

BOROUGH OF CONSHOHOCKEN OPEN SPACE PLAN

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INTRODUCTION & PLAN AUDIT

OPEN SPACE PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The 2005 Borough of Conshohocken Open Space Plan is the result of ten months of study by the Borough Open Space Committee. This Plan establishes a framework for creating new publicly accessible open spaces that will enhance the quality of life and provide additional active and passive recreational opportunities for Borough residents.

During the initial stages of the open space planning process, the Open Space Committee conducted an audit of the 1995 Open Space Plan to evaluate the accomplishments made during the previous Montgomery County Open Space Program. The results of the Plan Audit demonstrated that progress has been made toward preserving open space, increasing public access to open space, and the greening of the Borough. The Plan Audit also found that many of the opportunities and recommendations from the 1995 Plan are no longer feasible due to changes in existing conditions within the Borough.

In addition to auditing the 1995 Plan, the 2005 Borough of Conshohocken Open Space Plan Update documents the Borough's existing conditions, articulates goals and objectives, and presents recommendations for open space-related activities. These recommendations are intended for implementation within the next ten years.

Those recommendations that are the primary focus of this Plan include the following:

Recommendation B: Develop a Schuylkill River Greenway System along the Borough's Riverfront.

Recommendation G: Improve Streetscapes and Pedestrian Conditions throughout the Borough.

Recommendation L: Complete a Park and Recreation Needs Assessment

Chapter 11 details each of the Open Space Plan's recommendations and actions, sets a priority and timeline for implementation, recommends potential funding sources, and identifies public, private, and non-profit sector agents responsible for implementation. The 2005 Plan also continues the open space acquisition efforts begun during the previous County Open Space Program and will capitalize on the strong desire of the Borough of Conshohocken to preserve open space during a time of increasing development and redevelopment pressure.

INTRODUCTION

Borough of Conshohocken

Open Space Committee Members

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PLAN AUDIT

OPEN SPACE PLAN UPDATE

1995 Open Space Plan Update

The intent of the 1995 Open Space Plan was to guide the Borough in the “management of future development, the retention of open space, the protection of environmental resources and the creation of necessary park land.” The Plan created four overall goals with specific objectives designed to guide the Borough in addressing open space needs.

Upon a review by the Conshohocken Borough Open Space Committee, it was determined that portions of the 1995 Plan had been implemented, several other objectives were on-going, and several objectives that had not been accomplished would likely never be possible due to changes in parcel ownership. The following section presents the goals and objectives of the 1995 Open Space Plan, and presents an audit conducted by the Open Space Committee of the Plan’s implementation successes.

1995 Open Space Plan Goals

1995 Plan Goal #1: *Provide Access to the Schuylkill Riverfront – Provide access to the riverfront for Borough residents and employees, with the opportunity to utilize and appreciate the unique natural resources of the Schuylkill River.*

Objectives:

- a. Acquire the necessary easements along the river to establish a pedestrian trail and riverfront park along the entire length of the river.



Haines and Salvati Memorial Park

- b. Encourage creative alternatives in obtaining control of land within this area.
- c. Maximize the Borough’s access to the Schuylkill River Bicycle Trail.

Audit Findings:

This is an on-going goal that should be amended to read “Provide access to and along the Schuylkill Riverfront...” A small segment of the pedestrian trail (“Schuylkill Riverbank Path”) has been completed; however, this segment is isolated and will remain so until extended along the riverfront.

Zoning changes have been implemented to further promote public access and open space along the riverfront. The revised ordinance requires 24/7 public access in the SP-3 zoning district along the Schuylkill Riverbank Path, and also requires sidewalks and signage.

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The Open Space Committee wishes to implement a signage plan for the riverfront area that will promote public access and enhance the feeling of public space along the riverfront.

The Committee identified the need for access to the riverfront between Ash Street and Cherry Street, and for additional access points on the western side of the Matsonford Bridge.

1995 Plan Goal #2: *Provide active and passive recreation for all members of the Borough.*

Objectives:

- a. Plan new and expand existing park and recreational areas.
- b. Utilize the riverfront trail for passive recreation activities.

Audit Findings:

This is an on-going goal. Some specific improvements related to this goal that have been accomplished include the following:

- Expanded and updated facilities at the Fellowship House.
- Improved accessibility at Mary Wood Park and the Mary Wood Park House.
- Improved walking trail and playground at Sutcliffe Park.
- Updated and purchased new equipment at Haines-Silvati and Aubrey Collins Parks.
- Repaired and purchased new bleachers at the AA Garthwait Stadium (“A Field”), and rest rooms made accessible and tot lot developed at Borusiewicz Field (“B Field”).
- Purchased Russo property behind East 9th Avenue adjacent to Sutcliffe Park.

- Created 2nd Avenue Meadow. It is used as a dog park, but not intended for, and is not currently maintained for a dog park use.

1995 Plan Goal #3: *Protect significant natural features.*

Objectives:

- a. Create a natural resource protection ordinance establishing setbacks from stream corridors or requiring the preservation of ecologically sensitive areas.
- b. Undertake a stream corridor study of the Schuylkill River and the Plymouth Creek which would analyze the existing features and identify potential threats to these resources and recommend policies and actions that can be undertaken to conserve and/or enhance these resources.

Audit Findings:

In general, no significant action has been taken related to this goal. The Cross County Trail Study and flood management studies have been completed. and areas of Plymouth Creek have been cleaned, but no ordinance(s) or similar activities for natural feature protection were completed under the 1995 Plan.

The Borough of Conshohocken and the Open Space Committee are interested in developing a borough-wide natural features ordinance, specifically focusing on the preservation of riparian corridors, but also planning for other natural resource protections within the Borough.

There is some interest by the Open Space Committee to consider the possibility of a multi-municipal natural resources corridor study for the Schuylkill River corridor. This would likely be initiated by a

multi-municipal group that includes Montgomery County, riverfront communities and the Schuylkill River Greenway Association.

1995 Plan Goal #4: *Preserve significant cultural resources within the Borough.*

Objectives:

- a. Encourage owners of significant historic, cultural, archaeological and educationally important sites to become registered at the national, state and local levels.
- b. Create a Historical Architectural Review Board to oversee the future development of any historic sites within the Borough.

Audit Findings:

A historic resources plan was completed in the early 1990's. There has not been a significant push by the Borough to develop a Historic and Architectural Review Board which would be the next step in implementing the historic resources plan.

A design review committee and an active historic society exist within the Borough. Façade improvement guidelines also exist for structures along Fayette Street and there are three potential Historic Districts within the Borough. There are also individual resource structures identified as historic throughout the Borough.

The Open Space Committee wishes to see a renewed effort to preserve historic and cultural resources and consider potential methods that could be utilized to accomplish this goal.

1995 Open Space Plan Recommendations

Plan Recommendation – First Priority

Acquire the necessary easements along the Schuylkill River to establish a continuous riverfront path from the eastern to the western boundaries. Where possible, the Borough will strive to preserve portions of the canal that are present within this area.

Acquire the necessary land or easements along the Plymouth Creek to develop a park or greenway along the lower portion of the creek where it connects to the Schuylkill River.

The establishment of linkages between Conshohocken Borough, the Schuylkill Riverfront, the Schuylkill River Trail, and the Plymouth Creek Trail are necessary components in the development of a successful waterfront park.

Listed below, in priority order, are properties capable of supporting this need. All of these properties are presently available for purchase:

Two parcels of land associated with #34 on the Vacant Land Map will provide an important open space link to the Schuylkill River. These parcels will preserve a significant amount of open space as well as portions of the historic canal. This land will aid Conshohocken in the establishment of a passive park along the entire riverfront.

These parcels of land are not located within the Redevelopment Zone. Prior to any development or rezoning of this area the Borough will seek the donation of any sites and/or amend the Zoning Ordinance to protect the natural features located along the Schuylkill River and Plymouth Creek.

Once development is planned for this area the Borough will actively negotiate with the developer to

PLAN AUDIT

preserve any significant natural features or ecologically sensitive areas.

Audit Findings:

Acquiring land along the riverfront to provide public access is an on-going recommendation. The Open Space Committee recommends that this Priority be edited to state “Acquire the necessary easements or acquisition of properties along the Schuylkill River...”

Acquiring land along the Plymouth Creek is an on-going recommendation. The Open Space Committee wishes to see the Cross County Trail connection to the Schuylkill River Trail developed within the next few years. This should be done soon in order to begin assembling the disconnected sections of waterfront trail, walking paths, and corridors for connection into the larger pathway system.

The two parcels of land associated with #34 on the Vacant Land Map are no longer available. These properties have been acquired by O’Neill Properties Group for riverfront development. A 100’ preservation strip of land along the riverbank exists that will be used to link with other trail and pathway segments along the Riverfront.

The parcel of land owned by SEPTA (#40 on the Vacant Land Map) will allow the Borough to establish a greenway or park along the lower portion of the Plymouth Creek, directly adjacent to the Schuylkill River Trail. This parcel will preserve a significant amount of woodland within this area.

The Borough will acquire this property with county funding, look for a donation from SEPTA, and/or amend the Zoning Ordinance to protect the natural features present within this area.

Audit Findings:

This is an issue that the Open Space Committee suggests needs additional research and review. It is not clear if this parcel is part of a proposed development for this area. This is in the area of the Plymouth Creek and there may be easements provided as a result of the potential development.

Plan Recommendation – Second Priority

Acquire land for recreational/open space linkages throughout the Borough of Conshohocken.

Listed below, in priority order, are properties capable of supporting this need:

- a. The most effective man-made links toward the riverfront area will occur along Ash, Cherry and Poplar Streets. The Borough owns the rights-of-way to Ash Street.



Schuylkill River Trail Bridge over future Plymouth Trail location

- b. The parcel of land located on Hector Street between Ash and Poplar Streets (#15 on the Vacant Land Map).
- c. The parcel of land located at the terminus of the unopened portion of Seventh Avenue (#29 on the Vacant Land Map).
- d. The parcel of land located on Wood Street at the terminus of Eighth Avenue (#41 on the Vacant Land Map).

The Borough will either purchase these sites with County funding, encourage the donation of these sites for tax incentives, or acquire easements through these areas.

Audit Findings:

The connections from the riverfront area into the Borough are extremely important. Poplar Street has been vacated below Washington Street and therefore cannot be considered as a potential public access point. There is a need for waterfront access on the west side of the Matsonford Bridge. An opportunity currently exists for creating a plaza on the riverfront in the vicinity of the Matsonford Bridge.

The parcel of land located on Hector Street between Ash and Poplar was not acquired. This parcel is still undeveloped and could serve as a connection to the adjacent park. There are serious physical constraints in creating this connection due to the 20'+ elevation difference between this property and the adjacent park.

The parcel of land at the terminus of the unopened portion of Seventh Avenue is an old junkyard with possible contamination issues. The Open Space Committee discussed this as a potential connection to Sutcliffe Park; however, significant steep slope is-



Riverfront development adjacent to the Schuylkill River

sues exists. This is a low priority for preservation, though the property may be acceptable for purchase and re-use under a different program.

Plan Recommendation – Third Priority

Acquire land for recreational development throughout the Borough of Conshohocken. A high priority will be placed on those areas that were found to be deficient within the needs analysis of this Report.

Listed below are properties that are capable of supporting this need. These properties are listed in priority order so that those areas that were found to be deficient in recreational facilities will be serviced first:

- a. The parcel of land located within the southwestern area of the Borough at the terminus of West Second Avenue (#32 on the Vacant Land Map).
- b. The parcel of land located within the southeastern area on East Elm Street between Poplar and Cherry Streets (#22 on the Vacant Land Map).

PLAN AUDIT

- c. The parcel of land located within the northeastern area at Ninth and Spring Mill Avenues (#43 on the Vacant Land Map).
- d. The parcel of land located within the northeastern area at Eighth and Spring Mill Avenues (#44 on the Vacant Land Map).
- e. The two parcels located within the southeastern area are together capable of supporting a neighborhood park (#7 and #8 on the Vacant Land Map).
- f. The two parcels located within the southeastern area are together capable of supporting a neighborhood park (#5 and #6 on the Vacant Land Map).

The Borough will either purchase these sites with county funding or encourage the donation of these sites for tax incentives.

Audit Findings:

The parcel of land at the terminus of West Second Avenue was purchased under the previous County Open Space Program and is now known as the 2nd Avenue Meadow. The following parcels of land are not available for acquisition or preservation:

- The parcel on East Elm Street between Poplar and Cherry Streets.
- The parcel at Ninth and Spring Mill Avenues.
- The two parcels in the southeastern area are together capable of supporting a neighborhood park (#7 and #8 on the vacant parcel map).
- The two parcels in the southeastern area are together capable of supporting a neighborhood park (#5 and #6 on the vacant parcel map).

Plan Recommendation – Fourth Priority

Acquire land for the expansion of an existing facility. Listed below are properties capable of supporting this need:

- Two parcels of land are located directly adjacent to Borusiewicz Field within Whitemarsh Township (#42 on the Vacant Land Map).

One of these parcels is owned by the Philadelphia Water Company, but due to the presence of utility pipes is not a constructable site. Possible easements, other than acquisition, will be pursued to develop this land as future open space. The second parcel of land is located directly adjacent to the Philadelphia Water Company and is presently available for purchase. There is a vacant building associated with this site, but is in a deteriorated condition. The Borough will seek acquisition or donation of this site.

Audit Findings:

The parcel with frontage on Fayette Street cannot be built-upon due to utilities that run just under the ground. As such, this parcel presents a significant opportunity for development as public open space. This effort would require the leadership of Whitemarsh Township due to the property being located in the Township; however, the Open Space Committee suggests that this is an opportunity for multi-municipal project since it could directly benefit residents of the Borough of Conshohocken as well as those of Whitemarsh Township. This property could provide for a passive park for residents in this area.

Near this property is an old cemetery that the Open Space Committee suggests should be considered for preservation/recognition as a historic site.

- Preserve the Canal within the boundaries of Conshohocken Borough.

Since the Canal stretches over numerous parcels of land along the Schuylkill Riverfront, preservation will occur when development is proposed in this area and/or through acquisition. The Redevelopment Authority will negotiate with developers to donate an easement along the river that will include the extents of the Canal. Where negotiations are not successful, the Borough will purchase the necessary easements.

Audit Findings:

This is an on-going project that is a high-priority for the Open Space Committee. There are some areas along the riverfront where the Canal is exposed, though most of the canal has been in-filled. The exposed areas could be used as a historic/cultural interpretative site.

- Establish a historic trail throughout the Borough of Conshohocken.

Conshohocken Borough will establish a historic walking trail throughout the Borough. This trail will include interpretative signage for the canal area as well as historic markers for individual sites.

Audit Findings:

The Open Space Committee wishes to see efforts undertaken to recognize historic structures within the Borough. There are markers for historic homes and interpretative signage for several locations. These efforts can be the base from which a more de-

tailed historic preservation/identification effort can be initiated.



Remnants of the Old Schuylkill Canal wall

PLAN AUDIT

BOROUGH OVERVIEW
~
GOALS & OBJECTIVES

CHAPTER 1

COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

Regional Setting

Conshohocken Borough is located in the southeastern portion of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, along the banks of the Schuylkill River approximately two miles from the City of Philadelphia. Conshohocken is a highly developed Borough approximately one square mile in size. The Borough is bordered by Plymouth Township, Whitemarsh Township and the Schuylkill River. West Conshohocken Borough and Lower Merion Township are located directly across the Schuylkill River. Conshohocken has easy access to major area roadways including the Schuylkill Expressway, I-476 (the “Blue Route”), and both the East/West and Northeast Extensions of the Pennsylvania Turnpike.

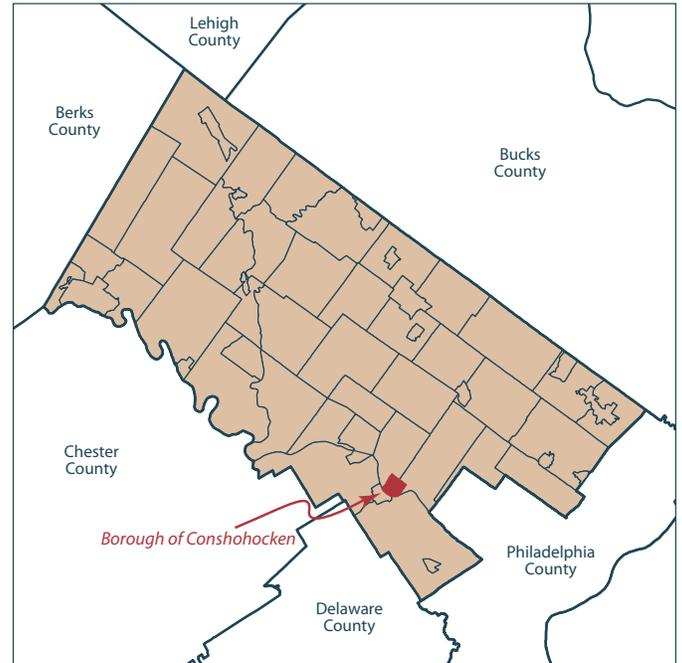
Municipal Setting

Though once a booming industrial community, Conshohocken has first-hand experience in the national shift from an industrial/manufacturing based economy to a service based economy. Although the Borough has a strong industrial setting, many of its industrial buildings are being transformed into housing and offices to serve the growing demand for these land use types.

Existing Land Use

Existing Land Use Pattern

Existing land use patterns in the Borough are a product of municipal infrastructure, the zoning that was established in the Borough’s 1964 Land Use Plan, and the Zoning Ordinance of 2001, including subse-



quent amendments. As mentioned above, the bulk of the Borough is comprised of residential development at a mix of densities.

The parcels along Fayette Street show the greatest diversity of uses within the Borough. Along this corridor, retail, residential, office, institutional and mixed uses can be found. Colwell Lane, as it exits into Plymouth Township, is composed primarily of a few large office and industrial uses.

East Elm Street, located near the Schuylkill River, has perhaps the largest concentration of non-residential uses with the Borough. This area contains large industrial, office and undeveloped parcels. In the past this area was the prime manufacturing center for the Borough and the decline in manufacturing is evident from the area’s current land uses.

CHAPTER · 1



Residential Development in the Borough

Existing Zoning Districts

Land use within the Borough is dictated both by the zoning districts which regulate the uses permitted on a particular parcel of land, as well as the infrastructure such as public sewer and water service and roadways. Public water and sewer are available to every resident within the Borough. The Borough's Zoning Ordinance provides for many different types of residential and non-residential development.

A summary of the existing zoning districts is presented below. In addition to the zoning districts that provide for permitted uses, setbacks and densities, the Zoning Ordinance also provides detailed information about permitted activities related to each use.

Conshohocken Borough Zoning Districts

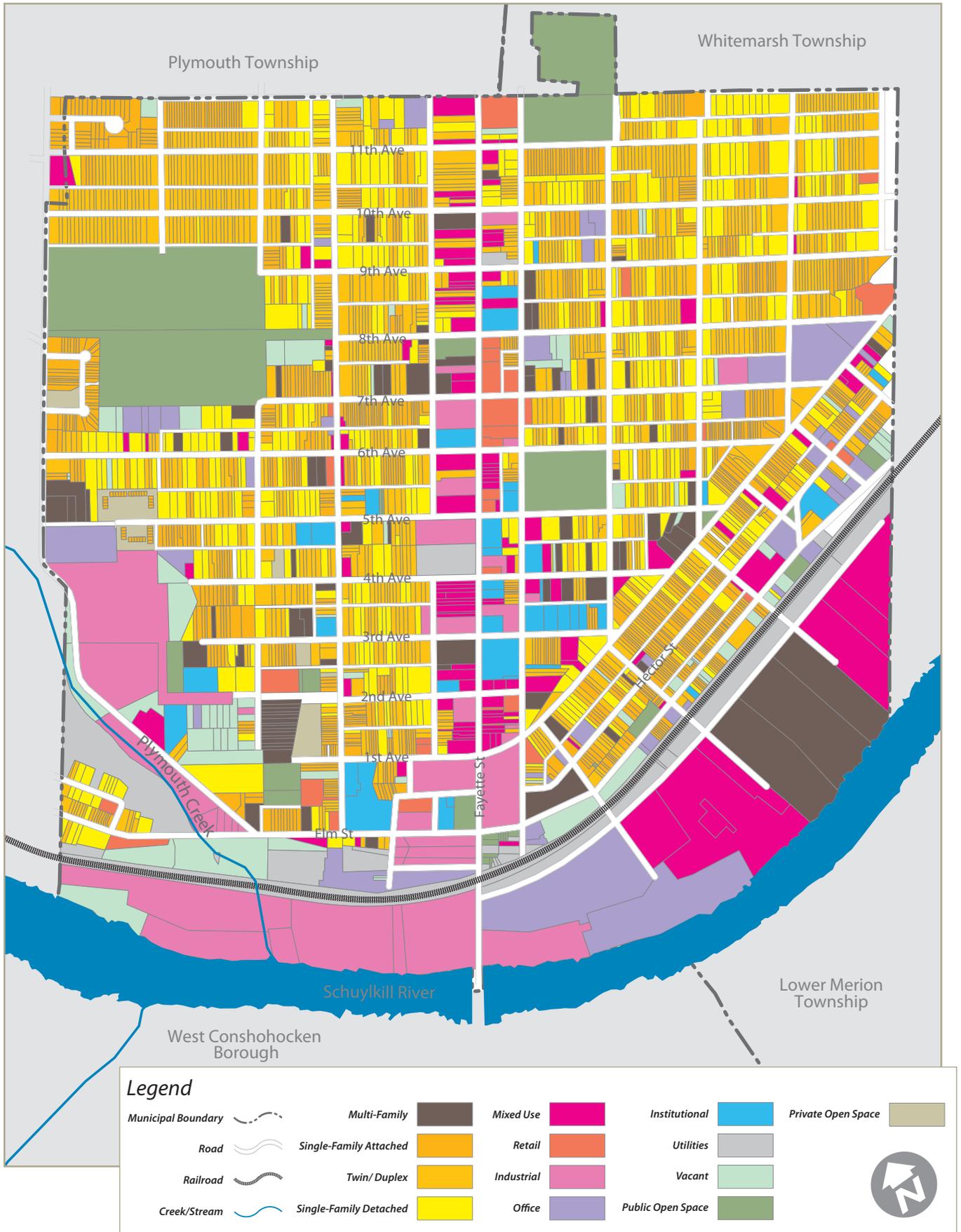
BR-1 Borough Residential District One – The purpose of the BR-1 District is to provide for single-family detached and single-family semi-detached dwellings. Other conditional uses may be permitted, including public or private schools, churches, municipal uses, private social organizations, fire houses or

day cares. All conditional uses must conform to additional standards addressing their implementation. Minimum lot sizes for single-family detached dwellings are 4,000 square feet, the minimum lot size for single-family semi-detached dwellings is 2,800 square feet and the minimum lot size for a conditional use is 10,000 square feet.

BR-2 Borough Residential District Two – The purpose of the BR-2 District is to provide for single-family attached dwellings and two-family attached dwellings, as well as for all uses permitted in the BR-1 District. Permitted minimum lot size is 3,500 square feet for single-family detached dwellings and the minimum lot size is 2,500 square feet for single-family semi-detached dwellings. Single-family attached dwellings should provide 1,800 square feet per unit and two family detached dwellings should provide 5,000 square feet. No more than eight single-family attached dwelling units per series shall be permitted. Maximum building coverage shall not exceed more than 40% of total lot area, and maximum impervious surface shall not exceed more than 60%.

R-O Residential Office District – The intent of the R-O District is to encourage the retention and preservation of existing Victorian and early 20th Century residences by permitting residential uses and allowing limited conditional office conversions. The permitted uses of the R-O District are single-family detached dwellings, single-family semi-detached dwellings and municipal and government offices. The conditional uses of the R-O District are professional offices, studios, funeral homes, bed and breakfasts, or other uses of similar scale and intensity. Minimum lot sizes must be at least 3,500 square feet for

MAP#1 LAND USE



COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

single-family detached dwellings, 2,500 square feet for single-family semi-attached dwellings, and 4,500 square feet for conditional uses. Maximum impervious coverage for conditional uses should be 60% (for by-right uses), unless two or more adjacent owners use common parking facilities, then the maximum impervious cover may be increased to 80%.

BC – Borough Commercial District – The intent of the BC District is to encourage the retention and development of traditional Main Street commercial uses and neighborhood services. Permitted uses include, but are not limited to, business offices, professional offices, financial institutions, retail establishments, restaurants (not including drive-throughs), studios, funeral homes, private social organizations, educational and religious facilities, public libraries and residential uses (provided they are not located at street level but are above non-residential uses). Minimum lot size for permitted use must be 2,000 square feet and the minimum lot size for conditional uses must be 10,000 square feet. The maximum impervious coverage for permitted uses cannot exceed 85% of the total lot area.

LI – Limited Industrial District/ Research – The intent of the LI District is to provide for the development and redevelopment of office, limited light industrial, research and development, and other laboratory uses. The maximum building coverage in the LI District may not exceed 50% of the total lot area and the maximum impervious surface must not exceed 75% of the total lot area.

SP-1 and SP-2 Specially Planned District One and Specially Planned District Two – The intent of the

SP-1 and SP-2 Districts is to provide for the development of major business and commercial areas throughout the Borough. The purpose of the District is to encourage a mix of commercial and office uses, a variety of heights, and to provide for the protection of the storage capacity and flow of flood waters. Permitted uses include office buildings, hotel/motels, parking, recreation areas, retail, municipal, financial institutions, restaurants, theaters, fitness centers, and residences. The highest building elevation permitted is 250 feet for structures with at least 70% of their floor area designated as residential and 200 feet for all other structures. In the SP-1 District a minimum of at least 15% of each lot shall be designated and maintained as open space, and in the SP-2 District a minimum of 10% in the aggregate of all lots in the district shall be provided as open space. Lots in the SP-2 District must provide for public riverfront access. The average of all lots in the SP-1 District must be a minimum of three acres and the minimum size of any lot must be one acre. The average of all lots the SP-2 District must be a minimum of two acres and the minimum size of any lot must be two acres.

SP-3 Specially Planned District Three – The intent of the SP-3 District is to allow for all uses permitted in the SP-1 and SP-2 Districts as well as industrial uses. The average of all lots or subdivisions within the district shall be a minimum of two acres, and the minimum of any one lot shall be one acre. The maximum building coverage of total lot area for industrial uses is 65% (building coverage for non-industrial uses is 50%) and the maximum impervious coverage of total lot area for industrial uses is 85%. A minimum of 15% of the total lot areas for non-industrial uses must be provided as public open space. Included in

CHAPTER · 1

this requirement is a 25-foot-wide Riverfront Access Area dedicated to the Borough.

FP Flood Plain Conservation District - The goal of the Floodplain Conservation District is to protect natural resources located within the floodplain. The Floodplain District prohibits most new development and severely restricts existing uses and development to those actions which would not adversely affect either the floodplain or waters herein.

Multi-Family Dwelling Overlay District - The intent of the Multi-Family Dwelling Overlay District is to permit modern multi-family apartments in the BR-1 and BR-2 Residential Districts and to provide a mix of housing types and options to Borough residents. The further intent of this district is to provide specific performance standards to enhance this housing type and preserve neighboring residential properties. Development in this district may not exceed sixteen dwelling units per acre. Maximum building coverage should not exceed 30% of total lot area, with maximum impervious surface coverage not exceeding 70% of total lot area. All newly developed land in this district should provide 10% of total acreage in open space.

