

**OPEN SPACE PLAN**



**COLLEGEVILLE BOROUGH**  
**MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**

**2006**

# COLLEGEVILLE BOROUGH OFFICIALS

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

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Perkiomen Greenway - First Avenue, Cover Background

Hunsberger Woods, Cover Foreground

**COLLEGEVILLE**

**OPEN SPACE PLAN**

**2006**

Prepared by the Montgomery County Planning Commission  
under funding through the  
Montgomery County Green Fields/Green Towns Program



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**BOROUGH OF COLLEGEVILLE**

**ADOPTION OF THE MUNICIPAL OPEN SPACE PLAN**

**Resolution No. 2006-01**

**WHEREAS**, On December 18, 2003, the Commissioners of Montgomery County established the Green Fields/ Green Towns Program which provides grant funds for green infrastructure improvements and open space preservation; and

**WHEREAS**, the Green Fields/ Green Towns Program requires the preparation of municipal open space plans and provides grants which may be used by any municipality in Montgomery County for the preparation of an open space plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the Borough of Collegeville has prepared an open space plan in accordance with guidelines established by the county; and

**WHEREAS**, the open space plan has been reviewed by the Montgomery County Open Space Board in accordance with guidelines established by the county; and

**WHEREAS**, copies of the draft open space plan were distributed to all the adjacent municipalities and the Perkiomen Valley School District on October 12, 2005; and

**WHEREAS**, the Open Space Plan Committee conducted a public meeting on the plan on September 7, 2005 and received comments on the plan; and

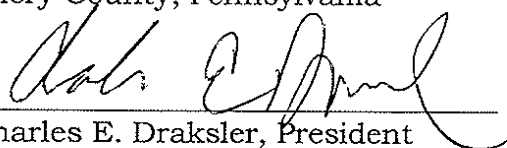
**WHEREAS**, a duly advertised public hearing on the Open Space Plan was held on November 2, 2005.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Council of Collegeville Borough hereby adopt the Open Space Plan in accordance with Section 302 of the Municipalities Planning Code and authorize its submission to the Montgomery County Open Space Board.

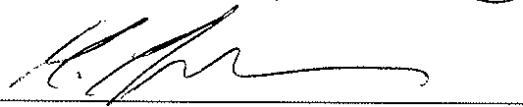
Duly presented and adopted by the Collegeville Borough Council in public meeting held this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of January, 2006.

Borough of Collegeville  
Montgomery County, Pennsylvania

By:

  
Charles E. Draksler, President

Attest:

  
Geoffrey D. Thompson, Secretary



# CHAPTER 1

## COMMUNITY PROFILE

The Community Profile Chapter of the Collegeville Open Space Plan is designed to provide residents the necessary background information to make well informed decisions regarding the future preservation of community, natural, and cultural resources within the community. It consists of four parts: Historical Background, Regional Setting, Existing Land Use Analysis, and the Community Demographic Analysis.

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Collegeville, like all of Pennsylvania, was originally part of a grant made to William Penn by Charles II of England in 1682. Penn designated the area which is now the borough as the Gilbert tract. This tract also included the present townships of Upper and Lower Providence and parts of Perkiomen and Worcester.

The first family of settlers was the Lane family. In 1689, Edward Lane constructed a house that has been enlarged and remodeled into the Perkiomen Bridge Hotel, a major landmark in the region. The hotel is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, as is the nearby bridge.

In 1708, Edward Lane constructed the first mill on the Perkiomen Creek. It was located near the

site of the old Collegeville Dam. This mill, which survived until 1972, was a major element in the early settlement of Collegeville. However, it was not until 1799, with the construction of the Perkiomen Bridge, that settlement began in earnest. It was located along the banks of the creek and soon developed into a village known as Perkiomen Bridge.

By the mid-nineteenth century another village, called Freeland, was founded. About one-half mile from the older village, it was clustered along the western end of Main Street, while Perkiomen Bridge continued in this location near the creek.

Collegeville began to take on its present form after 1868 when the railroad arrived. The two villages

had vied for both the location and name of the train station. The railroad settled the matter with a compromise. The station was placed between the two villages and named Collegeville, after the nearby Pennsylvania Female College.

The railroad's choice proved prophetic, for as the two villages began to grow together and with the founding in 1869 of Ursinus College, Collegeville became the accepted name. The present Borough of Collegeville was incorporated in 1896 when it was formally separated from Upper Providence Township.

## REGIONAL SETTING

Historically, a small college town surrounded by farmland, Collegeville is presently in the midst of a rapidly suburbanizing region. Collegeville's position in the lower half of the Perkiomen Valley places it in the Route 422 growth corridor. This corridor will continue to be one of the fastest growing sections of the county through the next decade. While much of the borough is already built out and will not experience the explosive growth of its neighbors, Collegeville can expect heavy development pressure on any remaining vacant parcels and infill and redevelopment of lower intensity areas.

As Route 422 is a primary factor in the region's suburbanization today, transportation patterns and developments have historically affected development in the borough. Initially, settlement occurred because of a ford in the Perkiomen Creek; development into a village began after the construction of the stone arch bridge in 1799. The arrival of the railroad in 1868 enabled the village to grow into a viable college town.

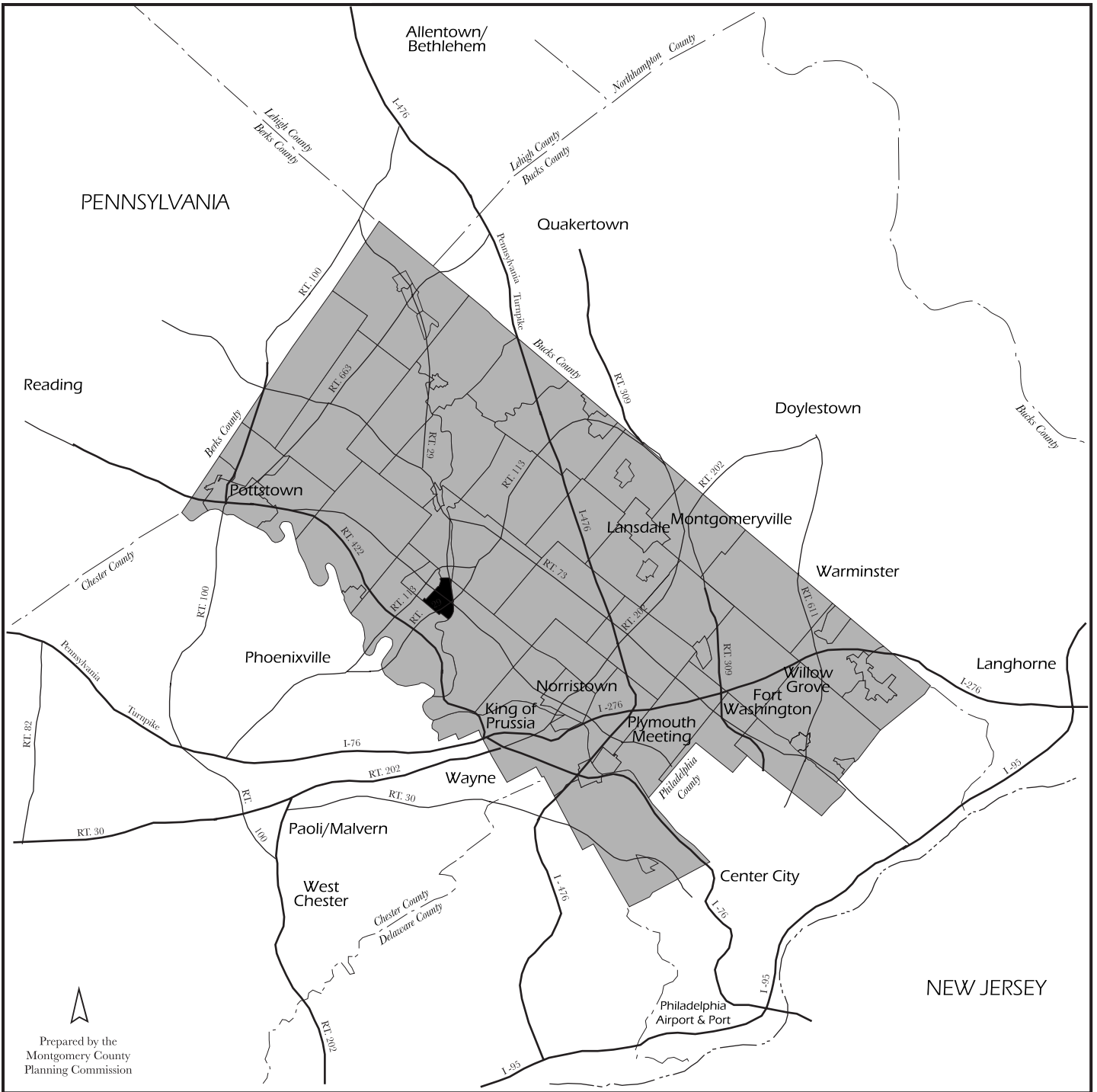
Similar factors are still relevant for the borough. Following its eastern border is the intersection of Route 29 and Ridge Pike, two arterial county roads as shown in Figure 1. These roads provide direct access to Collegeville; permitting the surrounding areas to utilize the borough's commercial districts. With the presence of a redeveloping commercial district on Main Street and the existing shopping centers on Route 29, the borough is thriving as a subregional shopping center. It provides convenient shopping and everyday goods and services to much of the lower portion of the Perkiomen Valley. While this role is not likely to enlarge due to the lack of available land and a location on a major highway, the borough will continue in its traditional role as the downtown center of the valley. This will be challenged however, as the Providence Town Center, a large retail, office, and restaurant complex, is slated for construction within several years in neighboring Upper Providence.

Ridge Pike and Route 29 also provide the borough's residents with convenient access to the region's major retail and employment centers. Ridge Pike provides direct access to the county's two largest boroughs: Norristown, the county



*Spring House at Hunsberger Woods*

Figure 1  
Regional Setting



seat and Pottstown, a site for a satellite campus of the county's community college. Route 29 provides direct access to Route 422, via an interchange just south of the borough. This interchange provides Collegeville, and the entire valley, with direct access to King of Prussia, a major retail and employment center, the Pennsylvania Turnpike, and the cities of Philadelphia and Reading. The presence of three major pharmaceutical companies and other office buildings at sites adjacent to the interchange has transformed the rural landscape to a business campus. It is expected that more companies will settle in this area.

