricultural land, flood plains, unique natural areas and historic sites.

Introduction

South Whitehall is blessed with a variety of natural and historic resources throughout the Township. These include agricultural lands important for farming and preserving the Township's rural character, natural resources including vegetation and waterways, historic buildings and structures, and scenic landscapes or viewsheds.

This map displays areas in the Township where the most resources are present. The color gradient darkens where more resources are present, whether they be natural, agricultural, or historic. Stream corridors and wetlands are the darkest colors due to importance of the presence of water.





Resource Protection Goals & Strategies



GOAL

.....
Preserve and protect resources that are important to the unique characteristics of the Township.

STRATEGY

Identify and prioritize resources that are important to the unique characteristics of the Township.

STRATEGY

Strengthen Township regulations to encourage and incentivize preservation of resources.

STRATEGY

Actively pursue partnerships and opportunities to preserve resources.

STRATEGY

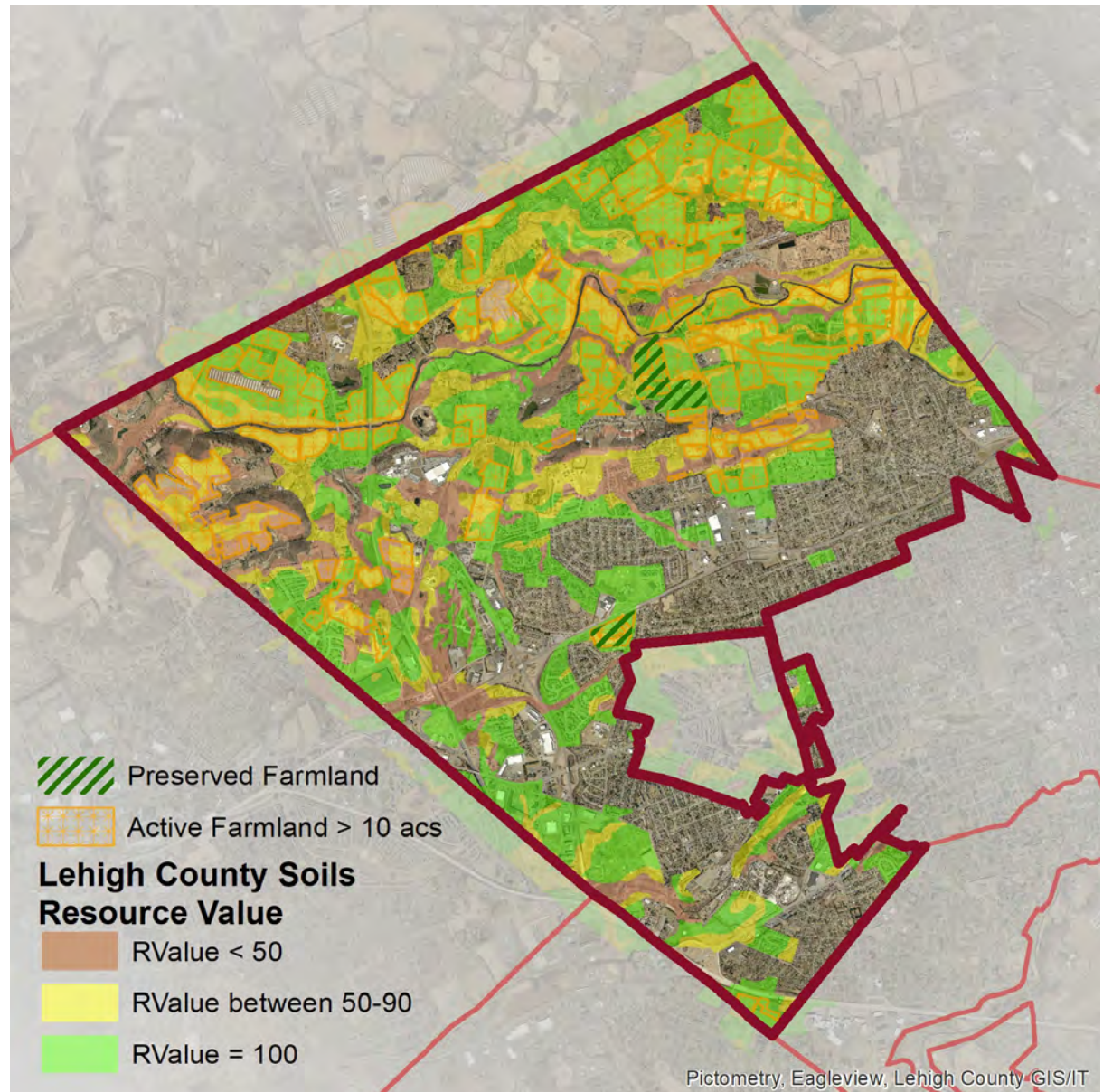
Direct development to areas with access to infrastructure and limit development in hazard prone areas.

Agricultural Resources

Farming and agriculture have been an important part of the history and growth of the Township. Besides the production of crops and livestock, farmland contributes to the Township's rural character and quality of life.

Soil suitability is one of the most important factors contributing to agricultural production. Prime agricultural land is determined by the combination of certain soil types, slope, and geology. Over one third of the Township is covered in prime agricultural land, particularly in the northern tier.

Farmland is often preserved by easement through the Lehigh County Farmland Preservation Office. As of 2022, Lehigh County has preserved 376 farms totaling over 26,000 acres. The Manito Horse Farm on Cedar Crest Boulevard is the only farm preserved through this program in South Whitehall.





Conversion

Farmland is a quickly diminishing resource throughout South Whitehall and throughout the country. Large tracts of open, flat land are often under intense development pressure. American Farmland Trust estimates that over 11 million acres of farmland have been converted to development in the US between 2001 and 2016*. This trend is projected to continue especially in low density residential areas such as the northern tier of South Whitehall.

*American Farmland Trust - Farms Under Threat 2040 Report

SHIFTS IN MODERN AGRICULTURE

New trends in agricultural practices are changing the type and scale of farming throughout the country. Throughout the 20th century, agriculture had been centered around large-scale, monoculture crop production and the development of mechanized technology to increase rapid productivity. Today, the United States has seen a shifting interest to smaller, polyculture farms that are more resilient to impacts such as climate change, the economy, and changing consumer habits. There is also a growing trend throughout the country for smaller community farms to support local neighborhoods and regional markets.

Agricultural Strategies



IDENTIFY & PRIORITIZE

- Shifts in modern agriculture
- Agri-significant areas
- Potential sites to support small- to medium-scale operations
- Economic development opportunities related to agriculture
- Opportunities to support a local food system



ENCOURAGE & INCENTIVIZE

- Update regulations
- Transfer of Development Rights
- Agri-Uses
- Agri-Zoning
- Cluster/ Conservation Zoning



PARTNERSHIPS & OPPORTUNITIES

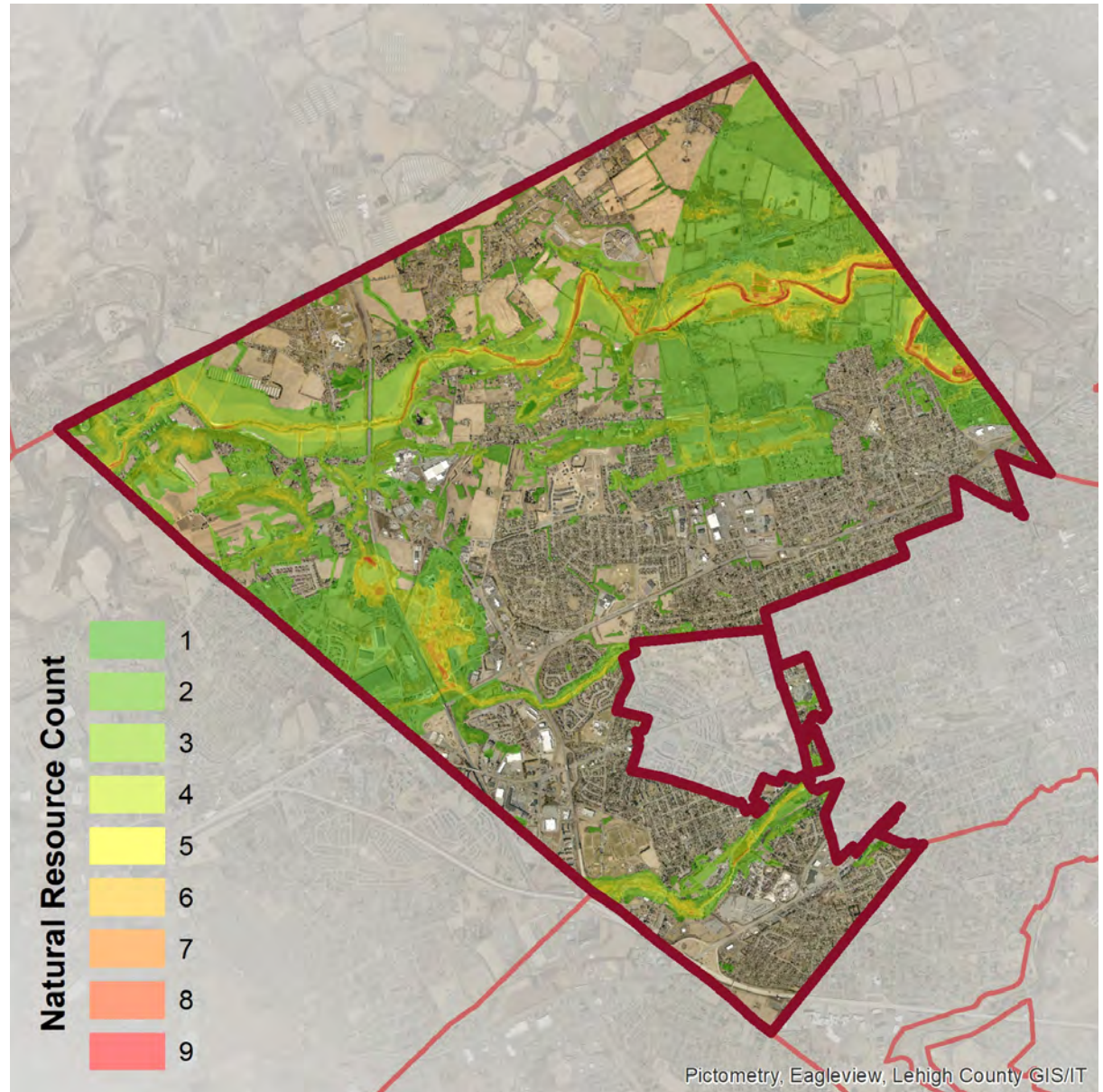
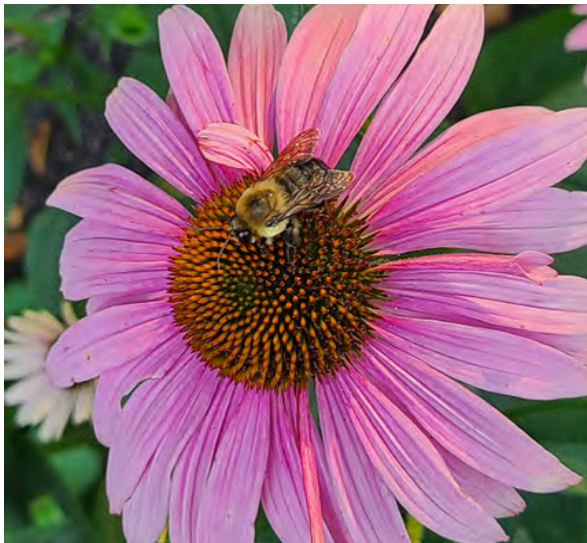
- Lehigh County Agriculture
- Clean and Green Program
- Seed Farm
- Rodale Farm
- Farmers
- Landowners

Natural Resources

Natural resources are physical materials found in or created by nature and tend to have significant impacts on development patterns. These resources provide a variety of benefits to the community and are integral to human, plant, and animal life.

The map shows the location of where the following natural resources are present.

- Steep Slopes
- Woodlands
- Floodplains
- Riparian Areas/Wetlands
- Sensitive Habitats



Woodland Resources

Woodlands provide a variety of ecological and human benefits including their contribution to clean air and water, stabilization of surrounding soils, and providing habitat for animal species. More benefits can be gained from larger tracts of intact woodlands opposed to scattered swaths of trees.

Steep slopes are important considerations for development, not because of the benefits they provide but the damage they can cause. Steep slopes of a grade greater than 12% are typically unstable and can contribute to soil erosion and heavy runoff. Development on or around steep slopes should be avoided when possible.

Water Resources

Water quality and water supply are vital to both human and animal life. The Township drains into three separate watersheds:

- Coplay Creek
- Jordan Creek
- Little Lehigh Creek

Riparian areas are the intersection between land and water on the edges of streams and other bodies of water. These areas are extremely important for ecological health as they offer shelter and habitat for both aquatic and terrestrial species, while stabilizing the streambank and reducing stream velocity.

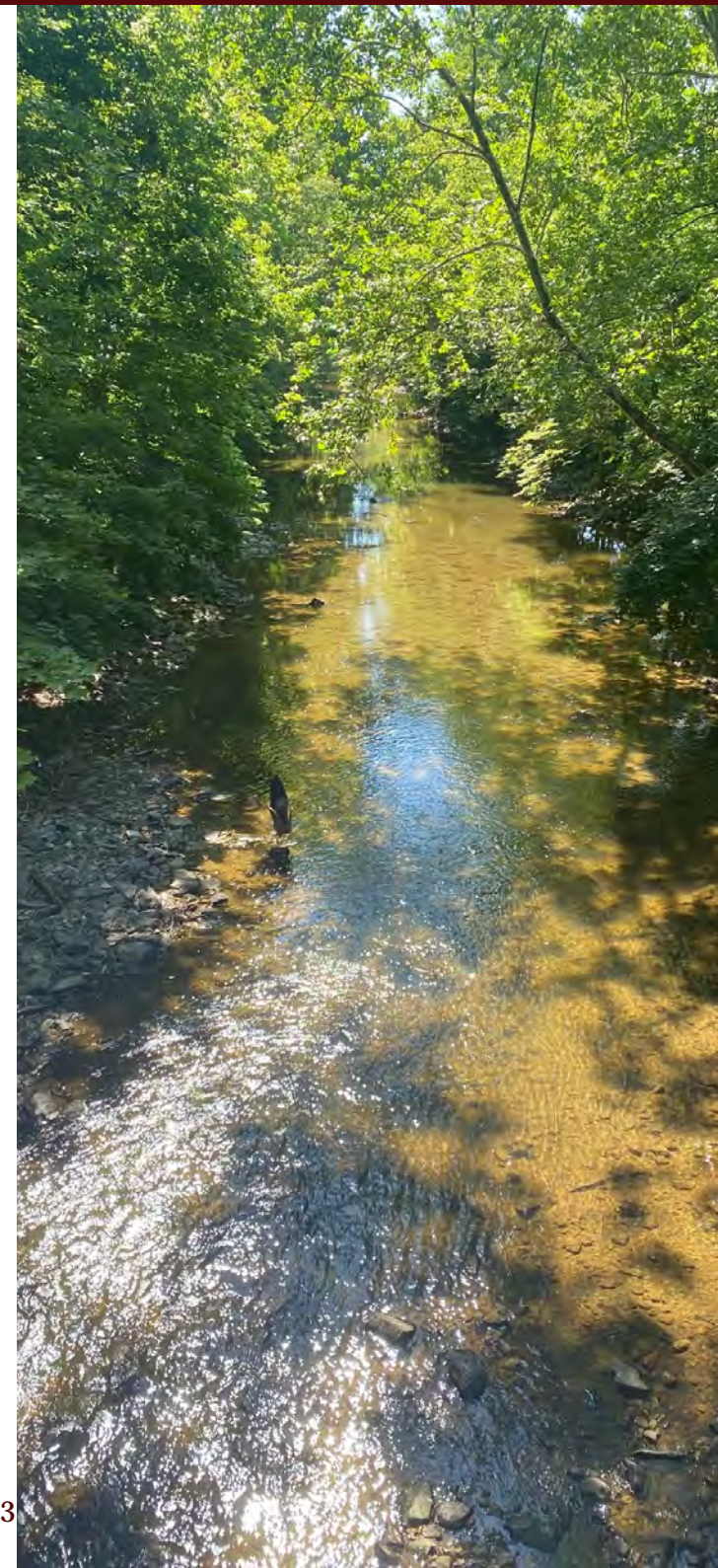
Corridors

Natural corridors or greenways are important to connect natural resources and provide seamless lines of habitat for animals and plants. These corridors can connect islands of natural resources in more developed areas and can provide a number of ecological and recreational benefits.

GREENWAYS

Greenways are corridors of land recognized for their ability to connect people and places together. These ribbons of open space are located within linear corridors that are either natural, such as rivers and streams, or manmade, such as abandoned railroad beds and utility corridors.*

*Definition provided by Greenways Incorporated



Natural Strategies



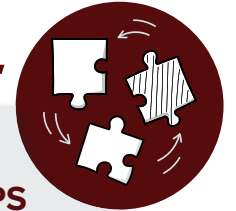
IDENTIFY & PRIORITIZE

- Woodlands
- Steep Slopes
- Riparian Areas
- Critical Habitat
- Others



ENCOURAGE & INCENTIVIZE

- Update/Adopt Ordinances addressing specific natural features: steep slopes, riparian buffers, floodplains, woodlands, etc.
- Greenways/natural corridors

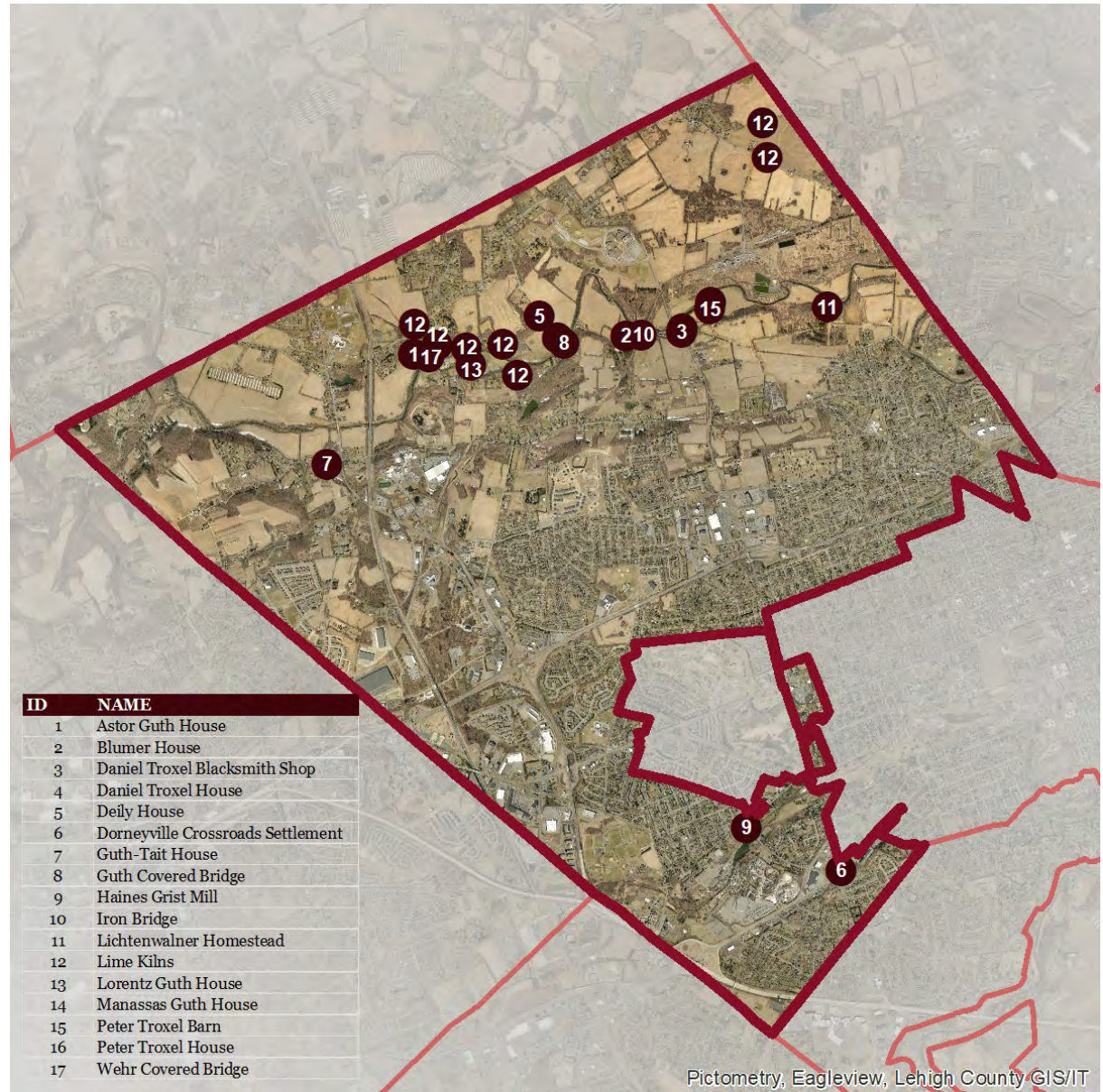


PARTNERSHIPS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Wildlands Conservancy
- PA DCNR
- Forest Stewardship Program
- Landowners

Historic Resources

South Whitehall has a rich history of agriculture and industry that can still be seen today. Most of the Township's remaining intact historical artifacts are found throughout the Jordan Creek Watershed including homes, barns, and infrastructure. Several sites are still present in the southern part of the Township but are surrounded by residential and commercial development. This map shows the location of sites identified in the 2010 Township Official Map and referenced in the 2009 South Whitehall Township Comprehensive Plan. Additional historic sites can be identified through future implementation.