Elderly/Disabled Housing Overlay District - The intent of the Elderly/Disabled Housing Overlay District is to permit safe, modern, and accessible housing for elderly residents and residents with disabilities in the BR-1 and BR-2 Residential Districts. Development in this district should not exceed a density of twenty-five dwelling units per acre. Maximum building coverage should not exceed 40% of total lot area and



Second Avenue Meadow

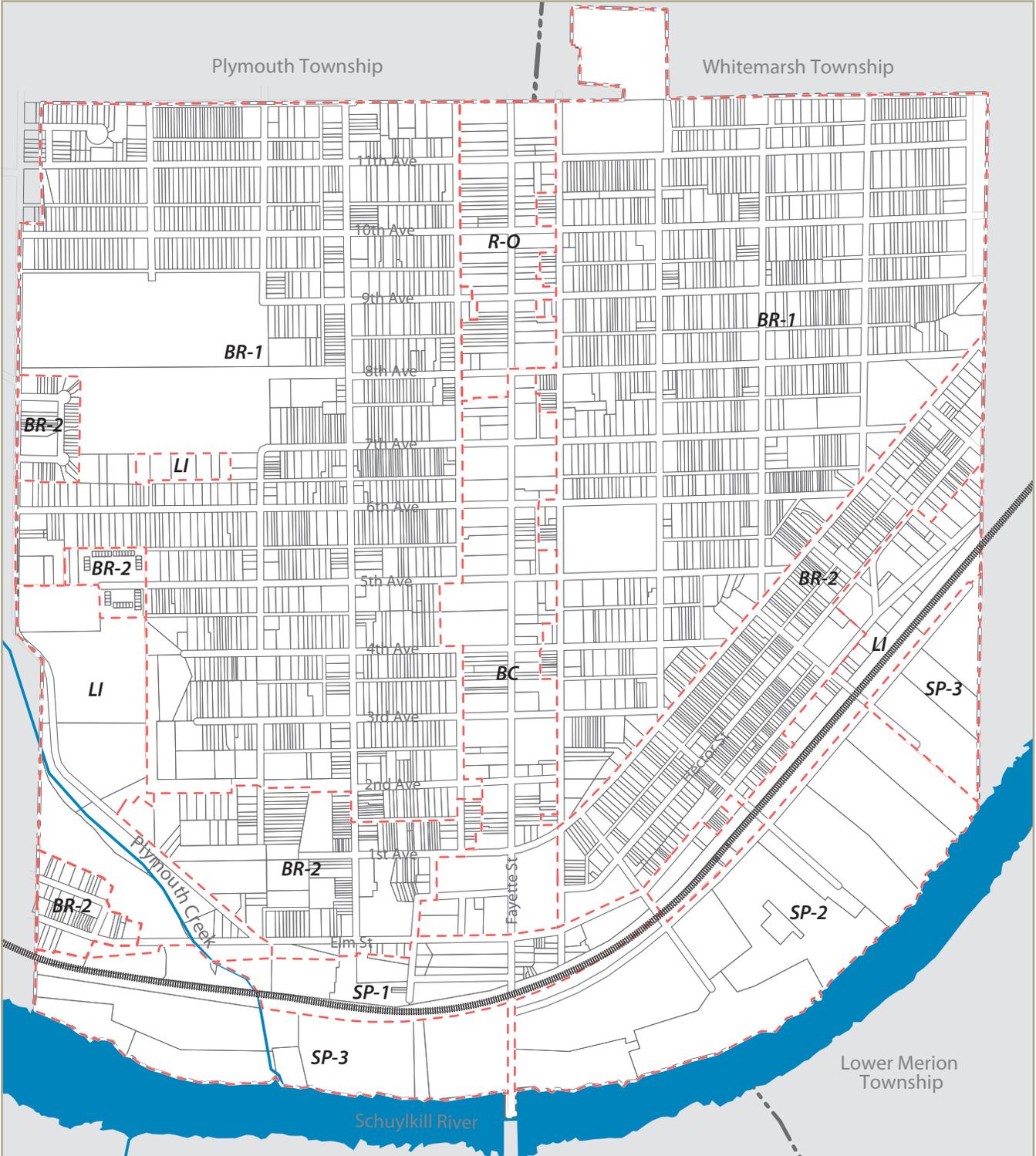
maximum impervious cover should not exceed 70% of total lot area

Existing Protected Open Space

All of the permanently protected land in Conshohocken is owned by the Borough. There are currently eight municipally-owned parks within the limits of the Borough, most of which are active park and recreation lands. The largest public land area owned by the Borough is Sutcliffe Park, located between Colwell Lane and Maple Street. This 23-acre property contains the majority of the Borough's recreational resources.

The other substantial large properties owned by the Borough include Mary Wood Park and A.A. Garthwait Stadium & Borusiewicz Field (A & B Fields). Mary Wood Park is a four-acre property containing a number of historic structures, which provide facilities for both indoor and outdoor recreation. A & B Fields is a nine-acre park located in the northeastern section of the Borough. This park provides a large

MAP#2 ZONING



Legend

Municipal Boundary		Borough Residential District One	BR-1	Limited Industrial District	LI
Road		Borough Residential District Two	BR-2	Specially Planned District One	SP-1
Railroad		Residential Office District	R-O	Specially Planned District Two	SP-2
Creek/Stream		Borough Commercial District	BC	Specially Planned District Three	SP-3



COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

multi-use football/baseball stadium as well as other recreational opportunities.

There are also a number of smaller parks located throughout the Borough. These parks include Aubrey Collins Park in the southeastern portion of the Borough on East Elm Street; the Haines & Salvati Memorial Park located in the southwestern portion of the Borough near the intersection of West Elm Street and Colwell Lane; and Second Avenue Meadow, located on Second Avenue between Wood and Maple Streets.

In addition to these parks, the Borough possesses a deed to a 100-foot-wide strip of land along the Schuylkill River from just east of Ash Street to the vicinity of the Whitemarsh Township Line.

In total, the Borough owns (or controls through easements) 45.84 acres of public active or passive open space.

Major Natural Features Located within the Township

The most prominent natural feature of Conshohocken Borough is the Schuylkill River. Aside from scenic vistas and tranquil spaces within the River valley, the Schuylkill River has been the primary force in the history and development of Conshohocken Borough. Other important natural features within the Borough are at least partially related to their proximity to the Schuylkill River.

Socio-Economic Analysis

The socio-economic characteristics of Conshohocken have changed over the past two decades and are continually changing as redevelopment of the Borough takes place. The following section describes the demographic characteristics as recorded through

the 2000 U.S. Census and compares this information to the 1990 U.S. Census.

POPULATION			
Municipality	1990 Census	2000 Census	% Change 1990 - 2000
Conshohocken Borough	8,064	7,589	-5.89%
Montgomery County	678,111	750,097	10.62%

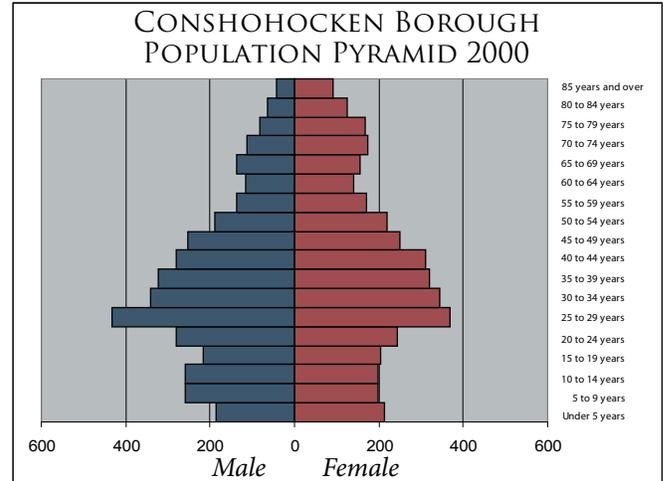
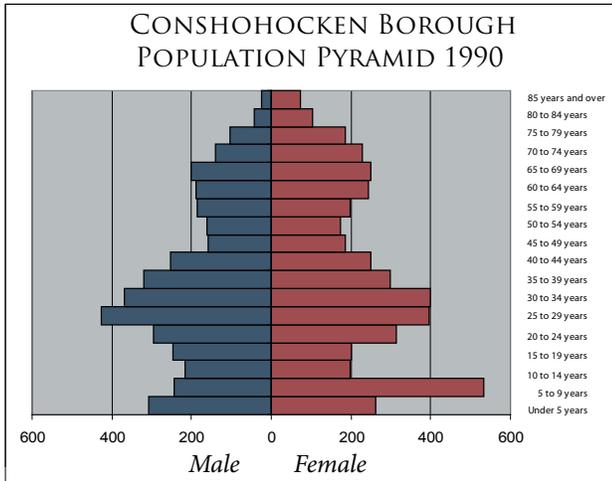
Population

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Conshohocken Borough had a population of 8,064 in 1990. By the year 2000, the population of Conshohocken Borough declined slightly to 7,589, representing a 5.9% decrease in population for the decade. The table above illustrates the changes in Conshohocken's population in comparison to the County.

The breakdown of the population by age is shown in the following population pyramids. The population pyramids show the male and female population within the Borough as recorded by the U.S. Census in Years 1990 and 2000. The largest populations represented in both population pyramids are the 25-39 age groups. These age groups are illustrated as lumps in the pyramids and indicate signs of the expanding young to middle-age adult population of the Borough.

Equally important is the second largest segment of the population, shown by the 14 and under groups in the Borough. It is possible that these are the children of the young and middle aged adult cohorts. It is also very likely that the baby boomers, those in the 45-54 age group with children in their 20's have more children than is shown in these diagrams. As demonstrated in the population pyramids, the age groups

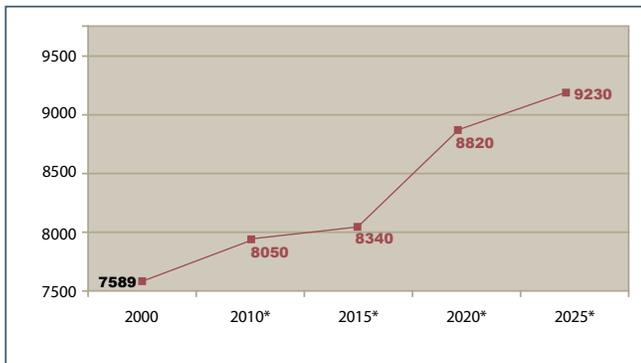
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from 50+ form classic pyramids as the population of each subsequent age group is smaller than the previous age group in the Borough.

Looking into the future, the trend indicates that the population is projected to gradually increase in Conshohocken. The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) forecasts that the population of Conshohocken Borough will increase by 75%, adding 4,500 new residents between the year 2000 and year 2025 (DVRPC Regional Data Bulletin #73, March 2002).

DVRPC Population Forecast



Families and Household Size

The trend in family composition and household size has been changing nationally from the nuclear family consisting of parents and children to more single homeowners and un-related individuals living together. This has caused the average household size to decrease on average in the United States and in Montgomery County. The average household size of Conshohocken Borough has remained consistent with the national and regional trends. Average household size in the Borough experienced a slight reduction of just under two-tenths a person per household, from 1990 (2.45 persons per household) to 2000 (2.27 persons per household).

Approximately 55% (1,835 households) of the households within the Borough in 2000 consisted of families. Approximately 22% of these households consist of families with children less than 18 years of age. Non-family households make up the remaining 45% of households in the Borough and of these approximately 13% are householders over 65 years of age living alone.

COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

Employment

According to the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (Regional Data Bulletin #73, Population and Employment Forecasts) in 1990 Conshohocken Borough had 5,435 people in the labor force. This number was forecasted to grow by 565 (10.4%) to 6,000 by the year 2000. From 2000 to 2010, the number of jobs is forecast to increase an

additional 30% and from 2010 to 2020, it is forecast to increase an additional 23.1%. The projected employment growth for Montgomery County remains at a relatively stable 6% across the thirty-year period discussed here. When compared to the projected growth in employment for the entire County, Conshohocken Borough, has a much better rate of employment growth. The following tables demonstrate

EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION (2000)		
Occupation	Conshohocken Borough	
	Number	Percent
Management, professional, and related occupations	1,454	33.7%
Service occupations	546	12.6%
Sales and office occupations	1,364	31.6%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	10	0.2%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	353	8.2%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	593	13.7%

EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY (2000)		
Industry	Conshohocken Borough	
	Number	Percent
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	17	0.4%
Construction	364	8.4%
Manufacturing	682	15.8%
Wholesale trade	111	2.6%
Retail trade	536	12.4%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	103	2.4%
Information	146	3.4%
Finance, insurance, real estate, and rental and leasing	415	9.6%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	514	11.9%
Educational, health and social services	708	16.4%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	381	8.8%
Other services (except public administration)	178	4.1%
Public administration	165	3.8%

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two different measures of employment - employment changes by occupation and changes by industry.

Employment by Occupation

Management, professional, and related occupations are the most prevalent among working individuals in Conshohocken Borough. This category is closely followed by the sales and office occupations, then production/transportation/material moving, and service occupations.

It is clear from the chart on the previous page that occupations in the service sector provide the bulk of employment for residents of the Borough. This is consistent with the trend over the past few decades in the United States of increasing employment in the service sectors and decreasing employment in the industrial sectors.

Employment by Industry

The chart on the previous page also demonstrates that employment in the educational, health and social services industries is the most prevalent for residents of the Borough. The second highest employment industry category was manufacturing, followed by retail trade.

There are several major employers within Conshohocken Borough, including the following (with number of employees):

- Jacobs Engineering Group Inc. (399)
- Mercy Catholic Medical Center (292)
- Rumsey Electric Company (139)
- Aon Service Corporation (135)
- Cardionet Inc. (131)
- Verizon Services Corporation (124)
- Hale Products Inc. (102)
- Colonial School District Admin. Offices (99)
- Ubiquitel Inc. (95)
- FNX Ltd. (89)
- Borough of Conshohocken (66)
- Jack Francis Inc. (66)
- Wachovia Securities, Inc. (66)
- General Fiber Communications, Inc. (57)
- AMR Construction Inc. (55)

Income

The income characteristics of Conshohocken Borough provide a snapshot of the wealth in the community. While there are several measures of income used by the U.S. Census Bureau, median household income and per capita income are the two measures most commonly used. The following table illustrates

INCOME				
Municipality	Median household income in 1989	Median household income in 1999	Per capita income in 1989	Per capita income in 1999
Conshohocken Borough	\$ 29,221.00	\$ 43,599.00	\$ 13,566.00	\$ 22,128.00
Montgomery County	\$ 43,720.00	\$ 60,829.00	\$ 21,990.00	\$ 30,898.00

COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

median household income and per capita income for the Borough compared with Montgomery County.

Housing

The median value of housing units in the Conshohocken Borough has increased over the past decade. According to the 1990 U.S. Census, the median value of housing in Conshohocken Borough was \$97,600. By the year 2000, the U.S. Census reported that the median value of a home in the Borough had increased by approximately 16% percent to \$113,600. Comparatively, the median value of housing in Montgomery County increased over the decade by 12% from \$143,400 to \$160,700.

There has also been a slight increase in the number of housing units in Conshohocken Borough. The 1990 U.S. Census recorded 3,287 housing units in the Borough. In the year 2000, this number increased by 231 units, to 3,518, a 7% increase for the ten-year period. In comparison, housing units in Montgomery County have increased a 12% increase. The lower growth rate seen in housing units in the Borough is likely due to the highly developed nature of the land located within its borders.

Status and Summary of Existing Township Documents:

The 2005 Open Space Plan utilized information from several Borough documents and multiple outside data sources. These data sources are indicated below:

Conshohocken Borough Open Space Plan of 1995 – The Open Space Update is the existing document that was thoroughly reviewed for information related

to past goals and objectives, their current status and importance, and importance in the future.

Conshohocken Borough Zoning Ordinance – This Ordinance is designed to promote the health, safety, morals and general welfare of the Borough by regulating land use and related activities.

Conshohocken Borough Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance – This Ordinance provides regulations to create conditions that promote the health, safety, general welfare of the citizens of the Borough of Conshohocken.

Conshohocken Revitalization Plan: A Community at the Crossroads (2002) – This document involved a review of several areas, including Economic Development, Infrastructure / Transportation, Housing and Neighborhood Preservation, and Public Safety and Communication, with a view toward needed revitalization activities.

Conshohocken Traffic and Parking Management Study (2004) – This study evaluated existing traffic and parking conditions within the Borough and developed a series of immediate and long-term recommendations for transportation and parking improvements.

Fayette Street Master Plan: Downtown - Riverfront Linkages Streetscape Plan (2005) – This report defined qualitative design standards for the pedestrian environment of Fayette Street, sought to improve pedestrian safety in the downtown, enhance gateways to the Borough and linkages to the riverfront, and provide way-finding and informational signage sys-

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tems. The Master Plan provides conceptual design guidelines for streetscape improvements which will potentially contribute to strengthening connections between the developing riverfront and Conshohocken's downtown.

Other Sources:

U.S. Census Bureau – Data and information from the 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census counts were utilized to provide demographic, population and housing trends within the Borough.

2004 Draft Montgomery County Comprehensive Plan: Transportation Chapter - This document provides the future transportation plans from the County level.

Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC): Regional Data Bulletin #73, Population and Employment Forecasts 2000 to 2025 – This data bulletin provides the DVRPC forecasted population and employment counts out to 2025.

CHAPTER 2

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Borough of Conshohocken is a mostly built-out community working to maintain its quality of life while experiencing significant growth and redevelopment. There are many open space and urban greening opportunities that currently exist within the Borough of Conshohocken. The Borough intends to enhance the quality of life and provide residents, workers and visitors with open space facilities through the following actions:

- Undertake greening of the Borough by planting additional vegetation as part of streetscaping projects in both the residential and non-residential areas within the Borough.
- Identifying and working with the owners of the remaining undeveloped and underdeveloped properties to preserve sensitive natural features and provide additional amenities where feasible.
- Working with Montgomery County to acquire properties that are deemed a priority for preservation for use as active or passive open space, or that are a culturally or historically important resource within the Borough.
- Coordinating open space projects that extend outside of the Borough into Plymouth Township, Whitmarsh Township, West Conshohocken Borough and Lower Merion Township.
- Teaming with non-profit organizations to pool resources and attempt to leverage additional monies to create active and passive open space areas.
- Working with developers to create intelligent development layouts and incorporate new publicly-accessible open space areas that link to other open



Streetscaping upgrades along Hector Street

space areas through trails, sidewalk connections, greenways or riparian corridors.

Mission Statement:

The Borough of Conshohocken will continue to provide a high quality of life by providing public access to and along the Riverfront, undertaking an urban greening program, expanding recreational opportunities, preserving historic and cultural resources and working with property owners and developers to preserve new open spaces and enhance existing open spaces.

Goals and Objectives:

Goal #1

Enhance public access to and along the Schuylkill Riverfront while providing opportunities to appreciate and preserve the unique natural resources of the

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Schuylkill River. Eliminate the feel of private space and create a sense of public open space.

Objectives:

- a. Acquire the necessary easements along the river to complete the Schuylkill Riverbank Path.
- b. Develop a Riverbank Path along the entire length of the Borough's riverfront.
- c. Encourage creative alternatives for providing public access on private lands within this area.
- d. Maximize the Borough's access to the Schuylkill River and the Schuylkill River Trail.
- e. Encourage the re-establishment of a riparian corridor and restore natural habitat along the riverbank.
- f. Eliminate the feel of private open space that exists with much of the public open space along the Riverfront and create a sense of public open space that encourages all Borough residents and visitors to utilize these areas.

Goal #2:

Provide active recreation amenities that will meet the current and future needs of Borough residents, workers and visitors.

Objectives:

- a. Ensure that the Borough continues to provide athletic fields, courts and other active recreation areas, and plan new water-based activities such as canoeing, kayaking, and rowing, and expanding existing park and recreational areas.
- b. Work to create walking trails and multi-use trails throughout the Borough along the Schuylkill River and Plymouth Creek in conjunction with

neighboring municipalities and Montgomery County.

- c. Create public access points from the Borough to the Schuylkill River and to other trail segments in Plymouth Township, Whitmarsh Township and West Conshohocken Borough. Ensure that access to the river is provided, park areas along the river are established, and that the Schuylkill Riverbank Path is completed.
- d. Consider potential park upgrades that should be undertaken to enhance the quality of the Borough's parks.
- e. Develop safe routes throughout the Borough to schools, parks, recreation areas, trails and the Schuylkill Riverfront.

Goal #3:

Provide passive open space amenities that will meet the current and future need of Borough residents, workers and visitors.

Objectives:

- a. Utilize the Schuylkill Riverbank Path for passive open space such as a riparian buffer, as active open space such as a walking trail and as access to river docks.
- b. Re-establish vegetation and trees along the Riverwalk footpath.

Goal #4:

Protect the significant natural features that exist within the Borough.

Objectives:

- a. Create a Natural Features Resource Protection Ordinance that will focus on the preservation

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

of riparian corridors along the Schuylkill River, Plymouth Creek and other smaller creeks.

- b. Establish setbacks from stream corridors along the Schuylkill River, Plymouth Creek and other smaller streams.
- c. Enact regulations protecting and maintaining existing trees in the Borough.
- d. Undertake a stream corridor study most likely at the multi-municipal level for the Schuylkill River and waterways within its watershed. Analyze the existing features and identify potential threats to these resources. Recommend policies and actions that can be taken to conserve and/or enhance these resources.

Goal #5:

Preserve significant historic and cultural resources within the Borough.

Objectives:

- a. Encourage owners of significant historic, cultural, archaeological and educationally important sites to become registered at the national, state and local levels.
- b. Develop tools to preserve historic and culturally significant resources in the Borough.
- c. Develop educational and public outreach tools to help the public understand the importance and presence of the historic and cultural heritage of the Borough.

Goal #6:

Identify specific revitalization activities related to open space preservation that could be funded by the Green Fields/Green Towns Open Space Program and other funding programs.

Objective:

- a. Undertake urban greening activities throughout the Borough in both residential and non-residential areas.
- b. Implement streetscaping activities that will improve pedestrian safety and mobility in the Borough and enhance the aesthetics of the street environment.

Goal #7:

Protect scenic viewsheds and vistas that exist within the Borough.

Objectives:

- a. Work with developers to maximize the view that could be provided both to Borough residents and to those people living or working in structures located along the river.
- b. Protect the views of the Schuylkill River and the cliffs and forested ridgeline in Lower Merion Township that exist from various locations within the Borough.

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CHAPTER 3

EXISTING PROTECTED LANDS

Types of Protected Land in Conshohocken Borough

Conshohocken Borough currently contains a significant amount of protected land. Protected land consists of any land established as open space in perpetuity through one of many different types of protection, including, but not limited to, municipal ownership, outright purchase, farmland easements, and conservation easements. Most of the protected land in Conshohocken Borough consists of public parkland. The existing protected Borough open space consists of the following types of land and the associated acreage:

Municipal Parkland and Open Space

The combined municipally-owned open space and recreational resources found in Conshohocken create an extensive matrix of parkland and open space and provide excellent potential for additional connections with surrounding municipalities. A total of nine municipal parks exist within the Borough, including the following:

Schuylkill Riverfront – This strip of land owned by the Borough extends 100-feet inland from the Schuylkill River banks, from the Whitemarsh Township Line to the Matsonford Bridge.

Aubrey Collins Park – This mini-park is located along the 200 block of East Elm Street. The park is approximately 0.5-acres in size and contains a tot-lot, a small basketball court, and a picnic pavilion.



Mary Wood Park

Mary Wood Park – This four-acre neighborhood park is bounded by Fifth and Sixth Avenues and Harry and Hollowell Streets, and is in close proximity to Fayette Street. This park is accessible to local schools and is used for after-school and weekend activities. The historic Mary Wood House and Caretaker House, as well as the Fellowship House, are located within the park. The Fellowship House contains an indoor gym, a community center, and other facilities used by Borough residents.

A.A. Garthwait Stadium & Borusiewicz Field – This nine-acre park is situated in the northeastern section of the Borough, between Eleventh and Twelfth Avenues and Harry and Hollowell Streets. The park is comprised of two field areas. A.A. Garthwait Stadium contains a large football stadium, which also serves as a baseball field. Borusiewicz Field has a football/

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baseball field, but no stadium. Borusiewicz Field also provides space for a gazebo, sitting area, playground equipment, and a tot lot.

Sutcliff Park – This twenty-three acre park located in the northwest section of the Borough is bounded by



Sutcliffe Park

Sixth Avenue, Tenth Avenue, Colwell Lane and Wood Street. Sutcliffe Park is the largest park facility within Conshohocken and contains most of the Borough's active recreational resources. The park contains four baseball fields, three basketball courts, various playground equipment, a picnic area, and walking trails with exercise stations.

The Schuylkill River Trail – This regional trail extends from Valley Forge National Historic Park to Center City Philadelphia. The trail parallels the R-6 SEPTA line from Norristown to Manayunk, including the approximately 1.2 mile segment through Conshohocken.

Second Avenue Meadow – Located at the western end of Second Avenue between Maple and Wood Streets, this 0.4 acre park was purchased in 1995 with the aid of a \$66,000 grant from the Montgomery County Open Space Program.

Haines and Salvati Memorial Park – Located near the intersection of West Elm Street and Colwell Lane, this mini-park is approximately one-acre in size. Serving the south-western neighborhoods of the Borough, this park contains a small basketball court, several pieces of play equipment, a picnic table, and benches. A stormwater management basin is located adjacent to the park.

Other Parkland

There are no county, state, or federal parks, or lands owned by watershed associations or conservancy groups within Conshohocken Borough.

Types of Temporarily Protected Land in the Conshohocken Borough

Temporarily protected land consists of school properties, private recreation land, and open institutional properties. Of these, Conshohocken Borough has institutional land holdings in the form of school land and church land.

Significant Institutional Land Holdings

There are approximately sixteen acres of significant institutional land holdings in Conshohocken Borough. The more significant parcels of land include the following:

Conshohocken Elementary School - 0.94 acres, located on Harry Street.

Saint Mary's Catholic Church - 1.74 acres, located on Elm Street.

Saint Matthews Catholic Church - 1.53 acres, located on Fayette Street.

EXISTING PROTECTED LANDS

Open Space Covenant Lands (Act 515)

Act 515 enables Pennsylvania counties to create a covenant with landowners in order to preserve farm land, forest land, or areas directly impacting a water supply or open space by taxing land according to its existing use rather than the prevailing market value. The program is voluntary and requires a minimum acreage enrollment that will remain in the designated land use for a period of ten years. There are currently no Act 515 lands in Conshohocken Borough.

Clean and Green Lands (Act 319)

In 1973, Pennsylvanians passed a Constitutional Amendment permitting preferential assessment of farmland and forest land. Act 319 is designed to preserve farmland, forest land, and open space by taxing land according to its use rather than the prevailing market value. The program is voluntary and generally requires a minimum of ten acres that will remain in the designated use. Land taken out of the permitted use becomes subject to a roll-back tax, imposed for up to seven years plus six percent simple interest. Conshohocken Borough currently has no lands enrolled in the Act 319 program.

Golf Courses

There are no golf courses in Conshohocken Borough.

Agricultural Security Areas

Conshohocken Borough has no land enrolled as Agricultural Security Areas.

Permanently Protected Farmland

The Farmland Preservation Program in Montgomery County is a voluntary program staffed by

the Montgomery County Planning Commission. The Planning Commission and Montgomery County Farm Board are tasked with the job of prioritizing and making decisions on which properties that are in an Agricultural Security Area are the most important for preservation in a given year. Preservation of properties occurs through the purchasing of agricultural easements from productive farms within Montgomery County.

There are no farms within the Borough of Conshohocken.

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CHAPTER 4

POTENTIALLY VULNERABLE RESOURCES

What are the Potentially Vulnerable Resources?