Collegeville is also served by public transportation. The Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) provides bus service to the borough, through a line that extends from Norristown to Pottstown. In Norristown, the line terminates at a regional transportation center. This provides a direct connection to the SEPTA regional rail network.

The borough's most significant natural feature is the Perkiomen Creek. This creek, located on the borough's eastern border, is part of a vast watershed that extends far beyond the county's border. Both the county and the borough own land along the creek. This land protects this valuable natural resource as well as infrastructure, both locally and downstream.

The borough enjoys close proximity to several major parks. Evansburg State Park, which is primarily located in the neighboring communities of Lower Providence and Skippack, provides for both passive and active recreation. The Perkiomen Trail is a great new addition to the borough as it parallels the creek from Oaks to Green Lane. It gives access to Valley Forge National Historic Park, the county's Norristown Farm Park, and the Upper Perkiomen Valley/Green Lane Reservoir park. Locally, the Central Perkiomen Valley Park helps create the natural aesthetic of the Perkiomen greenway and provides for a variety of recreational opportunities.

## EXISTING LAND USE ANALYSIS

Collegeville is largely built out and predominantly residential. Its dominant image is that of a small college town surrounded by more recent suburban developments. As previously stated, it developed gradually, assisted by transportation improvements. Near the Perkiomen Bridge is a survivor from the borough's earliest period of development—the Perkiomen Bridge Hotel. Main Street and its immediate environs present the image of a small college town. Spreading out, both north and south of Main Street, are suburban style developments, starting with 1950s style ranch houses and ending with the neo-traditional homes of today. Suburban style commercial development is located on Route 29, south of Main Street, while lower Main Street contains a traditional small town mix of commercial shops and residences.

An inventory of the borough's existing land uses is presented in Figures 2 and 3. It is interesting to note that in the 1970 Comprehensive Plan, vacant or farmland accounted 43 percent of all the land in the borough. Today vacant land accounts for only 2% of borough land. Farmland no longer exists.

### RESIDENTIAL

Greater than 50% of Collegeville is occupied with residential dwellings, including a mixture of single-family homes, two-family and twin homes, attached townhomes, and several apartment buildings. Density averages just above two units per acre in residential districts that are relatively homogenous in lot size. Single family lots are by far the largest land use in the borough.

### COMMERCIAL/OFFICE

Commercial acreage has remained constant since the 1994 Open Space Plan. The commercial areas of the borough are concentrated along Main Street and the southern Route 29 corridor. There are several shopping centers along Route 29, as well as many mixed use, office, and retail buildings throughout the borough. Main Street boasts a traditional downtown flavor on which revitalization efforts are building.

## INDUSTRIAL

Just 11 acres make up the industrial land use in Collegeville. The parcels with the largest acreages parallel the former rail line which now makes up the Perkiomen Trail. Another significant parcel lies along Third Avenue. As the regional economy changed in the last few decades, industries have vacated the borough leaving large parcels of land underutilized. These industrial areas are one of the keys to the future growth of the borough as the demands for different types of land use change towards more residential and mixed uses.

## INSTITUTIONAL

Collegeville has a significant amount of institutional land that consists of 17% of the borough land area. By far, Ursinus College makes up the greatest portion of this category of land use, controlling 140 acres. St. Eleanor Church on 6th Avenue manages 19 acres which includes a stream corridor, an open meadow and a stand of trees. The other 10 acres classified as institutional land use are held by various churches, the post office, and other community groups. These parcels offer borough residents a significant community services and open space, adding to the appeal of Collegeville.

## PARKS & OPEN SPACE

Since 1994, Collegeville has taken great strides to enhance its park and open space system. In ten

years, the publicly-owned, permanently-protected acreage within the borough has increased by 45 acres, or 52%. This brings the borough's inventory to include 109 acres of open space offering a variety of both passive and active recreational opportunities. Further, another 29 acres of open space lie outside the borough which Collegeville manages.

A large portion of this increase is the acreage within Hunsberger Woods Park, purchased under the County Open Space Program. Due to the scarcity of remaining vacant land in the borough, the opportunity for new parks are few, allowing the borough to focus some of its resources on development of existing open spaces.

Private and institutionally owned land that is permanently protected adds 29 acres to the open space network. This includes acreage from three residential developments and some dedicated college property. Existing protected land will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Three.

## UTILITIES

The acreage taken up by the utilities that serve borough residents and businesses takes up a mere two acres of land. This acreage is located at four sites scattered around the borough and used by local telephone and electric companies.

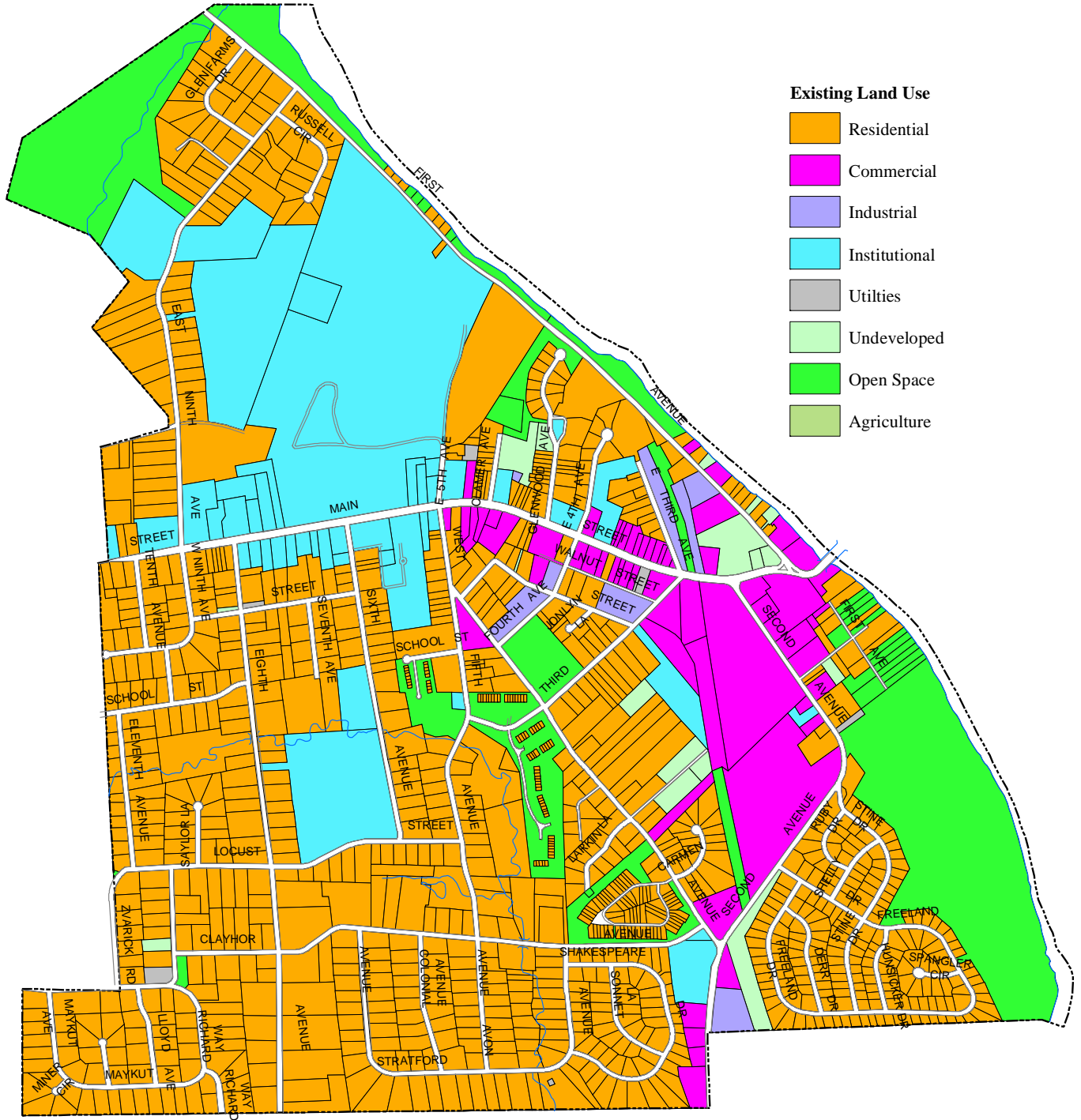
## UNDEVELOPED LAND

Considerable amounts of infill development are occurring on the Collegeville landscape. This makes existing land uses more dense and reduces the amount of vacant land. Of the 16 acres remaining that lie vacant, most will likely be developed through the proposed Claymont subdivision on Park Avenue and by the Harleysville National Bank upon completion of the Route 29 realignment.



*Bicyclists crossing Route 29 on the Perkiomen Trail*

Figure 2  
Existing Land Use



**MCPC**

Montgomery  
County  
Planning  
Commission

Montgomery County Courthouse - Planning Commission  
PO Box 311 • Norristown PA 19404-0311  
(p) 610.278.3722 • (f) 610.278.3941  
[www.montcopa.org/plancom](http://www.montcopa.org/plancom)

This map is based on 2000 ortho photography and official sources. Property lines were compiled from individual block maps from the Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, with no verification from the deed. This map is not meant to be used as a legal definition of properties or for engineering purposes.