Historic Strategies



IDENTIFY & PRIORITIZE

- Define historic
- Inventory historic properties



ENCOURAGE & INCENTIVIZE

- Adaptive Reuse
- Rehabilitation of structures
- Ensure long-term maintenance of structures



PARTNERSHIPS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Trexler Trust
- Lehigh County Historical Society
- Township-based commission
- Landowners

Scenic Resources

Part of the Township's cultural landscape can be experienced through scenic views of South Whitehall's agricultural, natural, and historic resources. These scenic resources can showcase a look into history and an understanding of our Township heritage. Preservation of these scenic views can assist in the preservation of culture and establish a unique sense of place throughout the community.



Scenic Strategies



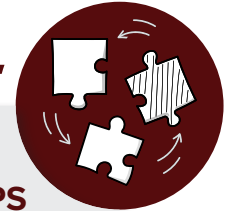
IDENTIFY & PRIORITIZE

- Significant viewsheds



ENCOURAGE & INCENTIVIZE

- Visual buffer provisions
- Height restrictions
- Scenic Resource Overlay



PARTNERSHIPS & OPPORTUNITIES

- Wildlands Conservancy
- Developers
- Landowners

Implementation

- Develop Transfer of Development Rights Program. (Identify Sending and Receiving Areas)
- Revise Township ordinances to ensure they support the normal operations of agricultural users
- Provide education and outreach materials to farming and non-farming residents about the importance of farming to the Township
- Develop a Preservation Toolbox
- Update the Official Map based on resource protection priorities
- Cluster development near crossroads villages in exurban and agricultural areas
- Evaluate preservation funding mechanisms
- Encourage adaptive reuse of historic structures
- Increase historic preservation awareness and education
- Conduct an inventory of historic sites and structures in the Township
- Consider adopting overlay zoning districts over existing villages for the purpose of preserving and enhancing the unique character found there
- Evaluate Scenic Viewsheds
- Update Ordinances to protect natural resources
- Update regulations in response to changes in agriculture
- Develop Resource Protection Prioritization Plan
- Develop Historic Preservation Plan
- Evaluate BOC Sub-Committees (EAC, GAC, Land Preservation) to prevent overlap of duties



COMMUNITY UTILITIES

Community Utilities

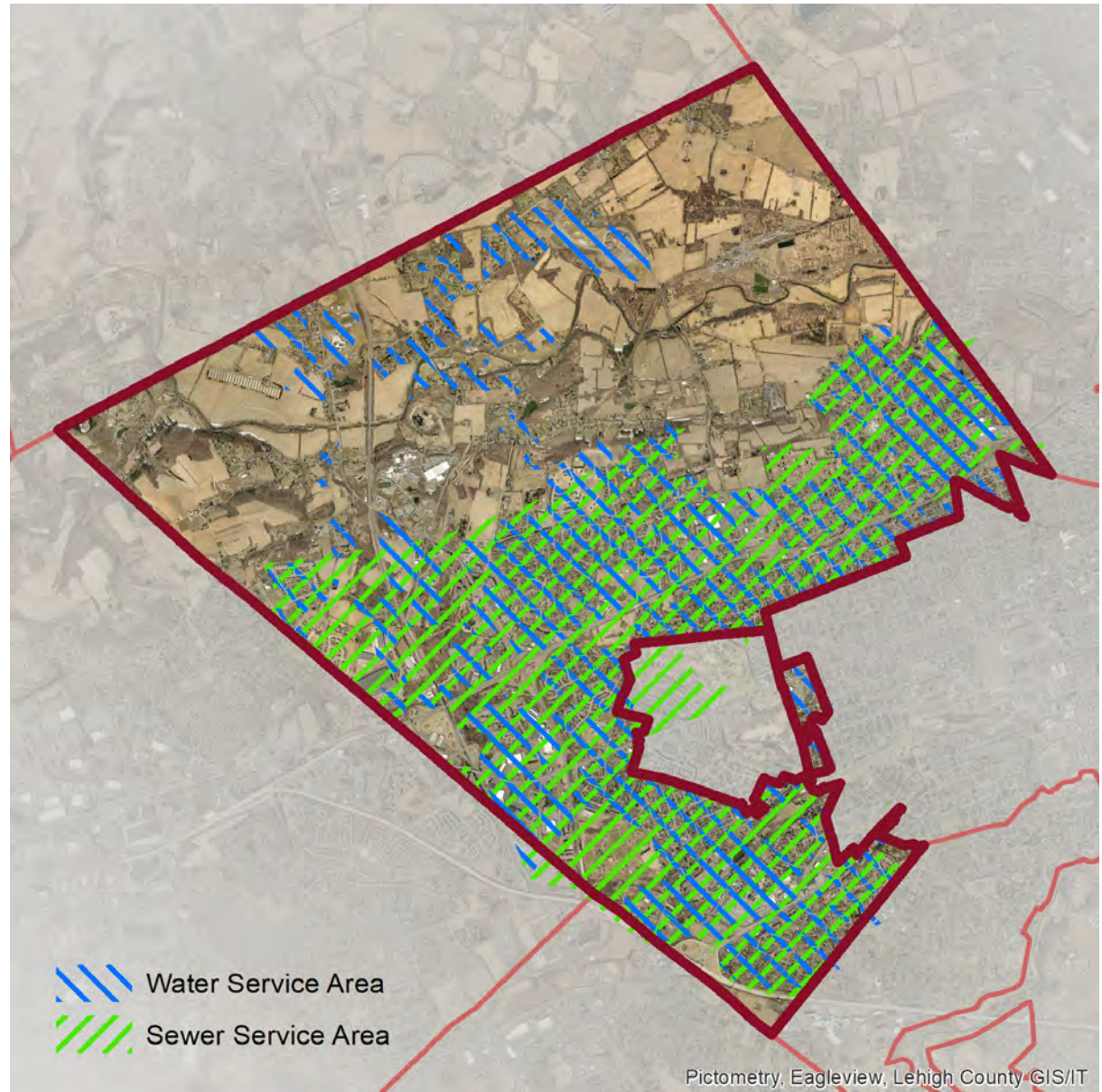
MPC: A plan for community facilities and utilities, which may include public and private education, recreation, municipal buildings, fire and police stations, libraries, hospitals, water supply and distribution, sewerage and waste treatment, solid waste management, storm drainage, and flood plain management, utility corridors and associated facilities, and other similar facilities or uses.

Introduction

South Whitehall Township provides drinking water, sanitary sewer and stormwater control services throughout much of the Township. Areas not served by water or sewer must rely on private on-lot wells and/or private sewerage disposal.

The map depicts areas of the Township that are served by water and sewer. Geographically, areas south of the Huckleberry Ridge are generally served by both water and sewer. North of the Ridge, water service is more disperse and municipal sewer service is non-existent. There exist a handful of private sewer treatment facilities located north of the ridge and discharge to the Jordan Creek.

Currently, South Whitehall has are over 6,800 water customers and over 7,000 sewer customers.



Community Utilities

Water Supply & Distribution

The drinking water supply is provided by South Whitehall Township through a network of over 100 miles of watermain. Water is provided through supply wells owned by SWT that draw from the Beekman Group and Allentown Formation aquifers. Additional water is obtained through a bulk water purchase via interconnections with the City of Allentown and the Lehigh County Authority. Pressure and storage are managed through a series of pumps, the Township owned 300,000-gallon “PPL Water Tower”, and the 3,000,000-gallon storage reservoir tank owned by South Whitehall on the Huckleberry Ridge. There is one private water company (Aqua-PA) operating in South Whitehall that provides water to the residents of Country Club Gardens and Springhouse Farms.

Water Utilities are regulated by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP). Annually, South Whitehall provides customers with Annual Water Quality Reports, also known as Consumer Confidence Reports. These reports are available on South Whitehall Township’s website. In summer of 2022, PADEP completed a full water audit of South Whitehall Township water facilities which resulted in no major findings.

LEAD & COPPER

Human exposure to lead and copper can cause significant health problems and is a growing concern related to public drinking water. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) established the Lead and Copper Rule to help reduce exposure to lead and protect public health. This rule promotes treatment techniques to reduce corrosion in pipes and monitor public water systems.



Community Utilities

Sanitary Sewer

The South Whitehall Township Sewer Utility provides gravity service south of the Huckleberry Ridge. Untreated sewage is transferred to Lehigh County Authority's treatment facility at Kline's Island. Currently, there is limited capacity to send increased gallonage to the Kline's Island facility. Providing sewer service to areas north of Huckleberry Ridge would require pumps to send sewage over the ridge or the upgrading of privately owned systems that discharge to the Jordan Creek. Sanitary sewer service allows development to occur at densities less than one acre. This is a driver for larger lot zoning in areas that remain unserved by sewer.

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection requires municipalities to develop an Act 537 plan. This plan provides “for a resolution of existing sewage disposal problems, provide for the future sewage disposal needs of new land development, and provide for future sewage disposal needs of the municipality.” (PADEP, Sewage Facilities Planning). South Whitehall should update their Act 537 plan in the near future.

INFLOW & INFILTRATION

Inflow & Infiltration (I&I) occurs when water other than intended sewage flows into sewer pipes. I&I can be generated from either groundwater seepage (infiltration) or through stormwater (inflow).

Unintended I&I contributes to excess flows at Kline's Island and can inundate the facility. As part of an I&I reduction plan, the Township conducts “cast-in-place” repairs to sewer lines and manhole rehabilitation.



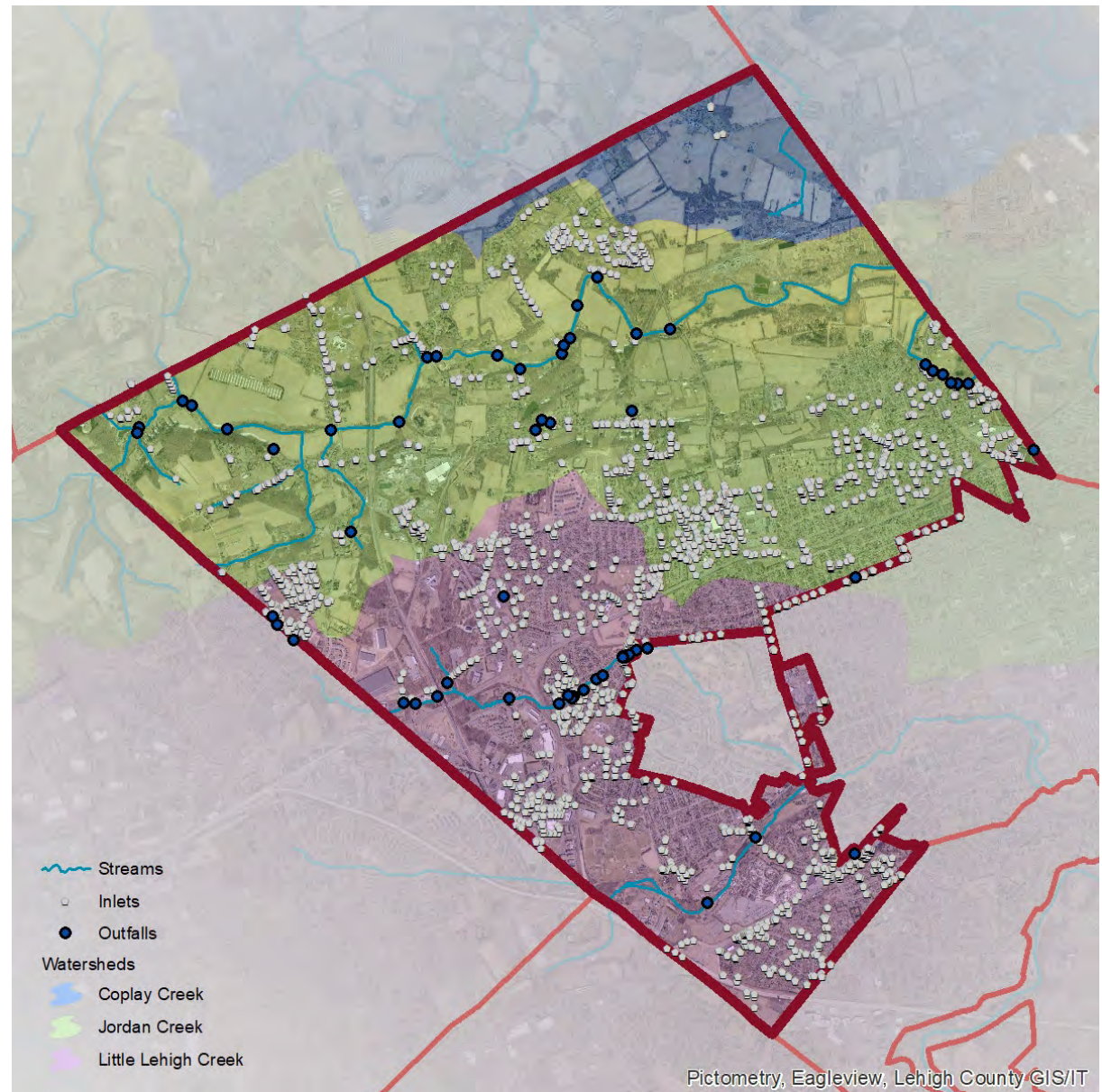
Kline's Island Wastewater Treatment Plant (Image Credit: The Morning Call)

Community Utilities

Stormwater

South Whitehall Township, through the wide expanse of storm sewer inlets and underground pipes, has managed to control stormwater runoff and keep damage to a minimum within the township. The storm sewer system is comprised of over 900 inlets that drain into underground pipes, which lead into 22 detention basins located throughout the township. The purpose of these detention facilities is to store the stormwater runoff and then let it runoff at a controlled rate so as not to adversely affect downstream property. One of the most important aspects of a stormwater system is the fact that it will drain into the ground or a stream, which then becomes a source for our drinking water supply. For this reason, the state of Pennsylvania has established strict guidelines which need to be followed when dealing with or working around storm sewers.

Act 167 of 1978 provided a change in the management of stormwater by shifting stormwater planning from individual municipalities to watershed-based planning. South Whitehall Township contains three separate watersheds within its borders: Coplay Creek, Jordan Creek and the Little Lehigh Creek watersheds. The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission prepares and maintains Act 167 plans for the Lehigh Valley. South Whitehall Township updated its Stormwater Management Ordinance in September 2022.



ACT 167

Pennsylvania Act 167 requires counties and municipalities to prepare stormwater management plans on a watershed basis. These plans involve hydrologic assessments and should establish standards for controlling runoff from new developments.

ACT 537

Pennsylvania Act 537 requires municipalities to prepare official sewage facilities plans to show the current and future needs of a municipal wastewater system. These plans are important to assure that safe and reliable sewage disposal is provided within the municipal boundaries.





Community Utilities Goals & Strategies



GOAL

Ensure that the Township is sufficiently served by utility infrastructure appropriate to the level of development and within the available capacity of the utilities.

STRATEGY

Develop sound economic strategies that consider Expansion, Maintenance, and Compliance of utilities.

STRATEGY

Develop an economic analysis that evaluates revenue streams to ensure the expenses related to Expansion, Maintenance, and Compliance are sufficient.