Potentially Vulnerable Resources are resources such as historic sites and undeveloped land including open space linkages, creeks and streams, floodplain areas, steep slopes, and highly sensitive natural areas such as wetlands, rock outcroppings, and woodlands. Additional vulnerable resources could include topographic characteristics, such as the vistas formed by the land as it descends to the Schuylkill River. The goal of this plan is not only to identify these assets in Conshocken Borough but to develop a scheme by which they can and should be protected.

Natural Features

Natural Features refer to the geology, topography, waters, slopes, vegetation, wildlife, and scenic resources of an area. In Conshohocken Borough, there are important natural features, such as the Schuylkill River. The River forms the southern edge of the Borough and greatly impacts the character, history, quality of life and safety of the Borough and its residents.

Physiography and Geology

Though seldom seen or considered, a region's geology plays an important role in all parts of the natural and built world above. Underlying geology will exert influence on an area's topography, soil, hydrology, (both surface and subsurface), vegetative communities and building suitability.

Montgomery County is located within the Triassic Lowland, Piedmont Upland, and Piedmont Lowland



Unimproved 100' Schuylkill River greenway area

portions of the Piedmont Physiographic Province. The northern two thirds of the county are located in the Triassic Lowlands and the remaining southern part is located within the Piedmont Upland and Piedmont Lowland. Conshohocken Borough is almost completely contained within in the Piedmont Lowland section, a very small portion, along the Schuylkill River in the southern portion of the Borough, is located in the Piedmont Upland. Geologically, the Piedmont Lowland is primarily composed of limestone and dolomite, with some shale and sandstone throughout. The Piedmont Upland is primarily composed of schist, gneiss, and quartzite.

The rock types found in the Upland are much more resistant to weathering than those of the Piedmont Lowland, and these differences are the principal reasons for the dramatic bluffs located across the river in Lower Merion. Two primary geologic forma-

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tions comprise the Piedmont Lowlands, the Conestoga Formation and the Octoraro Formation. A Diabase dike also extends across the Borough in an east/west direction. The Piedmont Upland section of Conshohocken is underlain by the 'Glenarm Wissahickon' Formation.

Conestoga Formation

The Conestoga Formation is comprised of a medium-gray, impure limestone with black graphitic shale partings. This formation is moderately resistant to weathering, showing slight signs of weathering to a shallow depth. The Conestoga formation provides good surface drainage and minor subsurface drainage. Few sinkholes can be found. Overall permeability is moderate to low, with a low magnitude of secondary porosity provided in joint and solution channel openings.

The Conestoga Formation is the primary formation underlying Conshohocken Borough, and can be found under approximately 75% of the Borough, except for the two areas where the Octoraro formation is found and a small area in the south, where the 'Glenarm Wissahickon' formation is located.

Diabase Dike

Diabase occurs in Pennsylvania primarily as dikes and sheets. A dike is formed when molten rock enters into the crack and crevasses of existing rock layers. The molten rock then cools creating a thin band of new rock referred to as a dike. Diabase dikes are generally 5 to 500 feet thick. Diabase is generally dark gray to black, very fine-grained and dense. It is highly resistant to weathering. Where weathering occurs it is usually only at a very shallow depth and produces large, rounded boulders. Diabase provides

fair surface drainage. This rock type provides a low permeability and joint openings which provide a very low secondary porosity.

A thin dike of Diabase exists in an east/west direction, entering the Borough from the Schuylkill River, north of Fayette Street, and exiting the Borough into Whitemarsh Township, just south of Righter Street.

'Glenarm Wissahickon' Formation

The Wissahickon Formation is mostly schist, comprised of quartz and feldspar and appears light-gray to gray-green in color. This Formation is moderately resistant to weathering, although it often weathers to a moderate depth, resulting in plate-like rubble at the base of exposed areas. The Wissahickon Formation provides good surface drainage and joint and cleavage openings in the rock provide a low secondary porosity and low permeability.

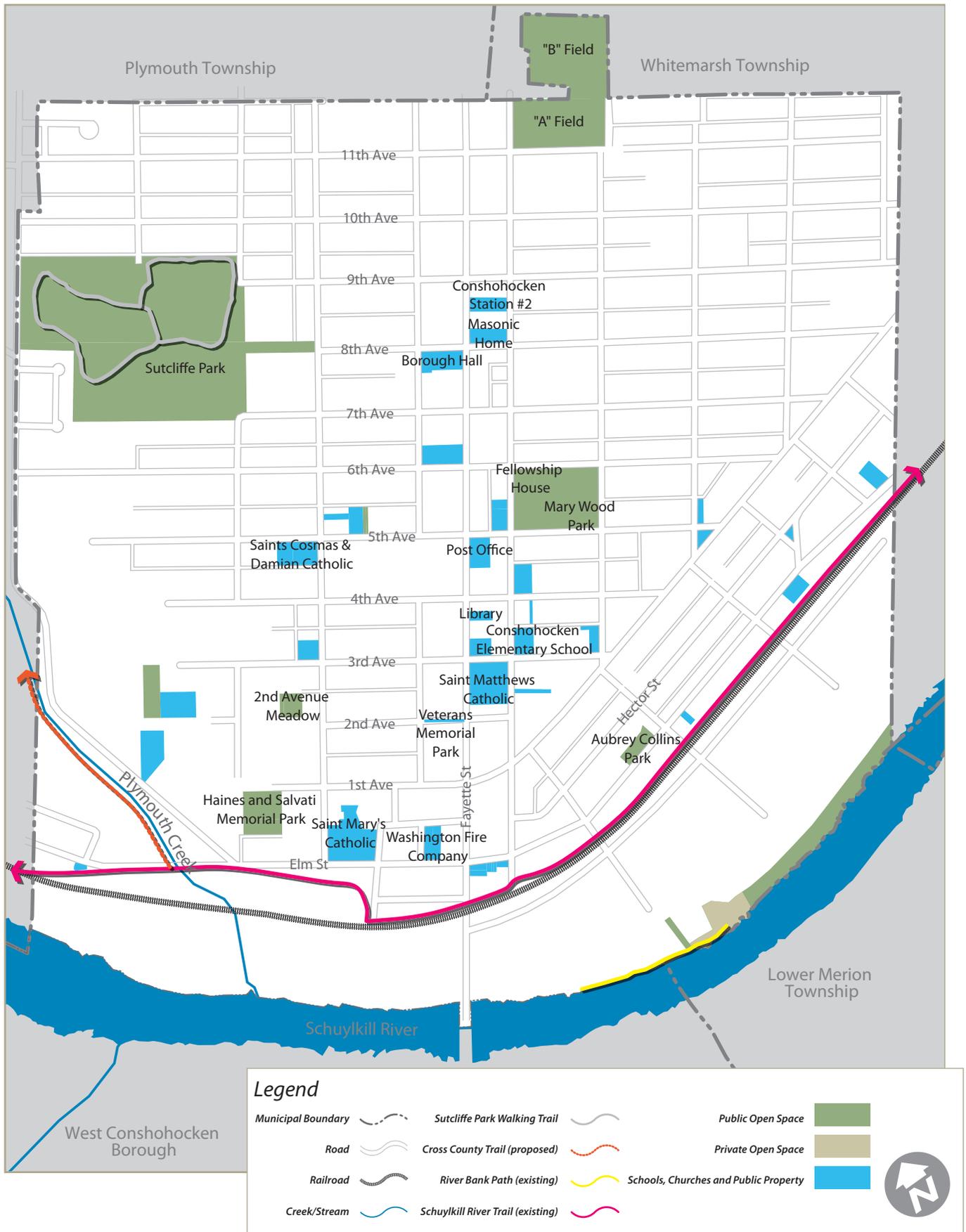
The Wissahickon Formation comprises a very small portion of the total geology underlying Conshohocken Borough. It is only found in the far southern portion of the Borough, which is located in the Piedmont Upland.

Octoraro Formation

The Octoraro Formation is a phyllite that contains schist, hornblende gneiss, and granitized members. It has quartz-albite-muscovite-chlorite assemblages. The soil was recently reclassified to Wissahickon Formation, albite-chlorite schist; however, all Commonwealth Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) references to this soil continue to refer to the Octoraro Formation.

The Octoraro Formation comprises a significant portion of the geology underlying the Borough. This

MAP#3 OPEN SPACE RESOURCES



POTENTIALLY VULNERABLE RESOURCES

Formation exists from the Schuylkill River north of Fayette Street, and runs northeast to approximately 7th Avenue and Hallowell Street. It is also found in the northeastern corner of the Borough, north of 8th Avenue and east of Jones Street.

Soils

Soils form primarily by weathering bedrock and therefore have characteristics related to those of the underlying rock formations. Soil characteristics are not static but are continually changing over time due to the actions of continued bedrock weathering, the activity of micro-organisms and the influence of humans. As a result, soils above similar geologies may vary with respect to depth to bedrock, depth to groundwater, color, mineral characteristics, fertility, erodibility and texture. Soils subsequently have a large influence on land cover and vegetation types, quality and quantity of groundwater, rates of erosion, and the aesthetic qualities of the landscape.

Soils of urban areas present additional challenges when considering their properties. Long histories of disturbance, often caused by cutting and filling activities, have significantly altered the soil characteristics, making soil behavior in similar situations extremely variable and unpredictable. These soils are often listed as a separate series. Made Land and Stony Land are two examples found in Conshohocken, but in many cases these areas have not yet been adequately identified. Due to the potential variability of soils in urban areas, their suitability must be determined on a site specific basis.

Soil in Conshohocken Borough is comprised of thirteen different soil types. While each type has distinct characteristics, similar soil types can be grouped into a soil series. The series describes the

overall characteristics of the soils within each series. The non-technical descriptions for each soil series found are listed below.

Bouldery Alluvial Land

These are areas of cut, fill and rubble or other areas with inconsistent natural soil properties and onsite investigations would be needed to determine specific suitability.

Duffield Series

The Duffield series consists of very deep and deep, well drained soils on uplands and formed in material weathered from impure limestone. The series is 48 to 99 inches to bedrock. Permeability is moderate and available water holding capacity is high. A water table when present is greater than six feet. The soil productivity is very high.

Glenville Series

The Glenville series consists of very deep, moderately well to somewhat poorly-drained soils on uplands. The soils are typically 48 to 96 inches to bedrock. Permeability is slow and available water holding capacity is medium. A water table when present is 1.0-2.5 feet. The soil productivity is moderate.

Hatboro Series

The Hatboro series consists of deep poorly drained soils on floodplains and formed in recently deposited micaceous sediments washed from uplands. The series is typically 48 to 96 inches to bedrock. Permeability is moderate and available water holding capacity is high. A water table when present is 0.0 – 1.0 feet. The soil productivity is high.

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Made Land

Made land is mostly comprised of cut, fill, rubble land or other areas with little or no natural soil or are soils with such variable properties that onsite investigations are needed to determine suitability for most uses.

Manor Series

The Manor series consists of very deep, well drained to somewhat excessively drained soils on uplands and formed in materials weathered mainly from micaceous schist. These soils are typically 24 to 99 inches to bedrock. Permeability is moderate and available water holding capacity is medium. A water table when present is greater than six feet. The soil productivity is moderate.

Rowland Series

The Rowland series consists of very deep, moderately well to somewhat poorly drained soils on floodplains and formed in alluvial sediments. The series is 48 to 72 inches to bedrock. Permeability is moderately slow and available water holding capacity is high. A water table when present is 1.0 – 2.0 feet. The soil productivity is very high.

Stony Land, Steep

These areas are comprised of extremely variable soils and fill materials, occurring on steep slopes. Most areas exhibit rapid run-off and unpredictable soil characteristics. On-site investigations are necessary to determine suitability for most uses.

Agricultural Soils

The Municipalities Planning Code states as one of the purposes of land use controls in Pennsylvania,

the preservation of “prime agricultural and farmland considering topography, soil type and classification, and present use.” In Pennsylvania, prime farmland has been lost to industrial and urban uses at an alarming rate. The loss of prime farmland to other uses puts increased pressure on marginal lands, which are generally more erodible, droughty, and less productive and cannot be easily cultivated. Agricultural soils and farming activities are important considerations in the open space planning process as these resources are important areas to consider for permanent protection. While not always an obvious concern in more urban areas, the retention and protection of remaining parcels of prime farmland serves as a powerful resource in the identification, protection, and funding of remaining open space parcels.

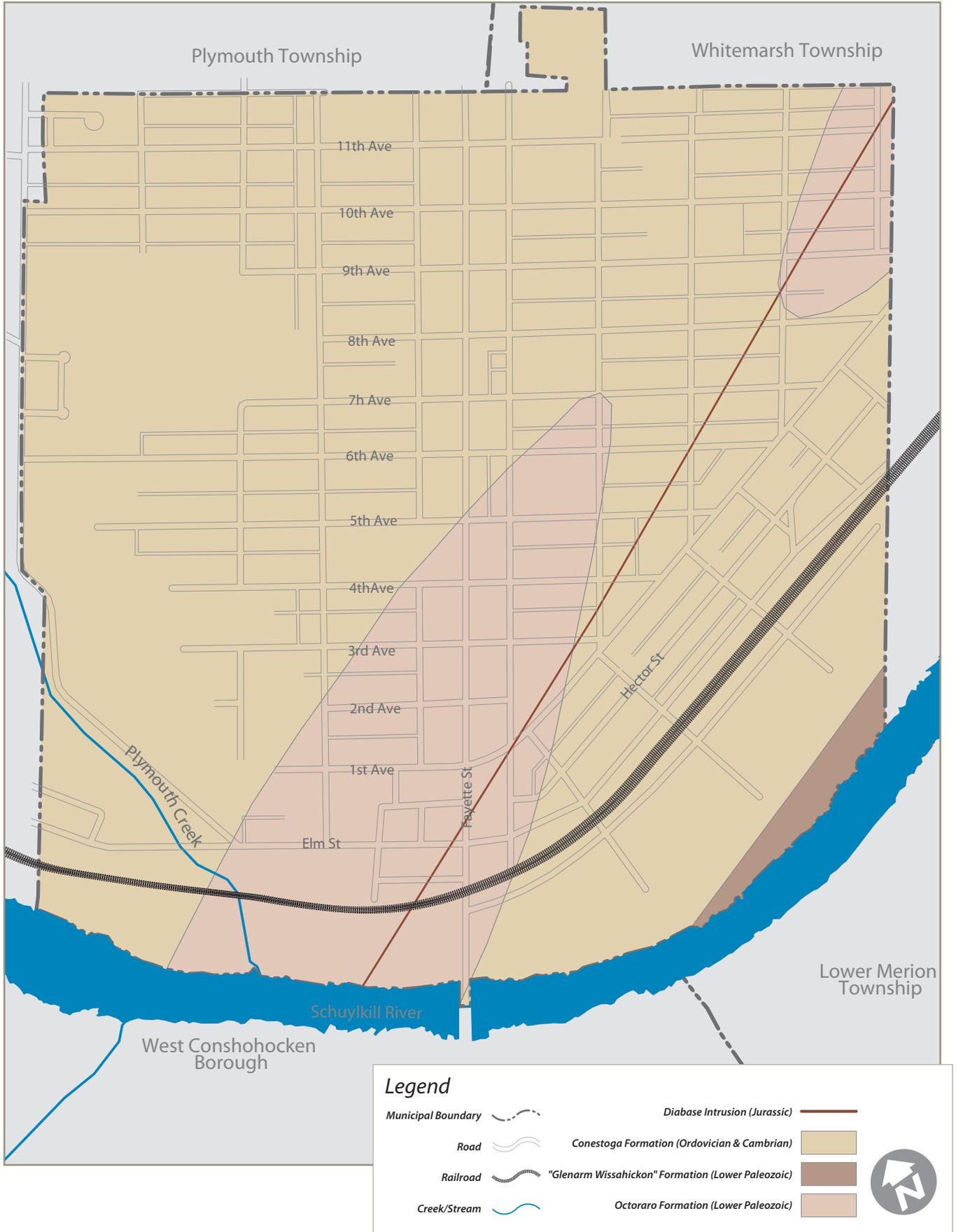
Prime farmland is defined as areas having an adequate and dependable supply of moisture from precipitation or irrigation. Prime farmland requires favorable temperatures, a long growing season, and soils with acceptable levels of acidity or alkalinity. Prime farmland has few or no rocks and is highly permeable to water and air. Neither is it excessively erodible or saturated with water for long periods or frequently flooded during the growing season. The slope ranges mainly from 0 to 6 percent. In Conshohocken Borough, there are two soils types that are considered prime agricultural soils:

Prime Agricultural Soils

1. Glennville silt loam
2. Rowland silt loam

These soils comprise approximately 33.8 acres of land which is 5% of total land in the Borough.

MAP#4 GEOLOGY



POTENTIALLY VULNERABLE RESOURCES

In Conshohocken Borough, there are two soil types considered to be agricultural soils of statewide importance:

Agricultural Soils of Statewide Importance

1. Duffield silt loam
2. Hatboro silt loam

These soils comprise approximately 6.5 acres of land, which is 1% of total land in the Borough.

Seasonal high water table

High water table soils and soils with a shallow depth to bedrock are two major soil dependant constraints to development. Soils with a high water table occur when groundwater is less than three feet from the surface. By evaluating soil characteristics seasonal high water table classification can be evaluated. The following soil types are typically associated with a seasonal high water table:

1. Bouldery alluvial land
2. Hatboro silt loam
3. Made land
4. Rowland silt loam

Geologic Hazards

There are no known geologic hazards in Conshohocken Borough. Although the Borough is primarily underlain by limestone geology (the Conestoga Formation) which is often associated with the development of sinkholes, this Formation is moderately resistant to weathering and therefore rarely forms sinkholes.

Significant areas with hydric soils can be identified in the Borough. Hydric soils are those that form under conditions of saturation, flooding or ponding,

occurring long enough during the growing season that anaerobic conditions develop in the upper soil horizons. These soil types can have a direct influence on the activities that take place in these areas. The ability to build permanent structures and conduct agricultural activities are often affected by the presence of these conditions.

In Conshohocken, extensively disturbed condition and frequency of filled soils create extremely variable soil conditions and characteristics and a situation where virtually all of the soil types are identified as hydric. While the presence of hydrologic soils appears extensive, this condition only identifies the potential for hydric conditions to occur and, as stated previously, soil suitability should be determined based on specific site surveys.

In Conshohocken Borough, there are five distinct hydric soil types, which include the following:

1. Bouldery alluvial land
2. Glenville silt loam
3. Hatboro silt loam
4. Made land
5. Rowland silt loam



Steep slopes in the southeastern section of the Borough

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Topography

Topography is defined as a measure of the relief of the surface of the earth. Typically it is graphically represented as a map illustrating the relative elevation differences throughout a region. The most important characteristic of topography for an area is its slope. The grade of a slope is calculated by dividing the rise (vertical elevation difference) by the run (horizontal distance the elevation covers as it rises). For example, a fifteen-foot elevation increase (rise) over a one-hundred-foot distance (run) would be expressed as a 15% slope.

Steep slopes are vulnerable resources that can be degraded and eroded through weathering, excessive disturbance, and the subsequent loss of the stabilizing groundcover. Eroded slopes damage and impair creeks and streams and change the flow of streams due to the increased sediment buildup in the streambed and the slumping of the land.

The topography of Conshohocken dramatically descends to the Schuylkill River. This slope had a slight amount of influence on the land planning and development decisions made within the Borough. Slopes in the 15% to 25% range can be found in small occurrences located primarily in the western portion of the Borough. Steep slopes are located between New Elm Street and the Schuylkill River and also paralleling Colwell Lane's eastern edge. A small pocket of 15-25% slopes, in addition to some slopes greater than 25%, can be found at the western terminus of West Third and West Fourth Streets.

Due to their severity, the areas of steep slopes within Conshohocken Borough are virtually undevelopable and most of the land is privately owned or included in storm water easements partially owned by the Borough.

Rock Outcroppings

By virtue of their steepness, and possible instability, rock outcroppings are unsuitable for most types of development. Rock outcroppings and the directly surrounding areas often provide a multitude of scenic vistas and recreation opportunities. These factors make rock outcroppings and the surrounding areas an excellent focus for protection as open space and the creation of recreational opportunities.

A variety of rock outcroppings are located within Conshohocken Borough. The outcroppings primarily occur on the Conestoga Formation and can be found running parallel to Colwell Lane and Hector Street. Their locations coincide with areas of steep slopes, making their development very difficult.

Groundwater

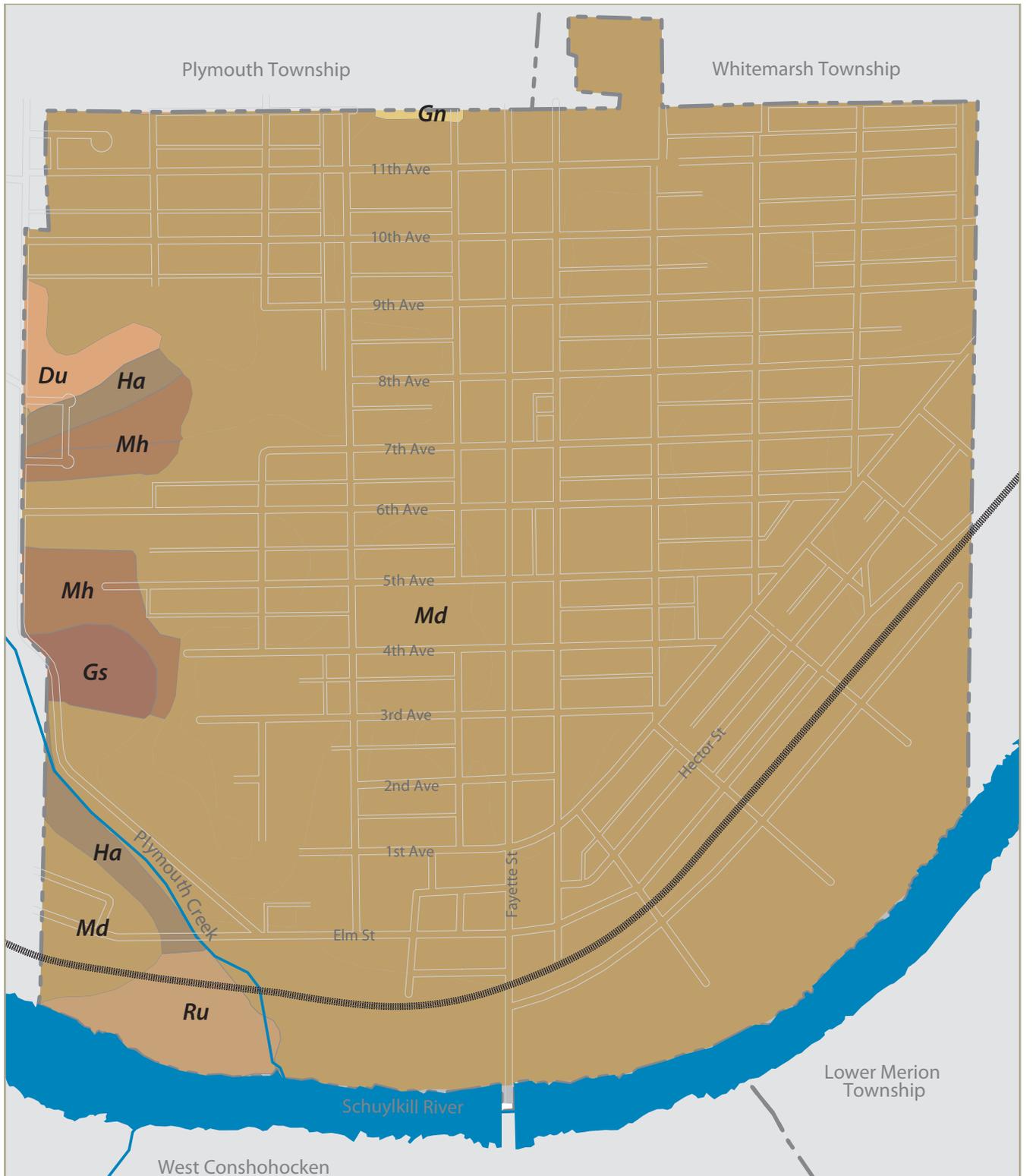
Aquifer characteristics

An aquifer is a rock and sediment area located under surface soils that contains significant quantities of groundwater. The permeability and porosity of these rock and sediment areas determine the ability to utilize the aquifer. In general, the best aquifers in Pennsylvania have high porosity and permeability and are typically sandy or gravelly areas located along stream valleys.

The controlling of any potential pollution sources from surface activities is extremely important to maintaining quality of both the groundwater and surface water in Conshohocken. Even in an area such as Conshohocken the impacts of polluted or over-used groundwater can be seen in the local surface waters. The reduction of groundwater flows can negatively impact flooding during storm events.

In Conshohocken, the underlying geology provides low to fair groundwater yields. Nearly 75% of

MAP#5 SOILS



Legend

Municipal Boundary		Duffield silt loam		Made land	
Road		Glenelg silt loam		Manor channery silt loam	
Railroad		Glenville silt loam		Rowland silt loam	
Creek/Stream		Hatboro silt loam			



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the Borough is underlain by the Conestoga Formation. Groundwater yields in this formation are low. The rock is generally resistant to weathering, allowing little secondary porosity and moderate to low permeability. Wells drilled into this formation can be expected to yield 25 gal/min. Some wells, encountering solution openings, may produce very large yields. Water extracted from this formation is often of a very hard quality.

The remainder of Conshohocken Borough is underlain by the Octoraro and 'Glenarm Wissahickon' Formations. A minimal portion of the Borough, located along the Schuylkill River, is underlain by the 'Glenarm Wissahickon' Formation. This Formation provides groundwater yields similar to those of the Conestoga Formation. The highest yields in the 'Glenarm Wissahickon' Formation come from the fractured, weathered zone above the bedrock. Groundwater in this Formation shows a strong seasonal influence and is usually soft and of good quality, although iron can sometimes be a problem.

Watershed Boundaries and Drainage Areas

Conshohocken Borough is drained by one major watershed basin and one minor watershed basin. A watershed basin consists of land areas in which all surface and ground water is drained by the same water course. The Borough is located entirely within the Schuylkill River Drainage Basin. The land area south and east of Fayette Street drains directly to the Schuylkill River and the remainder of the Borough drains to the Plymouth Creek, shortly before entering the Schuylkill River. The proximity of Conshohocken Borough to the Schuylkill River makes it the prime influence on landform and most activities within the Borough.



The Schuylkill River

Schuylkill River Drainage Basin

The Schuylkill River is one of the most central natural influences on southeastern Pennsylvania. Its watershed is close to eighty miles long and twenty-five miles wide, encompassing approximately 1,916 square miles, throughout eleven counties. Over one-half of Conshohocken Borough is drained directly by the Schuylkill River, which also forms its southern boundary. This basin is located to the south and east of Fayette Street. It also extends into an area south of the intersection of West Third Street and Forest Street.

Plymouth Creek Drainage Basin

The Plymouth Creek Basin drains the northern and western portions of Conshohocken Borough. The Creek drains the land west of Fayette Street and north of the intersection of West Third and Forest Streets. The water that drains from this basin enters the Plymouth Creek and soon drains into the Schuylkill River at the Plymouth's terminus, located south and west of New Elm Street.

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Hydrology

The Schuylkill River is the most significant natural resource within Conshohocken Borough. The Schuylkill River, in addition to the Plymouth Creek, and its hydrology are a major component of the natural and built environments. There are a number of other natural elements that form as a result of the hydrology of the area and they too have a significant impact on the environment of the Borough.

Water bodies (Streams, Lakes, Ponds)

There are two water bodies within the Conshohocken Borough: the Schuylkill River and Plymouth Creek.

The Schuylkill River comprises the southern boundary of Conshohocken. It traverses the border of the Borough flowing east towards its confluence with the Delaware River in Philadelphia.