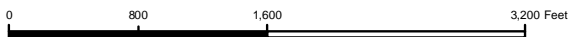
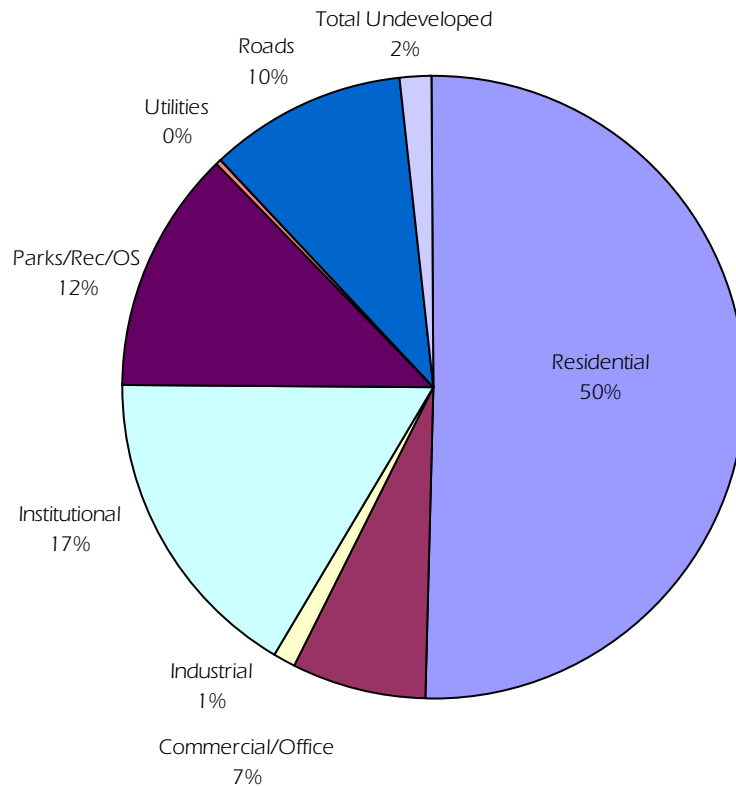


Figure 3  
Existing Land Use Comparison: 1994 & 2005

Land Use	1994		2005		1994 - 2005
	Acres	% Total	Acres	% Total	% Change
Residential	549	54.2%	512	50.2%	-6.7%
Commercial/Office	74	7.3%	72	7.1%	-2.7%
Industrial	0	0.0%	11	1.1%	-
Institutional	161	15.9%	170	16.7%	5.6%
Parks/Recreation/OS	86	8.5%	131	12.8%	52.3%
Utilities	8	0.8%	2	0.2%	-75.0%
Roads	-	0.0%	106	10.4%	-
<b>Total Developed</b>	<b>878</b>	<b>86.7%</b>	<b>1,004</b>	<b>98.4%</b>	<b>14.4%</b>
<b>Total Undeveloped</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>13.3%</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>-88.1%</b>
<b>Total Acreage*</b>	<b>1,013</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,020</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>



Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission Land Use Maps.  
\* Discrepancies due to digitization of parcel information.

**LAND USE DISCUSSION**

The existing land use map as presented in Figure 2 makes clear several different districts within the borough. These districts have evolved over time based on the presence of existing natural features, the accessibility to transportation, and the demands of the local economy changing from agriculture to service based industry. These areas are described below.

- The Perkiomen Creek, its floodplain and steep slopes, and the single crossing of the creek, have limited development on the eastern boundary of the borough.
- The railbed that now makes up the Perkiomen Trail historically attracted light industry into the borough. This area is now established with successful commercial districts and is even the site of some residential infill development.
- The traditional Main Street district of the borough is the site of significant reinvestment.
- Ursinus College as a major landowner greatly contributes to the character of the borough along West Main Street.
- Collegeville has an entire quadrant of its land area devoted to residential land use. Located on the borough's west side, this adds stability to the borough and gives it a strong community atmosphere.

Overall, Collegeville possesses a diverse mix of land uses that make it an attractive place to live, work, and shop.

**COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS**

The Community Demographic Analysis consists of information relating to Collegeville's population, housing, and economics. With few exceptions, the source of the information is the decennial U.S. Census. Demographic characteristics such as the number of school age children can provide insight when planning for open space preservation and recreational development. Demographic statistics can assist in determining not only how much land should be preserved, but also where. Additionally, this information can further assist a municipality in determining what type of recreational facilities, if any, should be placed in the preserved land.

**POPULATION**

The borough, located in one of the county's designated growth areas saw a growth rate of 10% for the period between 1990 and 2000. This placed Collegeville 30th among county's 62 municipalities for growth during this period. Although population growth did not meet the county's average of 10.6%, indications still show the high-desirability of the area. This is due in part to nearby employment opportunities and commercial areas.

While the population occupying households increased as shown in Figure 4, the group quarters population decreased by 7%. For Collegeville group quarters are the St. Eleanor Church Complex and students living in Ursinus College dormitories. A new student dormitory on the Ursinus campus will likely increase the group quarters population.

**POPULATION PROJECTIONS**

The rate of municipal population change is an important measure of the overall change that has occurred in a community over time. In general,

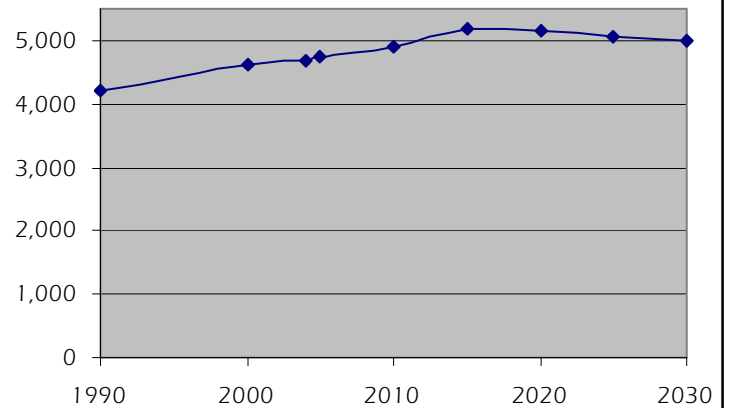
Figure 4  
*Population Classification*

Population Type	1990		2000		1990 - 2000
	Number	% Total	Number	% Total	% Change
Household Population	3,289	77.8%	3,754	81.1%	14.1%
Group Quarters Population	938	22.2%	874	18.9%	-6.8%
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>4,227</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>4,628</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>9.5%</b>

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 1990, 2000.

**Figure 5**  
*Population Projection*

Year	Population
1990	4,227
2000	4,628
2004 **	4,676
2005 *	4,750
2010 *	4,900
2015 *	5,200
2020 *	5,160
2025 *	5,050
2030 *	5,000



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 2000;  
DVRPC projections and estimates.

\* Projected population  
\*\* Estimated population

these projections are based on several factors, including past levels of development, recently proposed development, proximity to employment centers, available land, and public facilities (particularly sewers). In the case of Collegeville, the Central Perkiomen Valley Regional Plan, as discussed in Chapter Five, will have a significant role in guiding growth towards the borough as a Borough Conservation Area.

Figure 5 shows population trends in the borough projected to cover a 40 year period. At the time of this writing at least three development proposals totaling 40 new residences are in the pipeline for construction. At current populations per

household, these will add over 100 new residents in the coming years alone, on track with projections.

The population of Collegeville is expected to peak near 2015 with approximately 5,200 residents, a 12% increase from 2000. However, the population will then stabilize at near 5,000 residents by 2030. This still represents a 9% increase from 2000 figures and 18% since 1990.

**HOUSEHOLD TYPES**

Between 1990 and 2000, Collegeville households comprised of married couples increased the great-

**Figure 6**  
*Household Types*

Household Types	1990		2000		1990 - 2000
	Number	% Total	Number	% Total	% Change
Married Couples with Children	407	32.3%	473	33.6%	16.2%
Married Couples with No Children	372	29.5%	399	28.3%	7.3%
Single Parent	67	5.3%	66	4.7%	-1.5%
Other Family	44	3.5%	73	5.2%	65.9%
1 Person Non-Family Households	316	25.1%	302	21.4%	-4.4%
2+ Person Non-Family Household	53	4.2%	95	6.7%	79.2%
<b>Total No. of Households</b>	1,259	100%	1,408	100%	11.8%
<b>Average People per Household</b>	<b>2.61</b>		<b>2.67</b>		<b>2.1%</b>
<b>Average People per Household - Montgomery County</b>	<b>2.58</b>		<b>2.54</b>		<b>-1.6%</b>

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 1990, 2000.

Figure 7  
*Education Level*

Education Level	1990		2000		1990 - 2000
	Number	% Total	Number	% Total	% Change
Less than 9th grade	26	1.2%	33	1.4%	26.9%
9th through 12th grade, no diploma	175	8.1%	78	3.3%	-55.4%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	659	30.3%	648	27.3%	-1.7%
Some college or Associate degree	619	28.5%	606	25.5%	-2.1%
Bachelor's degree	503	23.1%	616	26.0%	22.5%
Graduate or Professional degree	191	8.8%	391	16.5%	104.7%
<b>Total Pop. 25 years and older</b>	<b>2,173</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,372</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>9.2%</b>

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 1990, 2000.

est. The number of married couples, both with and without children, increased by 12%. As the largest increases in population living in households with children, the average number of residents per household also increased. This is the opposite trend seen in the rest of the county where household size is decreasing. These figures are shown in Figure 6.

Non-family households with at least two people nearly doubled during these same ten years. This pattern is in line with trends experienced throughout the county in which greater numbers of unrelated people live together.

**EDUCATION**

The borough saw a strong increase in the number of residents holding a Bachelor's, Graduate, or

Professional degree in the period from 1990 to 2000. Figure 7 shows over 42% of borough residents of working age hold at least a Bachelor's degree as compared to 38% within the county. Also, a strong decrease in the number of residents without a high school diploma in working-aged people helped to show an overall increase in education attainment in the borough.

**AGE**

During the 1990s, Collegeville saw growth in all age groups, except the 18-34 age group. Significant growth occurred, most significantly in the population aged 45-64. In both 1990 and 2000, Collegeville had a significantly high level of residents in the 18-24 age group, reflective of the student body at Ursinus College. In 1990, the median age was 26, in 2000 it jumped significantly to 35 to nearly match the median age in the county of 38 years. The age characteristics of the borough's population are shown in Figure 8

**INCOME**

Collegeville experienced significant growth in two income categories during the 1990s. Although income per capita is below the county mean, median income per household is ranked seventh in the county. This ranking is up from 23rd in 1989. These statistics are shown in Figure 9. This describes a situation where most households are supported by two incomes.



*Concert in Memorial Park*

Figure 8  
Age Profile

Age	1990	% Total	2000	% Total	1990 - 2000
	Number		Number		% Change
0-4	234	5.5%	272	5.9%	16.2%
5-17	625	14.8%	762	16.5%	21.9%
18-24	1,195	28.3%	1080	23.3%	-9.6%
25-34	650	15.4%	478	10.3%	-26.5%
35-44	570	13.5%	736	15.9%	29.1%
45-54	380	9.0%	587	12.7%	54.5%
55-64	222	5.3%	336	7.3%	51.4%
65-74	199	4.7%	197	4.3%	-1.0%
75+	152	3.6%	180	3.9%	18.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,227</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>4,628</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>9.5%</b>
<b>Median Age</b>	<b>26.1</b>		<b>34.8</b>		

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 1990, 2000.