Community Utilities Strategies



EXPANSION

- Ensure the revenue stream of future infrastructure expansions is sufficient to sustain operations and future maintenance
- Increase productivity of infrastructure by maximizing user per foot of infrastructure



MAINTENANCE

- Increase productivity of existing infrastructure
- Improve infrastructure data to aid in evaluating and planning of maintenance



COMPLIANCE

- Evaluate/anticipate pending compliance regulations to be included in the budgeting process as soon as possible

Implementation

- **Update Act 537 Sewer Facilities Plan**
- **Update Act 167 Stormwater Management Plan**
- **Evaluate areas with aging septic systems and develop management/mitigation efforts**
- **Explore benefits of a Capital Improvements Plan**
- **Consider incentives for developers to extend utilities where appropriate**
- **Inventory and evaluate high-speed (5G) internet infrastructure**
- **Increase green stormwater infrastructure efforts**
- **Analyze users per foot along utility systems to determine potential rate increases**





COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Community Facilities

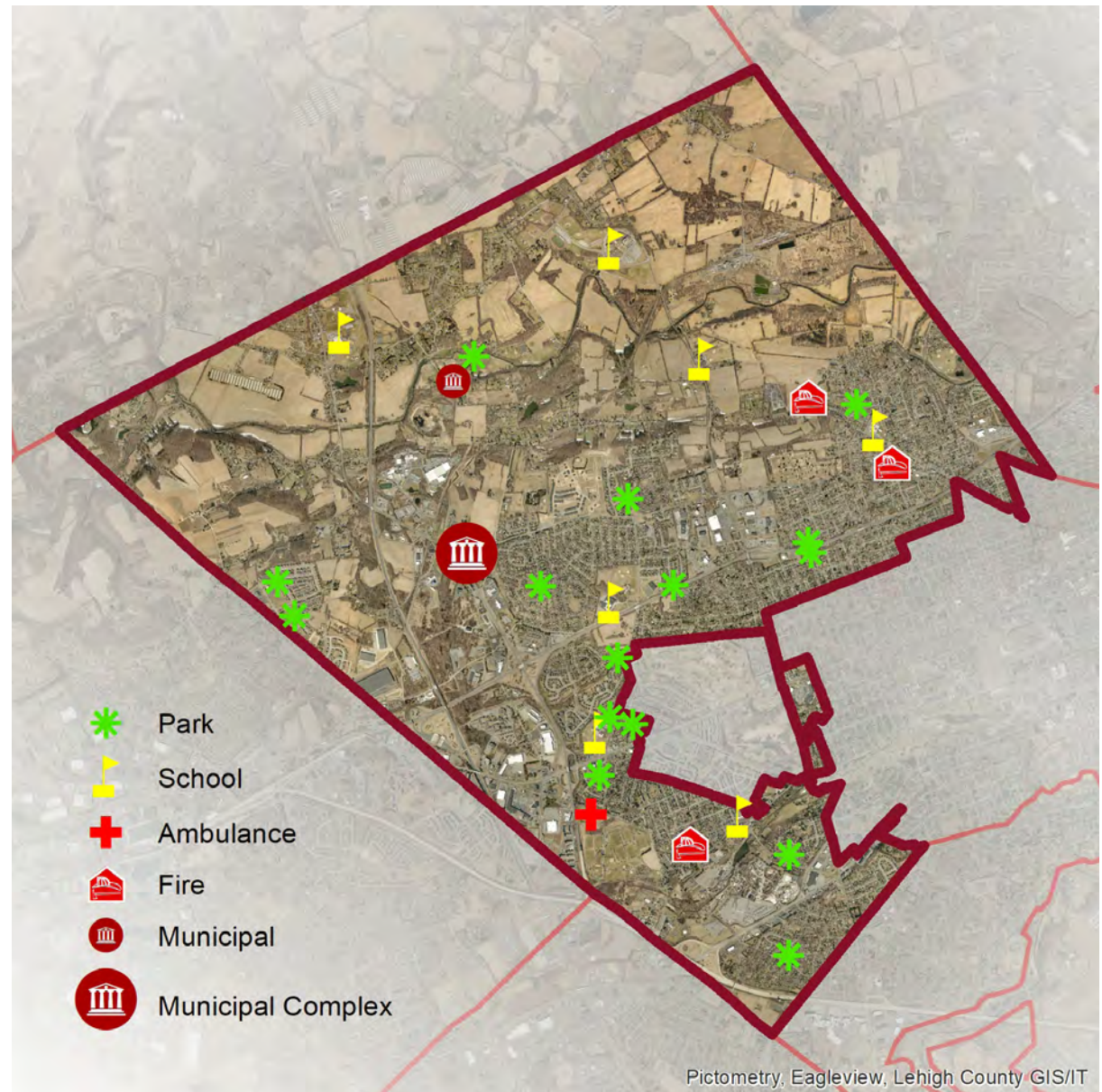
MPC: A plan for community facilities and utilities, which may include public and private education, recreation, municipal buildings, fire and police stations, libraries, hospitals, water supply and distribution, sewerage and waste treatment, solid waste management, storm drainage, and flood plain management, utility corridors and associated facilities, and other similar facilities or uses.

Introduction

Community facilities provide necessary services to residents including education, emergency services, government, and recreation. The Township is responsible for all government services and facilities, but coordinates with other public and private entities on services outside of their authority.

The map displays locations of existing public facilities including educational facilities, emergency medical services, fire stations, parks, township maintenance locations, and the township municipal campus. This is the primary location for public works, police, government services, and the library.

It is important to consider growth projections and goals of other elements of this plan when planning for the management and expansion of facilities. To make it easier to assess community facilities, this chapter has broken down facilities in categories of Public Safety and Public Use.





Public Safety

South Whitehall is home to over 20,000 residents and several regional employers. Public safety services are an essential need for any community and are available to all residents and visitors to the Township. These include police, fire, and emergency medical services (EMS).

South Whitehall has maintained its own municipal police force since 1970 and currently employs over forty officers and supporting staff. The Township Police station is located on the lower level of the municipal campus. Fire emergency and rescue services are provided by four volunteer fire departments dispersed throughout the Township. These volunteer departments are supported by donations and large contributions from the Township for equipment and materials. There is an abundance of medical service locations throughout the Township and are some of the region's largest employers. Two hospitals are located outside of the Township, but within a 15-minute drive, including two hospitals. The Cetrionia Ambulance Corps is located on Broadway Road and provides EMS vehicle and related services. South Whitehall Township coordinates with all of these quasi-public/private entities on public safety and emergency management planning through the Township Office of Emergency Management Services. The primary role of this team is to develop the Township's Emergency Operations Plan and provide guidance to the Township Board of Commissioners in emergency situations.

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

This plan is a culmination of disaster preparedness and hazard mitigation planning to outline how the Township may declare a local emergency and coordinate with local, county, state, and federal agencies in the event of a disaster.

Community Facilities

Public Use Facilities

Facilities designated for public use include the Township municipal campus, parks and community buildings, educational facilities, and the library. The Township maintains all Township buildings and facilities including the municipal campus where the community engages the Township, all public works facilities, and parks.

The Parkland School District is the public school district for all of South Whitehall Township and a few surrounding municipalities. Parkland is one of the largest districts in the area with over 9,600 K-12 students and over 1,400 district personnel. There are six schools and one administrative building in the Township:

- Parkland High School
- Orefield Middle School
- Springhouse Middle School
- Kratzer Elementary
- Parkway Manor Elementary
- Cetronia Elementary

The Parkland Community Library is located at the municipal campus and provides library services to residents of the municipalities in the Parkland School District. The library is administered by a Library Director and volunteer Board.

PARKLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT

As one of the largest districts in the region, the Parkland has a robust offering of community resources including athletics, clubs, and after school programs.



Parks

South Whitehall Township owns and maintains over 225 acres of park land and open space that range in size from small, half-acre pocket parks to the 112-acre Covered Bridge Park along the Jordan Creek. The park system offers numerous playgrounds, athletic fields, sport courts, picnic facilities, and open spaces that provide recreational opportunities year-round. The Township Parks and Recreation Department organizes and manages a variety of recreational and community programs and facility rentals.

Park & Recreation Plan

The South Whitehall Township Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Plan will guide future policies and decisions regarding park and recreation improvements in the Township. The previous comprehensive parks plan was completed as a joint plan with North Whitehall Township in 2009. Since then, the recreation needs for both municipalities have grown and changed significantly, calling for an individual plan for each Township. North Whitehall Township recently updated their Comprehensive Parks, Recreation, & Open Space Plan in 2022.





Community Facilities Goals & Strategies



GOAL

Promote an effective continuation of facilities, opportunities, and services for parks, recreation, education, public safety, and wellness.

STRATEGY

Continually assess and evaluate existing facilities and service areas while planning for future needs.

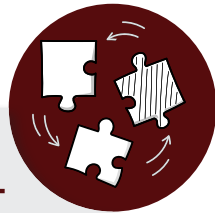
STRATEGY

Acquire necessary resources to expand and improve facilities and services.

STRATEGY

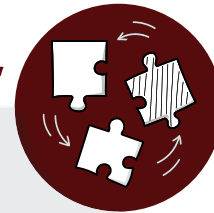
Develop and maintain partnerships and relationships to share and improve facilities and services.

Community Facilities Strategies



ASSESSMENT & PLANNING

- Continually evaluate staffing levels, services expectations, and future needs
- Incorporate community facilities into a Township-wide Capital Improvements Plan
- Ensure consistency with relevant supplemental plans



RESOURCE ACQUISITION

- Consider opportunities to acquire land or structures for community facility use
- Consider connections to facilities when reviewing developments



PARTNERSHIPS

- Maintain and improve partnerships with Parkland School District
- Increase community outreach and volunteer opportunities throughout the Township

Implementation

- **Develop mechanisms to periodically evaluate current and future needs of South Whitehall Township**
- **Utilize independent third parties to evaluate fire and EMS service areas**
- **Provide annual updates to the Township's annex of the Lehigh Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan**
- **Incorporate information from the Lehigh Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan into the Township's Emergency Operations Plan**
- **Work with Parkland School District to ensure efficient operations and maintenance of community facilities**
- **Utilize the Official Map to identify and prioritize community facility needs**



HOUSING



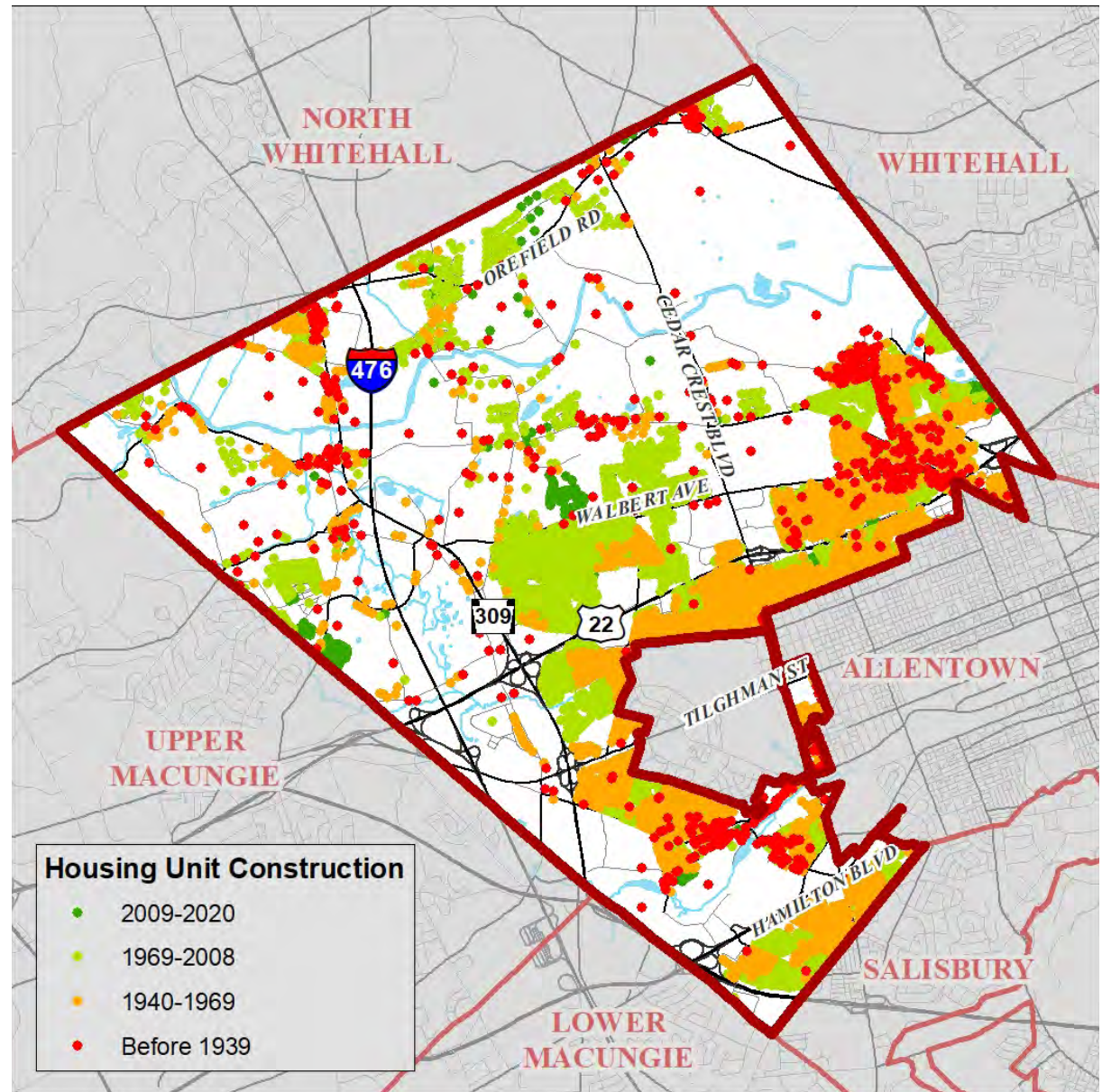
Housing

MPC: A plan to meet the housing needs of present residents and of those individuals and families anticipated to reside in the municipality, which may include conservation of presently sound housing, rehabilitation of housing in declining neighborhoods and the accommodation of expected new housing in different dwelling types and at appropriate densities for households of all income levels.

Introduction

Housing is an essential need for all residents and is an important element of South Whitehall. This chapter will review the current housing stock, types of housing choices available, costs and affordability, and what trends may influence the quality and availability of housing in the Township.

Approximately one third of the Township is currently residential and comprised of a variety of housing types and sizes. As one of the older suburban municipalities in the region, South Whitehall has seen immense residential development over the past century and housing continues to be a dominant type of land use in the Township.



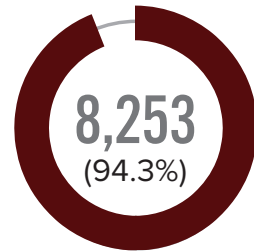
Housing Supply

TOTAL HOUSING UNITS:

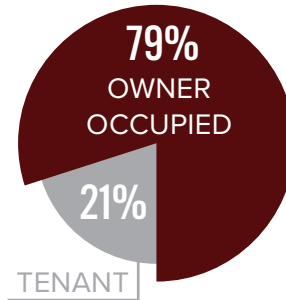
8,753

VACANCY RATE

5.7%



OCCUPIED UNITS



Inventory

South Whitehall has a strong housing stock with a relatively low vacancy rate. Most of the current housing is owner-occupied, single-family homes but changes in housing preferences and lack of developable land is slowly shifting to a mixed-use of housing types. The variety of building types and age allow for a continuous growth in population as neighborhoods begin to age out and residences turn over.

Development & Population



2000

in SWT

UNITS: 7,154
POPULATION: 18,028

in LEHIGH COUNTY

UNITS: 128,910
POPULATION: 12,090

2010

in SWT

UNITS: 8,180
POPULATION: 19,180

in LEHIGH COUNTY

UNITS: 142,613
POPULATION: 49,442

2020

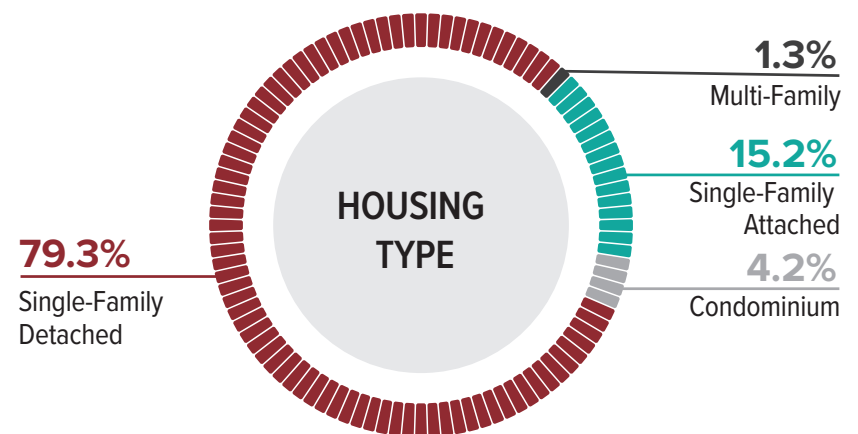
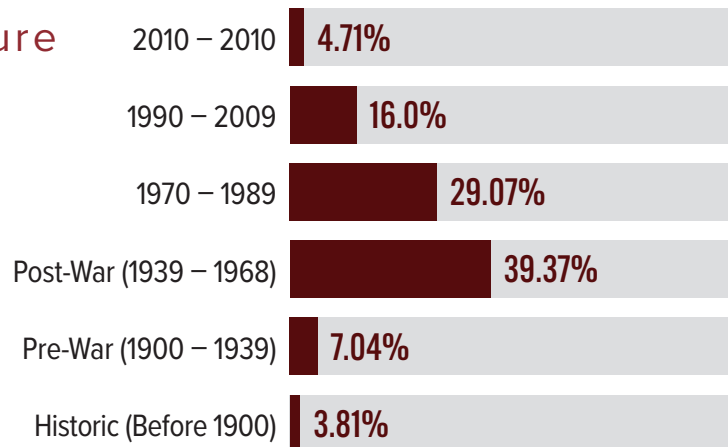
in SWT

UNITS: 8,753
POPULATION: 21,080

in LEHIGH COUNTY

UNITS: 149,830
POPULATION: 74,557

Structure Age



Housing Costs



\$245,900

MEDIAN HOME VALUE
(2020 ACS)

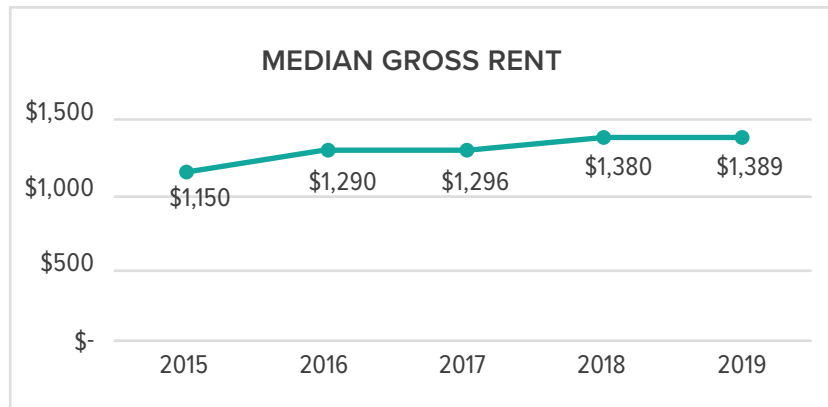
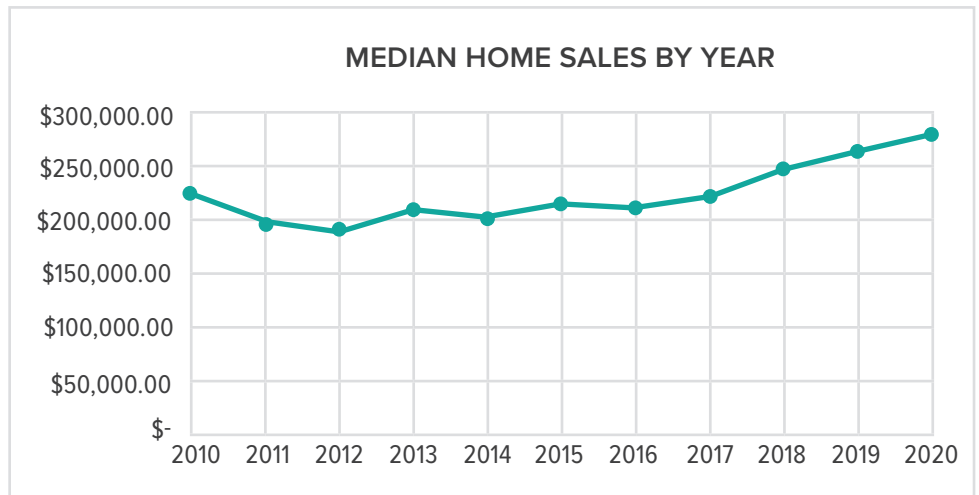
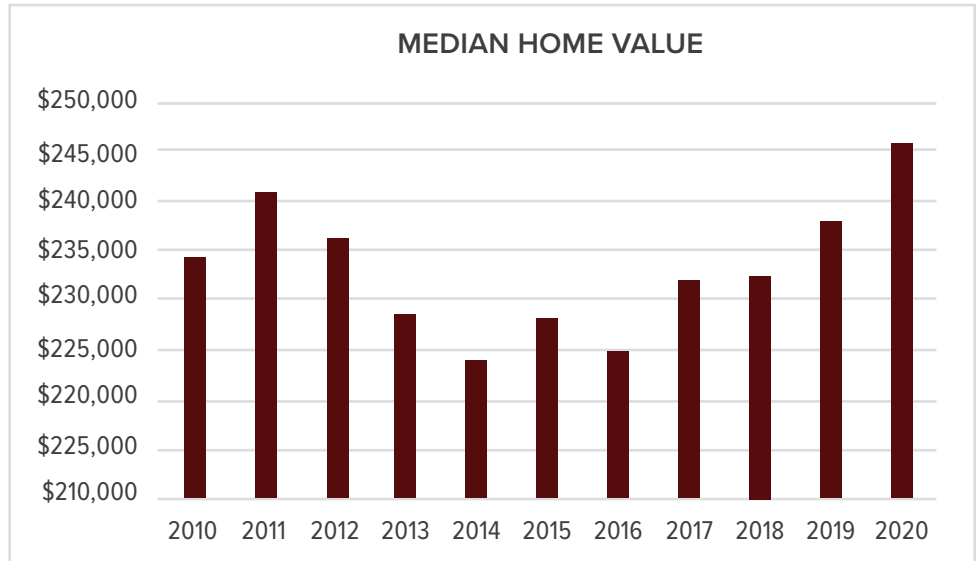


\$1,468

MEDIAN RENT
(2020 ACS)

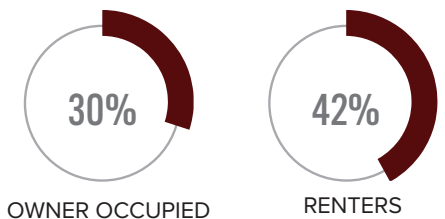
Attainability

Housing units are considered attainable when they are affordable to households that earn close to the Area Median Income (AMI). The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) reports that there are housing shortages in several income brackets across the Lehigh Valley, resulting in lower-income households spending more than they can afford because of limited housing in their price range. With a shortage of housing units for incomes of \$100,000/year or more, these higher-income households are forced to buy down, reducing the housing stock for mid- and lower-price ranges.