The Plymouth Creek flows south through the Borough, entering from Plymouth Township in the west. It enters the Borough just south of Colwell Lane and parallels this road until its intersection with New Elm Street. Shortly after passing under New Elm Street, the Plymouth Creek turns west and empties into the Schuylkill River.

Water Quality

The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources classifies the State's streams and creeks according to their water quality and the types of aquatic life they support. Since this classification is a measure of overall stream health, it may be seen as a potential source of project funding and an indicator for prioritizing protection efforts of stream and stream valley resources within Conshohocken Borough. These classifications are the basis for the

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) stream discharge regulations, which are designed to maintain stream quality. Below are the DCNR water quality criteria for stream designation, ranked from lowest designation (WWF) to highest designation (EV).

Symbol

WWF

Protected Use

Warm Water Fishes – Maintenance and propagation of fish species and additional flora and fauna which are indigenous to a warm water habitat.

CWF

Cold Water Fishes – Maintenance and/or propagation of fish species including the family Salmonidae and additional flora and fauna which are indigenous to a cold water habitat.

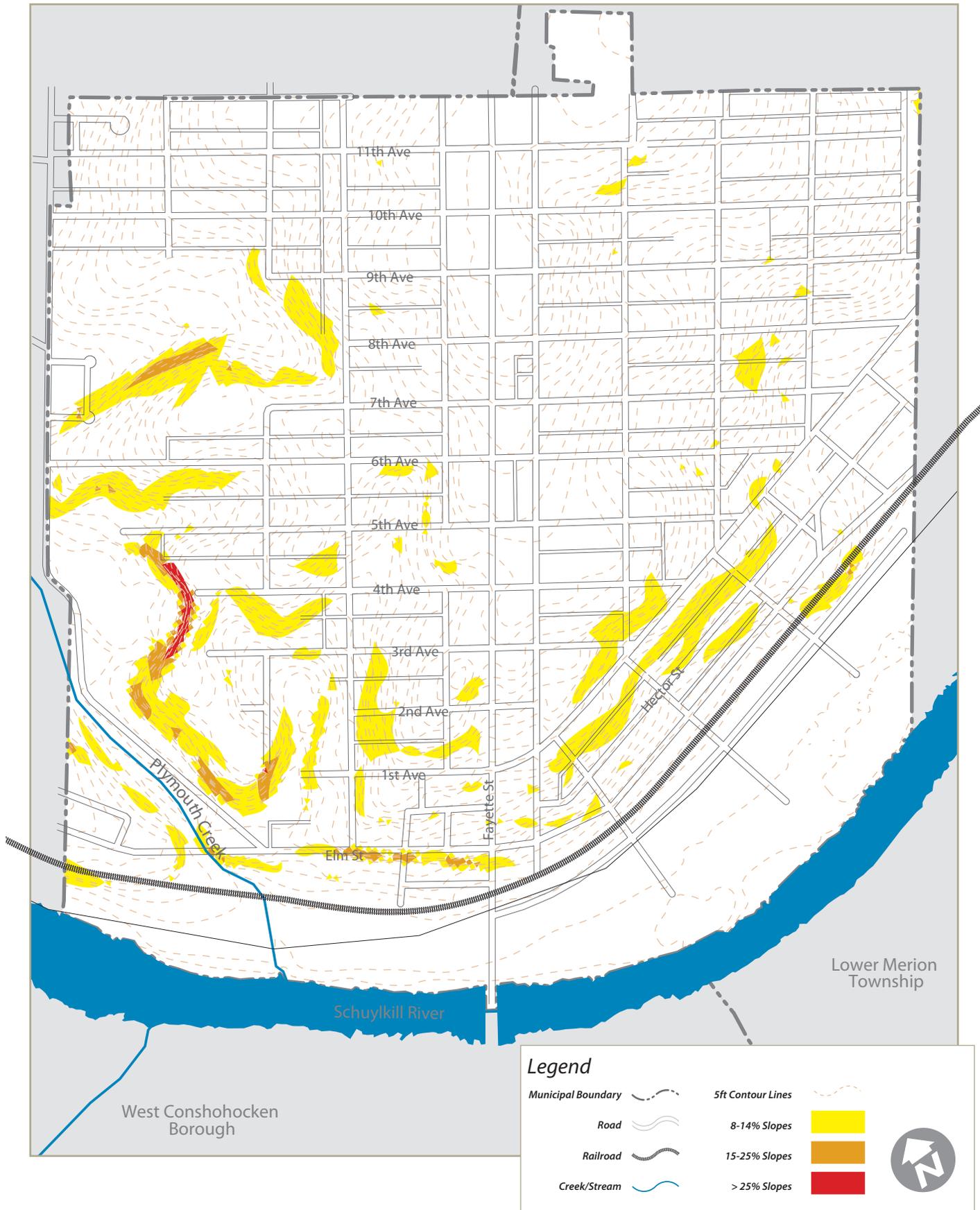
TSF

Trout Stocking – Maintenance of stocked trout from February 15 to July 31 and maintenance propagation of fish species and additional flora and fauna which are indigenous to a warm water habitat.

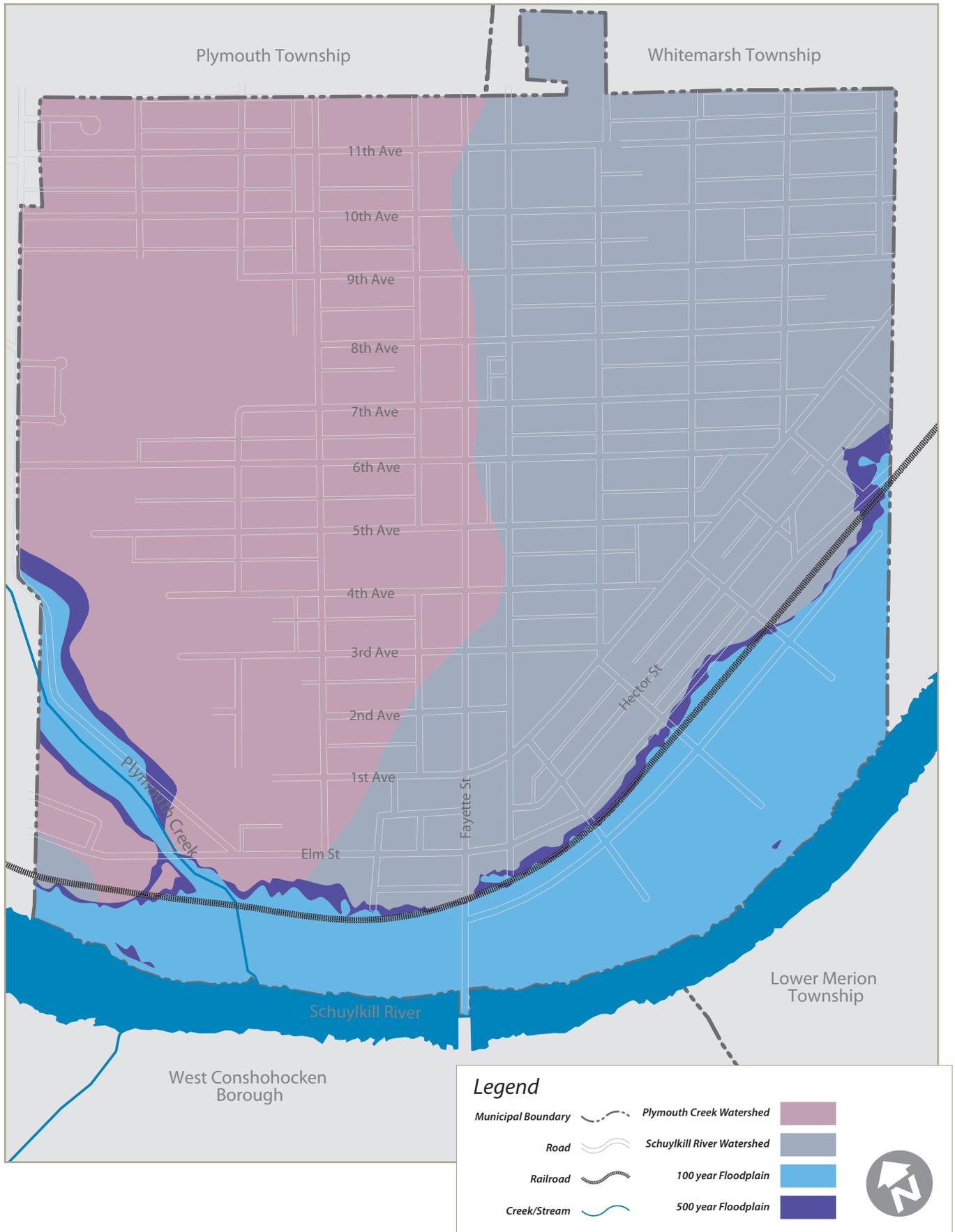
EV

Exceptional Value – A stream or watershed which constitutes an outstanding national, State, regional or local resource, such as waters of national, State, or county parks or waters which are used as a source of unfiltered potable water supply, or waters of wildlife refuges or State game lands, or waters which have been characterized by the Fish Commission as “Wilderness

MAP#6 TOPOGRAPHIC FEATURES



MAP#7 HYDROLOGIC FEATURES



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Trout Streams,” and other waters of substantial recreational or ecological significance.

Based on these criteria the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources designates the Schuylkill River as a Warm Water Fishery (WWF). Additionally, the Schuylkill has a special designation, identifying it as protected for the passage, maintenance, and propagation of anadromous and catadromous fishes and other fishes which ascend the flowing waters to compete their lifecycles.

Floodplains

A floodplain is the area adjoining a watercourse which has in the past or may in the future be covered by floodwaters created by the 100-year flood. The 100-year flood is the area expected to be covered by water during and/or after a storm which is calculated to have a 1% chance of occurring in any given year. A 500-year flood that which has a 0.2% chance of occurring in any given year.

Floodplains are an extremely valuable resource for communities serving a significant role in the absorption and dissipation of storm water. Floodplains create opportunities for conservation corridors, preserving valuable habitat for wildlife and vegetation. Excessive development in floodplain zones causes negative effects such as increased flooding, leading to costly property damage and erosion problems.

Due to its proximity to the Schuylkill River a significant portion of the southern parts of the Borough is located within the 100-year floodplain. The floodplain extends between 400 and 1,200 feet from the banks of the river, but averages 800 feet in most lo-

cations. The floodplain roughly follows a line parallel to south of Elm Street. The 500-year floodplain extends 50-75 feet beyond the 100-year line in most areas, except for the area located directly east of Jones Street, where it extends up to 150 feet past the 100-year floodplain.

The 100-year floodplain of the Plymouth Creek extends approximately seventy-five feet on either side of the Creek, encompassing the entire length of Colwell Lane within the Borough. There have been few occasions within the Borough when the floodwaters have reached the upper-most limits of the floodplain of either water body; however, as upstream development expands, these instances will increase in their frequency.

The Zoning Code of Conshohocken Borough establishes the creation of a Floodplain Conservation District. The Code specifically defines a floodplain based on the 100-year flood boundary. The ordinance restricts construction of new or renovation of existing structures within the Floodplain District. It also places restrictions on other activities deemed to pose a threat to the capacity of the channel and floodway in an attempt to mitigate flood hazards.

Wetlands

Wetlands are identified by the presence of hydric soil, surface water and wetland vegetation. The U.S. Department of the Interior’s Fish and Wildlife Service has identified and inventoried all wetlands at least one acre in size meeting this criterion, which have been recorded in the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI). Smaller wetlands may also be identified on a local basis using similar methods and analysis.

Wetlands serve many functions including habitat, purifying water, and providing areas for the collec-

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tion of floodwaters. They are often associated with hydric soils, located in floodplains and other pallustrine areas.

Conshohocken Borough contains no NWI listed wetlands.



Plymouth Creek and associated riparian area

Riparian Buffers

Riparian buffers are strips of land or more significant vegetated areas along creek, stream and river edges that consist of grasses, shrubs and trees. Riparian buffers filter polluted runoff and provide a transition zone between the water and man-made land uses. Well established riparian buffers create an ecosystem that provides habitat and protection for plants and animals along the waterways. Riparian buffers often coincide with the location of the 100-year floodplain, and benefit from the constraints and restrictions placed on development activities within the floodplain.

Conshohocken Borough has few remaining riparian buffers and those that do remain are severely undersized and disturbed. Small strips of riparian

buffer can be found located between the Schuylkill River and the rail line, in the western portion of the Borough. The extent of this buffer, relative to the size of the Schuylkill River makes it virtually useless. Additionally, this site is severely disturbed and fragmented, retaining very little of its original ecological function.

Minor buffers can be found located in the areas directly adjacent to the Plymouth Creek. Many of these are severely disturbed and invaded by non native, invasive plant species. This, in addition to the man-made and fill soils located in these areas, creates a dysfunctional natural system and negates many of the beneficial aspects associated with such buffers.

Vegetation and Wildlife

Vegetation and wildlife are important elements of the natural and physical environments within Conshohocken Borough. Vegetation provides ecological benefits including preventing soil erosion, removing pollutants from runoff water and providing habitat for wildlife.

Wooded Areas

Conshohocken Borough was once entirely covered by dense forest. Several hundred years of clearing, farming, grazing and development have reduced this cover to a fraction of its original extent. The remaining woodlands in the area play an important role in the character and health of the community, especially those areas directly adjacent to the Schuylkill River.

The preservation of the remaining wooded areas within the Borough, especially the riparian areas, is an important task. Aside from the obvious aesthetic and recreational values, woodlands provide important natural benefits and sustain the local ecology.

POTENTIALLY VULNERABLE RESOURCES

They provide a natural buffer around water courses and may reduce the amount and flow rate of water that quickly enters a stream after heavy rains, thereby reducing flooding. Wooded areas also create wind-breaks and provide cooling relief from the 'heat island' effect plaguing many urban areas.

The long history of development in Conshohocken resulted in the removal of a majority of the wooded areas which previously existed, although several small wooded pockets remain. Most of the remaining wooded areas can be found along the banks of the Schuylkill River. This area, west of Matsonford Bridge, is primarily privately owned and zoned Specially Planned District Three (SP-3). The general health of this 18-acre parcel has declined in recent years due to the invasion of non-native invasive plant species, although its ecological health could be returned with modest restoration and vegetation management efforts.

Additional wooded areas remain in Sutcliff Park and along the steep slopes along the Plymouth Creek Corridor. The woodlands of Sutcliff Park consist of two acres narrowly oriented and located along a drainage swale. The orientation and disconnection of this parcel serve to make this a wooded area of questionable value to the surrounding community. The wooded areas surrounding the Plymouth Creek comprise a corridor approximately 100 feet and totaling three acres, a small portion of which is located within the Borough. Montgomery County owns a fifty-foot easement along much of the Creek and the rest is privately owned. A moderately wooded area, containing a large number of rock outcroppings, is located along Colwell Lane near the terminus of West Fifth Avenue.

Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory Locations (PNDI)

The Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory (PNDI), now called the Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Program (PNHP), conducts inventories and collects data regarding the native biological diversity within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Since its inception in 1982, PNDI has become the State's primary source of information for outstanding natural habitats, sensitive plant and animal species and other noteworthy natural features. The information collected is continually updated and added into an integrated data management system. There are currently no Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory sites located within Conshohocken Borough.

Montgomery County Natural Areas Inventory

In 1985 the Nature Conservancy completed its Natural Areas Inventory (NAI) for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The goal of the Inventory was to identify areas for the protection of biological diversity. This study identified twenty-eight sites of statewide significance and thirty of local significance. The sites were selected and prioritized based upon the size and diversity of wildlife and plant life, water quality protection, and recreation potential.

According to the Open Space, Natural Features and Cultural Resources Plan section of the 2004 Montgomery County Comprehensive Plan, Conshohocken Borough contains no Natural Areas Inventory sites of importance.

Scenic Resources

The natural land form and dramatic elevation change emphasizing the natural beauty of the Schuylkill River contribute to the overall appeal of

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Conshohocken Borough. These resources, in concert with the historic structures and locations, create the empowering sense of place found within the Borough.



View from southeastern section of the Borough

Scenic Roads and Vistas – The 1995 Open Space Plan identified several significant scenic locations and vistas within the Borough. The most notable view is created by the dramatic elevation change looking south down Fayette Street towards the Schuylkill River. The entire area located directly adjacent to the Schuylkill River provides a number of opportunities for vistas and scenic areas. Additionally, the Borough contains a number of significant scenic views and areas which are listed below:

1. Looking south from Fayette Street toward the Schuylkill River and West Conshohocken.
2. Looking east into Whitemarsh Township from Third and Fourth Avenues.

3. From the terminus of West Seventh Avenue, looking over Sutcliffe Park and toward Plymouth Township.

Historic and Cultural Resources

Conshohocken Borough has a long and diverse history, successfully establishing itself as an integral part of the historic fabric of the Delaware Valley Region. Conshohocken was originally purchased from the Tammany Indians by William Penn. Its river-front location ensured that it was involved in many aspects of the regional history, and its proximity to early transportation routes made it an ideal location for industrial development. Conshohocken continued its industrial development into the 20th century, taking full advantage of its most important resource, the Schuylkill River. This long industrial history created a vast bank of historical resources located within Conshohocken Borough.

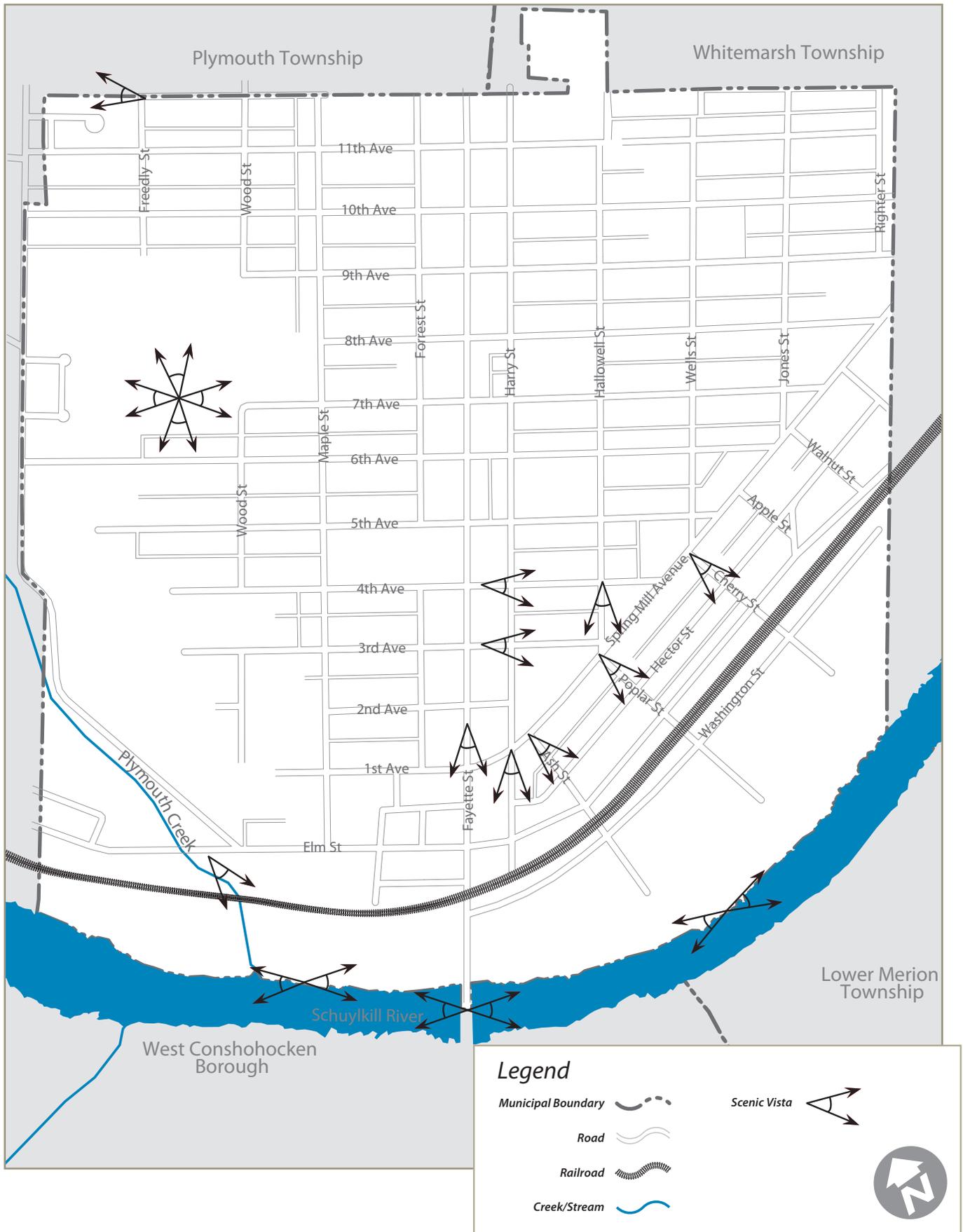
As much as any other feature, the history of the area defines its sense of place. Many of the resources are documented in the 1995 Municipal Open Space for the Borough.

National Register and National Landmark Resources

There is one property listed on the National Register of Historic Places located in Conshohocken Borough:

Washington Hose and Steam Fire Engine Company - Located at 15 West Hector Street, this building serves as an excellent example of the Italianate style. This site gains further importance for the fact that it has been in continuous use, with very little alteration, for over 100 years.

MAP#8 SCENIC VISTAS



POTENTIALLY VULNERABLE RESOURCES

Pennsylvania Inventory of Historic Places

There are five properties in Conshohocken Borough listed in the Pennsylvania Inventory of historic Places:

Conshohocken Library – Located at Third and Fayette Streets, this was the home of one of Conshohocken's first ironmasters, Lewis Lukens. This home was built in 1857 and was donated to the Borough for use as a public library.

St. Mary's Church Rectory – Located at Elm and Oak Streets, this house was built in 1850 and has served as the St. Mary's Rectory for many years.

The Sheppard House – This home located at West Elm Street and Colwell Lane, was built in 1794 and is currently the oldest house in the Borough.

Conshohocken Borough Hall (original) – This is the original Borough Hall of Conshohocken located at Hector and Forrest Streets. The interior has been remodeled and it is currently used as an apartment house.

Sites of local cultural significance

There are an abundance sites within the Conshohocken Borough that are of local cultural or historic significance. The 1995 Municipal Open Space Plan identifies an additional twenty-five sites in the Borough which are historically significant:

Leeland – Located on Eighth Avenue and Fayette Street, this home was originally built in 1895 for J. Elwood Lee, a pioneer in the surgical supply and automobile tire manufacturing fields. The home is built in the Victorian style and is currently used as a municipal building.

Wm. Hallowell – Located at Seventh Avenue and Forrest Street, this home was constructed in 1859 and although it has been converted into an apartment building and remains in excellent condition.

Paul Miraglia, M.D. – Located at Sixth Avenue and Fayette Street, this house was built in 1865 and now contains offices.

Mary H. Wood Park House – Located on East Fifth Avenue, this property has served as the hub of Conshohocken's civic and cultural activities since the formation of the Conshohocken Community Center in 1925. The property was bequeathed to the Borough in 1918 by Mary Wood with the expressed intent that it be used as a park or playground for the recreation and enjoyment of Borough residents.

Mary Wood Park, Caretaker's House – Located at Fifth Avenue and Harry Street, this small, stone house was constructed in 1861 and now serves as a private residence.

Mrs. Henry Collins – This home, located on East Tenth Avenue, was built around 1900 and is located in a residential neighborhood.

Glenn and Dorothy Hatfield – This home was built in 1850 and is located on East Fifth Avenue. It is currently divided into apartments.

Mrs. Thomas Christian – Located on East Fifth Avenue, this large sixteen room residence is currently divided into five separate apartments.

Henry Ferrier – This frame house, located on Spring Mill Avenue, was built around 1867 as housing for local workmen.

Thomas L. Kennedy – Located on Spring Mill Avenue, this was once the home of Archbishop Thomas L. Kennedy and is now a private residence.

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Lubbe House – Located on Spring Mill Avenue, this c. 1850 home was built by Francis Lubbe, a local engineer who first introduced electricity to the borough. It current serves as apartments.

Mrs. Thomas L. Christian – Located on Spring Mill Avenue, this home was built c. 1850 and was considered one of the most beautiful examples of a Colonial architecture in the Borough. The property currently contains nine apartments.

Calvary Episcopal Church – Located at Fayette Street and Fourth Avenue, the Victorian rectory, built c. 1873, is of particular architectural significance.

Equipment Furniture Company – Located at Third Avenue and Forrest Street, this structure generally known as the Grand Army Hall, has had significant interior alterations and now serves as the Coptic Church.

Collins Family – This home, located on Forrest Street, displays an outstanding example of Italian architecture, including twelve-foot ceilings, heavy woodwork and red pine random-width floors. The house was constructed in 1857 and since 1890 has been occupied by members of the Collins family.

P.O.S. of A. Building – Located at Second Avenue and Forrest Street, this building was originally built for the Patriotic Order Sons of America in 1891 and retains a Victorian appearance. It is currently occupied by a diverse group of commercial uses.

Joseph F. Leary, DDS – Located on Harry Street, within a cluster of century-old houses, this home is now occupied by a dentists office and private residence.

Wm. Morrison House – This 1873 residence, located on Harry Street, has been occupied by members of the same family since its construction.

St. Matthews School – Located on Hector Street and constructed in 1870, this building is the oldest Catholic High School building in Pennsylvania. Its use as a school was discontinued in 1970 and is now a multi-family residence.

Ace-Tex Vinyls Inc. – This building, located at Elm and Harry Streets, was originally built to house an iron foundry and until recently contained a synthetics manufacturer.

Wood Industrial Products Co. – This Washington Street facility was originally established c. 1867 by John Wood, Jr. as a boiler shop. The Foundry buildings have been reconstructed as offices.

Conshohocken Railroad Station – Located on Fayette Street, this 1935 structure was originally part of the Ford Hotel. Due to fire damage, the building has been demolished.

Joan L. Volpe – Located on Forrest Street, this property was the site of the first school room and fire house in Conshohocken. Borough meetings were held here at one time and the building was known as Stemple Hall.