Age/Sex Pyramid

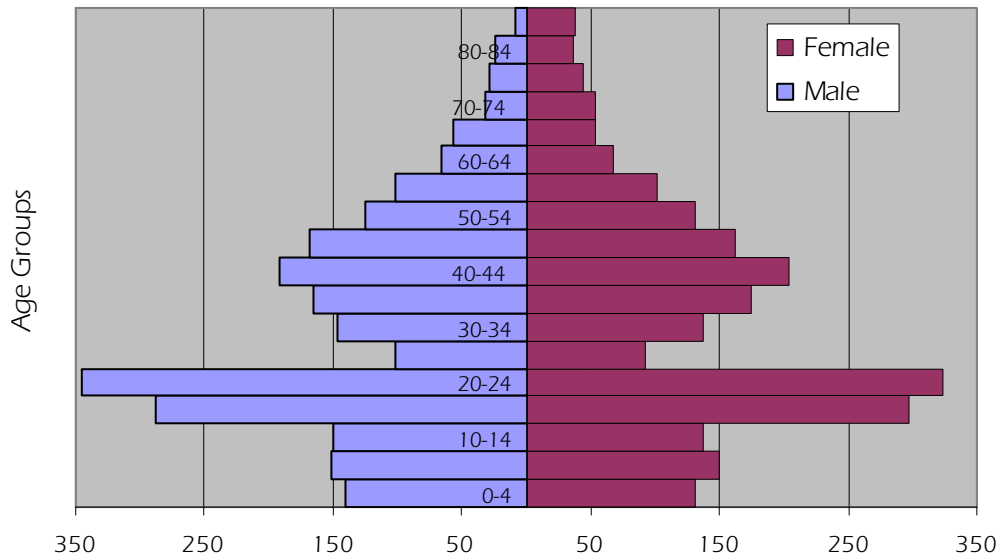


Figure 9  
Income Levels (1999 \$)

Income	1989		1999		% Change	
	Collegeville	Mont. Co.	Collegeville	Mont. Co.	Collegeville	Mont. Co.
<b>Per Capita</b>	\$21,798	\$29,463	\$26,979	\$30,898	23.8%	4.9%
<b>Median Household</b>	\$60,552	\$58,577	\$77,499	\$60,829	28.0%	3.8%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 1990, 2000.

Figure 10  
*Special Needs Groups*

Special Needs Group	1990		2000		1990 - 2000
	Number	% Total	Number	% Total	% Change
Persons 16-64 with Disabilities			371	8.0%	N/A
Persons 16-64 with Mobility and Self Care Limitations	23	0.5%			N/A
Over 65 Years of Age	351	8.3%	377	8.1%	7.4%
Under 18 Years of Age	859	20.3%	1,034	22.3%	20.4%
Income Below Poverty Level	72	1.7%	75	1.6%	4.2%
<b>Total Population</b>	<b>4,227</b>		<b>4,628</b>		<b>9.5%</b>

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 1990, 2000.

### SPECIAL NEEDS GROUPS

Information on these groups is important for the borough to consider when planning for open space. Besides making all areas handicapped accessible, the special recreational needs of seniors and children must be addressed. Specifically, any open space acquired should have areas for both passive and active recreational activities.

As shown in Figure 10 and indicated by the increase in households with children, there were 75% more youth in Collegeville in 2000 than in 1990. As this trend continues for the next 10 to 15 years, park and open space decisions should make sure this age group has recreation opportunities. However, this must be balanced as the senior citizen population is also a significant portion of the population.

### HOUSING TYPES

As discussed earlier, Collegeville's dominant land use is residential. Residential uses account for 50% of the borough's total land use. Figure 11 indicates how many housing units are in Collegeville and breaks them down by type. It also shows unit growth since 1990. Population increases have grown at the same pace as residential construction.

The largest housing category is single-family detached dwellings. Notwithstanding the sections of the borough that developed prior to zoning (first adopted in Collegeville in 1948), most detached dwellings are zoned R-1 and exist at a density of approximately two units per acre. However, two large detached dwelling developments, Collegeville Crossing and Collegeville Glen, are at significantly higher densities, up to 5.4 units per acre.

The attached housing units are the two townhouse developments (College Park and Collegeville Greene), the modern twins on Carmen Drive, and the old twins in the Main Street area. Densities of these twins can be similar to that of Collegeville Crossing. For townhouses, density of up to 20 units per acre is possible. Multifamily housing is either the converted older houses in the Main Street area or the College Arms Apartment complex, which has 176 units.

### JOBS LOCATED IN MUNICIPALITY

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission stated that in 2000, 3,000 jobs were located in the borough, thereby making it a local employment center within the county. The borough effectively has fewer jobs within its borders than workers between the ages of 18 and 65. It should be noted that the Ursinus student population is included in this population. Otherwise, the working age population is well balanced with employment opportunities.

### OCCUPATION

The U.S. Census bureau categorizes occupations into three broad groups that combine more refined job descriptions. In Collegeville, white collar workers make up 77% of the workforce, while blue collar workers make up 11%. Comparatively, in Montgomery County, 73% of the workforce are white collar workers.

The remaining 12% of Collegeville workers work in the Service industry. As shown in Figure 12, Collegeville has a well-diversified labor force to embrace a growing, changing, and diversified economy.

Figure 11  
*Housing Types*

Housing Types	1990		2000		1990 - 2000
	Number	% Total	Number	% Total	% Change
Single Family Detached	778	59.3%	899	62.5%	15.6%
Single Family Attached	131	10.0%	228	15.9%	74.0%
Multi Family (2-4 Units)	158	12.0%	95	6.6%	-39.9%
Multi Family (5 or More Units)	216	16.5%	211	14.7%	-2.3%
Mobile Home/Trailer/Other	29	2.2%	5	0.3%	-82.8%
<b>Total Housing Units</b>	<b>1,312</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,438</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>9.6%</b>

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 1990, 2000.

*Housing Types Comparison*

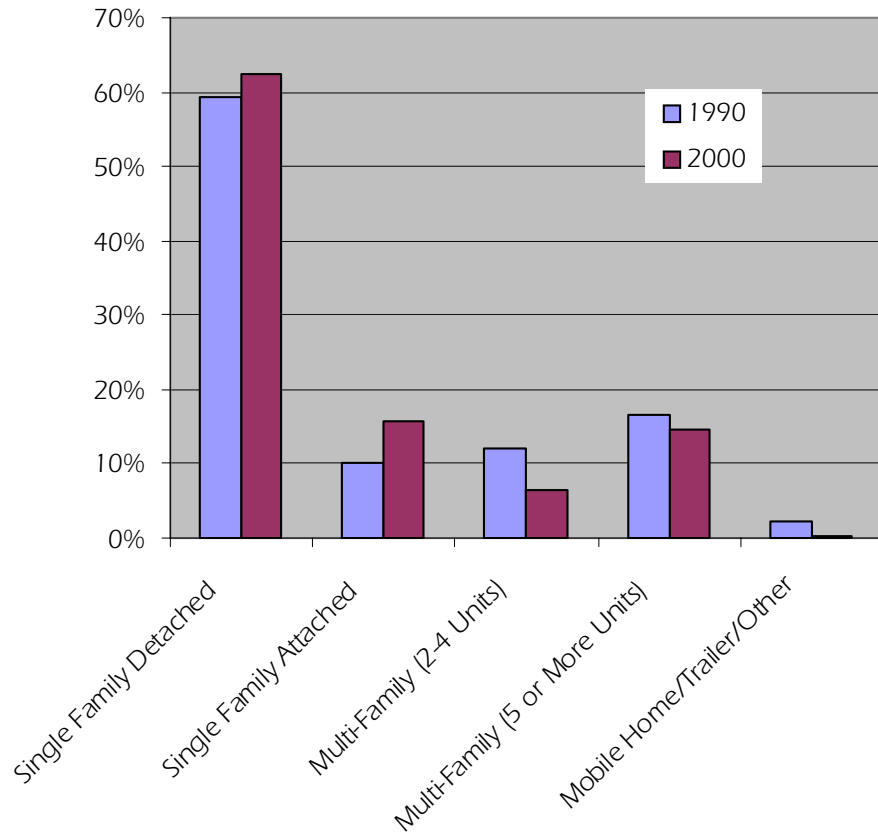


Figure 12  
*Labor Force by Occupation*

	Occupation	2000	
		Number	% Total
White Collar	Management	497	24%
	Professional	631	30%
	Sales	229	11%
	Clerical/Office	262	13%
Blue Collar	Construction	127	6%
	Production/Transportation	106	5%
	Farming	0	0%
	Services	240	11%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2,092</b>	<b>100%</b>

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 2000.

**EMPLOYMENT PROJECTION**

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission also develops employment forecasts based on census data, past trends, the job market, and available land. This projection is shown in Figure 13. Employment opportunities in the borough are expected to increase 7% from 2000 to 2030. This projection estimates there will be 3,200 jobs in the borough at that time, keeping pace with population growth.

Comprehensive Plan was adopted. The plans primary recommendations for open space include preserving stream corridors, such as along Donny Brook, and maintaining the Memorial and Scout Cabin Parks

Other studies have been performed for Main Street streetscaping and revitalization in both Collegeville and Trappe. Projects are underway based on these studies to enhance walkability in local neighborhoods.

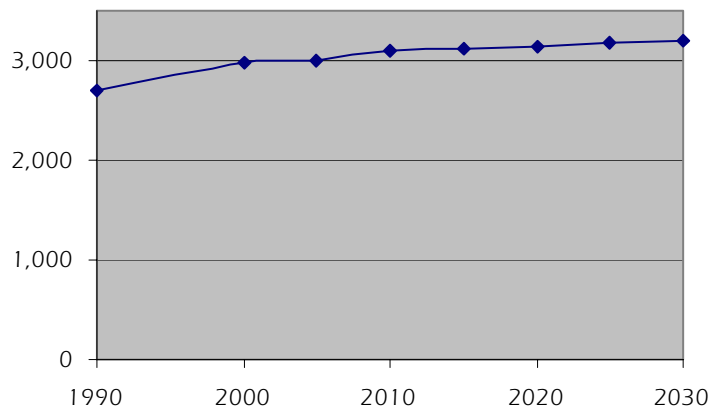
**STATUS OF RELEVANT PLANS**

Collegeville’s Comprehensive Plan, adopted on November 1, 1972, was still in effect until Spring 2005 when the Central Perkiomen Valley Regional

The Zoning Ordinance was updated in Fall 2004. The Subdivision & Land Development Ordinance dates from 1985 (amended in 1997) is currently going through the update process.