Cost-Burdened

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development describes those who pay more than 30% of their income on housing as “cost burdened”.



COST-BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS



Housing Goals & Strategies



GOAL

Maintain and strengthen the identity of the Township neighborhoods. Provide a variety of housing and neighborhood choices that meet the needs of all generations with consideration of family sizes, abilities, and income levels.

STRATEGY

Replicate successes of established Township neighborhoods in terms of design, character, and connectivity, especially with new developments

STRATEGY

New development should provide housing types that build upon housing choice and affordability of the Township

STRATEGY

Encourage densities and scale where capacity and impacts can be absorbed to the greatest extent

STRATEGY

Incentivize innovative housing strategies that respond to market demands

Implementation

- **Allow density credits to be applied to adaptive reuse of non-residential buildings within existing planning areas or corridors**
- **Strengthen Cluster Incentives**
- **Affordable Housing Incentives**
- **Review and amend zoning ordinance to ensure all types of housing are provided to meet the needs of current and future residents**
- **Transfer of Development Rights**
- **Planning for walkable/bikeable communities with a focus on origins and destinations**
- **Develop planning area-based design guidelines**



TRANSPORTATION



Transportation

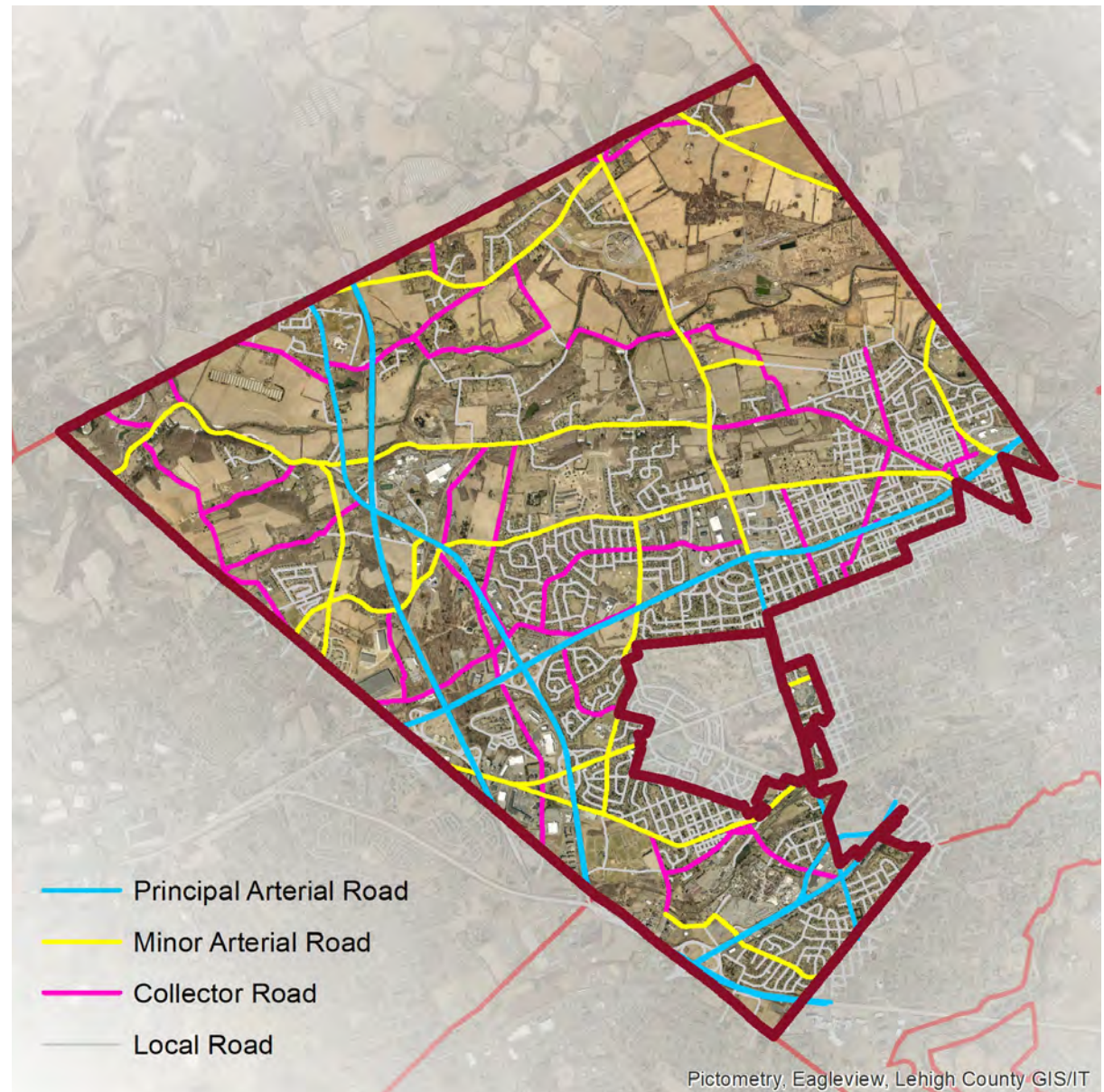
MPC: A plan for movement of people and goods, which may include expressways, highways, local street systems, parking facilities, pedestrian and bikeway systems, public transit routes, terminals, airfields, port facilities, railroad facilities and other similar facilities or uses.

Introduction

Transportation circulation is one of the more complicated elements of community development as it impacts every previous element on a regular basis. The transportation infrastructure in South Whitehall is primarily focused around single-use cars and trucks due to its historically suburban development and preferred mode of transportation in the Lehigh Valley. This chapter will discuss the impacts of transportation on traffic and where other modes of transportation fit in the planning of South Whitehall.

The map identifies major road systems in the Township, displayed by a functional classification system:

- Principal Arterial Roads
- Minor Arterial Roads
- Collector Roads
- Local Roads



The U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) provides functional classification concepts for all roads in the U.S. The broad definitions of roads seen in South Whitehall are described as:

Arterials: Designed to link metropolitan areas and provide a high degree of mobility through urban, suburban, and even rural areas.
Ex. Cedar Crest Boulevard

Interstates: Highest classification of Arterials, typically with limited access and designed with long-distance travel in mind.
Ex. Interstate 78 or Interstate 476 Northeast Extension

Collectors: Designed to gather traffic from Local Roads to funnel volume towards larger arterials. *Ex. Huckleberry Road*

Local Roads: Typically provides the lowest level of mobility and designed to provide access between adjacent land uses and to collector roads within a short distance. *Ex. North 40th Street*

Traffic

Traffic volume and congestion is a reoccurring issue in any municipality, including South Whitehall. Impacts to increased traffic volume could derive from the type of land use or development, design of a roadway, or lack of appropriate transportation infrastructure. In many cases it can be a combination of all these elements, making solutions to mitigate traffic issues complex and expensive.

Responsibility and maintenance for transportation infrastructure in South Whitehall is split between the Township and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) for all state-owned roadways and infrastructure. As a toll road, Interstate 476 is owned and operated by the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission.

Traffic control and safety enhancement can best be accomplished through integrated planning and modeling of transportation infrastructure and surrounding land use.



TRAFFIC CALMING

A combination of measures that reduce the negative effects of motor vehicle use, alter driver behavior, and improve conditions for non-motorized street users. Traffic calming consists of physical design and other measures put in place on existing roads to reduce vehicle speeds and improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

Multimodal

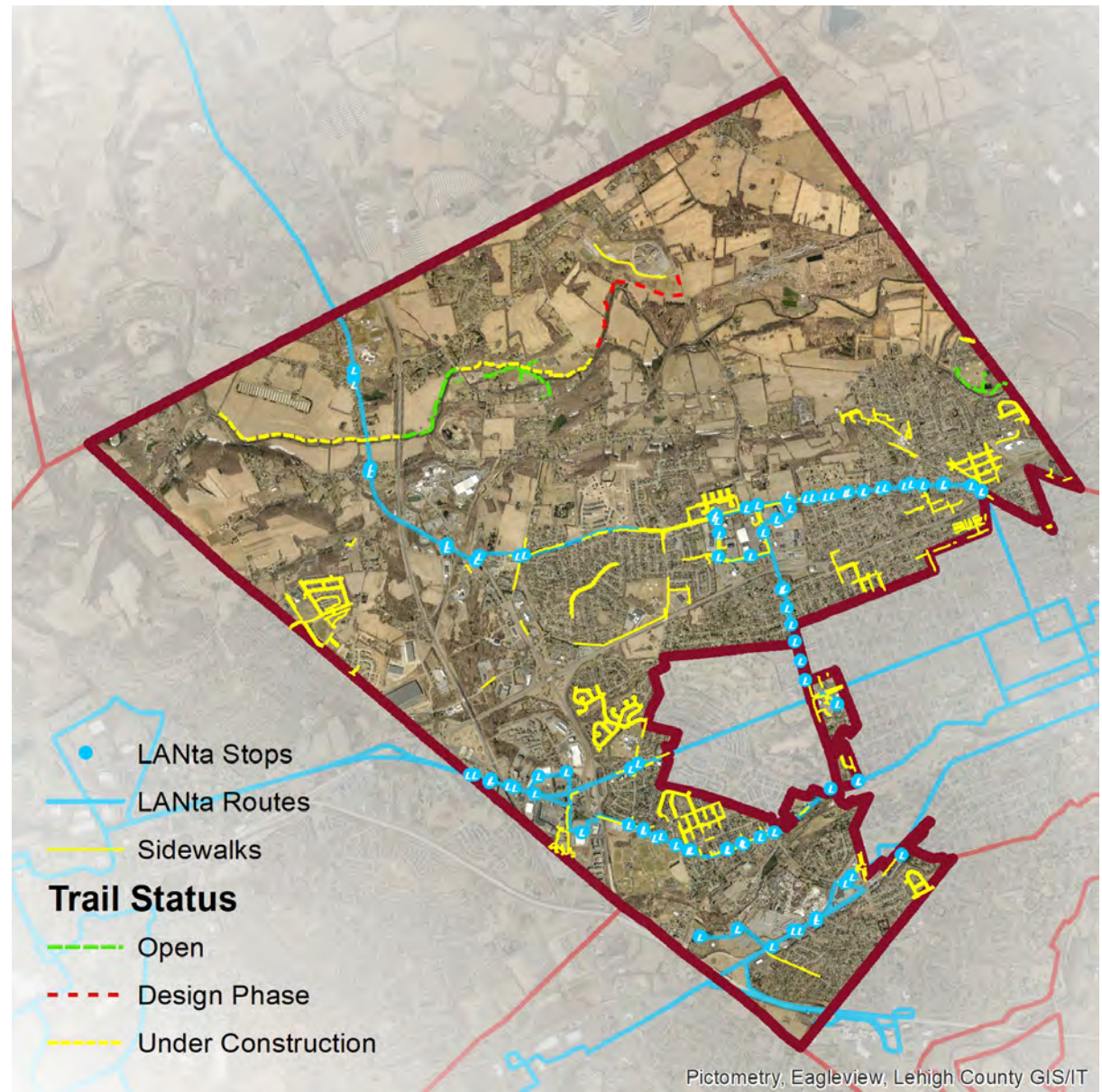
Multimodal transportation planning considers a variety of transportation choices including pedestrian, bicycling, and transit. These networks provide access to jobs, education, health care, and other essential services and can contribute to a community's quality of life and safer and more equitable transportation systems.

A successful multimodal transportation network works efficiently when mixing modes of transportation allowing safe, universal access to important nodes in the system such as home, work, and shopping. The Lehigh and Northampton Transportation Authority (LANTA) provides bus and transit services throughout South Whitehall and the Lehigh Valley. Coordination with LANTA is key to providing productive multimodal system.

More reliable transportation choices and safer access to multimodal infrastructure creates a more walkable community and can alleviate traffic congestion on our local roads.

WALKABILITY

Walkability refers to the ability to safely walk to amenities within a reasonable distance, usually defined as a walk of 30 minutes or less.



Transportation Funding

The most challenging aspect of transportation planning, as with many topics, is funding for infrastructure. Transportation infrastructure under the Township's responsibility is funded directly by the Township, through improvements required as part of the land development process, or with state or federal government funding.

Regional transportation planning is led by the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC)/ Lehigh Valley Transportation Study (LVTS). LVPC helps to develop the regional transportation goals and LVTS is the policy board who operates as the federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Lehigh Valley. The role of an MPO is to carry out policy consistent with the region's transportation goals and helps distribute state and federal transportation funding through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Funding for specific categories of transportation infrastructure (transit, bicycle/pedestrian, etc.) is sometimes available through federal and state grants.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)

The TIP is the active list of regionally-significant surface transportation projects eligible for state and federal transportation funding. This list covers a period of at least four years and is periodically reviewed and updated with new priorities. The TIP is the mechanism by which state and federal transportation funds can be allocated to local projects.



ACT 209

Legislative Act 209 of 1990 amended the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) to enable municipalities the ability to enact impact fee ordinances to cover the cost of off-site road improvements necessitated by new land development.



Transportation Goals & Strategies



GOAL

Facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods



GOAL

Encourage and promote multimodal (walk, bike, transit) transportation choices

STRATEGY

Inventory and assess current and future transportation impacts

STRATEGY

Develop programs and policies to address current and future transportation impacts

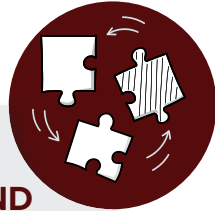
STRATEGY

Position the Township to leverage transportation funding and partners

STRATEGY

Assess and incorporate safety measures to benefit all modes of transportation

Traffic Strategies



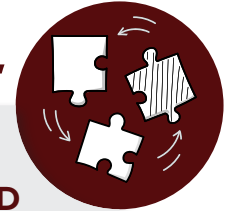
INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT

- Directional Routes (North-South, East-West)
- Road Classifications
- High Crash Areas
- Historic/Scenic Roads



POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

- Act 209 Traffic Impact Fees
- Functional Classification Map
- Official Map
- SALDO/Zoning
 - Traffic Calming Policy



FUNDING AND PARTNERSHIPS

- LVPC/LVTS
- PennDOT
- Adjacent Municipalities
- Citizens/Project Advocates

Multimodal Strategies



INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT

- Accessibility
- Bike/Ped Connectivity
- Sidewalks/Crosswalks
- Connectivity/Walkability
- Park & Ride Centers
- Transit Infrastructure
- Jobs/Commuter Sheds



POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

- Accessibility Policy
- Act 209 Traffic Impact Fees
- Official Map
- SALDO/Zoning
- Design Standards



FUNDING AND PARTNERSHIPS

- LVPC/LVTS
- PennDOT
- Adjacent Municipalities
- Citizens/Project Advocates
- LANTA
- Regional Trail Groups

Implementation

- **Transportation and Traffic Control Plan**
- **Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plan (including safe routes to school and parks)**
- **Evaluate an Act 209 Transportation Impact Fee**
- **Identify Transportation Safety Enhancements (vehicular and pedestrian)**
- **Identify transportation improvements/priorities in the Official Map**
- **Create and utilize a Capital Improvements Plan**
- **Develop design standards as part of the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO)**
- **Adopt a Traffic Calming Policy**
- **Continue to be involved with regional trail planning and connectivity efforts**



An aerial photograph of a residential neighborhood. The houses are mostly two-story structures with dark roofs, arranged in a somewhat circular or winding pattern around a central area. There are several roads, some of which are paved and have cars parked or driving. The surrounding area is a mix of green grass and bare trees, suggesting a late autumn or winter setting. A large red circle is partially visible on the left side of the image, overlapping the text.