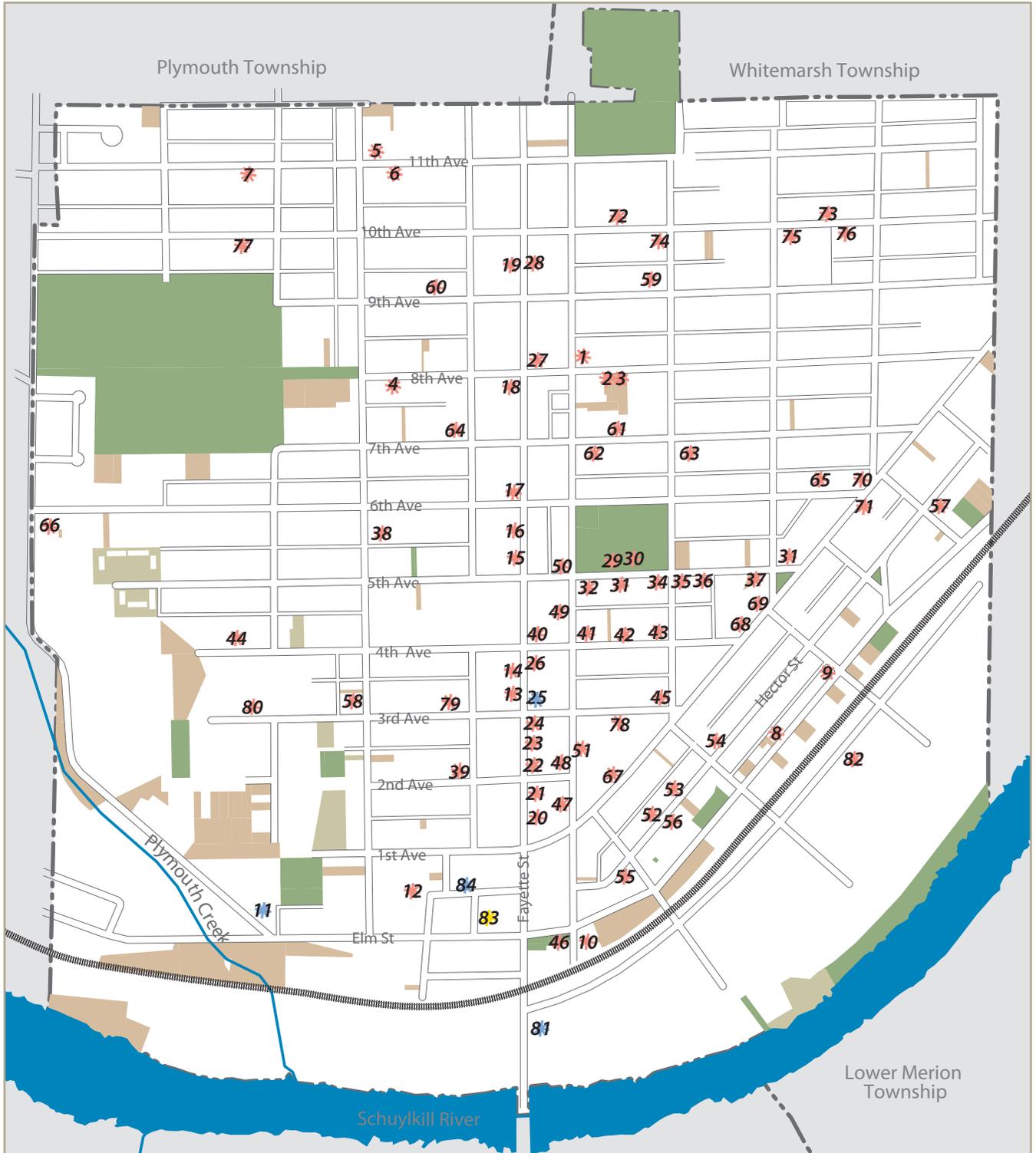
Schuylkill Canal – Located near the Plymouth Dam along the banks of the Schuylkill River, the stone walls of this canal built in 1820 can still be found today.

Ralph S. Philememo – Located on West Sixth Avenue, this home was built in 1850 and has retained much of its original design although it is negatively impacted by the proximity of a nearby steel plant.

Archeological Sites and Ruins

The long and extensive history of Conshohocken Borough creates the opportunity for identifying numerous archaeological sites and historic resources of lesser significance. Many of these sites may predate European settlement and have yet to be investigated.

MAP#9 HISTORIC RESOURCES



Legend

- Municipal Boundary
- Road
- Railroad
- Creek/Stream
- National Historic Register Site
- State Historic Register Site
- Conshohocken Historic Survey Identified Site

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| 1 African Methodist Church | 18 Borough Hall/ Lee Mansion | 35 Opjelski | 52 St. Matthew's Parochial School | 69 Richter |
| 2 J. Elwood Lee Co. | 19 Marken Co. | 36 Hertzman | 53 Westlove | 70 Leightham |
| 3 Williams | 20 Brown Derby | 37 Ohlson | 54 O'Donnell | 71 Kennedy House |
| 4 Cassidy | 21 Fayette Building | 38 A. Lamuti Post | 55 Baranowski | 72 McLaughlin |
| 5 Petrez | 22 Sons of America Bldg. | 39 Collins | 56 Mobby | 73 Matkowski |
| 6 Speelhoff | 23 St. Matthew's Rectory | 40 Santoro | 57 Wisniewski | 74 Shelanski Holding Corp. |
| 7 Frankfield | 24 St. Matthew's Church | 41 First Baptist Church | 58 Francis | 75 Collins |
| 8 Hockman | 25 Conshohocken Free Library | 42 McGarity | 59 Freas Glass Works, Inc. | 76 Koneski |
| 9 Lubbe House | 26 Calvary Episcopal Church | 43 Durbas | 60 Tolan | 77 Scandone |
| 10 Vy-Cal Plastics | 27 Masonic Temple | 44 Davis | 61 Shelton | 78 Colen |
| 11 Shepard House | 28 Williams | 45 St. Paul's Baptist Church | 62 Cashore | 79 Grand Army Hall |
| 12 St. Mary's Rectory | 29 Mary Wood House | 46 Conshohocken Railroad Station | 63 Smith | 80 Nadkarni |
| 13 Shear Funeral Home | 30 Mary Wood Care Takers House | 47 Cahill | 64 Zoak | 81 James Wood Mill Site |
| 14 Phipps | 31 Conshohocken Veterans Association | 48 Piermani | 65 Burrell | 82 Weissman |
| 15 David Wood Estate | 32 Nicholson | 49 Irvine | 66 Philomeno | 83 Washington Hose & Steam Fire Co. No 1 |
| 16 Whitten House | 33 Duncan | 50 St. Mark's Lutheran Church | 67 Wm. Morrison House | 84 First Borough Hall & Lockup |
| 17 Conshohocken United Methodist Church | 34 Hatfield | 51 Del Buono | 68 Turri | |



POTENTIALLY VULNERABLE RESOURCES

The significance and location of these sites is incredibly varied and diverse. Unfortunately, much of this information has become lost, forgotten or just overlooked.

Due to the history of the area, a large number of yet to be identified historical properties exist and should also be considered in prioritizing any open space decisions.

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POTENTIAL OPEN SPACE LINKAGES

Open Space Linkages

An open space system capable of impacting neighborhoods and residents requires open space areas, parks, and other public spaces to be connected to one another and for the connections themselves to be publicly accessible open space. Accessibility to public open space areas is the key to creating a system that residents of the Borough will utilize and enjoy.

Open space connections in the Borough of Conshohocken also include the following mix of stream valley or river trails, canal towpaths, and other man-made linear features.

Stream or River Valley

Schuylkill River Trail

The Schuylkill River provides a significant opportunity for creating a linear park along the waterfront. The paved multi-use Schuylkill River Trail runs through the Borough essentially paralleling the R-6 SEPTA line, and provides links to the City of Philadelphia and to Valley Forge National Historic Park.

Pedestrian and parking access to the Trail, however, is presently limited for residents living in the eastern section of the Borough and to the west of the Matsonford Bridge. Several opportunities for improving pedestrian access to the Trail exist immediately east of the Borough line in Whitmarsh Township and should be explored. These include a potential easement along a 20-foot-wide parcel owned by the Borough of Conshohocken Authority and located on East Elm Street immediately west of Walnut Street; the potential acquisition of a 40-foot-wide private-



Undeveloped land along the Schuylkill River

ly-owned parcel located between 723-731 East Elm Street; and a potential easement through a private-owned parking area located adjacent to the Quaker Place commercial center along East Elm Street immediately west of Sandy Street.

An additional opportunity exists for formalizing pedestrian and parking access to the Schuylkill River Trail west of the Matsonford Bridge on the Borough-owned gravel parking lot located along West Elm Street at Corson Street.

Schuylkill Riverbank Path

As a requirement of the SP-1 and SP-2 Zoning Districts in the Borough, a 100-foot wide area of land adjacent to the Schuylkill River must be preserved for public access to the river. (The SP-3 District may not require the 100-foot strip, but does require 15% open space to be concentrated along the River.) This land is proposed as a greenway that includes a Riverbank Path that will connect the Schuylkill River to

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Existing bridge footing in the Plymouth Creek

the Schuylkill River Trail, providing direct access to the river and its many amenities for residents, visitors and workers in the Borough.

A need also exists for one or more access points to be provided west of the Matsonford Bridge across the SEPTA R-6 tracks to link the Schuylkill River Trail, Cross County Trail, and the Borough's western neighborhoods with the Riverfront and the Riverbank Path.

Plymouth Creek – Riparian Corridor/Nature Trail

The Plymouth Creek corridor is proposed as part of the Cross County Trail alignment. The Trail will generally follow the path of the Creek into Plymouth Township and is proposed to have a connection to the Schuylkill River Trail in the vicinity of West Elm Street.

North of West Elm Street, this Plan recommends that connections be made between the Cross County Trail and the neighborhoods adjacent to the Plymouth Creek. One main connection point that could

be created exists along Colwell Lane at the Plymouth Township line. As shown in the photo on this page, there are existing bridge footings in the Creek that could be used to provide direct access to the County trail system for residents on the western side of the Borough.

Stormwater Drainage Basin

A stormwater drainage basin running north-south between the 2nd Avenue Meadow and Haines and Salvati Memorial Park provides an opportunity for linking these two open space areas. A ridge running along the length of the basin could provide opportunities as a greenway trail for walkers, hikers, and other recreational users.

Schuylkill Canal Interpretative Site

The old Schuylkill Canal that ran parallel to the Schuylkill River through Conshohocken was used primarily by cargo barges to bring goods to and from communities located outside of Philadelphia. The canal was abandoned decades ago and has been unused ever since. Dumping may have taken place in the canal back in the 1980's. Today it is an almost completely filled-in abandoned relic of the past, although a segment of the canal remains intact. While the canal itself does not provide any open space linkage benefit since it is a very short segment, connecting the proposed Schuylkill Riverbank Path to this historic site could provide trail users with a historic interpretative site that could explain the history and use of the canal.

POTENTIAL OPEN SPACE LINKAGES

Other Linear Man-Made Features

Pedestrian Environment & Walkability

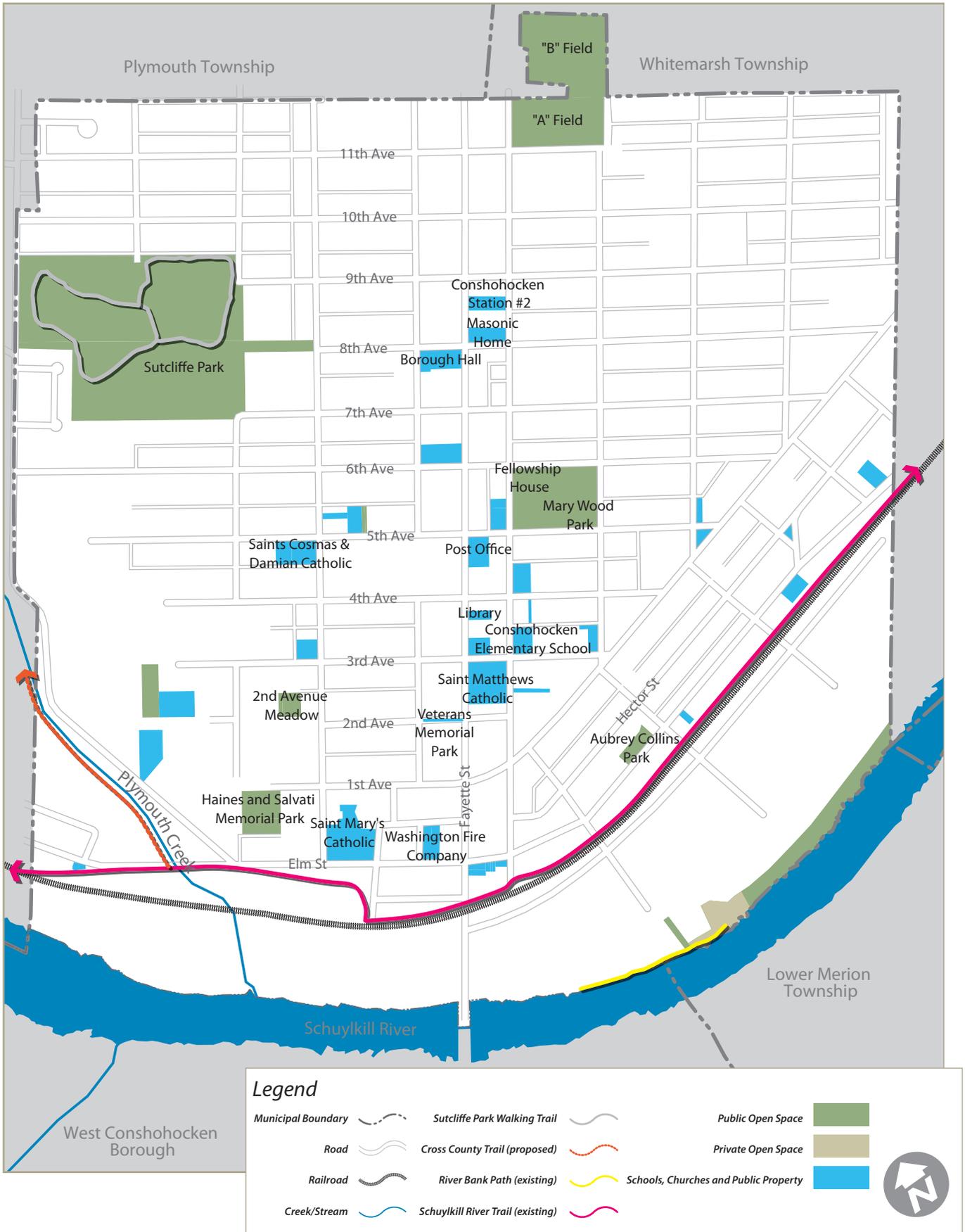
Sidewalks exist almost everywhere within the Borough and Conshohocken is considered one of the most walkable communities in Montgomery County. The active mixed-use business district along Fayette Street and proximity of residences to parks, shopping and public transit make it easy to move around the Borough without the use of an automobile. Public access to and connectivity between residences, trail segments, parks, shopping, and other amenities is provided throughout most of the Borough.

Pedestrian access is presently constrained, however, along several north-south streets across the R-6 tracks due to a lack of sidewalk continuity and poor surfacing conditions. Sidewalk upgrades and extensions should be provided across the R-6 tracks along Harry, Ash, Poplar, and Cherry Streets to enhance connectivity between the downtown, Borough neighborhoods, the Schuylkill River Trail, the proposed Riverbank Path, and the Conshohocken Riverfront.

Additionally, wayfinding signage could create a more user-friendly pedestrian system and provide existing connections between the recreational amenities in the Borough and its businesses and residences.

CHAPTER · 5

MAP#10 PATHWAYS AND TRAILS



CHAPTER 6

UNPROTECTED RESOURCES

Unprotected Resources

It is extremely important to ensure that the remaining unprotected resources in Conshohocken Borough will be adequately protected and potentially available as additional open space for residents of the Borough. Given the limited acreage of unprotected resources in Conshohocken and the increasing interest in infill development and redevelopment, all acquisition and protection activities should be considered as Near Term, High Priority projects for implementation.

Protection of the Schuylkill River and Shoreline

The Schuylkill River and shoreline have been long forgotten by landowners or viewed as a detriment. Recent trends in development; however, have propelled waterfront property into some of the most valuable land in the Borough. The realistic potential for the creation of a greenway, multiple public access points to the river and the creation of a continuous pathway along the riverbank that extends into adjacent municipalities makes working with waterfront property owners extremely important. The following are descriptions of the importance of the Schuylkill River and shoreline based on the four criteria required by the Green Fields Green Towns guidelines:

1. Concentration of Resources - The riverfront is a potential continuous greenway that would extend the length of Conshohocken Borough and into Plymouth Township or the City of Philadelphia. The idea of creating a greenway and multi-use pathway is a significant element to the other riverfront communities that are updating their



Schuylkill River and riverbank

open space plans. There is a wooded parcel located along the river in the southwestern portion of the Borough. This property is currently privately owned and undeveloped, but its siting makes it a prime location for development, should it become available.

- 2. Environmental Protection Function** - Previously in Conshohocken, the riverfront was the “back” of mostly industrial uses. It had been a forgotten area with little perceived value. However, this shoreline is extremely important to the water quality of the Schuylkill River. Between the Riverbank Path and the Schuylkill River, a riparian buffer should be restored to help stabilize the river shoreline and control stormwater runoff.
- 3. Compatibility with Community Goals** - The primary objective of this open space plan is to work with property owners, adjacent municipalities, Montgomery County and other interested parties

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to create a greenway and Riverbank Path along the riverfront. The path will improve the quality of life of Borough residents by cleaning up a forgotten waterfront area, providing a new active recreation linear park, new and renewed views of the river, and a greenway which will help improve the environmental protection of the Schuylkill River.

4. ***Contribution to Community Identity or Cultural Heritage*** – The Schuylkill River and associated Schuylkill Canal were a significant part of the heritage and history of the Borough. Many remnants of the original Canal alignment still exist along the river. Many stone walls are still visible along its course and remnants of the ‘Lock Tenders’ house can be found in land adjacent to the Plymouth Dam. The preservation of these historic resources would help to foster community identity and provide interpretive opportunities along the length of the proposed Riverbank Path. The creation of this greenway and path will provide new public access to the river and to the history of the Borough.

Clean-up and Protection of the Plymouth Creek

1. ***Concentration of Resources*** – The Plymouth Creek empties directly into the Schuylkill River just below the Plymouth Dam. Located adjacent to the Creek are several of the larger wooded areas found in the Borough. The Plymouth Creek Corridor presents a prime opportunity for the implementation of the proposed Cross County Trail, connecting into the Schuylkill River Trail.
2. ***Environmental Protection Function*** – Currently the Creek is a forgotten area with little perceived value. The stability of this Creek is extremely

important to the water quality of the Schuylkill River. Cleaning the Creek area and creating a riparian buffer has the potential to help stabilize the creek walls, protect the quality of the Creek and reduce the potential for silt runoff that will eventually end up in the Schuylkill River.

3. ***Compatibility with Community Goals*** – A high priority of this open space plan is to recommend working with property owners and other interested parties to clean up the Plymouth Creek. It will improve the quality of life of Borough residents by cleaning up a forgotten natural area, provide opportunities for a new active recreation trail and help reduce the negative environmental impacts on both the Plymouth Creek and the Schuylkill River.
4. ***Contribution to Community Identity or Cultural Heritage*** – The clean-up of the Plymouth Creek and the creation of Cross County Trail will provide a bicycling and walking environment unlike many others found within a Borough setting. The creation of this trail, in addition to the Schuylkill River Trail and the other initiatives proposed in this plan, will make the Borough of Conshohocken not only one of the most walkable communities in Montgomery County, but also one of the most diverse in terms of types of trails available to residents.

Preservation of the Schuylkill Canal

1. ***Concentration of Resources*** – A section of the Schuylkill Canal once ran through the Borough of Conshohocken in the area proposed to become the Schuylkill River Greenway. A portion of the Canal is still visible and has not been filled. This section of the canal is proposed to become

UNPROTECTED RESOURCES

an cultural/historic interpretative stopping point within the greenway. The proposed greenway will run along the Schuylkill River the length of the Borough of Conshohocken.

- 2. Environmental Protection Function** – The proposed interpretative site will be part of a cohesive greenway and path that will eventually run the length of the waterfront in the Borough. This greenway will create a more environmentally sensitive area through the greening of the corridor and the development/redevelopment of a riparian buffer along the Schuylkill River riverbank.
- 3. Compatibility with Community Goals** – The preservation of this last remaining visible segment of the Schuylkill Canal is a high priority to the community. The use of the site as an interpretative site as well as a stopping point along the greenway is a highly desired amenity within the Borough.
- 4. Contribution to Community Identity or Cultural Heritage** – The Schuylkill Canal is a significant part of the history of the Borough of Conshohocken. The creation of the greenway, Riverbank Path and this site as a stopping point and interpretative site will provide new public access to the history of the Borough by providing a connection to the remaining section of the original Schuylkill Canal.

Protection of Scenic Vistas

- 1. Concentration of Resources** – Scenic vistas are prevalent throughout much of the southeastern end of the Borough. Opportunities for additional viewsheds exist along the Schuylkill River and should be provided through the creation of the riverfront greenway and multi-use trail.



View of the Schuylkill River Valley

- 2. Environmental Protection Function** – The creation of a Schuylkill River Greenway along the riverfront will provide additional views of the river that have been essentially blocked from public view for decades.
- 3. Compatibility with Community Goals** – Protecting viewsheds such as those from the riverbank and the ridgelines within the Borough overlooking the Schuylkill River valley are important amenities to Borough residents.
- 4. Contribution to Community Identity or Cultural Heritage** – The views provided from sections of the Borough and the potential views along the Schuylkill River are very unique features not found in many communities within Montgomery County. The creation of views along the Schuylkill River will be a significant part of reclaiming access to an area that played a part in the history and heritage of the Borough of Conshohocken.

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CHAPTER 7

GROWTH AREA NEEDS - 2015

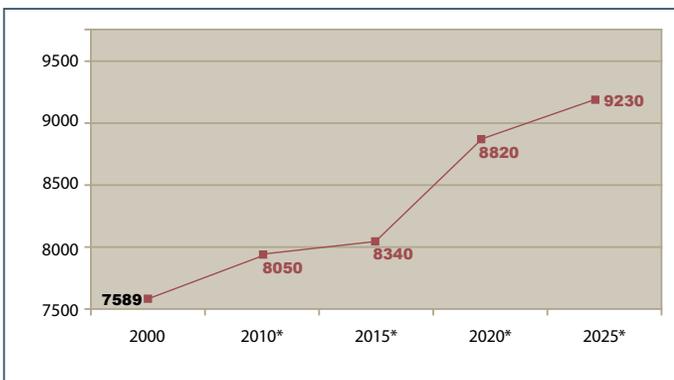
Future Growth

Current population and development trends in Conshohocken Borough exhibit marked increases in both residential and non-residential development. The redevelopment of the Riverfront area in the Borough, along with increased infill development and tear-down redevelopment, have brought about significant changes to the Borough in recent years.

As such, the increasing number of residential uses was not incorporated in Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) calculations to determine the future population of the Borough. The result of this redevelopment activity will be a substantial increase in the number of residential units within the Borough and thus a higher population.

From 2000 to 2025, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) forecasts that the Borough's population will increase from 7,589 in 2000 to 8,820 in 2020, before jumping to 9,230 in 2025. With the redevelopment activity that has been constructed and the development that is proposed, this population forecast does not appear to adequately represent the development of the expected future Borough population.

Projected Future Borough Population



Residential development along Washington Street

Potential Development

Developable Land

Developable land in the Borough is land that has the potential to be developed, existing structures not withstanding. In Conshohocken, there are several undeveloped tracts of land that have the potential for redevelopment. There are also several parcels with existing structures that could be redeveloped through the reuse of an existing structure or through the demolition of the structure.

For the purposes of this study, the potential future developable tracts of land are those sites that are undeveloped and are zoned to permit residential development. Though this calculation will not reflect the potential in underdeveloped or potentially re-developable sites with structures on them, it does provide a conservative estimate of the potential development that could be created within the Borough.

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Potential Residential Build-out

The residential build-out of the Borough represents the calculated maximum buildable units under the current zoning regulations. These counts are calculated based on undeveloped properties only (with the exception of the Riverfront area in which several previously developed parcels are currently being redeveloped for residential uses.) There are many properties within the Borough that have structures existing on them that could be reused for residential uses or be demolished and developed with residential uses. With the exception of the Riverfront, these sites were not considered buildable for this analysis due to the unknown potential for reuse of these sites.

The Borough of Conshohocken has nine zoning districts, five of which contain undeveloped parcels that could be utilized for residential development. With the exception of parcels along the Riverfront, all almost all other parcels are no larger than 1.0 acres, with most parcels being less than 0.5 acres in size. There are thirty-nine parcels that were considered developable for this study totaling 24.58 acres. The majority of this land, approximately 13.25 acres, is within the SP-2 and SP-3 Riverfront Districts.

The following buildout chart shows the potential number of residential units that could be built on undeveloped parcels within the Borough.

With the current land use pattern and the potential new residential construction, the calculated maximum build-out in the Borough is 1,688 housing units. This figure includes 1,000 housing units located in SP-2 along the Riverfront involving the ongoing redevelopment of several formerly industrial parcels.

Residential build-out based on developable land	
Zoning District	Calculated Maximum Build-out
BR-1	71 potential units
BR-2	75 potential units
SP-2	1,290 potential units
SP-3	248 potential units
R-O	4 potential units
Total Lots:	1,688 potential units

Future Residential Growth

It is likely due to the current interest in development and redevelopment activities within the Borough that currently undeveloped parcels will undergo development in the near future. Discussions related to development along the Riverfront resulted in new riverfront zoning and are a focus area for open space preservation and public open space.

Most of the large-scale future potential residential development in the Borough will occur on waterfront parcels with limited amount of residential development occurring on smaller parcels throughout the remainder of the Borough.

In order to estimate the potential increase in residents from the potential 1,688 additional units, a calculation utilizing the people per household from the 2000 U.S. Census is utilized. The U.S. Census Bureau calculated the average number of people per household in the Borough of Conshohocken was 2.27 in the year 2000. Utilizing the 2000 Census people per household count and the residential build-out number (1,688 units), there is a potential for 3,832 new residents in the Borough, an increase of 50% over the 2000 U.S. Census population count. The total population at full build-out under this scenario would be

GROWTH AREA NEEDS - 2015

11,421. (The average persons per household figure of 2.27, however, may overestimate population growth along the Riverfront as these residential developments appear to be attracting a large number of single individuals.)

With the exception of the Riverfront area, this calculation does not include potential residential conversions of existing structures or lots that have existing structures on them that may be re-developed into residential units. Thus, there is a potential for additional residential housing units in the Borough and therefore additional residents above the number calculated as part of this study.

Future Non-Residential Growth

In addition to the potential for residential growth in the Borough, new non-residential uses are also likely to occur, such as the 8 Tower Bridge commercial development.) Potential non-residential development (commercial, office) is most likely to occur on currently occupied parcels along the Riverfront where there is the largest amount of potentially developable land available.

Growth Potential Summary:

Recent development and redevelopment activity indicates that the Borough of Conshohocken is undergoing significant re-investment and residential construction.

There is interest in redeveloping vacant land formerly occupied by riverfront industrial buildings. In addition, there is a significant amount of infill development taking place on smaller parcels throughout the Borough on land currently considered built-out.