Figure 13  
*Employment Projection*

Year	Population
1990	2,707
2000	2,980
2005 *	2,993
2010 *	3,094
2015 *	3,124
2020 *	3,150
2025 *	3,176
2030 *	3,200



Sources: DVRPC projections.  
\* Projected population

# CHAPTER 2

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

In 1993, the Montgomery County Open Space Preservation Program provided an opportunity for municipalities to develop open space plans that reflect the needs of their residents. This chapter first describes the goals and objectives developed by Collegeville under that program as written in the township's 1995 Open Space and Environmental Resource Protection Plan. Combining these past goals with new and refined ideas from public input and Borough Open Space Committee meetings, new goals are also set forth here. These describe the new open space goals that served as a guide to the update process of the existing plan.

### **1995 OPEN SPACE & ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE PLAN**

#### **GOALS**

Collegeville Borough completed its Open Space and Environmental Resource Protection Plan in 1995. At that time, a series of goals and objectives were developed to address issues regarding the preservation of open space and the protection of environmental resources.

As a part of the update process required by the Montgomery County Green Fields/Green Towns Open Space Program, Collegeville has evaluated its previous goals and objectives to address whether the goals are still valid and to evaluate why some recommendations of the last plan were

not implemented. Below the original goals are listed.

1. Preserve Remaining Open Space
2. Protect Sensitive Natural Features
3. Enhance Natural Environment and Existing Streetscapes
4. Create and Preserve Small Green Spaces
5. Recreational Needs
6. Create Pathways to Provide Access to Open Space

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The 1995 plan made some specific recommendations for both acquisition and non-acquisition projects. These recommendations followed the goals as stated above. The extent to which these recommendations were followed is discussed below.

**IMMEDIATE ACQUISITION**

Two parcels were listed in 1995 for immediate acquisition. Hunsberger Woods was purchased jointly with Ursinus College. The McAllister tract near the Scout Cabin was purchased by a developer and now holds twelve single family homes. Nearly three acres were preserved as open space through this development and are managed by a homeowner’s association.

In 1997, a one-acre parcel not listed in the plan was purchased by the borough that increased access to Waterworks Park in Trappe from Locust Street in Collegeville.

**FUTURE ACQUISITIONS**

The following properties or regions were listed for acquisition as funding or opportunity became available. Their status is listed.

**Land Adjacent to Scout Cabin Park** - Although still available, the loss of the McAllister Tract has required a rethinking of the future land use of these parcels. The development of the McAllister tract did create a pathway between Glenwood and Clamer Avenues.

**Ursinus College Property** - The college still maintains the memorial to the Female College as a public space.

**Warren Masonic Lodge Property** - This parcel is still owned by the Lodge and utilized for parking. It lies adjacent to the open space preserved on the former McAllister tract.

**Clahor Manor Subdivision** - All lots at which open space could have been preserved were developed.

**Collegeville Crossing** - The area adjacent to this development is still owned by the county but no county plans are underway to develop active recreation there.

**Collegeville Memorial Park** - Although available at times in the past, no older homes were purchased for park expansion.

**NON-ACQUISITION**

Figure 14 describes the non-acquisition recommendations from the 1995 plan and the actions taken since that time. Actions taken that are consistent with the above goals but not specifically recommended in the plan include the following.

- Developed and began implementation of a master plan for Waterworks Park.
- New commercial zoning has incentives for public space
- Subdivision & Land Development Ordinance update with greater landscaping, tree replacement, and natural resource protection measures.

Figure 14  
1995 Recommendation Status

1995 Recommendation	Action Taken
Riparian Buffer Ordinance	Adopted for the V-2 District along the Perkiomen Creek
Update Floodplain & Steep Slope Ordinances	Updated 2004
Enforce Tree Replacement Ordinance	Update in progress - 2006
Develop Institutional Overlay	Created 2004
Develop Main Street Zoning	Created 2004
Coordinate with Perkiomen Trail Development	Complete
Contribute to a Perkiomen Creek Greenway	13 properties purchased
Create a Trail System	Sidewalk plan created- 2000
Complete Tree Planting Plan & Implement	Plantings at 5 locations
Create Small Green Spaces in Dense Areas	"Gateway Park" under consideration at Perkiomen Bridge

## 2006 OPEN SPACE PLAN GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The Open Space Committee has evaluated the goals and objectives of the previous plan and revised them to reflect what was discussed during the audit process. Updated goals and objectives as developed by the 2006 Borough Open Space Committee are include here to describe the new direction Collegeville plans to take to preserve open space and natural resources. These goals will serve as the framework for Collegeville's plan for open space preservation and protection of natural resources. Goals are provided regarding development, retention of open space, and protection of environmental features, followed by a series of objectives.

- 1. DEVELOP A GREENER BOROUGH IMAGE**
  - A. Fill gaps in the street tree network
  - B. Create new plazas and green spaces along Main Street and other commercial districts
  - C. Create highly visible green gateways at strategic borough entrances
  - D. Educate non-residential landowners on the benefits of maintaining green public spaces, streetscapes, and parking
  - E. Develop standards by which to create a borough-wide streetscape theme
- 2. INTEGRATE OPEN SPACE WITH ALL LAND USES**
  - A. Link together borough parks and open spaces
  - B. Increase pedestrian access to and from open space, neighborhoods, and commercial districts
  - C. Connect with regional open space and trail networks, including a Perkiomen Creek water trail
  - D. Partner with local businesses and institutions to maximize open space opportunities and access
- 3. PRESERVE LAND TO EXPAND THE OPEN SPACE NETWORK**
  - A. Expand existing parks and open spaces
  - B. Acquire new parks, open spaces, and plazas
- 4. PROVIDE A BROAD SPECTRUM OF RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL RESIDENTS**
  - A. Provide a safe, accessible, and useable park and open space network
  - B. Develop parks with appropriate recreational facilities and programs
  - C. Maintain parks at a high level of service to the community
  - D. Inform residents of recreational opportunities throughout the borough and the surrounding communities
- 5. PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES**
  - A. Acquire lands on which sensitive natural resources need protection
  - B. Adopt regulations that add further protection to natural resources



*The Donny Brook flowing from Eleventh Avenue*



# CHAPTER 3

## **EXISTING PROTECTED LAND**

A key component of the open space plan is a review of existing protected land. An inventory of existing conditions, along with an assessment of future needs, is necessary for formulating many of the plan's goals and objectives. Existing protected land refers to land preserved for active or passive recreation use or for environmental conservation purposes. In addition to municipally-owned areas, it can include land preserved by private conservation groups, Montgomery County, schools sites, and private open space preserved as part of the development process.

This chapter identifies existing open and recreational land in Collegeville and separates it into three categories of protection - public, private, or institutional. Private and institutionally owned open space makes an important contribution to the overall aesthetic and recreation base of a community by preserving open space, conserving significant natural features, and providing recreation facilities that do not require municipal involvement in maintenance. However, privately controlled land may have a different maintenance standard than publicly owned land, and in some cases, may be lost to development or have restricted access. In evaluating open space needs, this distinction is important, as is the goal of increasing the amount of permanently protected land so that future generations can also benefit from open space.

Figure 15  
Existing Public, Institutional, & Private Open Space

Open Space Type	Site Number	Name	Protection Type	Acreage
Public Open Space	1	Hunsberger Woods	Permanent	28.7
	2	Perkiomen greenway	Permanent	9.8
	3	Central Perkiomen Valley Park *	Permanent	53.8
	4	Dam access **	Permanent	11.6
	5	Scout Cabin	Permanent	1.3
	6	Perkiomen Trail *	Permanent	3.8
	7	Waterworks Park **	Permanent	17.5
	8	Memorial Park	Permanent	5.1
	9	Floodplain parcels	Permanent	5.9
	10	Richards & Clayhor Avenues	Permanent	0.5
<b>Total Public Open Space</b>				<b>138.0</b>
Institutional Open Space	11	Hunsberger Woods - Ursinus	Permanent	7.1
	12	Ursinus College open spaces	Temporary	45.0
	13	Women's College Memorial	Permanent	0.3
	14	St. Eleanor Parish	Temporary	19.3
<b>Total Institutional Open Space</b>				<b>71.7</b>
Private Open Space	15	Bum Hollow/Glenwood Avenue	Permanent	2.9
	16	College Park	Permanent	14.4
	17	Collegeville Greene	Permanent	4.1
<b>Total Private Open Space</b>				<b>21.4</b>
<b>Total Open Space</b>				<b>231.1</b>

Sources: County Board of Assessments; MCPC field checks, 1994, 2004.