LAND USE

Land Use

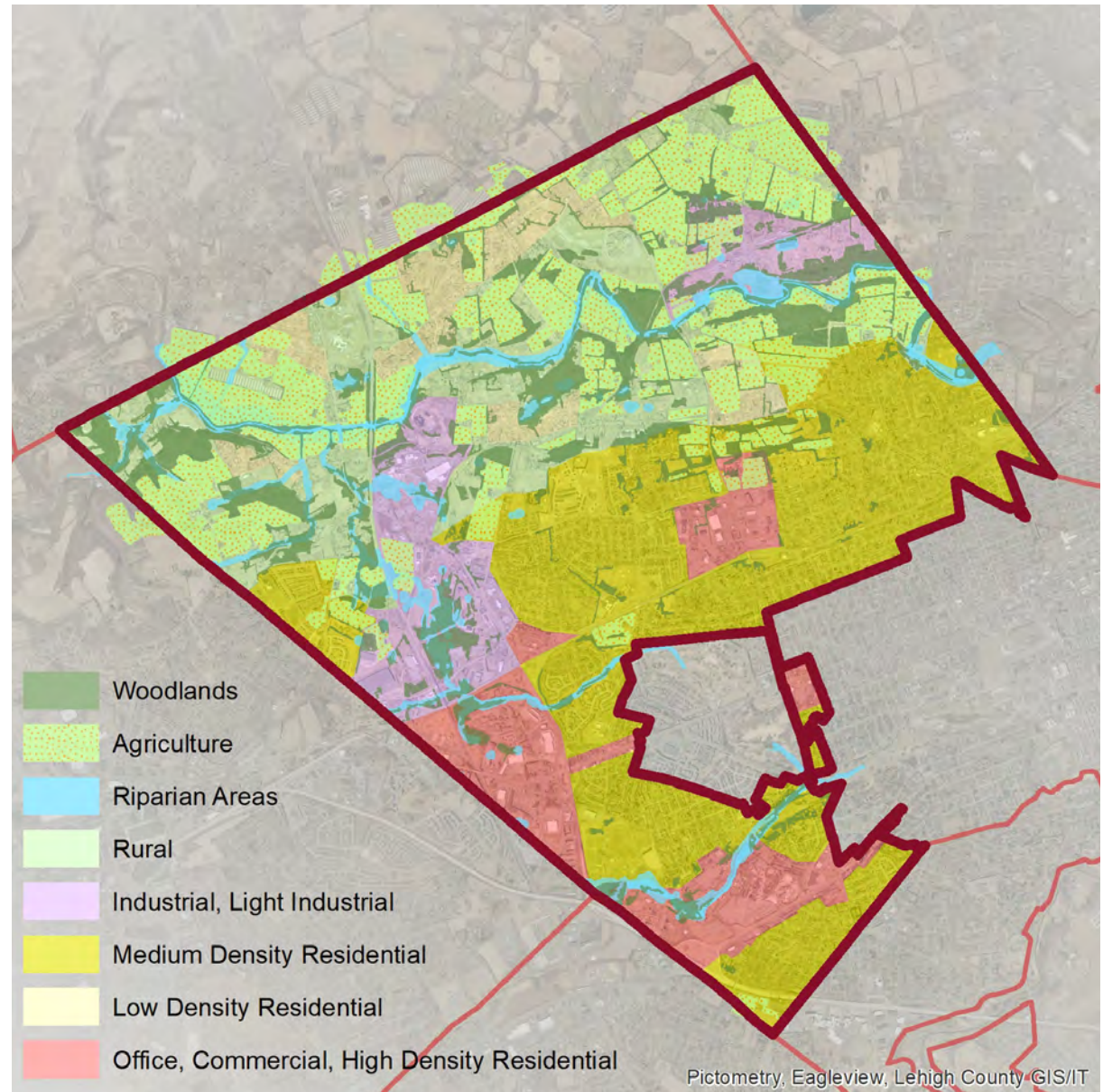
MPC: A plan for land use, which may include provisions for the amount, intensity, character, and timing of land use proposed for residence, industry, business, agriculture, major traffic and transit facilities, utilities, community facilities, public grounds, parks and recreation, preservation of prime agricultural lands, flood plains and other areas of special hazards and other similar uses.

Introduction

In Pennsylvania, the use of land is regulated on a local level by the governing municipality under the guidance of Act 247 the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC). The MPC enables and empowers local government to plan how and where development should occur and the intensity at which land should be used or developed.

Land use has a profound impact on how a community grows and prospers, making this one of the most important aspects of the comprehensive planning process. All the prior elements of this plan impact how land should be used in the Township, including the presence of resources, possible expansion of utilities, facility service areas, housing needs, and the transportation network.

The map to the right provides a general overview of how land is currently used in South Whitehall.



Land Use Plan

The purpose of the Land Use Plan is to provide a high-level overview of how and where land should be preserved, developed, or changed within South Whitehall. This Plan helps to lay out general locations for agricultural, residential, commercial, and industrial uses. It is also important to identify where natural, cultural, and historical resources are present in order to be preserved.

While the Land Use Plan is meant to guide how land is developed, it does not regulate the use of land. Land use and development is regulated locally by the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO) and Zoning Ordinance. The Land Use Plan should influence these regulatory processes and provide a general framework of how the Township should grow over the next 10-15 years. The Land Use Plan is considered a guiding document and does not constitute on the ground change but should provide the rational for any changes made to zoning or other regulatory decisions.

Place Types

Place Types are a newer concept used to help identify the overall character of a place in the community. These describe more of the intent of design rather than the requirements for development. Place Types can be used to establish the vision for an area and help shape the purpose of future regulatory decisions.

Zoning

Zoning is the division of a municipality into different districts (or zones) in which certain activities are permitted or prohibited. Zoning is a legal tool used to regulate or restrict the use of land in a specific locality. Zoning defines the rules and regulations of what can be built and how. Examples of zoning regulations including parking requirements, setback requirements, and building height restrictions.

Proposed Planning Flow





Land Use Goals & Strategies



GOAL

Provide a variety of land uses that can be supported by necessary infrastructure, preserve critical resources, and uphold the existing character of South Whitehall.

STRATEGY

Utilize the land use plan to provide opportunities for growth while preserving the framework of existing neighborhoods.

STRATEGY

Utilize the concept of Place Types to promote desired types of development and establish smooth transitions between land uses where appropriate.

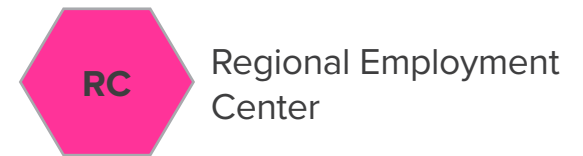
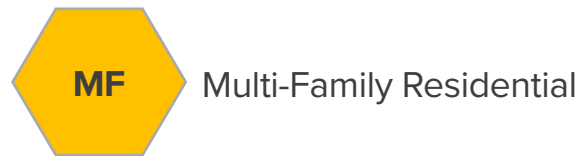
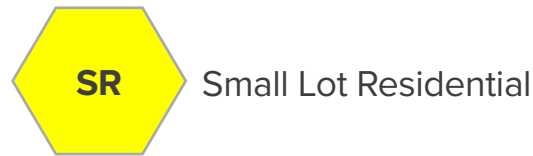
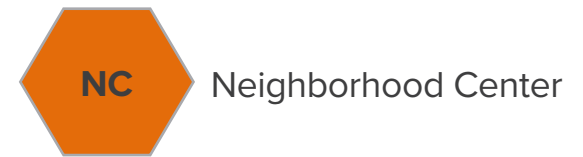
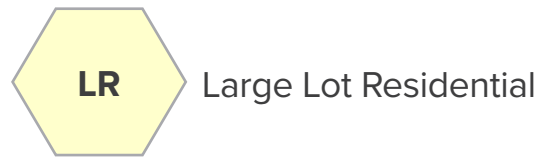
STRATEGY

Utilize the land use plan to inform updates to SALDO, Zoning Ordinance, and other regulatory documents to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Land Use Plan

Place Types

Place Types are a concept introduced in the Land Use Plan to help bridge the gap between general land use and zoning, with the goal of creating unique and desirable places to live, work, and play in South Whitehall Township. Place Types can be used to better describe the desired characteristics of future land uses and help create a common understanding of what types of development should be encouraged in each land use category. Twelve (12) distinct Place Types are proposed in the Land Use Plan, each intended to improve the quality of places in South Whitehall.



Place Types



Open Space

Open Spaces are areas left undeveloped for preservation purposes or specific low-impact uses that contribute to the surrounding environment. These areas pay special attention to natural, cultural, or recreational resources and may be preserved through a variety of ways by local, state, or nonprofit organizations. Land may be preserved on account of its outstanding natural beauty, contribution to surrounding landscapes, and/or for environmental and wildlife management purposes. Some of these areas may also be used for active and/or passive recreation.

Davis-Smith Preserved Open Space



EXAMPLE

Davis-Smith Preserved Open Space

This tract of land located next to Springhouse Road and State Route 22 was donated to South Whitehall Township as protected agricultural land and open space.

Place Types



Agriculture

This place type highlights land and development centered around agriculture including active, working farms and the infrastructure needed to support farming. These places can also feature more modern forms of agriculture including community supported agriculture (CSA), farm-to-table eateries, and small-scale farmettes or “hobby farms”. Agritainment is also a popular form of agricultural business, which features farm-related tourism/entertainment activities such as hayrides or pick your own produce. The preservation of agricultural lands is encouraged in this place type.

Eight Oaks Farm in Lynn Township



EXAMPLE

Eight Oaks Farm

This veteran-owned, family-run farm in Lynn Township is an example of a multifaceted business centered around agriculture. The farm grows grains for small batch spirits distilled onsite and sold locally. The distillery is open for scheduled tours and special events while the kitchen serves locally-sourced farm to table food, craft cocktails, and locally-sourced beer and wine.

Place Types



Rural

This place type accentuates the rural lifestyle seen in the northern part of the Township. Residential buildings are generally oriented towards roads with direct driveway access. Commercial areas highlight small nodes of activity along roadways that are reflective of the region's rural character and culture. These places include small-scale businesses that are important to the daily needs of the surrounding population such as gas stations, convenience stores, and eateries. This place type pays special attention to preserving the function and character of crossroad villages for commercial and social uses.

Village of Guthsville



EXAMPLE

Guthsville

Located at the intersections of Huckleberry, Village, and Blue Barn Roads, this crossroad village is one of the oldest settlements in the Township and was once the location of a general store, hotel, post office, and the South Whitehall Township Municipal Building.

Place Types



Conservation Subdivision

Conservation Subdivisions represent a development strategy that reflects the broader environmental and social goals of a community by developing the same amount of building as a conventional subdivision but doing so in a manner that conserves large areas of the landscape for natural/historic resource protection, open space, agriculture, or scenic views. Open spaces may be preserved in a variety of techniques including deed restrictions, easements, or direct ownership by government or nonprofit entities. Conservation subdivisions are not limited to residential developments and should be encouraged for other land use types such as commercial or industrial uses when appropriate. Currently, there are not any examples of conservation subdivisions in South Whitehall Township.

Serenbe Conservation Development



EXAMPLE

Serenbe (Fulton County, Georgia)

This development located outside of Atlanta, Georgia was designed around the concept of prioritizing nature and wellbeing. Small hamlets are clustered to promote walkability and community, while agriculture and woodlands provide fresh food, wellness, and tranquility. This development has received national recognition and multiple awards for its innovation.

Place Types



Conservation Subdivision Example

Below is an example of an 85-acre site developed under traditional zoning vs a conservation subdivision design. The image on the left depicts 34 house lots with a minimum of 80,000 square feet per lot (just under 2-acres). This traditional-style development utilizes approximately 70 acres of the 85-acre lot. The image on the right depicts the same parcel with the same yield of 34 house lots, but the average lot size being 36,000 square feet and clustered together away from existing natural resources such as woodlands and stream corridors. This conservation-style development yields the same amount of house lots, while preserving almost two thirds of the site as connected open space with trails and public greens.

Credit: Randall Arendt, Growing Greener: Putting Conservation into Local Plans and Codes

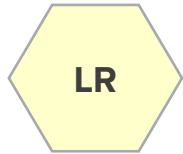
River Valley Option 1



River Valley Option 2



Place Types



Large Lot Residential

Large lot residential neighborhoods are generally formed as subdivisions and consist almost entirely of single-family detached homes. Buildings are oriented interior to the site and are typically buffered from surrounding development by transitional uses, topography, or vegetative areas. These developments have limited access to municipal utility service, causing lot sizes to be a minimum of 1 acre in order to allow for on-site septic systems. Density is relatively low in these developments.

Pheasant Hills Estates Development



EXAMPLE

Pheasant Hills Estates

This residential development in the northern part of the Township has access to public water, but not public sewer. Lot sizes range from 1 acre to 2.5 acres to allow for on-site septic. Houses are spaced further apart from each other and typically located in the center of the lot.

Place Types



Small Lot Residential

Small lot residential neighborhoods are generally formed as subdivisions with a relatively uniform housing types and densities. They are found in areas with access to public water and sewer, allowing for more density and smaller lot sizes. Lot sizes are typically less than 1 acre but may vary in size and proximity.

Cedar Creek Farms Development



EXAMPLE

Cedar Creek Farms

This residential development is a good example of a compact, smaller lot, walkable neighborhood with access to utilities.

Place Types



Multi-Family Residential

This place type features multi-unit housing options with a small footprint that are blended into the surrounding neighborhood. These units are comprised of duplexes, triplexes, townhouses, or small apartments typically less than six units. This place type offers more affordable housing choices at different price points to meet the needs of future residents.

Multi-Unit Apartment in Greenawalds



EXAMPLE

Greenawalds

The Greenawalds neighborhood is one of the oldest residential neighborhoods in the Township. Several larger, older homes have been converted into multi-family units that are indistinguishable from the surrounding single-family homes, allowing for more housing options in an established neighborhood.

Place Types



Mixed Residential

Mixed residential neighborhoods are characterized by a variety of housing types and densities, integrated into a cohesive, well-connected community. Following the traditional model of American communities earlier in the 20th century, these neighborhoods are designed to offer a wide range of housing choices and lifestyle options.

The Vistas at Green Hills



EXAMPLE

The Vistas

This development features a variety of living options including both townhouses and twin homes in the same community.

Place Types



Neighborhood Center

This place type highlights the integration of residential development and locally serving areas of economic, entertainment, and community activities. These areas should be pedestrian-oriented and compliment the design of the surrounding residential neighborhoods. These areas serve as the “Main Streets” for individual neighborhoods and help to establish a sense of community character. Streetscaping, beautification, and design should be prioritized in these areas.

Walbert Avenue



EXAMPLE

Walbert Avenue

Walbert Avenue east of Cedar Crest Boulevard features a mix of residential, retail, and other commercial buildings. The intent of these commercial establishments are to help satisfy the daily shopping needs of local residents such as convenience stores and pharmacies. Other low-impact businesses like financial offices, salons, and massage therapy are also found here.

Place Types



Suburban Center

This place type is comprised of commercial or mixed-use areas that serve more regional needs than just the surrounding neighborhood. They are located along busier arterial roads and have more parking availability. Transit access is essential for daily users.

Crest Plaza

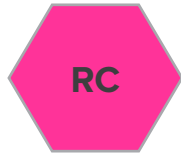


EXAMPLE

Crest Plaza

The commercial centers along Cedar Crest Boulevard are focal points for suburban shopping. Crest Plaza features a grocery store, department store, restaurants, and a pharmacy. There is ample parking and easy access to major roadways.

Place Types



Regional Employment Center

Regional Employment Centers draw people from throughout the region for employment activities including office buildings, large entertainment centers, and concentrated commercial activities like shopping malls. These areas are easily accessible from regional transportation networks with ample parking availability and excellent transit access. These centers should accommodate for both employee use and visitors.

Tilghman Square at Cetronia Road

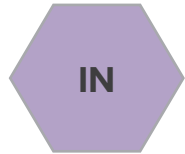


EXAMPLE

Tilghman Square

The area around Tilghman Square is a busy employment hub. Along Cetronia/Hausman Road there are multiple retail stores, eateries, office buildings, and a medical center. PPL Electric Utilities also operates a large utility support facility at the end of Hausman Road.

Place Types



Industrial

These are areas that support the manufacturing and/or distribution of goods and materials or can also include large-scale research and development. “Heavy Industry” typically includes large-scale manufacturing that creates more impacts to the surrounding land uses, therefore requiring more buffering. “Light Industry” typically includes warehousing or small-scale manufacturing that can be developed on a smaller footprint.

Geo Specialty Chemicals (Photo Credit: The Morning Call)



EXAMPLE

Geo Specialty Chemicals

Geo is a chemical manufacturing company that operates on almost 100 acres in the northeast part of the Township. This business is a good example of “heavy industry” that uses a lot of resources and is buffered from other land uses.

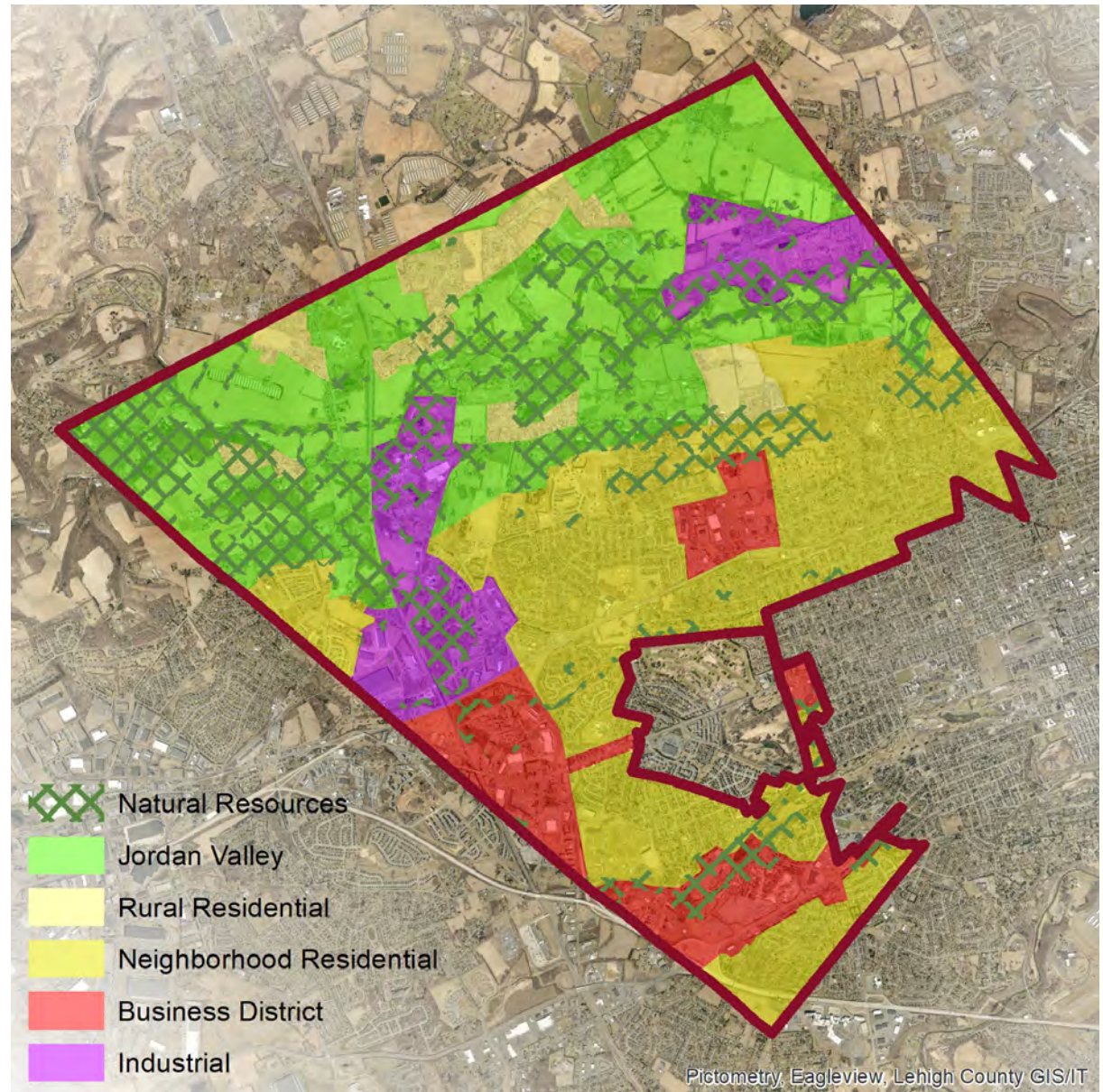
Future Land Use

The Future Land Use Plan identifies areas for growth, preservation, and change in South Whitehall Township. The land use types identified vary in intensity of development and have been created to accommodate the needs of current and future residents. The map to the right displays how the five major land use types are integrated and spread across South Whitehall.

These land uses are designed to be general and flexible in nature to influence development patterns, but still accommodate changes where necessary. Each land use type has specific goals and place types that are suitable to that use.