As a result of these redevelopment activities, most of which have a residential component, if not entirely



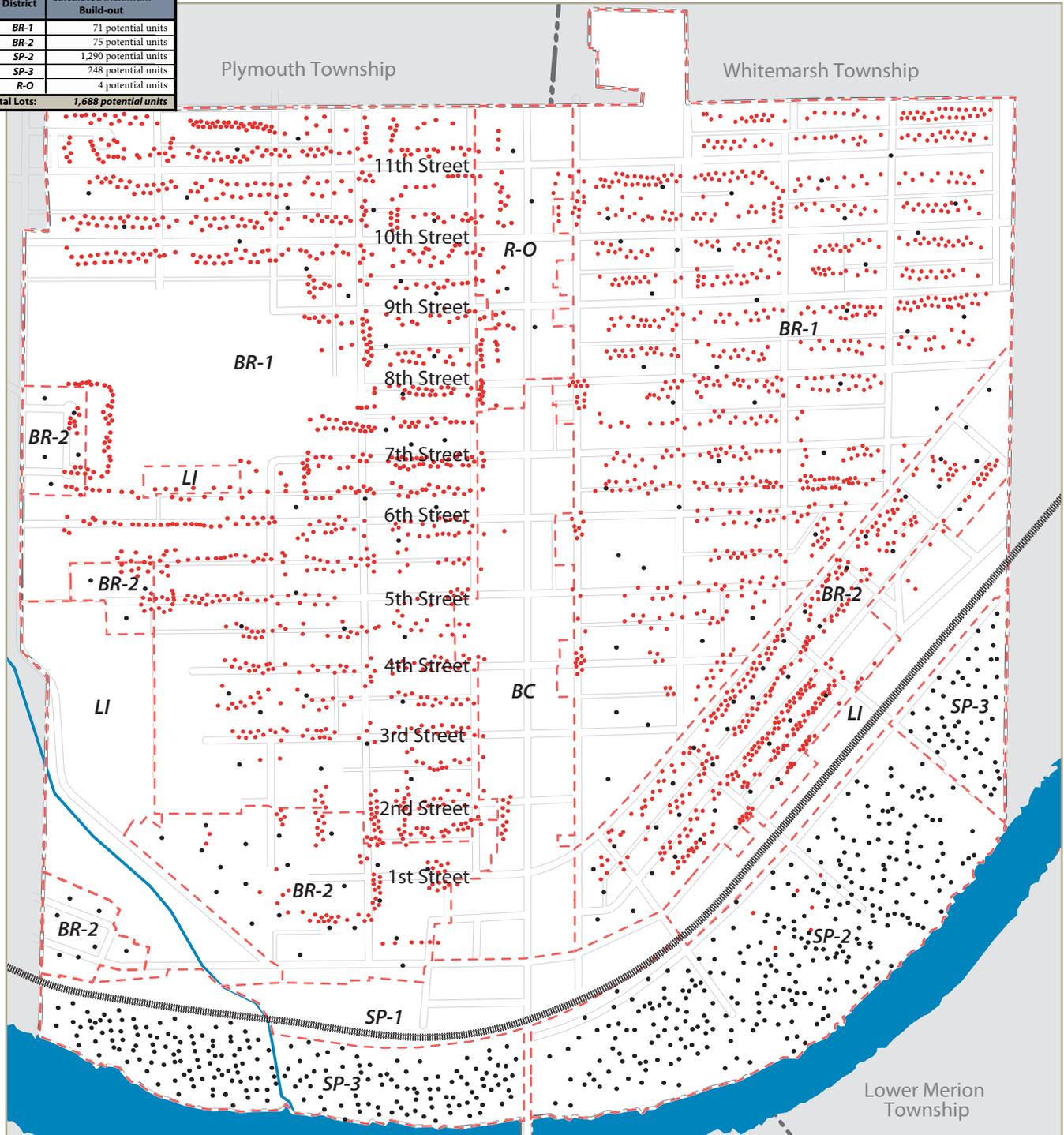
Recent non-residential development in the Borough

residential, there is little doubt that the population of the Borough will increase over the next 10 to 20 years.

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MAP#11 BUILDOUT

Residential build-out based on developable land	
Zoning District	Calculated Maximum Build-out
BR-1	71 potential units
BR-2	75 potential units
SP-2	1,290 potential units
SP-3	248 potential units
R-O	4 potential units
Total Lots:	1,688 potential units



Legend

Municipal Boundary		Borough Residential District One	BR-1	Limited Industrial District	LI	Random dot = 1 potential residential dwelling unit
Road		Borough Residential District Two	BR-2	Specially Planned District One	SP-1	Parcel located dot = 1 existing residential structure
Railroad		Residential Office District	R-O	Specially Planned District Two	SP-2	
Creek/Stream		Borough Commercial District	BC	Specially Planned District Three	SP-3	



CHAPTER 8

OPEN SPACE NEEDS

Open Space Needs

The open space, parks and recreation needs of communities vary depending on the composition of the community itself. Nevertheless, a formula to calculate the minimum amount of open space required to adequately serve a community has been developed by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA). The standards are used by communities throughout the Country in assessing and projecting future open space needs.

This formula utilizes current and projected population to calculate the minimum amount of open space, park, and recreation land needed to accommodate the open space needs of a community. It recommends that a community have at least 6.25-10.50 acres of open space per 1,000 population. Given this formula, the calculation in the box to the right provides the range of required open space needed in the Borough.

In the year 2000, according to the U.S Census, the Conshohocken Borough had a population of 7,589. Utilizing the NRPA formula and the 2000 U.S. Census population count, the amount of open space in 2000 required to accommodate the needs of the Borough ranged between 47.43 and 79.68 acres. This open space acreage is 1.59 acres deficient of the minimum of the range for recreation land as recommended by the NPRA.

Since this Plan covers open space planning efforts for the next 10 years, the recommended range of open space acreage needed to accommodate the needs of the Borough in 2015 also needs to be calculated. The

Population in the Year 2000: 7,589 People
Total Acres of Open Space, Parks and Recreation Land:

Aubrey Collins Park	0.50 Acres
Haines & Salvati Park	1.00 Acre
Mary Wood Park	4.00 Acres
'A' and 'B' Field Parks	9.00 Acres
Sutcliffe Park	23.00 Acres
2nd Avenue Meadow	0.40 Acres
Schuylkill Riverfront	7.94 Acres

Total: 45.84 Acres

Formula: 6.25 – 10.5 Acres of Open Space per 1,000 population

Given: Population of 7,589

Calculation: 7,589 population/1,000 population = 7.589

1. Range Minimum Calculation: $7.589 \times 6.25 = 47.43$ Acres of land required to meet the minimum of the range recommendation

DVRPC population forecast for 2015 shows a population increase to 8,340 people. Given this forecast, the Borough will remain deficient of the recommended range of open space acreage per population. The potential for an additional 3,832 new residents (from the potential residential build-out based on developable land) over the DVRPC population forecast will further compound the open space deficit.

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Present Open Space Deficit Areas

The 1995 Conshohocken Borough Open Space Plan identified specific deficit areas that are still relevant today. These deficit areas are based on the current and future development pattern within the Borough, the existing access limitations and the need for additional open spaces within the Borough:

- 1. *Park Acreage:*** The current acreage of Conshohocken parks is 45.84 acres and the NRPA standards project that the Borough is between 1.59 and 33.84 acres deficient of this goal. The Borough should work to develop new open space areas, especially through working with large-scale developers.
- 2. *Riverfront Access:*** Access to the river is currently limited within Conshohocken. The creation of the Schuylkill Riverbank Path and proposed connections to the Schuylkill River Trail will help create accessibility to the River, but additional access to the river itself is needed. Fishing access and a car-top boat launch to the Schuylkill River below the dam should be considered.

Natural Resources Worthy of Protection as Passive Open Space:

The two main natural resources that are worthy of protection in the Borough are the Schuylkill River and Riverbank and the Plymouth Creek and its banks. The continued development of the Schuylkill River Trail and proposed Schuylkill Riverbank Path should be set back an adequate distance from the River to provide an adequate riparian buffer.

Given the current land uses along the Schuylkill Riverfront that have degraded the Riverbank, a riparian buffer should be restored through clean-up ac-

tivities, possible grading, and the planting of native vegetation. The Plymouth Creek bank has also been neglected. Clean-up of the overgrowth and any trash will be needed, grading may be necessary, and planting of natural vegetation to help stabilize the creek bank will also be necessary.

CHAPTER 9

SCHUYLKILL RIVER GREENWAY

Schuylkill River Significance

The Schuylkill River, also known as the Hidden River, has been viewed for decades as an impediment to landowners with parcels located along the River. In the Borough of Conshohocken, as in many other municipalities, the River was considered the back end of properties, most of which were industrial uses. Recently, residents in communities bordering the Schuylkill River have gained an appreciation of the Schuylkill River for its natural features and potential use as a recreational amenity. With the Schuylkill River creating the southern municipal boundary of the Borough, there are opportunities to enhance the riverfront area to create significant public amenities for the Borough's residents, visitors and workers.

In 1995, the State of Pennsylvania designated the Schuylkill River Corridor a State Heritage Corridor. In 2000, the United States Congress authorized the designation of the Schuylkill River Corridor as a National Heritage Area – one of only twenty-three such designations in the United States. As a result, the Schuylkill River Greenway Association developed the Schuylkill River Valley National Heritage Area Management Plan – a plan which will implement goals and objectives intended to fulfill the mission of the Schuylkill River Heritage Area:

“Conserve, interpret and develop the historical, cultural, natural and recreational resources related to the industrial and cultural heritage of the Schuylkill River Valley of Southeastern Pennsylvania.”



Schuylkill River Greenway

For the Borough of Conshohocken, the Schuylkill River is an integral natural feature. Though underutilized, the river represents a potential recreational and natural amenity that only a few municipalities within Montgomery County can directly access. Current land use patterns along the riverfront discourage public access and are not river-oriented. The proposed greenway and Riverbank Path along the riverfront are proposed public amenities that will implement multiple objectives including the following:

- Protection/restoration of valuable natural resources along the riverfront
- Connectivity to Riverfront preservation efforts in Whitemarsh Township and Plymouth Township
- Preservation of existing cultural/historic sites
- Education of the riverfront's cultural, historic, and natural resources
- Creation of new public access to the river

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- Increased recreational activities for Borough residents

Current Public Access to the River

There is limited formal public access to the Schuylkill River within the municipal limits of the Borough of Conshohocken. There is, however, an increasing ability to provide additional access to the riverfront due to ordinance requirements recently put into place by the Borough.

Potential Riverfront Access and Projects

Public access to the Schuylkill Riverfront, as well as the protection/restoration of the natural habitat along the river, is a primary goal of this Plan. The timeliness of creating a linear greenway and Riverbank Path system is critical given the intense interest in redeveloping waterfront parcels.

This Plan recommends that the area along the riverfront be preserved as a greenway with public access to the river, and a Schuylkill Riverbank Path connecting along the River to adjacent municipalities. In addition, the development of a car-top boat launch would provide direct access to the river for both existing residents and for the many new riverfront residents who are expected to move into the newly constructed residential areas along the riverfront.

CHAPTER 10

STREETSCAPING

Streetscape Elements

The purpose of focusing on streetscape improvements in this Open Space Plan is to enhance the pedestrian environment along streets, pathways, roadways, and bridges that may serve as critical linkages to open space and other park and recreation facilities throughout the Borough. Streetscape improvements also enhance the overall aesthetics of the public environment, thereby increasing the economic appeal of commercial districts and neighborhoods, and improving safety, comfort, and accessibility of pedestrians.

Streetscaping

Streetscaping involves a range of enhancements – from landscaping and other “greening” techniques (tree planting, hanging baskets, planters, green trenches) to improvements, such as traffic calming and other applications for improving the pedestrian environment (curb extensions, crosswalks, advance pedestrian warning signage).

Greening

The need to enhance the Borough’s streets and neighborhoods with trees and other greening techniques is considered a priority by the Open Space Committee and was recommended by several participants during the first Public Meeting. The Open Space Committee conducted an initial evaluation identifying areas requiring street trees throughout the Borough (see Map 12 – Deficient Street Tree Areas). A more thorough investigation should be con-



Mature street trees overhang most of Tenth Avenue

ducted to identify the types of street trees that should be planted (native species, and if possible, of the same species as existing mature trees), and the priority for planting trees throughout the Borough. (A listing of street trees recommended by the Conshohocken Shade Tree Commission is provided at the end of this chapter.) The Fayette Street Master Plan: Downtown – Riverfront Linkages Streetscape Plan (November 2005) also recommended that tree planting, “green trenches”, and hanging baskets and planters be installed at identified locations along the entire Fayette Street Corridor. The Open Space Committee has also



Several blocks in the Borough have no street trees

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recommended that a program be formalized for the planting and maintenance of street trees and neighborhood greening on private residential and commercial properties.

Pedestrian Amenities

In addition to landscaping initiatives, the need to improve conditions for pedestrian safety, accessibility, and mobility was identified by the Open Space Committee and at Public Meetings as a high priority. Several locations throughout the Borough were identified in the Conshohocken Borough Traffic and Parking Management Study (Final Report, July 2004), in the Fayette Street Master Plan Report, and by the Borough Open Space Committee through a field survey. These sources identified the need for a variety of traffic calming techniques, including curb-extensions, stamped asphalt crosswalks, advance pedestrian warning signage, and mid-block raised pedestrian crosswalks at locations along Fayette Street, Elm Street, Hector Street, Spring Mill Avenue, and 6th Avenue (see Recommendation G).



Well-maintained sidewalks exist throughout most of the Borough



Curb-extensions on Hector Street

Streetscape improvements focused on improving the pedestrian environment and connections (crosswalks, curb-extensions, mid-block crossings, curb ramps, landscaping, and street trees) were also identified for locations in the vicinity of the Borough's parks (Sutcliffe Park, A & B Fields, Mary Wood Park, Aubrey Collins), and for historic streets (Hector Street) and Borough gateways (Edwards-Freeman Roadway Triangle, East Elm Street, Fayette Street).

While the Borough is already a very walkable community, the present condition of many of its sidewalks was an issue raised by residents during the first Public Meeting and at Focus Group meetings. The Open Space Committee evaluated the condition of sidewalks located along major pedestrian routes (e.g. Fayette Street), within commercial districts, and near pedestrian generators (SEPTA R-6 Station, parks, trails) and identified locations along Fayette Street, Wood Street, Washington Street, and Colwell Lane, requiring repair and replacement. The identified locations are listed under Recommendation G in Chapter 11.

Recommended Street Trees Conshohocken Shade Tree Commission

Small Trees

Low mature height/suitable for street tree plantings under low utility lines.

Amelanchier x grandiflora

(Serviceberry, Shadbush)

'Autumn Brilliance'

H:20-25' W:15-18'

'Cumulus'

H:20-25' W:12-18'

'Robin Hill'

H:20-25' W:12-15'

Crateegus viridis

(Hawthorne)

'Winter King'

H:20-25' W:25-30'

Malus species

(Crabapple)

'Centurion'

H:20-25' W:15-20'

'Harvest Gold'

H:20-25' W: 15-20'

'Snowdrift'

H:18-20' W:18-20'

Syringa reticulata

(Japanese Tree Lilac)

'Ivory Silk'

H:20-30' W:15-20'

'Summer Snow'

H:20-25' W:20-25'

Medium Trees

Moderate mature height / plant where growing space will, allow up to 50' mature trees

Aesculus carnea

(Ruby Red Horsechestnut)

'Briotti'

H: 40-50' W:30-45'

Betula nigra

(River Birch)

'Heritage'

H: 40-50' W:30-35'

Carpinus Betulus

(European Hornbeam)

'Fastigiata'

H: 35-45' W:20-30'

Celtis occidentalis

(Hackberry)

'Prairie Pride'

H: 40-50' W:40-50'

Koeleruteria Paniculata

(Goldenrain tree)

H: 25-40' W:25-40'

Pyrus calleryana

(Callery Pear)

'Aristocrat'

H: 35-45' W:30-40'

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'Autumn Blaze'

H: 35-45' W:20-30'

'Chanticleer' a.k.a. 'Cleveland Select'

H: 35-40' W:15-20'

'Redspire'

H: 40-45' W:25-30'

Sophora Japonica

(*Pagodatree, Scholartree*)

'Princeton Upright'

H: 40-50' W:25-30'

'Regent'

H: 40-50' W:30-40'

Large Trees

Tall mature height/plant where there are no overhead restrictions

Cercidiphyllum japonicus

(*Katsura Tree*)

H: 50-80'

Fraxinus pennsylvanics

(*Green Ash*)

'Patmore'

H: 50-60' W:40-50'

'Summit'

H: 50-60' W:45-55'

Liquidambar styraciflus

(*Sweetgum*)

H: 50-75' W:40-65'

Platanus x acerifolis

(*London Planetree*)

H: 70-80' W:55-65'

Quercus phelloa

(*Willow Oak*)

H: 55-75' W:45-60'

Quercus robur

(*English Oak*)

'Fastigiata'

H: 50-60'

Quercus rubra

(*Northern Red Oak*)

H: 60-80' W:45-65'

Quercus shumardil

(*Shumard Oak*)

H: 60-80' W:45-65'

Tilia cordata

(*Littleleaf Linden*)

'Glenleven'

H: 50-70' W:35-50'

'Greenspire'

H: 50-70' W:35—50'

Zelkoya serrata

(*Japanese Zelkova*)

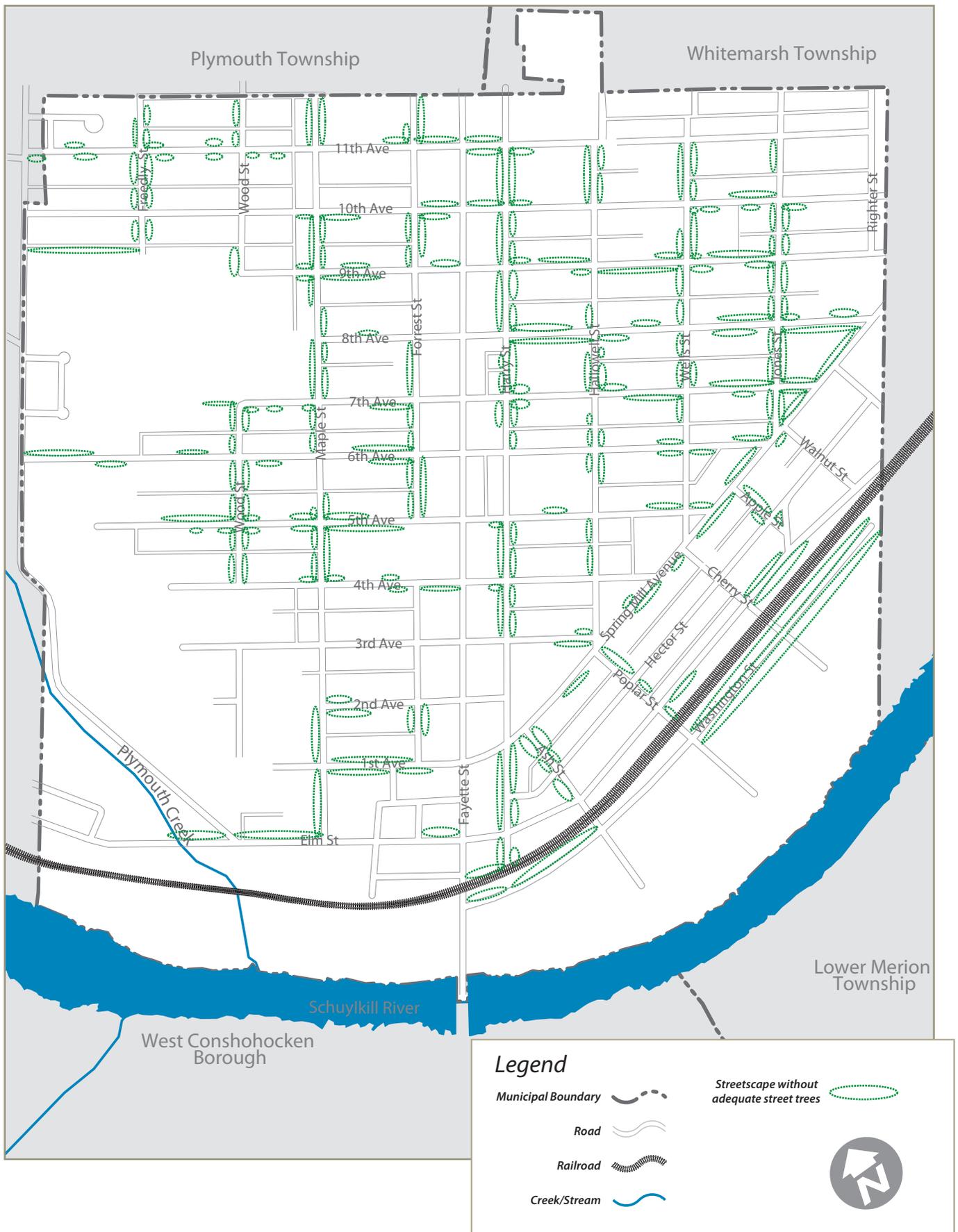
'Green Vase'

H: 60-75' W:50—55'

'Village Green'

H: 50-60' W:50-60'

MAP#12 DEFICIENT STREET TREE AREAS





RECOMMENDATIONS

CHAPTER 11

RECOMMENDATIONS

A variety of open space opportunities currently exist within the Borough of Conshohocken. The timing for implementing these opportunities is extremely critical given the desire to provide additional public access to prime developable areas within the Borough and the increasing interest in developing these parcels.

The following recommendations represent the open space acquisition and parks improvement needs that Conshohocken Borough seeks to accomplish within the next ten years. These recommendations were developed utilizing the following criteria:

- *Location of the recommended open space projects within the Borough*
- *Distribution of open space within the Borough*
- *Balance of open space types within the Borough*
- *Diversity of open space within the Borough*
- *Consistency with needs and goals of the Borough*
- *Creation of an overall network or system of open space within the Borough*
- *Development of open space linkages both within the Borough and to adjacent municipalities*
- *Potential to acquire or protect identified land parcels*
- *Analysis of the current vulnerability to development pressure*

The primary focus of this Open Space Plan is on creating and improving public access and amenities along the Schuylkill Riverfront. The connection of existing and proposed parkland and open space

within the Borough to trails and other open space in Plymouth Township, Whitemarsh Township, West Conshohocken, and Lower Merion Township is also a high priority for the Borough.

The priority of each of the following recommendations is provided as a reference to demonstrate the anticipated need for completion as it relates to each of the other recommendations. The implementation timeline for each recommendation is based on the priority for preservation assuming that existing conditions, such as development pressure, remain stable. Near-Term Recommendations include projects the Borough seeks to implement in the next five years, while Long-Term Recommendations are considered funding priorities for the Borough's Open Space Program in Years 6-10. Over time, priorities may change due to changes in the existing conditions within the Borough. In the event of significant changes, the Borough recognizes that it may be necessary to amend this Plan accordingly.

The implementation of each of the specific recommendations will be led by a primary advocate from the public, private, or non-profit sectors, and supported by one or more implementation partners. This Implementation Lead Advocate and Partner(s) are identified for each Recommendation and Sub-Action listed below.

In addition to the implementation advocates, the potential funding source(s) for each Recommendation and Sub-Action are also listed below. Contributions from private developers as a condition for de-

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veloping property within the Borough are referenced under Funding Source(s) as “Development Process”.

Given the nature of planning for open space, streetscaping, and greening of the Borough for the next ten years, it is likely that unforeseen opportunities to protect open space will arise. The Recommendations List included below has been created to guide the Borough in open space planning activities under current conditions. Should additional open space-related opportunities arise that are not listed in this Plan’s Recommendations List, the Borough intends to actively pursue any opportunity that will enhance the quality of life for residents.

Open Space Recommendations

Recommendation A: *Develop a Waterfront Plan Along the Schuylkill River*

This plan would encompass the 100-foot-wide deeded strip along the Schuylkill Riverbank for the entire length of the Borough and focus on the Riverfront adjacent to the Millenium development as the activity core, radiating outwards.

Priority: High

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Open Space Committee

Implementation Partners: Borough Planning Commission, Borough Council Parks & Recreation Committee, Borough Council Buildings & Grounds Committee, Schuylkill River Greenway Association

Potential Funding Sources: Borough Funds, Montgomery County’s Green Fields Green Towns (GFGT) Open Space Program, Schuylkill River Greenway Association, County funding earmarked for Schuylkill River activities.

Recommendation B: *Develop a Schuylkill River Greenway System Along the Borough’s Riverfront*

Sub-Action #1: *Build the Schuylkill Riverbank Path*

Acquire land parcels and build a path extending from the Borough Line with Whitemarsh Township to the Borough Line with Plymouth Township. This Riverbank Path will be part of a larger pathway system potentially extending to Norristown. The Greenway and Riverbank Path will provide direct access to the River’s edge, allowing passive recreation activities such as nature or bird watching, and active activities, such as fishing, and boating/canoeing/kayaking/rowing.

Priority: High

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Open Space Committee

Implementation Partners: Borough Planning Commission, Borough Council Parks & Recreation Committee, Borough Council Buildings & Grounds Committee, Schuylkill River Greenway Association, Local Developers

Potential Funding Sources: GFGT Open Space Program, Schuylkill River Greenway Association, Development Process, County funding earmarked for Schuylkill River activities.

Sub-Action #2: *Build Connections Between the Greenway/Riverbank Path and Borough Destinations*

The Greenway and Riverbank Path could connect to the Schuylkill River Trail and to Borough neighborhoods and commercial districts at Ash Street, Harry Street, and Cherry Street. Investigate additional public access along Poplar Street and other unnamed streets within the Millenium project. The feasibility

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for Riverfront access west of the Matsonford Bridge is proposed in Recommendation E below.

A signage system recommended in Recommendation H and Recommendation N, Sub-Action #3, would further facilitate connectivity.

Priority: High

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Planning Commission

Implementation Partners: Borough Open Space Committee, Borough Council Public Works Committee, Private Developers

Potential Funding Sources: GFGT Open Space Program, Federal Transportation Enhancements, Development Process

Sub-Action #3: *Restore the Riparian Buffer Along the Riverfront*

This buffer will strengthen and protect the river's edge as well as provide habitat for river-based wildlife. Any proposed riparian buffer along the Schuylkill River should be consistent with the Riparian Corridor Ordinance developed as part of Recommendation #I (Develop a Natural Resource Protection Ordinance.)

Priority: High

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Open Space Committee

Implementation Partners: Borough Planning Commission, Borough Council Parks & Recreation Committee, Private Developers

Potential Funding Sources: GFGT Open Space Program, Private Developers, Growing Greener II, Development Process

Sub-Action #4: *Build a Cultural & Historic Park Along the Old Schuylkill Canal*

Acquire the required land parcels and build cultural and historic attractions along restored sections of the Old Schuylkill Canal. These attractions could be incorporated into a cultural / historic trail or linear park, supported by a wayfinding and interpretive signage system and a physical pathway.

Priority: Low

Implementation Timeline: Long-Term

Implementation Lead: Conshohocken Historical Society

Implementation Partners: Borough Open Space Committee, Borough Planning Commission, Borough Council Parks & Recreation Committee, Borough Council Buildings & Grounds Committee, Schuylkill River Greenway Association

Potential Funding Sources: GFGT Open Space Program, Schuylkill River Greenway Association, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, and GFGT funding earmarked for Schuylkill River Greenway activities.

Recommendation C: *Provide Riverfront Amenities for River Recreational Activities / Integrate the Riverfront with River Life*

Sub-Action #1: *Install Pedestrian Amenities Along the Riverfront*

These activities could include a fishing pier, sitting pier, dog stations, pavilion, picnic area and river-re-

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lated businesses such as rental facilities for bicycles and in-line skates.

Priority: High

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Planning Commission

Implementation Partners: Borough Council Parks & Recreation Committee, Borough Council Buildings & Grounds Committee, Local Developers

Potential Funding Sources: Borough funds, Development process

Sub-Action #2: *Build an Additional Public Access Boat Launch Along the Riverfront*

Investigate the potential for building a new publicly-accessible car-top boat launch along the riverfront west of the Matsonford Bridge.

Priority: Medium

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Council Parks & Recreation Committee

Implementation Partners: Borough Council Buildings & Grounds Committee, Borough Planning Commission, Schuylkill River Greenway Association, Private Developers

Potential Funding Sources: Local Developers, PA Fish & Boat Commission

Sub-Action #3: *Create Secured Boat Storage along the Schuylkill Riverfront*

Provide secured storage to river sojourners for river vehicles (boats, canoes, kayaks, rowboats) while spending time in the Borough. Advertise this amenity to potential river enthusiasts through flyers, adver-

tising and “word of mouth” to local recreation outlets such as gyms and recreation supply stores. This sub-action should be coordinated with statewide efforts to create the Schuylkill River “Blueway”.

Priority: Medium

Implementation Timeline: Long-Term

Implementation Lead: Schuylkill River Greenway Association

Implementation Partners: Borough Open Space Committee, Borough Planning Commission, Private Entrepreneur

Potential Funding Sources: Funding should be advanced through the Schuylkill River Greenway Association or other state or federal body as part of a multi-municipal, regional, statewide effort.

Sub-Action #4: *Develop a Boathouse along the Schuylkill Riverfront*

Identify potential public and private partners (i.e. the Schuylkill Navy) for developing a Conshohocken Boathouse along the Borough’s Schuylkill River banks. This amenity would provide rowing opportunities for the Borough’s residents with an emphasis on youth activities.