\* Owned by Montgomery County Parks Department

\*\* Exists outside borough boundary

## PUBLIC OPEN SPACE BOROUGH OPEN SPACE

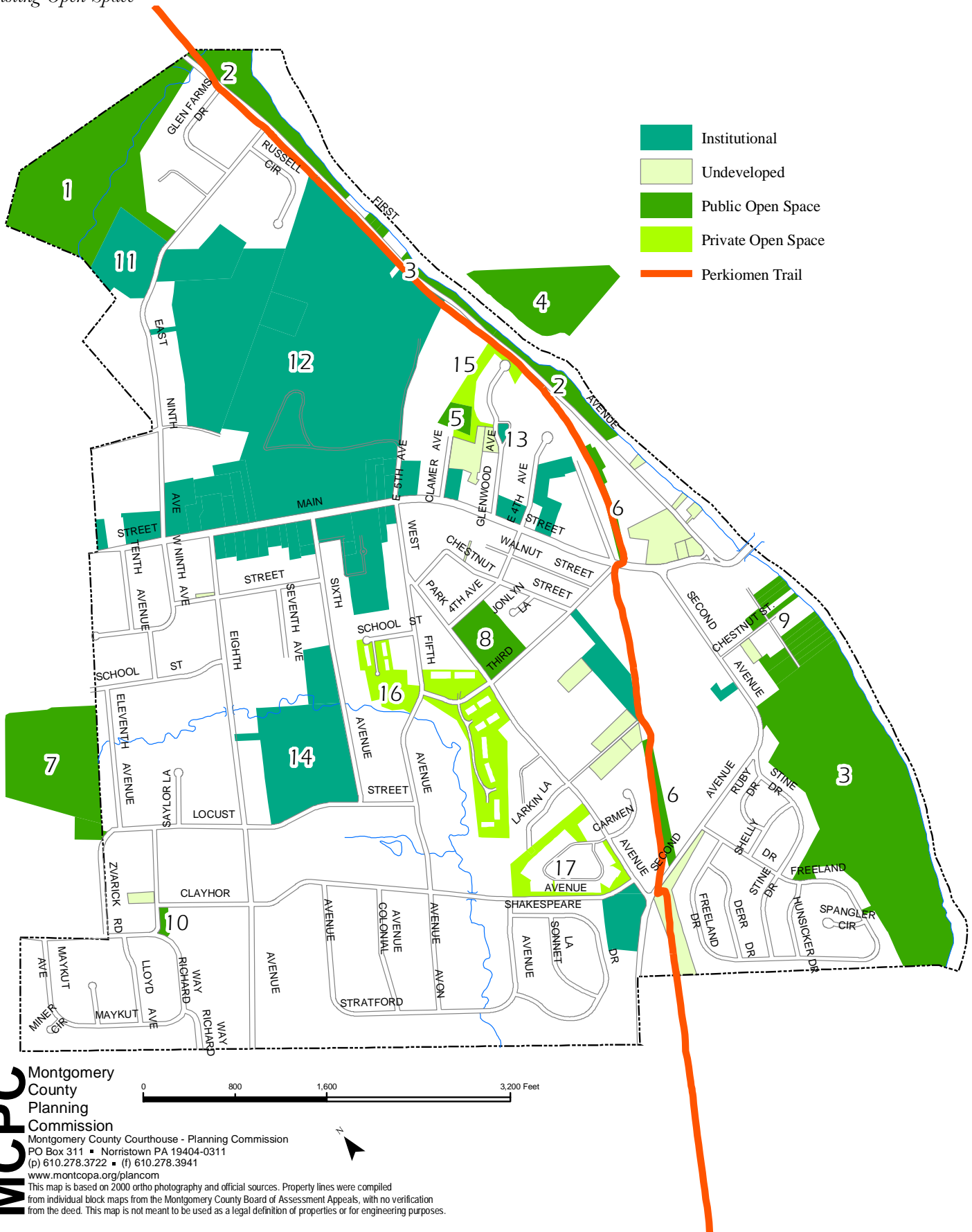
Collegeville's existing system of parks and open space has grown since it adopted its 1995 Open Space Plan. Today, the public park and open space system is made of eight sites totaling over 80 acres as shown in Figures 15 and 15A. These parcels vary from intensely used Memorial Park to natural areas making up part of the Perkiomen greenway. Each offers community residents important recreational opportunities and scenic amenities. The latest community park is Hunsberger Woods, located on 29 acres in the northern corner of the borough, offering numerous recreational opportunities.

It is important to note that two borough-owned parcels lie outside the borough boundaries. Waterworks Park is jointly owned and managed by Trappe Borough and primarily lies within that municipality. On the east side of the Perkiomen Creek in Lower Providence Township, the borough owns a wooded parcel once important for access to the Collegeville Dam. These two areas make up over one third of the borough's open space acreage.

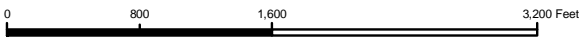
## COUNTY OPEN SPACE

Montgomery County owns three parcels within the borough. Two parcels hold sections totaling approximately 2,000 feet of the Perkiomen Trail and make up almost 4 acres. The Central Perki-

Figure 15A  
Existing Open Space



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This map is based on 2000 ortho photography and official sources. Property lines were compiled from individual block maps from the Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, with no verification from the deed. This map is not meant to be used as a legal definition of properties or for engineering purposes.

omen Valley Park is a 54-acre site that is undeveloped and lies predominantly in the Perkiomen floodplain, adjacent to Collegeville Crossing.

## PRIVATE OPEN SPACE HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATIONS

Three homeowner's associations exist in the borough that control 21 acres. Collegeville Greene land is a band of green space that separates the complex from adjoining properties and streets. Its use is primarily visual and it does not provide any recreational area.

College Park open space meanders throughout that development. It includes a large flat area that can be used for limited recreation.

Homes built on the McAllister tract on Glenwood Avenue are surrounded by open space. Within this space lies a stormwater basin and a wooded sloping area with a trail leading to the Scout Cabin.

## INSTITUTIONAL

Collegeville Borough also has a substantial amount of open space offered by several institutions. These open spaces differ from the publicly owned spaces because they may not remain open forever. Land use decisions for these institutions

depend on factors often beyond the borough's control. These sources of open space are still important to Collegeville as they add to the aesthetic appeal of the borough and provide some diversity to the developed landscape.

Ursinus College owns 140 acres in the borough. Of these 140 acres, approximately 45 acres are open space. The overall visual impression is of a small college with an attractive tree filled campus. Victorian houses owned by the college line one side of Main Street. At the rear of the campus is a large wooded area that slopes toward the Perkiomen Creek. Much of this area contains steep slopes and drainage swales. While the college is expected to remain in the borough, it is a private institution subject to changes in the marketplace. Therefore its holdings, which provide the borough with some significant open space, cannot be considered permanently protected.

Ursinus also purchased a 7-acre parcel of the Hunsberger Tract to compliment the preservation efforts of the borough. This parcel includes the farm house and barn and a flat area for use as a multipurpose field.

St. Eleanor Church owns 14.7 acres, of which 8 could be considered open space. The site includes a church, school, and parsonage. The northern end of the site contains steep slopes and the Donny Brook. Similarly to Ursinus, it is a private institution that could relocate.

## DISCUSSION

In total, Collegeville has a significant amount of protected land, with more than 202 acres within the borough being either permanently or temporarily protected. Added to this are 29 acres of publicly-owned land outside the borough that Collegeville helps maintain. This land provides residents with many opportunities to enjoy all that open space can offer, recreation, tranquility, beauty, and a sense of community. However, close to half of this open space could be lost to development in time if the land owners or land use changes.



*Private open space on Glenwood Avenue and Women's College Memorial*

# CHAPTER 4

## INVENTORY OF POTENTIALLY VULNERABLE RESOURCES

A place is not just a particular location. A place is recognizable and enjoyed because of its own unique set of natural, historic, and cultural features. This section gives a brief description of some of Collegeville's most important resources as they relate to open space. While Collegeville's physical setting and natural features were some of the factors determining the borough's early development patterns, these factors are less important as the borough redevelops and land uses change. Although various resources and features were considered for this discussion, only those important to current and future planning efforts within the borough are included here.

### HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES

#### HISTORIC SITES

Collegeville has two structures that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. They are the Perkiomen Bridge Hotel and the stone arch bridge over the creek. Their national register listing indicates an importance far beyond the borough's border. The Power House is listed as being eligible for the National Register.

Along with the hotel, bridge, and Power House, nine additional properties are considered historically significant. Figure 16 gives a listing of all these properties.

All the information on these sites comes from the Comprehensive Plan, the County Inventory, the Borough Historic Sites Survey performed by the Clio Group in 1986, and the 1995 Open Space Plan. The locations of these sites are shown in Figure 17. These sites contribute to the historic fabric and unique character of the borough.

Of special note is a group of houses along the south side of Main Street between Fifth and Eighth Avenues (included here is the Fetteroff House). Owned by the college and recently renovated,

Figure 16  
Historic Resources

Map	Structure	Date	Description
1	Stone Arch Bridge	1799	Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, it is one of the oldest stone arch bridges still in use in Pennsylvania.
2	Perkiomen Bridge Hotel	1689	Listed on the National Register, it is reputed to be the oldest hotel in the country, it is a good example of colonial architecture.
3	Schuylkill Valley Tractionco (The Power House)		The Power House is a structure successfully adapted from an industrial structure to a commercial area, it is eligible for the National Register.
4	The Worrall House	1860	Located at 105 First Avenue it is an excellent example of Victorian Italiante Architecture.
5	Clamer Hall	1890	A Queen Anne Victorian style house. Clamer was a metallurgist who operated the Female College and the Collegeville Mill during the late 19th century.
6	Pennsylvania Female College	1915	On the site of the Pennsylvania Female College, the first accredited women's college (1851).
7	Fetteroff House	1800	One of several farmhouses still standing in the borough, it is a good example of early 19th Century rural Pennsylvania architecture.
8	Andrew Todd House	1750	This stone colonial house is Collegeville's finest example of colonial architecture. It is now owned by Ursinus College and known as Isenberg Hall.
9	Fircroft Hall	1840	Hunsicker founded the Freeland Seminary, which later became Ursinus College.
10	Rees Farmhouse	1783	Located on Fifth Avenue
11	Clayhor Avenue Farmhouse	1778	Located near Avon Avenue
12	Styer House	1875	Located on West Second Avenue, this structure is still standing but now part of a larger office building.

these houses provide one of the finest examples of a 19th Century streetscape in the county.

**SCENIC ROADS AND VISTAS**

Scenic resources are elements of the natural or built environment that stand out among all the attributes of a community. They tend to be the most pleasant and interesting places, such as historic sites, natural features, and recreation areas. While personal preference plays the dominant role in determining a scenic streetscape or view, discussion and debate has lead to a balanced community-wide inventory.

Most scenic views and streetscapes in Collegeville are the result of a harmonious interaction between the built and natural environment. These areas should be preserved and linked to the community's open space and recreation system. Figures 17 and 18 show an inventory of all such streetscapes and views as determined by

the Spring 2005 Topics in Environmental Studies class at Ursinus College, using information from the 1994 Open Space Plan. Below, they are described and ranked based on their aesthetic value as determined by this class.

**A. STONE ARCH BRIDGE**

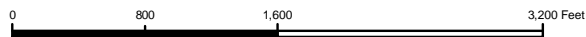
Looking either upstream or down while standing on the bridge, one can view the creek similar to how it may have looked prior to settlement. Buildings and modern improvements are obscured by trees, providing a bucolic scene. This view illustrates the importance of woodland preservation along stream banks.