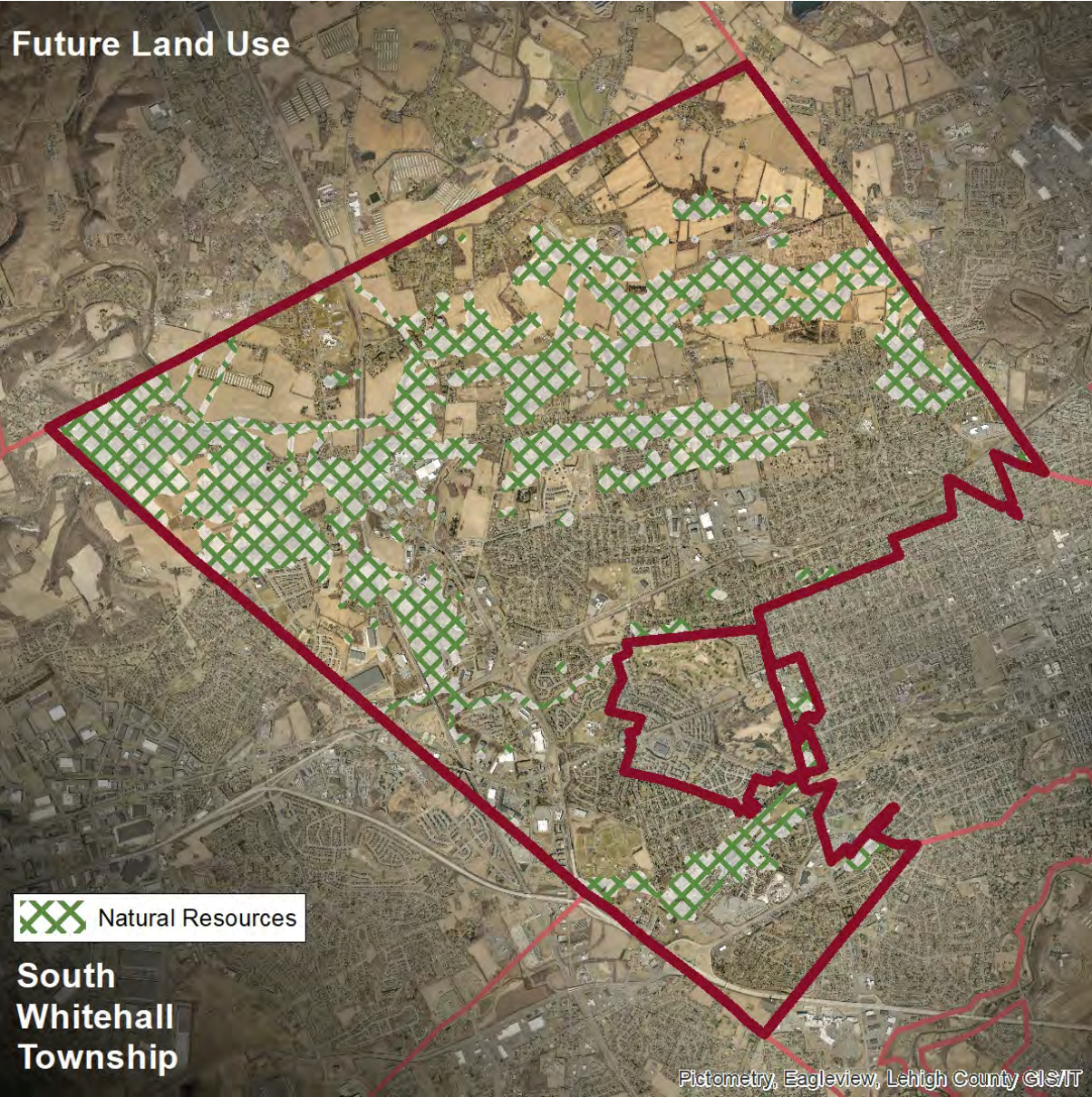
LAND USE TYPES

- Jordan Valley
- Rural Residential
- Neighborhood Residential
- Business District
- Industrial



Natural Areas

Natural areas are comprised of woodlands, riparian areas, and steep slopes. These areas are designated with an overlay and should be priority for preservation when possible. Protection of these areas can occur through resource protection ordinances, discussed in the implementation plan. In some cases, development can be supported in these areas but may require site-level analysis.



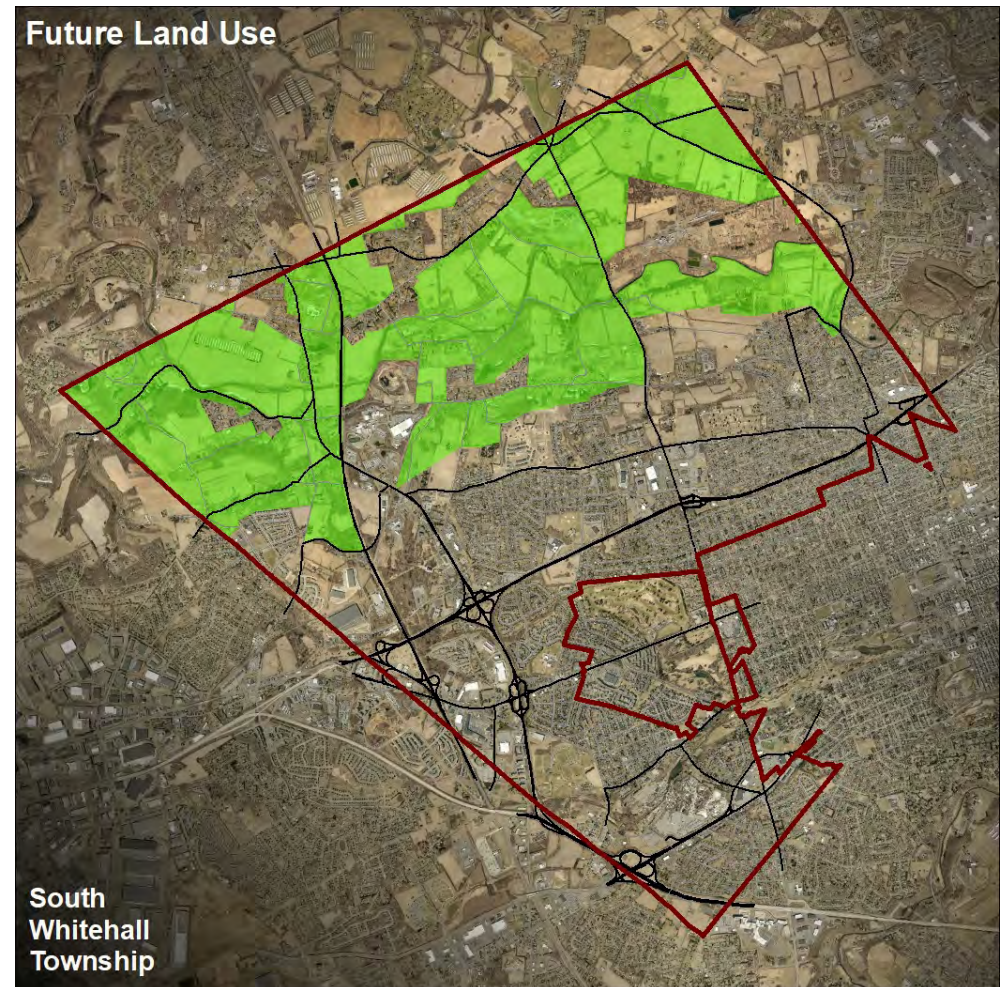
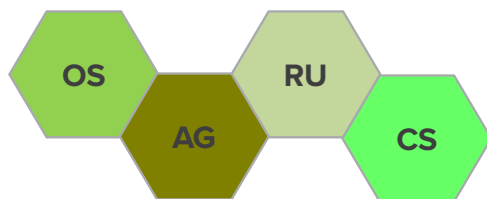
Jordan Valley

The South Whitehall Township portion of the Jordan Creek Watershed is a distinctive landscape when compared to other areas of the Watershed. Most of the upstream areas in Lowhill and North Whitehall Townships are defined by steep ravines and challenging topography. As the Jordan Creek enters South Whitehall, the topography transitions from steep slope areas to a more defined valley. Downstream, denser development patterns surround the Creek as it enters Whitehall and the City of Allentown.

This valley, the Jordan Valley, is a unique area that residents consider a special landscape, contributing to the Township's rural identity and enhancing residents' quality of life. With limited access to public water and public sewer, a large portion of Jordan Valley has remained undeveloped. Most of the Township's agricultural, historical, and natural resources are found in the Jordan Valley.

Goals

- Preserve the rural and historic character of the Jordan Valley through the following:
 - Preserve natural resources and important landscapes through incentives and cooperation with landowners
 - Enhance crossroad villages with attention to the surrounding landscape
 - Encourage the continuation of active agriculture by allowing uses consistent with operations of working farms
 - Incentivize the utilization of Conservation Subdivisions for future land developments

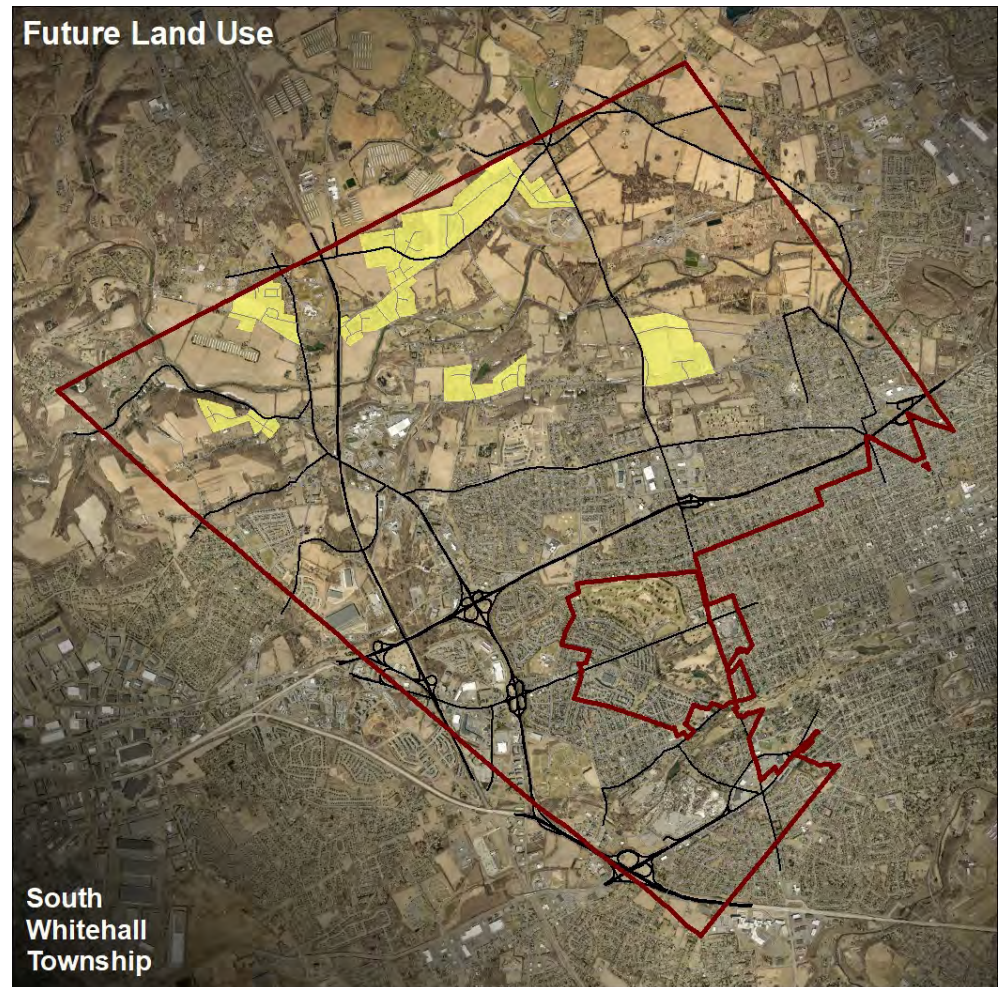
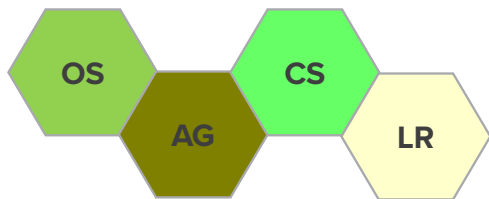


Rural Residential

These areas are located within the Jordan Valley where access to utilities is sparse. While the water utility services much of these areas, sewer disposal is required to be on-lot individual septic. Therefore, the rural residential areas of the Township are identified as residential subdivisions that have lot sizes greater than one acre. Large lots adjacent to these areas have been identified as Rural Residential primarily due to the presence of stub streets and or close proximity to existing infrastructure, making future development of these parcels more feasible. Development in these areas is in the form of Large Lot Residential.

Goals

- Preserve natural resources and important landscapes through incentives and cooperation with landowners
- Encourage the continuation of active agriculture by allowing uses consistent with operations of working farms, including ancillary uses that promote agri-tourism
- Incentivize the utilization of Conservation Subdivisions for any future land development
- Encourage the continuation of existing development in a seamless manner to preserve and enhance neighborhood character

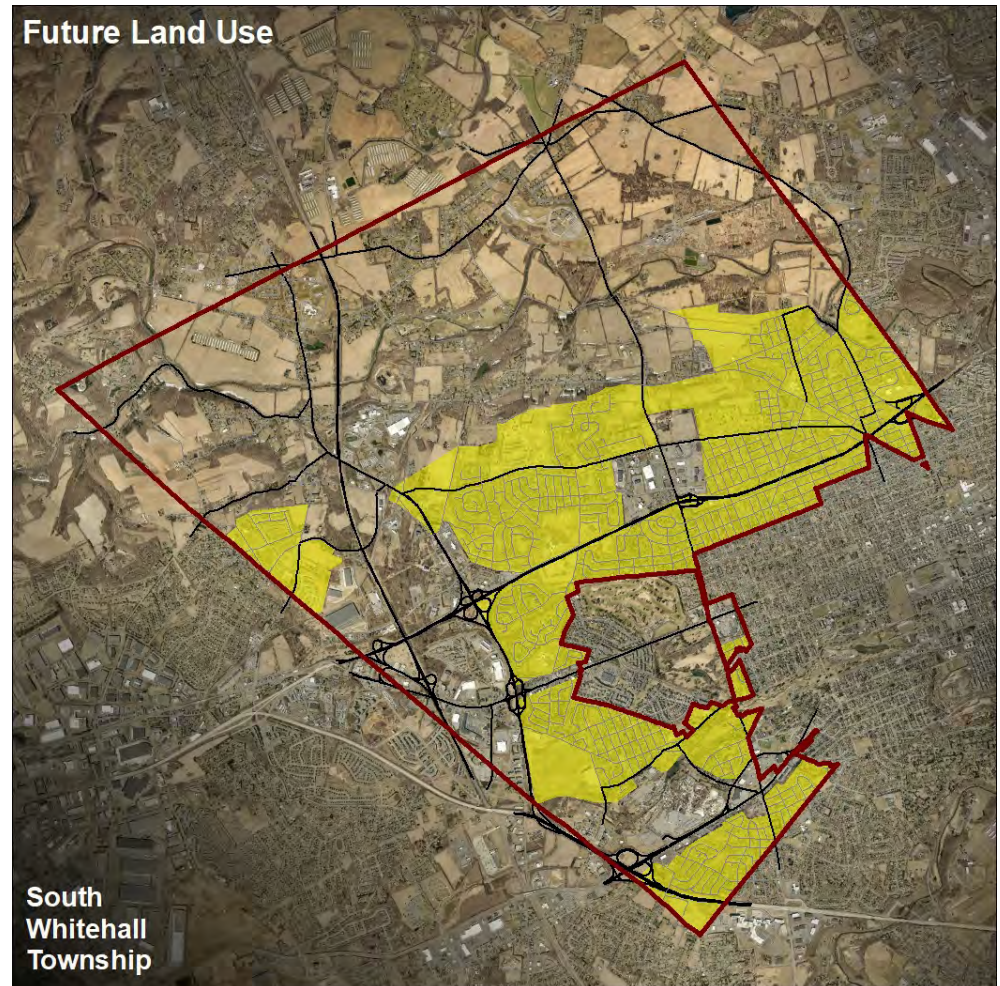


Neighborhood Residential

These areas are predominantly established neighborhoods, dominated by existing residential development typically on lots less than 1 acre and served by water and sewer. The overall area contains a variety of housing types and densities and is home to the largest proportion of the Township population. These areas also include pockets of locally serving commercial activity.

Goals

- Encourage housing types to address the needs of all income levels
- Support opportunities for local-serving small business development where appropriate
- Evaluate pedestrian safety and connectivity
- Encourage walkability within neighborhoods and to other land use types
- Consider traffic calming and congestion relief where possible
- Utilize streetscaping, facades, and beautification techniques to create sense of place and preserve community character

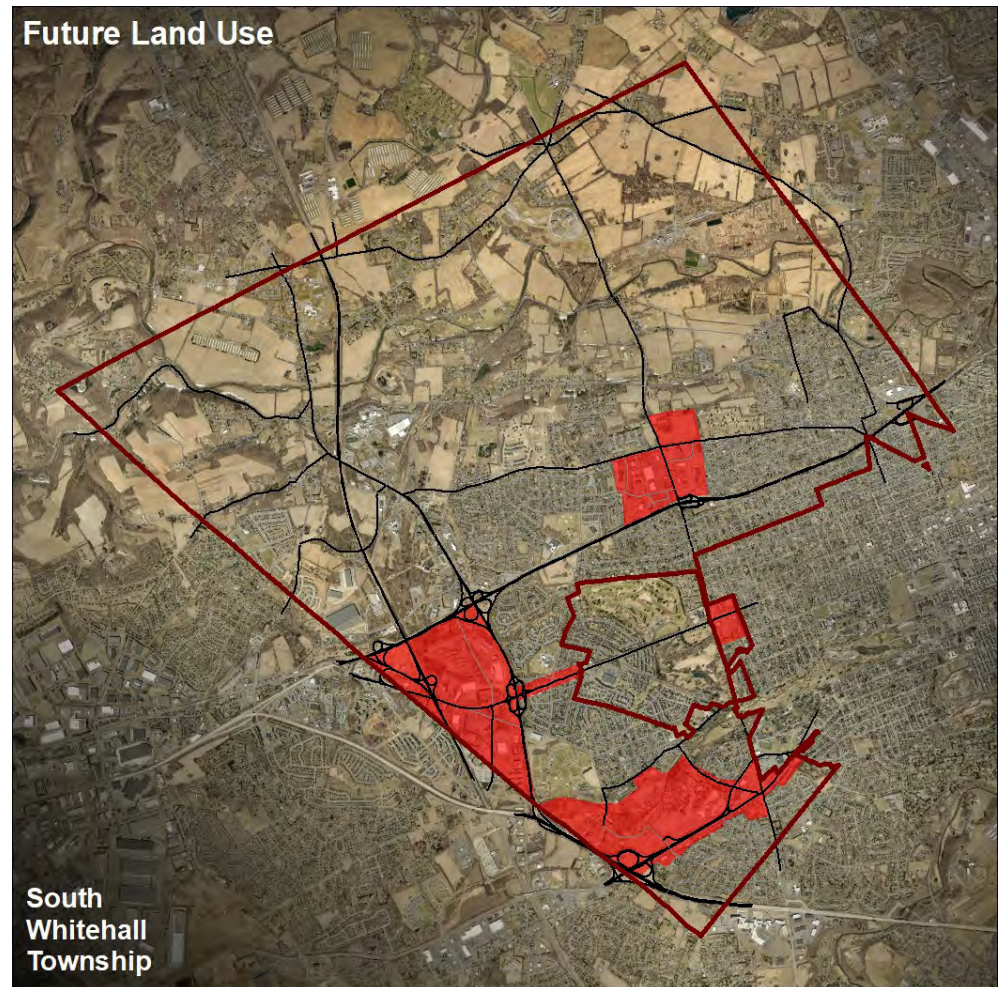
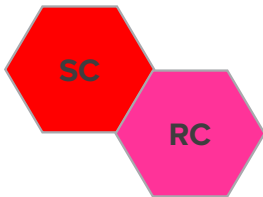


Business District

These areas represent regional employment centers and the hubs of economic activity for South Whitehall Township. These areas are primarily established developments that feature shopping centers, entertainment areas, and office buildings. The Business Districts typically have the greatest concentration of employees. These areas serve both a local and regional draw while supporting a mix of uses and place types.