Priority: Medium

Implementation Timeline: Long-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Open Space Committee

Implementation Partners: Schuylkill Navy, University or High School, Private Rowing Club, Fellowship House, Private Developers

Potential Funding Sources: Schuylkill River Greenway Association grant, University or School Rowing Programs, Development Process

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Recommendation D: *Improve Access and Mobility Conditions for Bicyclists and Pedestrians Along the Matsonford Bridge*

Sub-Action #1: *Integrate the Matsonford Bridge with the Riverfront and Trail Systems*

Enhance physical connectivity between the Matsonford Bridge and the Schuylkill River Trail and the proposed Schuylkill Riverbank Trail and Lower Merion/West Conshohocken Trail through construction of ramping structures, steps, or an elevator. These access improvements should also serve to better connect the Conshohocken Riverfront with the West Conshohocken and Lower Merion Township riverfronts.

Priority: High

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Council Transportation Committee

Implementation Partners: PennDOT, Borough Engineer, Borough Council Public Works Committee, Local Developers, Borough Planning Commission, West Conshohocken Borough, Greater Valley Forge Transportation Management Association (TMA)

Potential Funding Sources: Federal Transportation Enhancements, Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality Improvement Program. Potential Congressional Annual Appropriation, Private Developers, State Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP)

Sub-Action #2: *Improve Pathway Conditions and Amenities Along the Matsonford Bridge*

Widen the existing barrier-separated pedestrian-bicycle pathway to accommodate bi-directional multi-use traffic and consider integrating look-outs, plazas, seating, interpretive signage, pathway light-

ing, to improve the user experience along the Bridge pathway.

Priority: High

Implementation Timeline: Long-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Council Transportation Committee

Implementation Partners: PennDOT, Borough Engineer, Borough Council Public Works Committee, Borough Planning Commission, Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia, Greater Valley Forge Transportation Management Association

Potential Funding Sources: Ensure that this action is included in any future bridge widening funding package. Federal Transportation Enhancements, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program, Congressional Annual Appropriation, State Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP).

Recommendation E: *Study the Feasibility for Riverfront Access West of the Matsonford Bridge*

Study the feasibility for linking the Schuylkill River Trail and Cross County Trail and the Borough's western neighborhoods across the SEPTA R-6 tracks to the Riverfront and the Riverbank Path west of the Matsonford Bridge.

Potential linkages might include above-grade access such as an elevated trail facility from the Schuylkill River Trail to the riverfront, or below-grade access, such as an adaptive use of the Plymouth Creek drainage improvements. This study should be pursued as a multi-municipal effort in partnership with Plymouth Township.

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Priority: High

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Planning Commission

Implementation Partners: Borough Open Space Committee, Borough Engineer, Private Developers

Potential Funding Sources: Borough Funds, DVR-PC Transportation & Community Development Initiative grant, DCNR Community Conservation Partnerships Program (Planning & Technical Assistance), Schuylkill River Greenway Association, Development Process.

Recommendation F: Support the Development of the Cross-County Trail & Access Linkages

Sub-Action #1: Review and Comment on the County's Plans for Developing the Cross-County Trail (CCT)

Utilize Borough staff and consultant resources to assist the County in planning a trail alignment and designing facilities that best serve Borough residents and future trail users.

Priority: Medium

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Planning Commission

Implementation Partners: Borough Engineer, Borough Planner, Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia, Montgomery County Planning Commission, Borough Council Parks & Recreation Committee, Borough Council Buildings & Grounds Committee, Greater Valley Forge TMA, Borough Council Transportation Committee

Potential Funding Sources: Borough Funds

Sub-Action #2: Construct Bicycle-Compatible Connections from the Cross-County Trail to Adjacent Neighborhoods and Destinations

This effort should involve using existing footings along the Plymouth Creek to link the trail to Colwell Lane (below Ardmore Tire) at the Borough/Township Line. Install a striped bike lane and sidewalk (east side only) along Colwell Lane to provide improve access for residents located further north of the Trail corridor. Also, make improvements along Brook/Alan Wood Road in Plymouth Township to enhance access to the CCT. These actions should be advanced in coordination with Plymouth Township.

Priority: High

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Open Space Committee

Implementation Partners: Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia, Plymouth Township, Montgomery County Planning Commission, Borough Open Space Committee, Borough Council Parks & Recreation Committee, Borough Council Buildings & Grounds Committee, Borough Planning Commission, Borough Council Transportation Committee

Potential Funding Sources: The Cross-County Trail is being funded through County Trail development sources. Funding sources for constructing Trail connectivity could include the Borough Funds, Federal Transportation Enhancements, Federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program, DCNR Community Conservation Partnerships Program (Development Projects / Greenways and Trails), GFGT Open Space Program

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Sub-Action #3: *Construct Trail Parking Adjacent to Ardmore Tire Co.*

Priority: High

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Council Parks & Recreation Committee

Implementation Partners: Borough Open Space Committee, Borough Planning Commission, Borough Council Buildings & Grounds Committee, Borough Engineer, Plymouth Township, Borough Council Public Works Committee

Potential Funding Sources: Borough Funds, Federal Transportation Enhancements, Federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program, DCNR Community Conservation Partnerships Program (Development Projects / Greenways and Trails), GFGT Open Space Program

Recommendation G: *Improve Streetscapes and Pedestrian Conditions throughout the Borough*

Sub-Action #1: *Improve Streetscapes in the Vicinity of the Following Parks:*

Sutcliffe Park – Street trees needed along perimeter of park. Pedestrian connections from the roadway to the interior loop trail should also be considered.

A. A. Garthwait Stadium & Borusiewicz Field – Street trees and/or shade trees are needed near the pavilion. The grass parking should be formalized. Curb-extensions and crosswalks should be provided at the intersection of 11th and Harry Streets. Cross-walks should be provided at 11th and Hallowell Streets, and 12th and Hallowell Streets.

Mary Wood Park – Street trees should be provided in the two areas highlighted on the Deficient Street Tree Areas map (See at end of Chapter). Coordinate with Mary Wood Park Commission to improve safety and lighting and to maintain trees in the park.

Aubrey Collins Park – Mid-block crosswalks to the park should be provided to connect with the opposite side of Elm Street.

Priority: Medium

Implementation Timeline: Long-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Shade Tree Commission

Implementation Partners: Borough Council Public Works Committee, Morris Arboretum, Mary Wood Park Commission

Potential Funding Sources: DCNR TreeVitalize grant program, Federal Transportation Enhancements, GFGT Open Space Program

Sub-Action #2: *Repair and Maintain the Streetscaping Elements Along Hector Street*

Undertake restoration efforts for the streetscaping elements previously installed along this historic street.

Priority: Medium

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Council Public Works Committee

Implementation Partner: Borough Open Space Committee

Potential Funding Sources: Borough Funds

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Sub-Action #3: Incorporate Street Trees and Neighborhood Greening at Various Locations

Utilize the Deficient Street Tree Areas Map and Shade Tree Commission Recommended Street Trees List (see at end of Chapter 10) to undertake a more specific study of the street trees needed, type of trees that should be planted (native species, and if possible, of the same species as existing mature trees), and the priority for planting trees throughout the Borough. Tree planting and “green trenches” should be installed at identified locations along the entire Fayette Street Corridor per the recommendations of the Fayette Street Master Plan (November 2005). Identified Borough streets (Harry, Ash, Poplar, Cherry, and Maple Streets) should be greened with tree plantings to visually connect the downtown and neighborhoods to the riverfront (“Green Fingers” streetscaping). The installation of Hanging Baskets and Planters throughout the Borough would further enhance neighborhood greening efforts.

The Borough Shade Tree Commission should formalize a program for planting and maintaining street trees and neighborhood greening within private property and develop an Adopt-a-Tree Program. Consideration should be given to reinvigorating the Shade Tree Commission.

Priority: Medium

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Shade Tree Commission

Implementation Partners: Borough Planning Commission, Borough Council Public Works Committee, Morris Arboretum, Borough Garden Club, Private Developers, Property Owners

Potential Funding Sources: Borough Funds, DCNR TreeVitalize grant program, TreeTenders Program

Sub-Action #4: Enhance Borough Gateways

Landscape the traffic island adjacent to the Edwards-Freeman Roadway Triangle. Study the feasibility of converting the intersection at East 1st Avenue, Harry Street and Spring Mill Avenue to a roundabout, creating a visual destination and improving conditions for walking (see sub-action #5 below). Other potential locations for gateways include East Elm Street, Fayette Street and Colwell Lane. Incorporate “Conshohocken Riversteps,” a gently sloped outdoor stairway, along Elm Street and Harry Street, as recommended in the Conshohocken Revitalization Plan (March 2002) and the Fayette Street Master Plan (November 2005).

Priority: Medium

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Council Public Works Committee

Implementation Partners: Borough Planning Commission, Borough Engineer, Borough Planner, Greater Valley Forge TMA, Borough Council Transportation Committee

Potential Funding Sources: Borough Funds, Federal Transportation Enhancements, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program, DVRPC Transportation and Community Development Initiative. Identify potential volunteer services (“Friends of Conshohocken Borough” and “Conshohocken Garden Club”) for the maintenance and planting of the Edwards-Freeman Roadway Triangle and other gateway locations.

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Sub-Action #5: Implement Traffic Calming Measures at Various Locations Throughout the Borough

The following traffic calming measures should be considered at the identified locations per the recommendations of the Conshohocken Borough Traffic and Parking Management Study (Final Report, July 2004) and the Fayette Street Master Plan (November 2005):

Fayette Street:

- Install bump-outs at all corners of the Fayette Street Corridor and strategic corners along all linkage routes
- Install stamped asphalt crosswalks at each intersection

Elm Street:

- Install stamped asphalt crosswalks at each intersection
- Install advance warning signage (with flashing beacons) alerting motorists to pedestrians at the Corson Street approach

Hector Street:

- Install stamped asphalt crosswalks at Jones Street and Walnut Street
- Install overhead cantilevered pedestrian crossing sign with flashing beacons on the Jones Street and Walnut Street approaches

Spring Mill Avenue

- Install stamped asphalt crosswalks at Harry Street and Hallowell / 4th Avenue

6th Avenue

- Construct curb extensions and install stamped asphalt crosswalks at Wood Street, Maple Street, and Forrest Street
- Construct mid-block raised pedestrian crosswalk between Colwell Lane and Wood Street

Priority: High

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Council Transportation Committee

Implementation Partners: Borough Engineer, Borough Council Public Works Committee, Private Developers, Greater Valley Forge TMA, Private Developers

Potential Funding Sources: Borough Funds, Safe Routes to School, Transportation Enhancements program, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program, Development Process

Sub-Action #6: Install Sidewalks (Where Missing) at Various Locations.

Identified locations along highly used pedestrian routes include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Harry, Ash, Poplar, and Cherry Streets - across SEPTA R-6 tracks for improved access to Schuylkill River Trail
- 13th Avenue – along the “B” field
- Washington Street – adjacent to the SEPTA right-of-way
- Colwell Lane – on east side of roadway for connectivity to the Cross-County Trail

Priority: Medium

Implementation Timeline: Long-Term

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Implementation Lead: Borough Council Public Works Committee

Implementation Partner: Private Developers

Potential Funding Sources: Borough Funds, Private Developers, Property Owners

Recommendation H: *Design & Implement Signage Systems for Waterfront Wayfinding*

Link Riverfront Attractions to Interior Borough Destinations and Link Regional Riverfront Communities to One Another Through Integrated Signage

This signage system – directional, wayfinding, and interpretive – should highlight the Borough’s historic, recreational, shopping, and entertainment amenities for visitors, residents, workers, and trail users. This project should be advanced in coordination with other Riverfront municipalities on both sides of the Schuylkill River. Consider Schuylkill River Heritage Area Signage standards and be consistent with signage and wayfinding recommendations contained in the Fayette Street Master Plan (November 2005). This signage system should be integrated with the Borough-wide signage system referenced in Recommendation N, Sub-Action #3.

Priority: High

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Open Space Committee

Implementation Partners: Borough Planning Commission, Schuylkill River Greenway Association, Borough Council Public Works Committee, Selected Businesses

Potential Funding Sources: Submit a multi-municipal application to the following funding sources: Grow-

ing Greener II, Transportation Enhancements program, Schuylkill River Greenway Association grant program. Identify additional stakeholders, including developers, business owners, historical/cultural institutions, recreation organizations, for support in fundraising activities.

Recommendation I: *Develop a Natural Resource Protection Ordinance*

Develop a Natural Features Resource Protection Ordinance that Focuses on Preserving Riparian Corridors, Establishes Setbacks from Stream Corridors and Ecologically Sensitive Natural Areas, and Protects Existing Resources

This ordinance should include a riparian corridor ordinance that focuses on the preservation of riparian areas along the Schuylkill River, Plymouth Creek, and other smaller tributaries. Undertake a stream corridor study for the Schuylkill River and Plymouth Creek.

Priority: Medium

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Planning Commission

Implementation Partners: Borough Planner, Academy of Natural Sciences, Borough Solicitor

Potential Funding Sources: Contact the Academy of Natural Sciences to assess their interest in studying the Borough’s stream corridors. Other potential funding sources include Growing Greener II and Borough Funds.

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Recommendation J: Investigate Potential for Strengthening Historic Preservation

Sub-Action #1: Encourage Preservation of Existing Historic Structures and Properties Within the Borough

This could be accomplished through the development of financial, tax, or other incentives to allow existing property owners to retain the original building. Consider adopting zoning ordinance incentives for proposed development that will provide increased density for residential uses or increased floor area for non-residential uses beyond what is permitted by the base zoning regulations when a proposed development retains a historic structure or property.

Priority: Medium

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Conshohocken Historical Society

Implementation Partners: Borough Planner, Borough Solicitor, Conservancy of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

Potential Funding Sources: Borough Funds

Sub-Action #2: Investigate the Creation of a Historic Architectural Review Board (HARB)

Consider creating a HARB to oversee the future development/redevelopment of any historical sites in the Borough. Task this committee with studying the feasibility of creating a historical preservation ordinance, and consider implementing incentives for utilizing historic preservation measures.

Priority: Low

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Conshohocken Historical Society

Implementation Partners: Borough Planning Commission, Borough Planner, Borough Solicitor, Conservancy of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

Potential Funding Sources: Borough Funds

Sub-Action #3: Create an Oral History of the Borough

Identify and meet with seniors in the Borough to develop an oral history of the Borough through one-on-one interviews with long-term residents.

Priority: Low

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Conshohocken Historical Society

Implementation Partner: Local University

Potential Funding Sources: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

Recommendation K: Initiate Volunteer Efforts Within the Borough

Sub-Action #1: Initiate a Garden Club in the Borough

This club should be invested with the responsibility both for identifying potential locations of pocket parks and gardens in public spaces and for planting and maintaining these spaces.

Priority: Medium

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Council Parks & Recreation Committee

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Implementation Partner: Borough Open Space Committee

Potential Funding Sources: Any initial efforts would be accomplished with volunteer labor. This organization could be the source for any subsequent fundraising for capital or operational projects.

Sub-Action #2: *Form a “Friends of Conshohocken Borough”*

This group would advocate for open space, park, recreation, and overall improvement projects within the Borough.

Priority: Medium

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Open Space Committee

Implementation Partner: Borough Council Parks & Recreation Committee

Potential Funding Sources: Any initial efforts would be accomplished with volunteer labor. This organization could be the source for any subsequent fundraising for capital or operational projects.

Park and Recreation Recommendations

Recommendation L: *Complete a Park and Recreation Needs Assessment*

Complete a Borough-Wide Park and Recreation Assessment to Determine the Need for Additional or Improved Facilities Within the Borough

This Assessment would consider not only park and recreational facility needs but would also consider the Borough-wide distribution of such facilities. As part of this Assessment, identify locations for such needs as a dog park, skate park, tot lot, and passive open space in the eastern section of the Borough. A Bor-

ough-Wide Assessment should be completed prior to the development of Site Master Plans as described in Recommendation M below.

Priority: High

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Council Parks & Recreation Committee

Implementation Partners: Borough Council Buildings & Grounds Committee, Borough Planner, Borough Planning Commission

Potential Funding Sources: DCNR Community Conservation Partnerships Program (Planning & Technical Assistance), Borough Funds

Recommendation M: *Develop Site Master Plans for the Borough’s Parks*

Develop Site Master Plans to Identify, Upgrade, and Formalize Potential Uses for the Following Parks:

- 2nd Avenue Meadow - Potential uses could include a children’s play area, passive picnic area, or a dog park.
- Sutcliffe Park – Potential upgrades may include restrooms, concession area, expansion to available adjacent undeveloped property, and an entranceway and parking area to the park at 9th Avenue.
- A.A. Garthwait Stadium & Borusiewicz Fields - Potential additional amenities could include a running track, tennis courts and multi-purpose field.
- Aubrey Collins Park – Potential upgrades may include restrooms, improved swings/tot lot and passive amenities such as picnic tables, benches and shade trees. Consider expansion of the park to include acquisition of the undeveloped par-

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cel along Hector Street. Include the recently acquired parcels adjacent to the park for expansion purposes. Work with neighborhood residents to design these expansion/upgrade activities.

- Mary Wood Park – Potential improvements include increased park maintenance and construction or improvement of facilities for toddlers and children.

Priority: High

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Council Parks & Recreation Committee

Implementation Partners: Borough Council Buildings & Grounds Committee, Borough Planner, Mary Wood Park Commission

Potential Funding Sources: DCNR Community Conservation Partnerships Program (Planning & Technical Assistance; Development Projects; Acquisition Projects), DCNR TreeVitalize grant program

Recommendation N: *Encourage Bicycling and Walking Through Physical Improvements and Other Techniques*

Sub-Action #1: *Install Bicycle Racks, Benches, and Other Amenities at Designated Locations*

Locations should be identified along and near the Schuylkill River Trail and proposed Schuylkill Riverbank Path and at other locations throughout the Borough, including the SEPTA R-6 Station, parks, retail shops, restaurants, schools, and workplaces.

Priority: High

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Open Space Committee

Implementation Partners: Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia, Local Businesses, Borough Engineer, Borough Open Space Committee, Borough Planning Commission, SEPTA, Borough Council Transportation Committee, Greater Valley Forge TMA

Potential Funding Sources: Federal Transportation Enhancements program, Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) program, PennDOT Safe Routes to School program, SEPTA, Private businesses, Development Process.

Sub-Action #2: *Create Incentives Through Zoning or Other Public and Private Financial Techniques for Supporting and Encouraging Bicycling and Walking Throughout the Borough*

Such incentives could support the acquisition and installation of secured and covered bicycle parking at a variety of public and private destinations.

Priority: Medium

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Planning Commission

Implementation Partners: Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia, Borough Solicitor, Greater Valley Forge TMA

Potential Funding Sources: Borough Funds

Sub-Action #3: *Plan & Design a Borough-Wide Pedestrian-Oriented Directional Signage and Wayfinding System*

This signage system should be designed to direct pedestrians – whether visitors, tourists, workers, residents, trail users, students – to major recreational, entertainment, commercial / retail, historical and cultural destinations. This proposed system should be

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integrated with the riverfront signage referenced in Recommendation H, and be consistent with signage recommendations contained in the Conshohocken Revitalization Plan (March 2002).

Priority: Medium

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Planning Commission

Implementation Partners: Borough Council Public Works Committee, Borough Council Transportation Committee, Borough Planner, Greater Valley Forge TMA

Potential Funding Sources: Federal Transportation Enhancements program, Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality Improvement program, PENNDOT Safe Routes to School program, Development Process.

Sub-Action #4: *Plan & Create a Borough-Wide Bicycle Map*

A bicycle map should include locations of multi-use trails, bike lanes, bicycle routes, bridge pathways, bicycle parking facilities, as well as recreational, cultural, historic, and entertainment destinations. This map could serve to highlight the Borough's many assets. Distribution could take place along the Trail and at bicycle/sports shops, libraries, and local businesses.

Priority: Medium

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Council Transportation Committee

Implementation Partners: Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia, Borough Planning Commission,

Borough Council Public Works Committee, PennDOT, Greater Valley Forge TMA

Potential Funding Sources: PennDOT Safe Routes to School program, Borough Funds

Sub-Action #5: *Develop Additional Pedestrian and Parking Access to the Schuylkill River Trail*

Build a pedestrian/bicycle access link to the Schuylkill River Trail along East Elm Street at one of the potential locations identified in Chapter 5. This area of the Borough presently has no access within walking distance to the Schuylkill River Trail. Formalize the Borough-owned gravel parking lot along West Elm Street at Corson Street as Trail parking and pedestrian access to accommodate residents living west of Matsonford Bridge.

Priority: Medium

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

Implementation Lead: Borough Council Parks & Recreation Committee

Implementation Partners: Borough Engineer, Whitemarsh Township, Montgomery County Planning Commission, Greater Valley Forge TMA

Potential Funding Sources: Borough Funds

Recommendation O: *Link Open Space Areas Throughout the Borough*

Formalize a Walking Trail Along the Existing Stormwater Drainage Basin to Link 2nd Avenue Meadow and Haines and Salvati Memorial Park.

Other opportunities for linking open space areas throughout the Borough are described in Recommendation B, Sub-Action #2, Recommendation D, Sub-Action #1, Recommendation E, Recommendation F, Sub-Action #2, Recommendation G, Sub-Action

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tions #1,2,3,6 Recommendation H, and Recommendation N, Sub-Actions #3,4,5.

Priority: High

Implementation Timeline: Near-Term

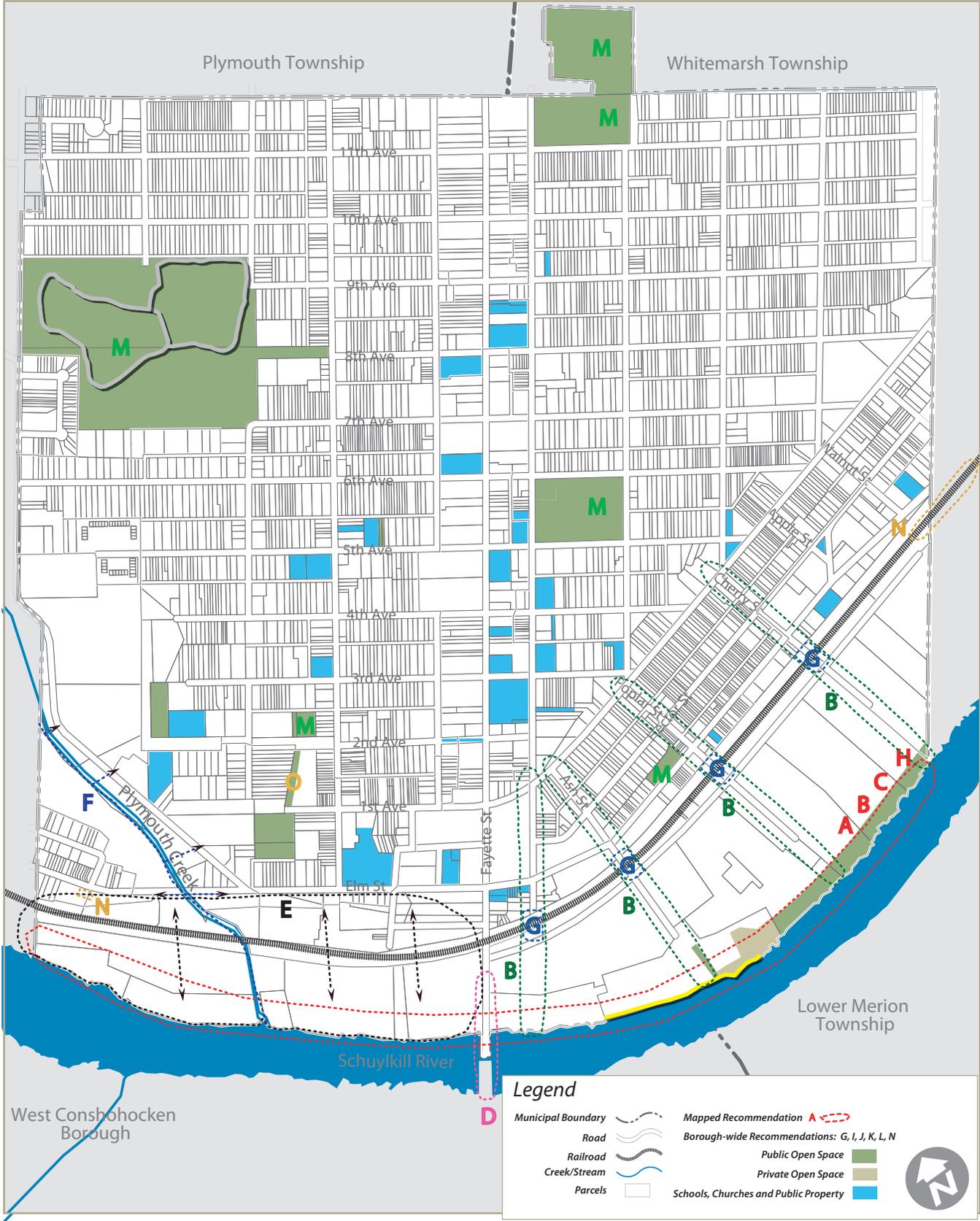
Implementation Lead: Borough Open Space Committee

Implementation Partners: Borough Engineer

Potential Funding Sources: Borough Funds

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MAP#13 RECOMMENDATIONS



Recommendations

Recommendation A:

Develop a Waterfront Plan along the Schuylkill River

Recommendation B:

Develop a Schuylkill River Greenway System along the Borough's Riverfront

Recommendation C:

Provide Riverfront Amenities for River Recreational Activities/Integrate the Riverfront with River Life

Recommendation D:

Improve Access and Mobility Conditions for Bicyclists and Pedestrians along the Matsonford Bridge

Recommendation E:

Study the feasibility for Riverfront Access West of the Matsonford Bridge

Recommendation F:

Support the Development of the Cross-County Trail & Access Linkages

Recommendation G:

Improve Streetscapes and Pedestrian Conditions throughout the Borough

Recommendation H:

Design & Implement Signage Systems for Waterfront Wayfinding

Recommendation I:

Develop a Natural Resource Protection Ordinance

Recommendation J:

Investigate Potential for Strengthening Historic Preservation

Recommendation K:

Initiate Volunteer Efforts within the Borough

Recommendation L:

Complete a Park and Recreation Needs Assessment

Recommendation M:

Develop Site Master Plans for the Borough's Parks

Recommendation N:

Encourage Bicycling and Walking Through Physical Improvements and Other Techniques

Recommendation O:

Link Open Space Areas Throughout the Borough

REGIONAL COMPARISON
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REGIONAL COMPARISON

Why Compare to Conshohocken Borough Other Municipalities and Montgomery County?

This Open Space Plan is intended to further the actions taken by the Borough over the last 5 – 10 years to create not only additional park facilities, but also to develop greenways, construct interconnecting multi-use trails, and enhance the redevelopment efforts that have taken place to date.

In planning for open space within the Borough, it is important to consider the actions of the surrounding municipalities and Montgomery County in terms of their proposed open space programs. In particular, where there is a similar interest in open space preservation, working jointly could not only reduce the needed local match funding, but also create a more cohesive purchase/acquisition process and a more complete final result.

Goals of Adjacent Municipalities that Relate to Conshohocken Borough

Whitemarsh Township:

- a. Develop trails throughout the Township and into adjacent municipalities.
- b. Preserve land along the Schuylkill River.

Plymouth Township:

- a. Provide additional access to the Schuylkill River.
- b. Complete the Cross-County Trail.

West Conshohocken Borough

1. Enhance pedestrian connections with Conshohocken over the Matsonford Bridge.
2. Develop a pedestrian and wayfinding signage system in cooperation with adjacent municipalities.