Depending on the final use of the potential open space at the intersection of Route 29 and Ridge Pike, this gateway could be one of the greatest assets for the borough. If this site is landscaped well, it would complement the Perkiomen Bridge and Hotel.

Figure 17  
Historic & Scenic Resources



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This map is based on 2000 ortho photography and official sources. Property lines were compiled from individual block maps from the Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, with no verification from the deed. This map is not meant to be used as a legal definition of properties or for engineering purposes.

Figure 18  
*Scenic Resources*

Map	Location	Interest
A	Stone Arch Bridge	Perkiomen Creek
B	Main Street & Sixth Avenue	Victorian houses, Ursinus College, and tree lined neighborhood
C	Gravel Pike	Steep slopes, rock outcroppings, and Perkiomen Creek
D	Ninth Avenue Curve	Hunsberger Woods
E	Eighth Avenue	Donny Brook
F	Fifth Avenue at Donny Brook	Wooded stream corridor

**B. MAIN STREET BETWEEN FIFTH & EIGHTH AVENUES**

This site includes Sixth Avenue to the south of Main Street. On the south side of Main is a grouping of Victorian houses. The north side provides a view of the front grounds of Ursinus College. The expanse of green space, populated by mature trees, leads up to several of the college's most impressive buildings, which are set far back from the street. Sixth Avenue leading up to Main Street is the borough's best example of an older tree lined street. Older houses, set close together, are flanked by mature street trees. An excellent example of the interaction between the built environment and the natural one; the appearance is formal but also inviting.

**C. STRETCH OF GRAVEL PIKE BETWEEN NINTH AVENUE & THE FORMER DAM SITE**

A scenic vista of the creek valley is available at this intersection. The stretch of Gravel Pike provides numerous views of steep wooded slopes, impres-

sive rock outcroppings (the result of road construction) and the creek.

**D. NINTH AVENUE CURVE**

At the curve, one is presented with the picturesque view of the Hunsberger Woods. The wooden rail fence, pasture land, small stream, farmhouse, and outbuildings present a rural image that is rapidly disappearing from this part of the county.

**E. EIGHTH AVENUE**

Near the south end is a stretch of beautiful homes set back from the street lined with stately oaks. As one begins to descend on Eighth Avenue toward Main Street there is a nice overview of Donny Brook and of Ursinus College.

**F. FIFTH AVENUE AT DONNY BROOK**

This stretch of Fifth Avenue provides a wooded buffer between the College Park townhouses and suburban style single-family houses. An excellent example of how a wooded stream corridor can provide a natural barrier between different land uses.



*A runner on the Perkiomen Trail*

**GEOLOGY**

Except for surface outcrops, bedrock geology is unseen, and as a result its influence on natural features is not always acknowledged. However, the influence is both strong and pervasive, for bedrock geology is the foundation of an area. Bedrock, along with the hydrologic cycle, is responsible for the changes in elevation, steep slopes, location of watercourses, and orientation (orientation, in turn, will influence vegetative communities, soils, and availability of sunlight).

The bedrock or parent material has a great influence on the type of soil formed. For example, hard, igneous bedrock has resulted in soils with a high stone and boulder content. Groundwater yield differs from one bedrock formation to the next. In Montgomery County, the difference ranges from under 1 gallon per minute (gpm) to over 30 gpm.

Montgomery County is located in the Triassic Lowland and Piedmont Upland section for the Piedmont Physiographic Province. The Triassic Lowlands are primarily red shales and sandstones, with intrusions of diabase. The Brunswick formation underlies the entirety of Collegeville. A fine grain sandstone, the Brunswick formation was laid down 310 million years ago during the Triassic Age. This rockbed covers most of central Montgomery County.

The Brunswick formation can provide a great amount of water. Collegeville has six wells from which it draws water; five of which are owned by the Collegeville-Trappe Joint Water Works. These wells average about 150 gpm. Collegeville relies on these wells as its main source of public water. It is a natural reservoir that relies on continuous recharge from rainfall. It is critical to preserve open space to provide an adequate supply of clean groundwater.

## SOILS

Soils are a natural assortment of organic materials and mineral fragments that cover the earth and support plant life. The composition of soils changes slowly over time, due to weathering of rock and activity of soil organisms. As a consequence, soils vary with respect to depth to bedrock, depth to groundwater, color, mineral characteristics, fertility, texture, and erodibility. One of the most influential natural features, soils are a result of the hydrology and the weathering capacity of the underlying geology in a given area. They are also influenced by the orientation of the land and the types of vegetation that grow in them. Conversely, the type of soil influences the vegetative cover of the land, which affects the quality and quantity of surface and groundwater, wildlife diversity, rates of erosion, and the aesthetic quality of the landscape.

Though soils are diverse, soil scientists have classified the soils found in Montgomery County into several groups called soil series. Soils listed within the same series will display similar subsurface characteristics. The surface characteristics of soils within a particular series can vary in slope, degree of erosion, size of stones, and other easily recognizable features. Although a variety of soil types exist in all parts of the borough, the densest development has oc-



*An example of Collegeville's underlying geology along the Perkiomen Trail*

curred on Made Land, Penn Silt Loam, and Readington Loam.

In addition to the soil mapping units, soils can also be divided into hydric and alluvial soils. These groups of soil pertinent to the borough are described below and shown in Figure 19.

**HYDRIC SOILS**

Hydric soils are those soils that, in general, are saturated with water at or near the ground surface for substantial periods during the year. As would be expected, such areas often exist near water bodies and watercourses and may be part of wetlands. Because of wetness, these soils present a major constraint for development wherever on-site subsurface sewage treatment is utilized, since treatment depends largely on adequate water percolation through the soil. In Collegeville this is not an issue since the borough is almost completely sewered, and such soils exist only in small concentrations along riparian corri-

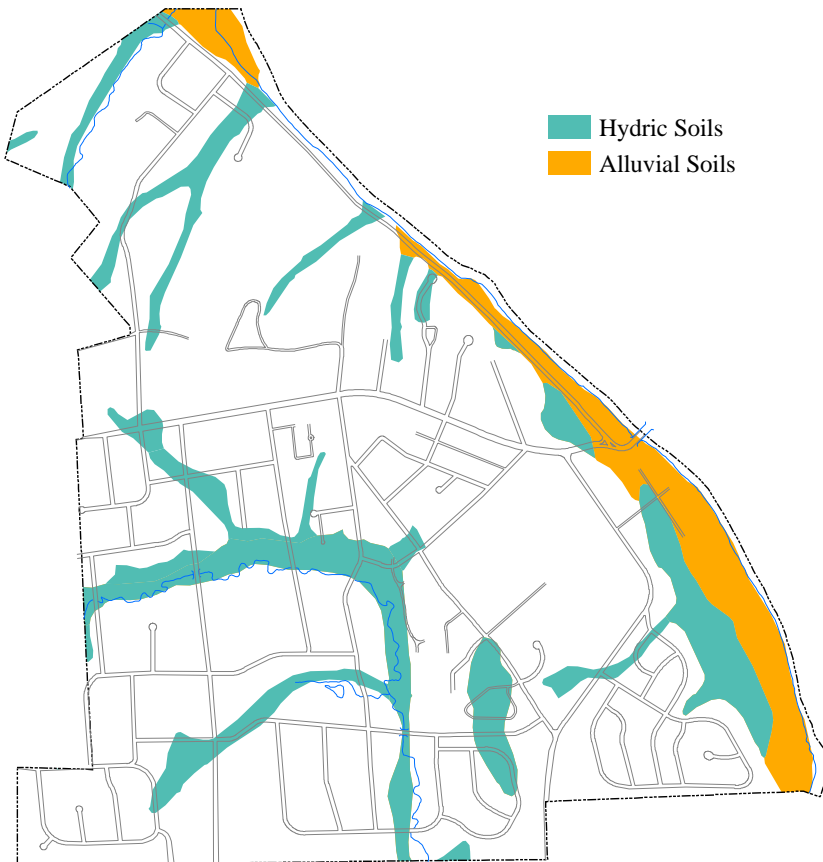
dors as shown in Figure 19. However, hydric soils and their wet condition do affect development where they exist in the borough.

**ALLUVIAL SOILS**

Alluvial soils are frequently, but not always, located within a floodplain. They are often formed when streams carrying soil gradually lose carrying capacity with decreasing velocity. As a river slows down, it does not have sufficient power to keep larger particles of soil suspended, and these particles begin to settle. These soils are not stable as a result of their texture and composition. The presence of alluvial soils is only one indicator of a floodplain.

Changes in the tributary drainage area or slope of the adjacent stream may create a floodplain that is either larger or smaller than the area of alluvial soils. Also, alluvial soils do not indicate the probability of recurrence of a flood. An important aspect of alluvial soils is that they often form aquifer recharge areas.

Figure 19  
Soils



**TOPOGRAPHY**

**STEEP SLOPES**

Slope, or frequency of change in elevation, is an important environmental condition. When expressed as a percentage, slope is defined as the amount of change in vertical elevation over a specified horizontal distance. For example, a three foot rise in elevation over a one hundred foot horizontal distance is expressed as a three percent slope. These changes in elevation throughout a community contribute a great deal to its appearance and natural diversity.

This is especially true of the steep slope areas of a community, which also cause limitations to development. The slope and soils present on steep slopes are in balance with vegetation, underlying geology and precipitation levels. Maintaining this equilibrium reduces the danger to public health and safety posed by unstable hillsides. Steep slopes often have a combination of vegetation, climate, soil and underlying geology that differs from the surrounding area. Frequently this means that the environmental sensitivity of the steep slope are different as well. Susceptibility to erosion and mass movement may

be greater than the surrounding area, especially if vegetation is removed. Increased runoff and sedimentation from disturbed slopes require increased public expenditure for flood control and stormwater management. Also, different species of plants and the associated wildlife that depends on these plants may be present only on the slopes, creating unique recreation opportunities.