Goals

- Incentivize infill and redevelopment
- Incorporate residential to create mixed-use developments
- Encourage local connectivity to surrounding land uses
- Encourage walkability and multiple modes of transportation
- Encourage regional connectivity through transit and multimodal infrastructure and circulation

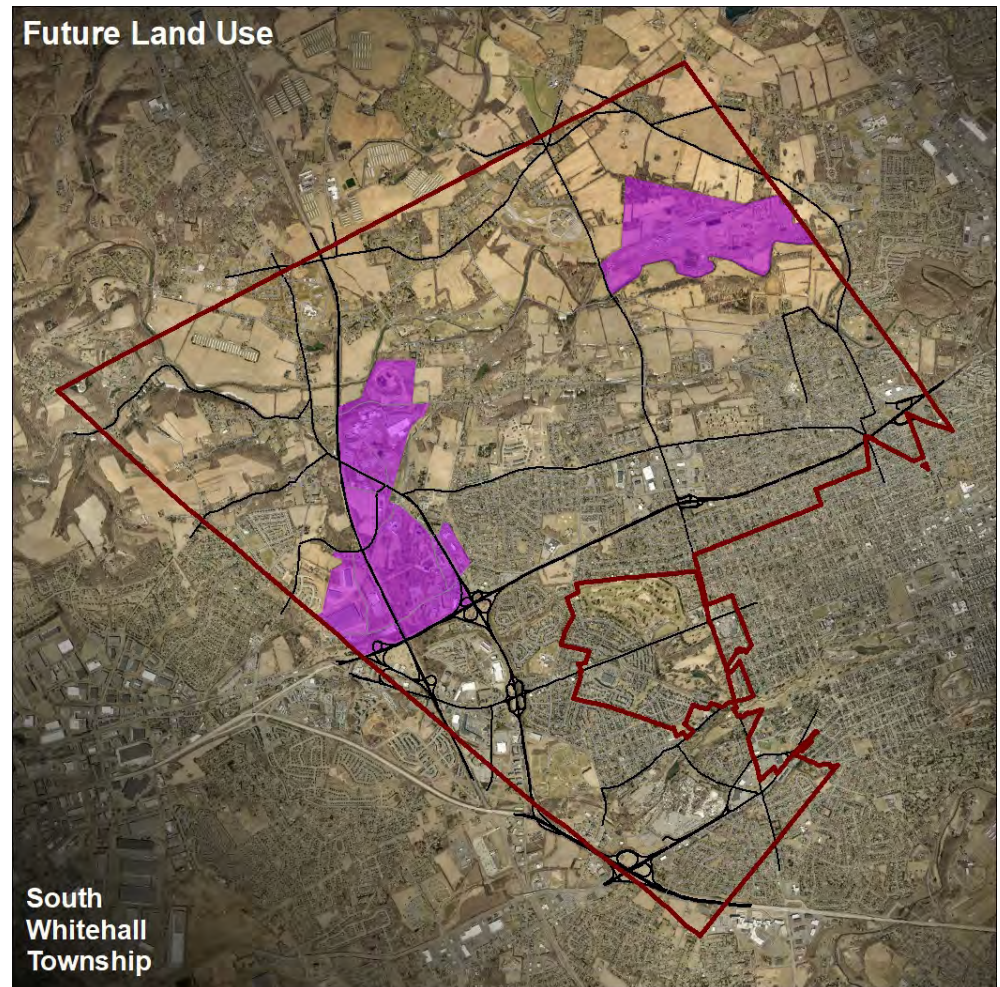
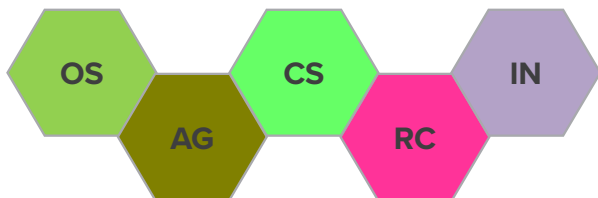


Industrial

These areas support the manufacturing and distribution of goods and materials. Intensity of development is dependent on the availability of utilities and connections to road infrastructure. These areas contain both heavy and light industrial uses. Heavy industry typically contributes more impacts. Light industrial uses typically have less noticeable impacts.

Goals

- Require buffers to be proportionate to the degree of impact and intensity of development
- Consider transit and multimodal connection to support industrial employees
- Coordinate development along transportation routes that can appropriately accommodate traffic impacts and require necessary transportation improvements





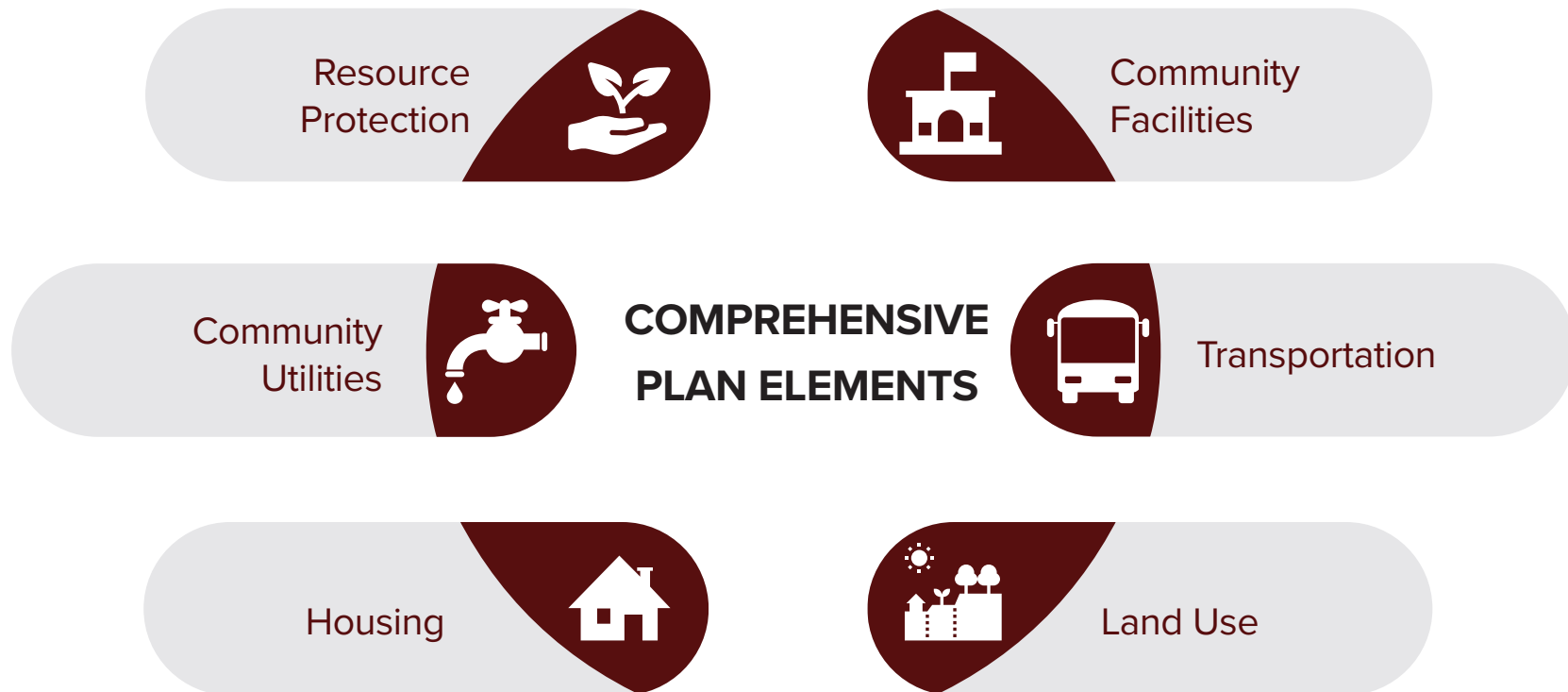


IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation Strategy

The Comprehensive Plan establishes a vision for South Whitehall Township and guides the future of how this community will be shaped, developed, and preserved. Each chapter in this plan highlights the most important elements of the Township and how these elements are intrinsically connected.

In order to bring the vision of the Comprehensive Plan to reality, the Township must identify a clear strategy for implementation. This chapter outlines the implementation strategy for South Whitehall and the resources necessary to take action on each implementation item. Each implementation item works towards achieving the goals of one or more of the following comprehensive plan elements:



Implementation Framework

EXAMPLE

A standardized Implementation Framework helps to outline all of the elements needed to implement the goals of this plan and consistently track results. This framework should be used to inform decision-makers of the steps, timing, resources, and partners necessary for each implementation item, while still allowing the flexibility to update and adjust pieces of the framework as needed. This framework is intended to be used as a guide to help develop a more detailed scope of work at the time of implementation.



KEY GOALS

The overarching result that each implementation item intends to accomplish.



KEY ACTIONS

List of specific steps necessary to achieve the key goals. Several actions may list sequential steps such as planning, assessment, and policy development. These actions are intended to be fluid and updated over time as steps are completed, priorities change, and resources become available.

PRIORITY

Lists the level of importance to pursue key actions:

- High
- Medium
- Low

TIMELINE

Identifies the targeted time periods to pursue key actions:

- Short-Term (1-2 years)
- Mid-Term (2-5 years)
- Long-Term (5-10 years)

	↓	↓	↓
PRIORITY	High	Medium	Low
TIMELINE	Short	Mid	Long
	↑	↑	↑



FUNDING SOURCES

List of possible funding sources that can be used to initiate the first key actions if necessary



KEY PARTNERS

List of necessary internal departments and possible outside agencies that can support key actions. Township Board of Commissioners and Administrative Staff will be involved in all actions.



MEASURE OF SUCCESS

The metrics used to track progress made towards achieving key goals

PLAN ELEMENTS

Elements highlighted in red are impacted by the proposed implementation item















































Implementation Action Plan

Implementation will be directed by the Board of Commissioners, Township Manager, and Director of Operations. Twenty six (26) implementation items have been developed from working group recommendations, public input, and staff review. The Implementation Summary on the following pages provides an overview of the 26 implementation items to assist the Township with long-range planning, budgeting, and tracking progress. Detail sheets provide an overview of the Implementation Framework for each item to help evaluate budgetary, resource, and personnel constraints.

















































All implementation items and priorities are just recommendations and will continually be reviewed by the Board of Commissioners and Administrative Staff. Implementation items have been broken out separately based on the importance and uniqueness of their goals, but many items can be combined into one action or plan.



Implementation

Implementation Item	Description	Plan Elements						Timeline	Priority
Active Transportation (A1)	Develop plan to provide safe/efficient bicycle and pedestrian connectivity							Short Term	High
Advisory Committee Evaluation (A2)	Evaluate roles/duties of boards, committees, and subcommittees							Short Term	High
Agricultural Preservation (A3)	Develop plan and programs to preserve agricultural lands and culture							Short Term	Medium
Broadband Infrastructure (B1)	Increase access to high-speed internet							Mid Term	Medium
Capital Improvements Plan (C1)	Integrate capital improvements budgeting and planning across departments							Short Term	High
Energy Conservation (E1)	Investigate energy reduction opportunities/policies							Long Term	Low
Hazard Mitigation (H1)	Coordinate hazard mitigation planning between Township and regional entities							Short Term	Medium
Historic Preservation (H2)	Develop plan to preserve historic assets and places							Short Term	Medium
Housing (H3)	Develop programs and policies to ensure current and future housing needs are met							Mid Term	Low
Infrastructure Evaluation (I1)	Evaluate municipal services and utilities for functionality and expansion							Short Term	High
Landscape Preservation (L1)	Develop plan and policies to preserve important cultural and historic landscapes							Mid Term	Medium
Open Space Preservation (O1)	Develop a plan, strategy, and process to preserve open space and natural areas							Short Term	Medium
Official Map Updates (O2)	Update the Official Map with new recommendations from the Comp Plan							Short Term	High

Summary

Implementation Item	Description	Plan Elements						Timeline	Priority
Park & Rec. Plan (P1)	Implement the priority goals of the P&R Plan							Long Term	Low
Public Safety Evaluation (P2)	Evaluate public safety needs of SWT (including outside 3rd party evaluation)							Short Term	High
Regional Coordination (R1)	Investigate regional/multi-municipal planning opportunities (transportation, watershed, etc.)							Mid Term	Medium
Reexamination Report (R2)	Establish timeline and mechanism to reexamine and reevaluate the Comp Plan							Short Term	Medium
Resource Protection Ordinances (R3)	Draft ordinances to protect specific resources (riparian areas, woodlands, steep slopes, etc.)							Long Term	Low
SALDO Updates (S1)	Update the SALDO based on Comp Plan recommendations (design standards)							Short Term	Medium
Sewer Plan (Act 537) (S2)	Update Township sewage facilities plan per DEP requirements							Short Term	High
Solid Waste (S3)	Evaluate SWT waste collection and recycling processes							Mid Term	Medium
Stormwater Plan (Act 167) (S4)	Develop a stormwater management plan							Mid Term	Medium
Transfer of Development Rights Program (T1)	Investigate the feasibility/applicability of a TDR program							Mid Term	Medium
Traffic Safety (T2)	Identify high crash and priority safety improvement areas							Short Term	High
Transportation Plan (T3)	Inventory critical transportation infrastructure, investigate Act 209 feasibility, update necessary transportation policies							Short Term	High
Zoning Updates (Z1)	Update zoning ordinance to be consistent with the Comp Plan							Short Term	High

Implementation

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION (A1)

Conduct a comprehensive review of bicycle, pedestrian, and transit modes of travel within the Township. Includes an evaluation of commuter and recreational origins and destinations in accordance with the following identified prioritized criteria: connectivity, enhanced walkability in the community, and ensuring safe routes to public and private facilities located within the Township.



KEY GOALS

Improve current pedestrian safety and connectivity throughout the Township



KEY ACTIONS

1. Develop a written Active Transportation Plan
 - Identify/evaluate bike/ped networks for connectivity/mobility
 - Identify/evaluate pedestrian intersections for safety improvements
 - Identify/evaluate safe routes to schools and parks
 - Identify/evaluate multimodal infrastructure
 - Identify/evaluate existing and future PennDOT projects
 - Coordinate with regional trail planning and connectivity efforts
 - Prioritize sidewalk deferral call-ins
2. Update SALDO with recommendations from Plan
 - Consider bike parking requirements

PRIORITY	High	Medium	Low
TIMELINE	Short	Mid	Long



FUNDING SOURCES

- PennDOT
- PA DCNR
- PA WalkWorks Program



KEY PARTNERS

- Community Development Dept.
- Public Works Dept.
- LANTA
- PennDOT
- Regional advocacy/trail groups



MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Adoption of plan
- Increased mileage of continuous bike/ped networks
- New policies adopted



Implementation

ADVISORY COMMITTEE EVALUATION (A2)

Inventory and evaluate roles and responsibilities of all advisory boards, committees, commissions, councils, and subcommittees, to reduce overlap of duties/responsibilities and make recommendations to streamline, if determined to be prudent and appropriate.



KEY GOALS

Evaluate all advisory boards, committees, commissions, councils, and subcommittees to prevent overlap of duties/responsibilities and to identify enhanced efficiency where applicable.



KEY ACTIONS

1. Review mission, goals, and by-laws of each sub-committee
2. Review recent sub-committee agendas and member attendance
3. Consider merging committees or revising duties where appropriate



FUNDING SOURCES

- N/A



KEY PARTNERS

- Board of Commissioners
- Administration Dept.
- Community Development Dept.
- Emergency Services Dept.
- Parks and Recreation Dept.



MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Completed evaluation
- Committees merged or duties revised (if applicable)

PRIORITY	High	Medium	Low
TIMELINE	Short	Mid	Long



Implementation

AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION (A3)

Inventory agricultural resources, including active farms and prime agriculture lands. Develop viable methods of preservation and evaluate long-term economic viability of agricultural preservation efforts. Preservation methods could include land preservation, agricultural zoning, agriculture business development, adaptive reuse or other methods to preserve agriculture within the Township.



KEY GOALS

Preserve agricultural lands and culture in the Township.



KEY ACTIONS

1. Develop a written plan or fact sheet outlining farmland preservation strategies
2. Revise Township ordinances to ensure they support the normal operations of agricultural users
3. Provide education and outreach materials to farming and non-farming residents about the importance of farming to the Township
4. Conduct targeted outreach to large landowners and farmers to discuss preservation options.
5. Update regulations in response to changes in agriculture
6. Enhance South Whitehall's Agricultural Security Area (ASA) program



FUNDING SOURCES

- Lehigh County Farmland Preservation Program
- USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)
- Penn State Extension



KEY PARTNERS

- Community Development Dept.
- Lehigh County Farmland Preservation
- Penn State Extension
- Landowners/Farmers



MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Adoption of an Agricultural Preservation Plan
- Agricultural land preserved
- Number of farmers engaged

PRIORITY	High	Medium	Low
TIMELINE	Short	Mid	Long



Implementation

BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE (B1)

Inventory and evaluate broadband access throughout the Township and make recommendations to provide more options in tandem with internet service providers and the Federal Communications Commission, as applicable.



KEY GOALS

- Provide more opportunity for broadband infrastructure
- Increase access to high-speed (5G) internet



KEY ACTIONS

- Inventory where high-speed internet (5G) is available and explore opportunities to increase access
- Work with service providers to better understand legal offerings/partnerships
 - Review State/Federal Laws and Guidelines
 - Inventory available service providers
 - Consider opportunities for incentives
- Examine/update Township regulations to ensure shorter review periods in order to keep up with technological advancements

PRIORITY	High	Medium	Low
TIMELINE	Short	Mid	Long

↓
↑



FUNDING SOURCES

- PA DCED Grants and Loans
- Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) Programs
- NTIA Broadband Infrastructure Program



KEY PARTNERS

- Community Development Dept.
- Service Providers
- Cable/Fiber Optic Companies



MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Regulatory changes made
- Increase in high-speed (5G) service areas



Implementation

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS (C1)

Compile departmental capital improvements plans that are vetted and considered during the annual budgetary development/approval process into a comprehensive Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) to be reviewed by the Board of Commissioners and account for a period of time of at least five years. The CIP is a working document that provides a roadmap for financing identified infrastructure projects, vehicle/equipment purchases, and major planning studies anticipated for the Township.