Montgomery County Open Space, Natural Features, and Cultural Resources Plan

Montgomery County has outlined its open space goals in its Comprehensive Plan – Open Space, Natural Features, and Cultural Resources Plan. These goals, the Comprehensive Plan asserts, “...will help connect open space and greenways while preserving natural, historic, and agricultural resources” and involve many players including local governments, developers, farmers, landowners and conservation and preservation organizations.

The goals from the Montgomery County Plan are listed below followed by both the goals and action items that are being proposed by the Borough of Conshohocken and their relationship to goals and action items being proposed by Whitemarsh Township, Plymouth Township, and West Conshohocken Borough. This format is intended to provide a quick reference demonstrating how the policies of the County Plan relate to the goals, objectives and actions that the Borough intends to pursue.

Montgomery County Goal #11:

Preserve Large Interconnected Areas of Significant Open Space:

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This overarching open-space goal will be achieved through a variety of actions working in unison, including the following:

- Purchasing land and development rights for perpetual preservation.
- Encouraging the donation of land and development rights.
- Adopting zoning regulations, including cluster zoning, transfer of development rights, and resource protection ordinances.
- Reducing the demand for development in open areas by limiting sewer and water extensions, directing transportation improvements to designated growth areas, and refraining from rezoning these open areas to higher intensity uses.
- Improving cooperation among all the various people and organizations involved in open space preservation, including federal, state, county and municipal government, conservation organizations, farmers, property owners and developers.
- Creating open space plans, comprehensive plans and other plans that show the larger pattern of open space that should be preserved.
- Encouraging owners of corporate campuses, large industrial properties, golf courses, camps, schools and other temporarily open land to consider permanent preservation of this land.

Conshohocken Recommendations Related to this County Goal:

- 1. Recommendation A:** Develop a Waterfront Plan Along the Schuylkill River
- 2. Recommendation B:** Develop a Schuylkill River Greenway System along the Borough's Riverfront
- 3. Recommendation E:** Study the Feasibility for Riverfront Access West of the Matsonford Bridge
- 4. Recommendation F:** Support the Development of the Cross-County Trail & Access Linkages
- 5. Recommendation L:** Complete a Park and Recreation Needs Assessment
- 6. Recommendation M:** Develop Site Master Plans for Park Facility Upgrades

Montgomery County Goal #12:

Protect and Manage Wetlands, Streams, Steep Slopes, Woodlands, and Natural Habitats:

This goal will be achieved through careful planning of future development. The following specific actions will help fulfill this goal:

- Showing wetlands on plans with development set back from the edge of these wetlands.
- Prohibiting development within floodplains, except for the development of elevated and flood-proofed buildings on brownfields sites in redevelopment areas encouraging economic revitalization.
- Adopting riparian corridor ordinances that require setbacks and preservation of riparian woodlands.
- Encouraging the enactment of steep slope preservation ordinances.
- Adopting landscaping ordinances that encourage the preservation of existing trees and replacement of trees that are destroyed during the land development process.
- Considering the exclusion of environmentally sensitive land from the portion of tracts that can be developed or counted towards lot area.
- Properly enforcing erosion and sedimentation control measures.

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- Encouraging and promoting conservation easements on environmentally-sensitive land.
- Moving portions of development that will disturb the land away from environmentally sensitive land, through techniques such as clustering, flexible lotting and transfer of development rights.

Conshohocken Recommendations Related to this County Goal:

1. **Recommendation B:** Develop a Schuylkill River Greenway System along the Borough's Riverfront
2. **Recommendation I:** Develop a Natural Resource Protection Ordinance

Montgomery County Goal #13:

Create a Greenway System Along Rivers, Creeks and Other Sensitive Natural and Historic Features:

This goal will be achieved through the following actions:

- Using floodplain, riparian corridor, wetland, steep slope and woodland preservation ordinances to keep greenways in their natural state.
- Adopting cluster zoning, flexible zoning, or transfer of development rights to move development away from important greenways.
- Purchasing land or development rights along critical greenways.
- Connecting open space on abutting tracts of land along greenways.
- Encouraging public access.
- Enhancing existing riparian corridor woodlands.

Conshohocken Recommendations Related to this County Goal:

1. **Recommendation B:** Develop a Schuylkill River Greenway System along the Borough's Riverfront

2. **Recommendation E:** Study the feasibility for Riverfront Access west of the Matsonford Bridge
3. **Recommendation F:** Support the Development of the Cross-County Trail & Access Linkages
4. **Recommendation I:** Develop a Natural Resource Protection Ordinance

Montgomery County Goal #14:

Develop a County-Wide Network of Interconnected Trails:

This goal will be achieved through the following actions:

- Building county trails along major corridors.
- Encouraging local municipalities to create their own smaller-scale trail networks that connect to the county system.
- Interconnecting trail systems within abutting municipalities and counties.
- Working with state, regional and federal entities to connect their trails with the county-wide system.
- Using state and federal transportation funds to build trails, in addition to other funding sources.
- Building trails parallel to any new highways that are built.
- Providing trail connections from new developments to County and local trails.
- Connecting off-road trails with local sidewalks and on-road bicycle lanes.
- Requiring new public facilities, such as bridges and train stations, to include trails.
- Working cooperatively with many individuals and groups to create trails, including farmers, other property owners, businesses and institutions.

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Conshohocken Recommendations Related to this County Goal:

1. **Recommendation B:** Develop a Schuylkill River Greenway System along the Borough's Riverfront
2. **Recommendation D:** Improve Access and Mobility Conditions for Bicyclists and Pedestrians Along the Matsonford Bridge
3. **Recommendation E:** Study the Feasibility for Riverfront Access West of the Matsonford Bridge
4. **Recommendation F:** Support the Development of the Cross-County Trail & Access Linkages
5. **Recommendation G:** Improve Streetscapes and Pedestrian Conditions throughout the Borough
6. **Recommendation H:** Design and Implement Signage Systems for Waterfront Wayfinding
7. **Recommendation N:** Encourage Bicycling and Walking Through Physical Improvements and Other Techniques

Montgomery County Goal #15:

Provide Park Facilities to Meet the Public's Recreation Needs:

With more organized sports activities and an increasing population, the demand for active recreation facilities, particularly ballfields, will continue to grow. These facilities should be placed as close to population centers as possible, preferably within growth areas, with convenient road access and proper setbacks from sensitive natural land.

This goal will be achieved through the following actions:

- Adopting zoning that requires open space and requires a portion of this open space to be usable for playing fields and courts.

- Creating ordinances that require the dedication of open space or the payment of a fee-in-lieu of for open space.
- Encouraging developers to build recreation facilities within their developments or giving a bonus for the construction of these facilities.
- Purchasing land in growth areas for future use as a park.
- Encouraging schools to allow the general public to use their facilities and playing fields.
- Allowing private recreation facilities in appropriate locations in designated growth areas.
- Providing sidewalk and trail access to recreation facilities and parks.
- Recognizing and encouraging the diverse and wide variety of recreational activities that exist, ranging from bird watching to baseball, from skateboarding to golf.

Conshohocken Recommendations Related to this County Goal:

1. **Recommendation B:** Develop a Schuylkill River Greenway System along the Borough's Riverfront
2. **Recommendation C:** Provide Riverfront Amenities for River Recreational Activities/Integrate the Riverfront with River Life
3. **Recommendation F:** Support the Development of the Cross-County Trail & Access Linkages
4. **Recommendation G:** Improve Streetscapes and Pedestrian Conditions throughout the Borough
5. **Recommendation H:** Design and Implement Signage Systems for Waterfront Wayfinding
6. **Recommendation K:** Initiate Volunteer Efforts within the Borough
7. **Recommendation L:** Complete a Park and Recreation Needs Assessment

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8. *Recommendation M:* Develop Site Master Plans for Park Facility Upgrades

Montgomery County Goal #17:

Protect Scenic Roads, Vistas and Viewsheds:

This goal will be achieved through the following actions:

- Permitting clustering that can move homes away from roads or behind ridgelines and woodlands.
- Using transfer of development rights to transfer development from areas with scenic views or roads.
- Enacting scenic corridor ordinances that control the type, intensity, and character of new development.
- Encouraging donations of land, development rights, and scenic easements to local municipalities or land conservation groups.
- Encouraging tree protection, buffering between incompatible uses and street trees.
- Constructing narrower streets and adding street improvements that have a rural character.
- Creating an inventory whenever plans are created or developments reviewed.
- Adopting ordinances to protect the character of villages and hamlets in rural areas.
- Encouraging owners of corporate campuses, large industrial properties, golf courses, camps, schools and other temporarily open land to permanently preserve views and rural character.

Conshohocken Recommendations Related to this County Goal:

1. *Recommendation C:* Provide Riverfront Amenities for River Recreational Activities/Integrate the Riverfront with River Life

2. *Recommendation G:* Improve Streetscapes and Pedestrian Conditions throughout the Borough

3. *Recommendation J:* Investigate Potential for Strengthening Historic Preservation

Montgomery County Goal #18:

Protect Historic Resources and Cultural Landscapes:

This goal will be achieved through the following actions:

- Adopting village commercial ordinances that either require preservation of buildings for more intense use or give significant bonuses for preserving these buildings.
- Enacting historic preservation ordinances that a) allow additional uses to go into historic buildings, and b) delay the demolition of historic buildings so alternative preservation options can be explored.
- Planning for historic resources during the subdivision and land development process.
- Encouraging adaptive reuse of historic buildings.
- Creating historic districts with strong regulations and an architectural review board.
- Using cluster zoning, transfer of development rights, agricultural zoning, and farmland preservation to preserve cultural landscapes.
- Purchasing important historic structures.
- Using façade grant and loan programs to improve facades in Main Street areas.
- Creating an inventory of historic buildings and structures.
- Encouraging federal and state governments to expand the tax benefits of preserving historic properties.

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- Improving cooperation among all the various people and organizations involved in historic preservation, including federal, state, county and municipal government, nonprofits, businesses, property owners and developers.

Conshohocken Recommendations Related to this County Goal:

1. *Recommendation J:* Investigate Potential for Strengthening Historic Preservation

CHAPTER 13

PROTECTION POLICIES AND METHODS

Alternative Open Space Protection Methods

The Borough of Conshohocken is undergoing significant redevelopment activities on underutilized parcels throughout the Borough. The current economic climate makes outright purchase and in some cases purchase of easements extremely difficult to obtain due to the cost of land.

In order to continue providing open space amenities to Borough residents to enhance the quality of life for residents, alternative methods to preserve open space that do not require financial resources should be considered.

To ensure the long-term improvement and creation of new park and recreation amenities within the Borough, the following menu of alternative open space preservation techniques should be considered in addition to grant opportunities:

1. Strengthen protective zoning around natural and environmental amenities through resource protection ordinances.
2. Create a flexible performance-type zoning overlay or similar districts that encourages land preservation or provides development bonuses.
3. Establish mechanisms that will streamline the development review process and promote cooperation between developers and the municipality for proposals that meet the community's goals.
4. Create strong mandatory open space provisions for all new development in return for various development incentives.
5. Establish an open space dedication or fee-in-lieu requirement, as permitted by the Municipalities Planning Code, Section 503(11).
6. If outright purchase or donation of land is not feasible, the placement of conservation or scenic easements should be sought on properties which will enhance or protect the natural resources or views from a particular site.

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Implementation of this plan is vital to the success of open space planning efforts in Conshohocken Borough. Given the increasing interest in development and redevelopment of parcels within the Borough, implementation of Plan recommendations within the next ten years is more critical now than it has ever been in the past.

Much of the implementation of the plan will come through the efforts of the Borough of Conshohocken to work with developers and land owners. A significant percentage of the Open Space Plan recommendations could potentially be accomplished through cooperation between developers and the Borough, leaving public funds and other means of open space protection available for implementation of the remaining recommendations. Funding for open space related activities that are not created as a result of working with developers will come from the Montgomery County Green Fields/Green Towns Program and any other applicable grant opportunity.

Implementation Methods

The most significant recommendation in this plan is the creation of public access along and to the Schuylkill Riverfront. In addition to working with developers, the Borough may utilize funding opportunities provided through Montgomery County's Green Fields/Green Towns Program and Community Revitalization Program. The Borough could also seek additional funding opportunities from the Schuylkill River Greenway Association for Borough open space activities directly related to the goals and initiatives

developed by this Association and any other open space related grant program that is available.

There are essentially three methods that will be utilized to implement these recommendations that require funding:

1. Acquisition/preservation by priority – funded through the dedicated funds from the Montgomery County Open Space Program,
2. Competitive funds within the Montgomery County Open Space Program, or
3. Other funding opportunities which are listed in this chapter.

The implementation timeline of the Plan Recommendations have been split into two groups, those that should be funded in Years 1-5 (and correspond to the dedicated funding provided by the Green Fields/Green Towns Program) and those that could be funded in Years 6-10 (and correspond to the competitive funding cycle of the Green Fields/Green Towns Program) during the second half of the program. Though the Borough of Conshohocken has prioritized the recommendations, it is clear that as opportunities arise, these recommendations may be re-evaluated and any future opportunity that develops may be considered, furthering the goals of the Borough's open space planning efforts.

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Implementation Responsibility

The Borough of Conshohocken Council will be responsible for taking official action on all proposed open space planning activities. The Borough of Conshohocken Open Space Committee will provide the overall advocacy and monitoring function for Plan implementation. The Committee will also be responsible for reporting progress in implementation of the Open Space Plan to Borough Council annually.

According to the County's Green Fields / Green Towns Program requirements, the Conshohocken Borough Council will be required to review the success of the Open Space Plan in 2009, make any necessary updates to the Open Space Plan, and send the updated plan and implementation findings to Montgomery County for their review.

At least once a year, the Conshohocken Borough Council will advertise a public meeting to discuss Open Space planning implementation activities. This meeting should be held as part of the report to the Borough Council made by the Borough Open Space Committee. This process will allow all attendees to observe the results of implementation activities for the year and discuss any issues related to open space planning within the Borough.

An implementation lead entity will serve as the primary advocate for implementation of specific open space projects throughout each year. This advocate will be supported by one or more implementation partners, consisting of public-sector entities, local developers, private businesses, and non-profit groups.

Potential Funding Sources for Borough of Conshohocken Open Space Activities:

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC)

Historic Preservation Grants

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission provides competitive grants (60/40 match) to support projects in one of the following six categories:

- Cultural Resource Surveys
- National Register Nominations
- Technical and Planning Assistance
- Educational and Interpretative Programs
- Staffing and Training
- Pooling and Third Party Administration

Grants are awarded subject to the annual availability of funds from the U.S. Department of the Interior National Park Service and are based on the Federal Fiscal Year, October through September. Awards are a minimum of \$3,000 and a maximum of \$25,000. This grant program does not support the acquisition of historic properties or development projects for historic structures/properties including stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration and reconstruction.

Additional information can be found on the PHMC Grants website: www.artsnet.org/phmc

Historic Preservation Project Grants

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission provides competitive grants for projects in the following areas:

- Cultural Resource Surveys
- National Register Nominations
- Planning and Development Assistance

- Educational and Interpretive Programs
- Archaeology

The grant requirements vary depending on the amount of the grant. Grants are awarded subject to the annual availability of funds from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and are based on the state fiscal year, July through June. For grants up to \$5,000, no match is required. For grants from \$5,001 to \$15,000, which is the maximum grant award, a 50/50 match is required.

Additional information can be found on the PHMC Grants website: www.artsnet.org/phmc

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Growing Greener (DCNR)

The Growing Greener Program was enacted in 1999 to provide funding to preserve farmland and protect open space, eliminate the maintenance backlog in state parks, clean up abandoned mines and restore watersheds, and provide new and upgraded water and sewer systems throughout the Commonwealth.

There are four state agencies that administer different parts of the program. The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) administers the Open Space and Recreation Grant program. The grant process is established under the Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2), a combination of several funding sources and grant programs including Keystone Recreation, Parks and Conservation Fund, Watershed Protection Act, and Act 68 Snowmobile and ATV Trails Fund. The program also includes federal funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and the Recreational Trails component of TEA – 21. The C2P2

program contains the following grant components which, except for Heritage Parks, have been combined into one annual grant application cycle (generally late summer/early fall):

- Community Recreation
- Land Trusts
- Rails-to-Trails
- Rivers Conservation
- Snowmobile/ATV
- Heritage Parks
- Land and Water Conservation Fund
- Recreation Trails

Generally, all grant components require a 50/50 match.

Additional information can be found on the DCNR website: www.dcnr.state.pa.us

Pennsylvania Rivers Conservation Program (DCNR)

This program was developed through the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund Act of 1993 to conserve and enhance river resources through preparation and accomplishment of locally initiated programs. The program provides technical and financial assistance to municipalities and river support groups to carry out planning, implementation, acquisition and development activities under the following six grant components:

- Planning Grants
- Technical Assistance
- Rivers Registry
- Implementation Grants
- Development Grants
- Acquisition Grants

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The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources allocates approximately \$1.5 million every year. The minimum grant is \$2,500 with the upper limit of the grant being allocated based on the size of the project and complexity of the project. This grant application period is approximately three months long and begins in the summer of each year. The grant program requires a 50/50 match.

This grant program presents many opportunities for implementing the Open Space Plan recommendations. Acquisition grants could be utilized to purchase trail or greenway areas to complete the system where it is not completed by developers.

Additional information can be found on the DCNR website: www.dcnr.state.pa.us

Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Program (PRTP)

The DCNR Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Program (PRTP) provides funds to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail related facilities for motorized and non-motorized recreational trail use. Funding originates from federal transportation allocations and is administered through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and PENNDOT.

The program is administered by the DCNR Bureau of Recreation and Conservation (BRC) in consultation with the Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Advisory Board (PARTAB). The funds available are 80% grant, up to \$100,000 and a 20% project application match.

Additional information can be found on the DCNR website: www.dcnr.state.pa.us

Commonwealth Community Revitalization Program (CR)

This state program provides grant funding to support local initiatives that promote the stability of communities. The program also assists communities in achieving and maintaining social and economic diversity to ensure a productive tax base and positive quality of life. Grants range between \$5,000 and \$25,000 and can be used for several activities including construction and acquisition of land.

Additional information can be found on the DCED website: www.inventpa.com

New Communities: Main Street Program

The Borough could develop a Main Street Program which requires the creation of a Main Street Manager position. The Main Street Manager Component is a five-year program designed to assist a community's downtown economic development efforts.

Downtown Reinvestment and Anchor Building components are also available which use business district strategies to support eligible commercial related projects located within a central or neighborhood business district.

The program provides a total of \$115,000 over a five year period for the Main Street Manager position and requires a local match. For Downtown Reinvestment and Anchor Building components, up to \$250,000 or one-third of the total development cost can be applied for and should have a local match to be competitive.

Additional information can be found on the DCED website: www.inventpa.com

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Elm Street Program

The Elm Street Program provides grant funds for planning, technical assistance, and physical improvements to residential and mixed use areas in proximity to central business districts. Funding can be used for revitalization of residential and mixed use neighborhoods and for administrative costs needed to support the Elm Street Program. A maximum of \$250,000 is available with a minimum local match of 10%.

The Elm Street Program is a grant option for work related to redevelopment of the neighborhoods surrounding Fayette Street.

Additional information can be found on the DCED website: www.inventpa.com

Hometown Streets/Safe Routes to School

As part of the Growing Greener legislation, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation has embraced this program as a key part of its role in fostering community development/redevelopment. This program is intended to assist communities in enhancing their revitalization efforts.

The Hometown Streets component provides funding for streetscape improvements that are vital to reestablishing downtown and commercial centers in a defined “downtown” area. The Safe Routes to School component provides funding for projects that enhance the transportation system for pedestrians through the construction of new facilities or the improvement of existing facilities. Funding is primarily for transportation routes and is not intended for recreation-only trail systems.

This is a federal cost reimbursement program, not a grant program. Costs will be reimbursed for actual approved project expenses up to the amount ap-

proved for the project. This program has an 80/20 match requirement.

Additional information can be found on the PENNDOT website: www.dot.state.pa.us

Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission Transportation and Community Development Initiative (TCDI)

The TCDI program is intended to assist in reversing the trends of disinvestment and decline in many of the region’s core cities and first generation suburbs by supporting local planning projects that will lead to more residential, employment or retail opportunities; improve the overall character and quality of life within these communities; to retain and attract business and residents; enhance and utilize the existing transportation infrastructure capacity to reduce the demands on the region’s transportation network; and reduce congestion and improve the transportation system’s efficiency.

TCDI grants will support planning, design, preliminary engineering, analysis or feasibility studies that lead to public and private sector investment for growth and redevelopment. A maximum of \$100,000 is available for a single project with a 20% local match.

These grants could be used for many open space recommendations and redevelopment activities within the Borough of Conshohocken.

Additional information can be found on the DVRPC website: www.dvrpc.org

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Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program

The CMAQ program is a federal program that was established in 1991 for projects that contribute to the attainment of the Clean Air Act standards by reducing emissions from highway sources. CMAQ is a competitive program for municipalities and governmental agencies within the nine-County DVRPC region.

Projects eligible for CMAQ funding must produce a reduction of harmful emissions related to transportation and must meet all federal eligibility requirements for transportation projects.

This program has potential applications in the Borough of Conshohocken for the following elements:

- Transit projects related to the R6 Regional Rail line
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects
- Development efforts of a locality to reduce single occupant vehicle (SOV) travel.

Schuylkill River Greenway Association

Schuylkill River Heritage Area

The Schuylkill River Greenway Association is a not-for-profit agency that oversees the management and preservation of the Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area. The Association provides grants for projects and programs that address its five core goals: resource conservation, education and interpretation, recreation, community revitalization, and heritage tourism.

The Schuylkill River is a major natural feature that creates the municipal line for the Borough of Conshohocken. The Borough should seek funding to create public access to and along the riverfront area and to preserve and restore the river's riparian buffer.

Additional information can be found on the Schuylkill River website: www.schuylkillriver.org

PECO (Natural Lands Trust)

Green Region Open Space Grant Program

PECO, through the Natural Lands Trust, is providing grants of up to \$10,000 to protect and improve open space areas in southeastern Pennsylvania. The grants can be used with other funding sources to develop or update municipal open space plans, acquire open space, undertake habitat improvements within municipally-owned open space, or use for capital improvements for passive recreation.

These grants could be used for most of the Open Space Plan Recommendations.

Additional information is available from the Natural Lands Trust.

IMPLEMENTATION

IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX			
Recommendation	Priority	Timeline	Implementation Lead
Recommendation A: Develop a Waterfront Plan Along the Schuylkill River	High	Near-Term	Borough Open Space Committee
Recommendation B: Develop a Schuylkill River Greenway System Along the Borough's Riverfront			
Sub-Action #1: Build the Schuylkill Riverbank Path	High	Near-Term	Borough Open Space Committee
Sub-Action #2: Build Connections Between the Greenway/Riverbank Path and Borough Destinations	High	Near-Term	Borough Planning Commission
Sub-Action #3: Restore the Riparian Buffer Along the Riverfront	High	Near-Term	Borough Open Space Committee
Sub-Action #4: Build a Cultural & Historic Park Along the Old Schuylkill Canal	Low	Long-Term	Conshohocken Historical Society
Recommendation C: Provide Riverfront Amenities for River Recreational Activities			
Sub-Action #1: Install Pedestrian Amenities Along the Riverfront	High	Near-Term	Borough Planning Commission
Sub-Action #2: Build an Additional Public Access Launch Along the Riverfront	Medium	Near-Term	Borough Council Parks & Recreation Committee
Sub-Action #3: Create Secured Boat Storage Along the Schuylkill Riverfront	Medium	Long-Term	Schuylkill River Greenway Association
Sub-Action #4: Develop a Boathouse Along the Schuylkill Riverfront	Medium	Long-Term	Borough Open Space Committee
Recommendation D: Improve Access and Mobility Conditions for Bicyclists and Pedestrians Along the Matsonford Bridge			
Sub-Action #1: Integrate the Matsonford Bridge with the Riverfront and Trail Systems	High	Near-Term	Borough Council Transportation Committee
Sub-Action #2: Improve Pathway Conditions and Amenities Along the Matsonford Bridge	High	Long-Term	Borough Council Transportation Committee
Recommendation E: Study the Feasibility for Riverfront Access West of the Matsonford Bridge	High	Near-Term	Borough Planning Commission
Recommendation F: Support the Development of the Cross-County Trail (CCT) & Access Linkages			
Sub-Action #1: Review and Comment on the County's Plans for Developing the CCT	Medium	Near-Term	Borough Planning Commission
Sub-Action #2: Construct Bicycle-Compatible Connections	High	Near-Term	Borough Open Space Committee
Sub-Action #3: Construct Trail Parking Adjacent to Ardmore Tire Co.	High	Near-Term	Borough Council Parks & Recreation Committee
Recommendation G: Improve Streetscapes and Pedestrian Conditions			
Sub-Action #1: Improve Streetscapes in the Vicinity of Parks	Medium	Long-Term	Borough Shade Tree Commission
Sub-Action #2: Repair and Maintain the Streetscaping Elements Along Hector Street	Medium	Near-Term	Borough Council Public Works Committee

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IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX (CONTINUED)

Recommendation	Priority	Timeline	Implementation Lead
Sub-Action #3: Incorporate Street Trees and Neighborhood Greening	Medium	Near-Term	Borough Shade Tree Commission
Sub-Action #4: Enhance Borough Gateways	Medium	Near-Term	Borough Council Public Works Committee
Sub-Action #5: Implement Traffic Calming Measures	High	Near-Term	Borough Council Transportation Committee
Sub-Action #6: Install Sidewalks at Various Locations	Medium	Long-Term	Borough Council Public Works Committee
Recommendation H: Design & Implement Signage Systems for Waterfront Wayfinding	High	Near-Term	Borough Open Space Committee
Recommendation I: Develop a Natural Resource Protection Ordinance	Medium	Near-Term	Borough Planning Commission
Recommendation J: Investigate Potential for Strengthening Historic Preservation			
Sub-Action #1: Encourage Preservation of Existing Historic Structures and Properties Within the Borough	Medium	Near-Term	Conshohocken Historical Society
Sub-Action #2: Investigate the Creation of a Historic Architectural Review Board	Low	Near-Term	Conshohocken Historical Society
Sub-Action #3: Create an Oral History of the Borough	Low	Near-Term	Conshohocken Historical Society
Recommendation K: Initiate Volunteer Efforts Within the Borough			
Sub-Action #1: Initiate a Garden Club in the Borough	Medium	Near-Term	Borough Council Parks & Recreation Committee
Sub-Action #2: Form a "Friends of Conshohocken Borough"	Medium	Near-Term	Borough Open Space Committee
Recommendation L: Complete a Park and Recreation Needs Assessment	High	Near-Term	Borough Council Parks & Recreation Committee
Recommendation M: Develop Site Master Plans for the Borough's Parks	High	Near-Term	Borough Council Parks & Recreation Committee
Recommendation N: Encourage Bicycling and Walking through Physical Improvements			
Sub-Action #1: Install Bicycle Racks, Benches, and Other Amenities	High	Near-Term	Borough Open Space Committee
Sub-Action #2: Create Incentives for Supporting and Encouraging Bicycling and Walking	Medium	Near-Term	Borough Planning Commission
Sub-Action #3: Plan & Design a Directional Signage and Wayfinding System	Medium	Near-Term	Borough Planning Commission
Sub-Action #4: Plan & Create a Borough-Wide Bicycle Map	Medium	Near-Term	Borough Council Transportation Committee
Sub-Action #5: Develop Additional Pedestrian and Parking Access to the Schuylkill River Trail	Medium	Near-Term	Borough Council Parks & Recreation Committee
Recommendation O: Link Open Space Areas Throughout the Borough	High	Near-Term	Borough Open Space Committee