KEY GOALS

Establish an efficient process to make budgeting decisions for all capital improvements regardless of Township Department



KEY ACTIONS

1. Consolidate existing Capital Expenditure Plans into a unified Capital Improvements Plan
2. Develop a mechanism to continually prioritize projects
3. Consider associated technical design/engineering costs, available revenues, and spending limitations
4. Develop long-term funding strategies and leverage grant funding where available

PRIORITY	High	Medium	Low
TIMELINE	Short	Mid	Long



FUNDING SOURCES

- Township Budget



KEY PARTNERS

- Administration Dept.
- Community Development Dept.
- Emergency Services Dept.
- Finance Dept.
- Parks and Recreation Dept.
- Public Works Dept.



MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Adoption of a Township-wide Capital Improvements Plan (CIP)
- Continued utilization of CIP annually in the decision-making process



Implementation

ENERGY CONSERVATION (E1)

Municipalities Planning Code (Section 301.1. Energy Conservation Plan Element) reads as follows: *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 component and element of the comprehensive plan on the present and future use of energy in the municipality, details specific measures contained in the other plan elements 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.*



KEY GOALS

Evaluate the impact of present and future energy consumption related to all elements of the Comprehensive Plan.



KEY ACTIONS

1. Identify a standardized way to evaluate energy conservation in the community.
2. Investigate energy conservation strategies for the Township and residents
 - Transportation-related strategies
 - Building/construction-related strategies
3. Evaluate the potential to increase renewable energy sources/use



FUNDING SOURCES

- PA DEP
- PA DCED



KEY PARTNERS

- Planning Commission
- Community Development Dept.
- Public Works Dept.



MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Number of strategies developed
- Policy/regulatory changes

PRIORITY	High	Medium	Low
TIMELINE	Short	Mid	Long



Implementation

HAZARD MITIGATION (H1)

Coordinate hazard mitigation planning between the Township departments and related regional entities. Hazard mitigation planning includes direct Township involvement and participation in the process to update and adopt of the regional Lehigh Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan, which is statutorily required to be updated every five years, as well as the compilation and review of the local recommended action items pertaining to local hazards that are identified in the Lehigh Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan and any other local document as compiled by Township officials.



KEY GOALS

Coordinate hazard mitigation planning between Township departments and related regional entities



KEY ACTIONS

1. Develop a timeline to consistently provide updates to the Township's annex of the Lehigh Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan
2. Incorporate information from the Lehigh Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan into the Township's Emergency Operations Plan
3. Reconcile the goals and strategies of both plans to ensure Township actions and results are achievable



FUNDING SOURCES

- FEMA



KEY PARTNERS

- Office of EMS
- Public Safety Commission
- Police/Fire/EMS
- Regional Planning Partners



MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Adopted timeline for periodic updates
- Completed Township annex

PRIORITY	High	Medium	Low
TIMELINE	Short	Mid	Long

↑ (under Short) ↓ (over Medium)



Implementation

HISTORIC PRESERVATION (H2)

Identify and evaluate historic buildings, structures and cultural resources in the Township to determine an appropriate mechanism for promotion and preservation. Cultural resources include tangible items of historic or cultural significance, such as cultural landscapes, buildings, structures, and objects; as well as the intangible items, like traditional knowledge, sociological practices, and customs



KEY GOALS

Preserve the historic buildings, structures, and places in the Township



KEY ACTIONS

1. Develop a written Historic Preservation Plan
 - Inventory and evaluate historic sites and structures
 - Establish mechanisms for preservation
 - Develop strategies to encourage adaptive reuse
2. Conduct targeted outreach to key landowners/businesses



FUNDING SOURCES

- PA DCED
- PHMC
- Private Foundations



KEY PARTNERS

- Community Development Dept.
- Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission (PHMC)
- Lehigh County Historical Society
- Landowners/Businesses



MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Adoption of plan
- Ordinances adopted
- Number of historic structures preserved

PRIORITY	High	Medium	Low
TIMELINE	Short	Mid	Long



Implementation

HOUSING (H3)

Develop programs and policies to help meet the housing needs of residents.



KEY GOALS

Ensure all types of housing are provided to meet the needs of current and future residents

Increase access to low-maintenance living options (HOAs, community developments, etc.)



KEY ACTIONS

1. Develop incentive programs and flexible regulations to encourage different housing options
 - Affordable Housing
 - Accessory Dwelling Units
 - Cluster Housing
 - “Missing Middle” Housing Types
 - Office-Residential Conversions
2. Review and amend zoning ordinance to ensure all types of housing needs are provided in a way that still preserves existing neighborhood character



FUNDING SOURCES

- Township Budget
- PA DCED
- HUD



KEY PARTNERS

- Planning Commission
- Community Development Dept.
- LVPC



MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Increase in new housing types constructed, adapted, or redeveloped

PRIORITY	High	Medium	Low
TIMELINE	Short	Mid	Long

↓
↑



Implementation

INFRASTRUCTURE EVALUATION (I1)

Evaluate existing municipal services and utilities to assess functionality and potential for expansion and/or enhancement. All best available technology methods and practices shall be considered.



KEY GOALS

Evaluate municipal services and utilities to help guide future refinements and expansions to municipal functions



KEY ACTIONS

1. Develop measures and benchmarks for municipal services and utilities
2. Create incentives for developers to extend utility systems where appropriate
3. Explore alternative energy potential in the Township (solar, wind, geothermal, etc.)
4. Conduct analysis of users per foot to determine optimal revenue stream to cover future maintenance
5. Review current ordinances and guidelines for alternative energy
6. Leverage daily operations to expand infrastructure data

PRIORITY	High	Medium	Low
TIMELINE	Short	Mid	Long

Arrows point to the 'High' and 'Short' cells.



FUNDING SOURCES

- PA DCED
- Infrastructure Investment and Jobs (IIJA) Act Programs
- American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)



KEY PARTNERS

- Public Works Dept.
- Lehigh County Authority (LCA)



MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Completion of evaluation report



Implementation

LANDSCAPE PRESERVATION (L1)

Identify and evaluate important landscapes, including scenic corridors and cultural landscapes, throughout the Township and investigate techniques for preservation.



KEY GOALS

Preserve and enhance landscapes that help define the sense of place that differentiates South Whitehall from other municipalities



KEY ACTIONS

1. Identify and evaluate important landscapes in the Township
2. Investigate techniques to preserve the viewsheds, resources, and unique character of the landscape
3. Conduct targeted outreach to key landowners



FUNDING SOURCES

- PA DCNR
- PA DCED
- PHMC
- Private Foundations



KEY PARTNERS

- Planning Commission
- Community Development Dept.
- Community/Landowners



MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Completed plan
- Acres/Sites Preserved
- Adoption of ordinances/zoning updates

PRIORITY	High	Medium	Low
TIMELINE	Short	Mid	Long

↓
↑



Implementation

OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION (O1)

Identify and prioritize natural, historic, cultural, agricultural resources to be preserved in the Township and determine an appropriate mechanism for preservation.



KEY GOALS

Establish a process to preserve open space within the Township



KEY ACTIONS

1. Develop a written plan for open space preservation
 - Identify and prioritize resources to be protected
 - Evaluate scenic viewsheds
 - Develop a preservation toolbox
2. Identify and evaluate funding sources and consider new tax-based funding options
3. Incorporate open space preservation techniques into SALDO

PRIORITY	High	Medium	Low
TIMELINE	Short	Mid	Long



FUNDING SOURCES

- Township Budget
- PA DCNR



KEY PARTNERS

- Planning Commission
- Community Development Dept.
- Parks & Recreation Dept.
- Land Preservation Organizations



MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Completed plan
- Funding secured
- Acres preserved



Implementation

OFFICIAL MAP (O2)

Update Township Official Map to identify and prioritize goals and recommendations from the Comprehensive Plan or otherwise identified



KEY GOALS

Update Township Official Map to identify and prioritize goals and recommendations from the Comprehensive Plan or otherwise identified



KEY ACTIONS

1. Identify and incorporate new/updated elements
 - Historic/important structures
 - Resource protection priorities
 - Facility/Park/Open Space/Trail goals
 - Transportation infrastructure
2. Educate the public
3. Prepare map, ordinance, and public notice
4. Work with developments to ensure implementation

	↓		
PRIORITY	High	Medium	Low
TIMELINE	Short	Mid	Long
	↑		



FUNDING SOURCES

- Township Budget
- PA DCED Municipal Assistance Program



KEY PARTNERS

- Planning Commission
- Community Development Dept.



MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Adoption of updated Official Map



Implementation

PARKS AND RECREATION (P1)

Implement the priority recommendations of the Township Parks & Recreation Plan, as amended.



KEY GOALS

Implement the goals and recommendations of the Park & Recreation Plan



KEY ACTIONS

1. Increase recreation fees based on plan recommendations
2. Upgrade park facilities to meet National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) guidelines
3. Pursue cooperative agreements with Parkland School District and neighboring municipalities to share facilities/programming where appropriate



FUNDING SOURCES

- Township Budget
- PA DCNR
- PA DCED



KEY PARTNERS

- Parks and Recreation Dept.
- Public Works Dept.
- Parks and Recreation Board



MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Number of recommendations implemented

PRIORITY	High	Medium	Low
TIMELINE	Short	Mid	Long



Implementation

PUBLIC SAFETY (P2)

Develop a mechanism that includes both quantitative and qualitative data review methods to periodically evaluate the current and future public safety needs for the Township.



KEY GOALS

Develop mechanism to periodically evaluate current and future public safety needs of South Whitehall Township



KEY ACTIONS

1. Utilize independent third party to evaluate Fire/EMS services areas
2. Inventory, maintain, and repair equipment
3. Identify partnerships and increase volunteerism



FUNDING SOURCES

- Township Budget
- PA DCED
- FEMA Grants



KEY PARTNERS

- Police Department
- Public Safety Commission
- Fire/EMS Departments



MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Public satisfaction of service
- Officer recruitment/retention

	↓		
PRIORITY	High	Medium	Low
TIMELINE	Short	Mid	Long
	↑		



Implementation

REGIONAL COORDINATION (R1)

Investigate opportunities to coordinate with neighboring municipalities and regional organizations on planning efforts, intergovernmental collaboration, and appropriate shared public services.



KEY GOALS

Identify and work with regional agencies and neighboring municipalities to coordinate and share services where feasible



KEY ACTIONS

1. Identify and evaluate multi-municipal planning partners
2. Investigate a regional watershed plan
3. Investigate a regional traffic safety plan

PRIORITY	High	Medium	Low
TIMELINE	Short	Mid	Long

↓
↑



FUNDING SOURCES

- N/A



KEY PARTNERS

- Board of Commissioners
- Planning Commission
- Community Development Dept.
- Public Works Dept.



MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Number of plans created/implemented



Implementation

REEXAMINATION REPORT (R2)

Establish a process and timeline in accordance with recognized best project management practices to periodically track progress and identify significant revisions or changes to the Comprehensive Plan.



KEY GOALS

Periodically reexamine the Comprehensive Plan to identify progress, major problems, significant changes, and areas requiring revision or adjustments



KEY ACTIONS

1. Develop consistent guidelines and/or questions for reexamination
2. Determine frequency of reexamination
3. Incorporate reexamination report into Planning Commission Annual Report

PRIORITY	High	Medium	Low
TIMELINE	Short	Mid	Long

↑ (under Short) ↓ (over Medium)



FUNDING SOURCES

- Township Budget



KEY PARTNERS

- Board of Commissioners
- Planning Commission
- Community Development Dept.



MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Adoption of reexamination process
- Number of reexamination reports completed



Implementation

RESOURCE PROTECTION ORDINANCES (R3)

Develop ordinances to help protect the Township's most vulnerable and valuable resources such as woodlands, steep slopes, and riparian areas.



KEY GOALS

Develop ordinances to help protect the Township's most valuable resources



KEY ACTIONS

1. Review existing ordinances to evaluate their ability to preserve natural resources
2. Review/evaluate LVPC model ordinances (woodlands, floodplains, etc.)
3. Develop a steep slopes ordinance
4. Develop a riparian buffer ordinance



FUNDING SOURCES

- Township Budget



KEY PARTNERS

- Board of Commissioners
- Planning Commission
- Community Development Dept.
- LVPC



MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Number of ordinances adopted

	↓		
PRIORITY	High	Medium	Low
TIMELINE	Short	Mid	Long
	↑		



Implementation

SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE (SALDO) UPDATES (S1)

Update the SALDO to be consistent with the goals and priorities of the Comprehensive Plan.



KEY GOALS

Update the SALDO to implement goals and be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan



KEY ACTIONS

1. Develop design standards as part of the SALDO
2. Re-evaluate lighting standards to current Backlight, Uplight, and Glare (BUG) standards
3. Modernize SALDO to be consistent with modern development practices



FUNDING SOURCES

- Township Budget



KEY PARTNERS

- Planning Commission
- Community Development Dept.
- Public Works Dept.
- Township Engineer



MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Number of ordinances updated or added

PRIORITY	High	Medium	Low
TIMELINE	Short	Mid	Long

↑ (under Short) ↓ (over Medium)



Implementation

SANITARY SEWER (S2)

Update the Township Sewer Plan (Act 537 Official Plan) in accordance with the PA Act 537 Sewage Facilities Act. The purpose of this Act 537 Official Plan is as follows: first, to provide methods that clearly identify and document existing wastewater disposal needs and second, to provide general guidance for summarizing and presenting the identified needs.



KEY GOALS

Update the Act 537 Sewer Plan to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and PA DEP requirements



KEY ACTIONS

1. Evaluate areas with aging septic systems and develop management/mitigation efforts
2. Evaluate Growth Areas to ensure adherence to future land use plan
3. Examine existing system capacity
4. Update GIS data to include septic information



FUNDING SOURCES

- Township Budget
- PA DEP
- PA DCED



KEY PARTNERS

- Public Works Dept.
- Community Development Dept.
- Lehigh County Authority



MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Adoption of plan
- Dissolution of Sewer Authority

PRIORITY	High	Medium	Low
TIMELINE	Short	Mid	Long

↑ (under Short) ↓ (over Medium)



Implementation

SOLID WASTE (S3)

Evaluate and investigate ways to improve the Township’s waste collection and recycling process, which includes bulk materials, electronics, hazardous materials, leaf collection, and yard waste, in accordance with both the needs of the Township and the evolving standards of the overall industry.



KEY GOALS

Improve the Township’s waste collection and recycling process



KEY ACTIONS

1. Evaluate municipal solid waste/recycling contract
2. Investigate opportunities for local/regional composting
3. Develop a mechanism to divert waste material from streams



FUNDING SOURCES

- Township Budget
- PA DEP



KEY PARTNERS

- Public Works Dept.
- Finance Dept.
- Green Advisory Council



MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Number of new programs created
- Savings to the Township budget

PRIORITY	High	Medium	Low
TIMELINE	Short	Mid	Long

↑ (under Short) ↓ (over Medium)



Implementation

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT (S4)

Develop a Township-wide stormwater management plan and investigate watershed-based planning in accordance with the provisions of Pennsylvania Stormwater Management Act 167.



KEY GOALS

Develop a plan to address stormwater in the Township



KEY ACTIONS

1. Develop a Township-wide stormwater management plan
 - Consider green infrastructure efforts
 - Evaluate future maintenance costs/funding sources
2. Investigate watershed plans for the Jordan Creek, Coplay Creek, and Little Lehigh Creek watersheds



FUNDING SOURCES

- PA DEP
- PA DCED
- Stormwater Fees



KEY PARTNERS

- Public Works Dept.
- Community Development Dept.
- LVPC



MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Adoption of plan

PRIORITY	High	Medium	Low
TIMELINE	Short	Mid	Long



Implementation

TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (TDR) (T1)

Investigate the potential for a Transfer of Development Rights program in the Township. Transfer of Development Rights is a zoning technique that conserves land by conveying development that would otherwise occur on the land (the sending area) to a receiving area that has been determined to be appropriate for denser development (due to factors such as the presence of existing public utilities, compatible adjacent land uses and improved road infrastructure).



KEY GOALS

Preserve open space by clustering development and minimizing land used for development

Improve opportunities for infill and redevelopment



KEY ACTIONS

1. Complete a TDR Program Feasibility Study
 - Identify Sending and Receiving Areas
 - Evaluate density transfers on micro (site-specific) and macro (Township-wide) scales
2. Strengthen cluster incentives
3. Allow density credits to be applied to adaptive reuse of non-residential buildings where appropriate



FUNDING SOURCES

- Township Budget
- PA DCED



KEY PARTNERS

- Planning Commission
- Community Development Dept.
- Landowners



MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Completion of feasibility study
- Increase in acres of preserved lands
- Increase in number of cluster developments
- Increase in new development types (ex. farmettes)

PRIORITY	High	Medium	Low
TIMELINE	Short	Mid	Long

↓
↑



Implementation

TRAFFIC SAFETY (T2)

Inventory and evaluate high-crash and pedestrian crossings throughout the Township to integrate mitigation strategies into a transportation plan.



KEY GOALS

Improve traffic safety conditions and high crash areas



KEY ACTIONS

1. Create a Township-wide (or multi-municipal) traffic safety plan
 - Identify hazard areas
 - Incorporate regional crash data
 - Incorporate parameters into transportation model
 - Develop mitigation strategies



FUNDING SOURCES

- PennDOT
- LVPC/LVTS/LTAP



KEY PARTNERS

- Public Works Dept.
- Police Dept.
- Community Development Dept.
- Township Engineer
- PennDOT
- LVPC
- Neighboring Municipalities



MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Adoption of plan
- Reduction in crash fatalities
- Number of safety improvements

PRIORITY	High	Medium	Low
TIMELINE	Short	Mid	Long

↓
↑



Implementation

TRANSPORTATION PLAN (T3)

Inventory transportation infrastructure and develop a plan to help manage traffic, improve transportation and pedestrian safety, and plan for future transportation impacts and maintenance. Includes the following: coordination of future planned transportation projects at all levels of government (local, state and federal) and associated public agencies; identification of costs; stakeholder identification and coordination; coordination with public utilities and public transit entities.



KEY GOALS

Evaluate current and future transportation network to absorb future growth



KEY ACTIONS

1. Create a transportation and traffic control plan
 - Evaluate functional road classifications and update as needed
 - Identify and evaluate appropriate truck routes
2. Update the Road Maintenance Plan
 - Include ancillary infrastructure (curbing, drainage, etc.)
 - Coordinate with Capital Improvements Plan
3. Investigate feasibility of an Act 209 Transportation Impact Fee
4. Adopt a Traffic Calming Policy
5. Prioritize transportation improvements to be incorporated with the Long-Range Transportation Plan/TIP

	↓		
PRIORITY	High	Medium	Low
TIMELINE	Short	Mid	Long
	↑		



FUNDING SOURCES

- PennDOT
- LVPC/LVTS
- Township Budget



KEY PARTNERS

- Planning Commission
- Community Development Dept.
- Public Works Dept.
- PennDOT
- LVPC



MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Adoption of plan
- Number of new policies/ordinances adopted



Implementation

ZONING UPDATES (Z1)

Update the Township Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Plan.



KEY GOALS

Update Township Zoning Ordinance to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Plan



KEY ACTIONS

1. Review and update zoning districts where appropriate based on the land use plan
2. Integrate Place Types when updating zoning districts
3. Utilize transportation and economic impact models to evaluate impacts on potential zone changes



FUNDING SOURCES

- PA DCED
- Township Budget



KEY PARTNERS

- Planning Commission
- Community Development Dept.
- Public Works Dept.



MEASURE OF SUCCESS

- Zoning districts updated

PRIORITY	High	Medium	Low
TIMELINE	Short	Mid	Long





swt



South Whitehall Township
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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