In Collegeville, elevations range from 100 feet above sea level at the Perkiomen on the borough's southern border to 280 feet in the western corner. Most areas of steep slopes border the Perkiomen Creek, north of Main Street. Overall, steep slopes make up 3% of the borough's land area. Using soil types from the Soil Survey as a general guide, Figure 20 shows that concentrations of steep slopes occur in three areas: along the Donny Brook, along Gravel Pike and a nearby Perkiomen Tributary, and along Route 29 near Stine Drive. These areas coincide with lands protected by the borough, the county, or local institutions, and will most likely not be developed.

## SURFACE WATERS & HYDROLOGY

Water is a valuable resource, consumed by people and industry, enjoyed at recreation facilities, employed in the assimilation of treated sewage, and integral to the ecological landscape. The average rainfall in the county varies from 43 inches near City Line Avenue to 47 inches in the vicinity of the Green Lane Reservoir.

It should be noted that in any given year, annual precipitation can vary from the average by as much as ten inches. Generally speaking, 25% of precipitation becomes direct runoff, 50% evaporates or is transpired by plants, and 25% replenishes groundwater. The surface water that falls on or is carried through Collegeville affects the topography, soils, vegetation, and groundwater and comes from two natural sources, direct runoff and groundwater. A third, manmade source, may also contribute to stream flow, effluent from sewage treatment plants, which tends to dampen the variation between high and low flow periods in streams to which they discharge.

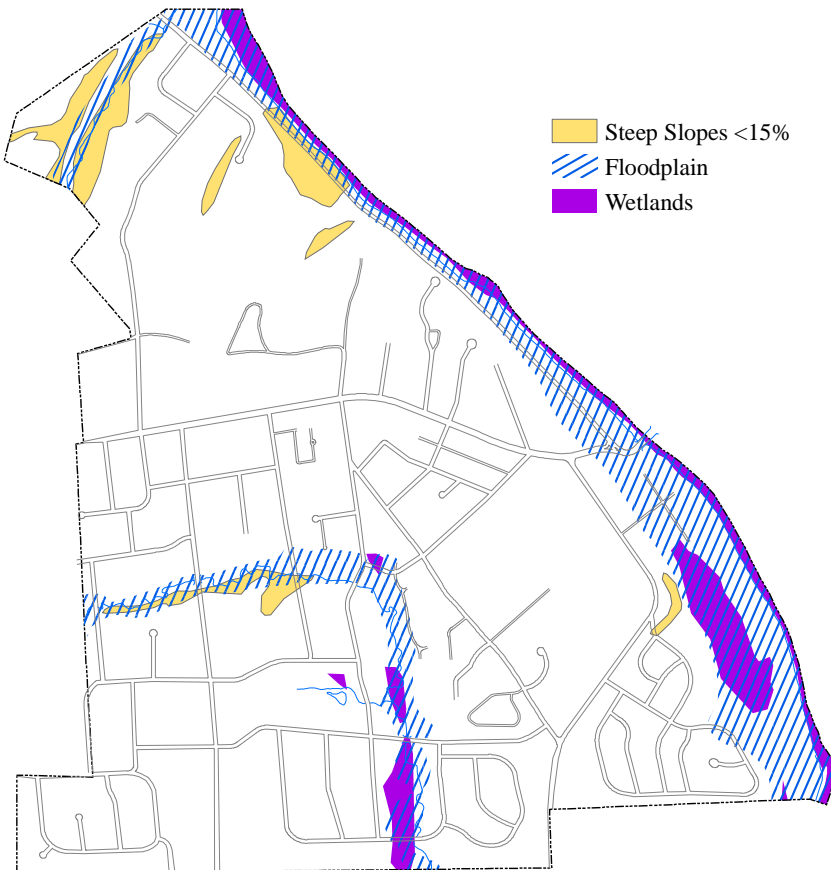
Because the basins drained by a stream system are usually larger than one community, an interrelationship exists whereby municipalities that are upstream contribute surface water flow to Collegeville, while those downstream receive the borough's runoff. With this in mind, the borough should aim to maintain the natural conditions of its drainage system through preservation of open space along watercourses and education about the benefits of riparian buffers.

### STREAM CORRIDORS

The borough contains three water courses. The Perkiomen Creek borders the borough on its eastern end. A significant watershed for the region and the largest tributary to the Schuylkill River, its bank in Collegeville is generally protected by publicly owned land.

The Donny Brook is located in the southern section of Collegeville. Most of the area surrounding it is developed, although at a low density. It generally meanders through the backyards of single family homes, inaccessible to all but property owners.

Figure 20  
*Topography & Hydrology*



An unnamed stream bisects Hunsberger Woods. Surrounded by former agricultural land, it contains two small man-made ponds and flows into the larger Perkiomen Creek.

## FLOODPLAINS

The 100-year floodplain is a feature that will effect the health, safety, and welfare of borough residents. During storms the floodplain stores and conveys floodwater. Development within the floodplain reduces the carrying capacity and increases the height and destructive ability of floodwater. In addition to carrying floodwaters, the floodplain and stream corridor serve other important functions such as the deposition of waterborne sediments. The condition of the stream corridor itself is important in minimizing erosion and water pollution, protecting water quality, and providing animal habitat and recreation opportunities. Floodplains affecting the borough are shown in Figure 20.

Well vegetated buffers along stream corridors will filter out non-point source pollutants, shade the stream, and provide wildlife habitat. Most of the stream corridors in the borough contain ample amounts of vegetation. The borough should try to preserve these corridors and enhance them through building setbacks from streambanks and encouraging planting or reforestation in denuded areas.

## WETLANDS

Wetlands that filter and impede stormwater are frequently found along stream corridors. Wetlands are predominantly protected by preserved lands, but significant wetlands do lie in private hands along the Donny Brook. Vegetation preserved along the banks of feeder streams as well as the main stem, pollutant loads are greatly reduced.

## VEGETATION & WILDLIFE WOODLANDS

The original vegetation of Montgomery County was a dense forest of hardwoods which covered over 99% of the county. Oaks were the dominant species, but chestnut, tulip poplar, hickory, ash, red maple, and dogwoods were also present. Several hundred years of clearing and cultivation, and in more recent times the rapid development of houses and commercial facilities, have reduced woodlands to a shadow of their former extent.

Woodlands and hedgerows serve many purposes, both functional and aesthetic. Woodlands prevent erosion, provide habitat for wildlife, provide buffers for creeks, offer recreational opportunities for residents, and provide cover for wildlife movement, shelter, and migration.

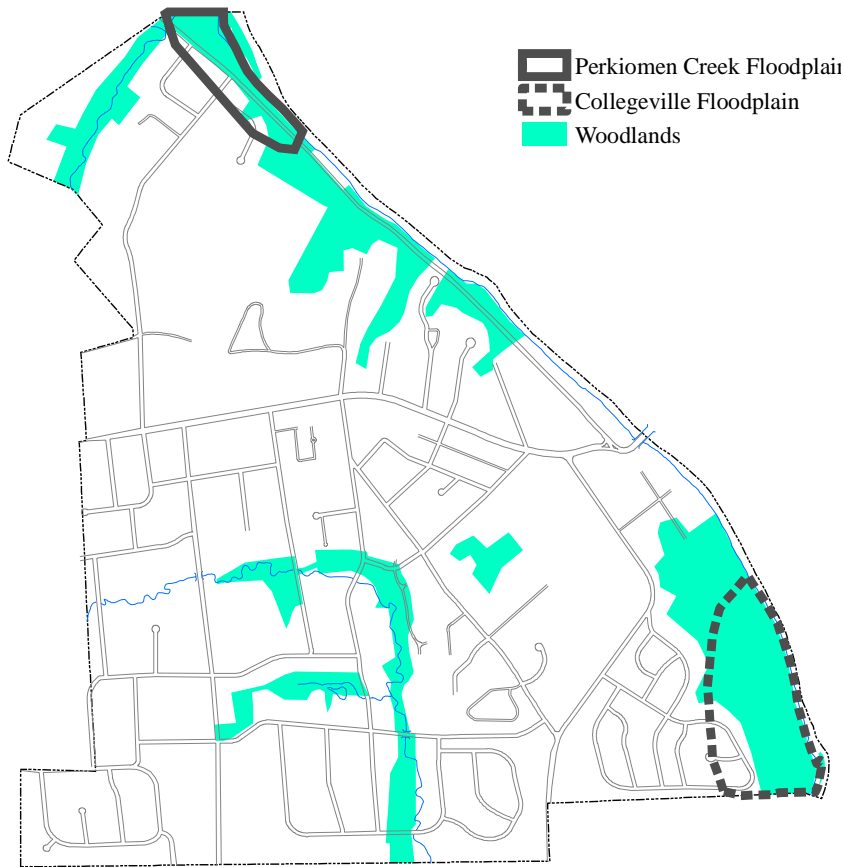
Areas of dense woodlands in the borough include the Central Perkiomen Park, the portion of the college's property adjoining Gravel Pike, the Bum Hollow area, Sections of Donny Brook, and the low density residential area bounded by Locust, Clayhor and Eighth Avenues and Donny Brook. Figure 21 shows the location of significant woodlands in the borough.

## HABITAT

The Montgomery County Natural Areas Inventory defines two areas within Collegeville that contain natural communities or features of high quality or exceptional diversity.

- **Perkiomen Creek Floodplain** - Located along Gravel Pike before Rahns, this is a site of statewide significance. Here exists a small population of an unnamed endangered plant species found in 1987. The floodplain forest habitat is marginal for this species but supports many other native floodplain species. Non-native plants, such as garlic mustard are a problem.
- **Collegeville Floodplain** - This site has a locally significant floodplain community of woods, swales, and gravel bars. There is mature canopy and a diverse herb layer including water lily, monkey-flower, forget-me-not, and stonecrop. The site is impacted by runoff, nutrient input, ATVs, and clearing for adjacent development.

Figure 21  
*Vegetation & Wildlife*



**NATURAL LANDS TRUST  
SMART CONSERVATION PRIORITIZATION  
PROGRAM**

This is a project developed by the Natural Lands Trust and sponsored by DCNR, DEP, and the William Penn Foundation. It is a model that analyzes large quantities of spatial data about natural resources from across Pennsylvania’s expanded piedmont ecoregion. This is shown in Figure 22. This includes data about native species habitat, impervious cover change, protected lands, greenway corridors and barriers, and impaired streams. The resulting map is a tool allowing local officials to make “educated decisions about how to prioritize between conservation projects.”

For every area across this 15-county region, a value was given describing that site’s relative priority status for preservation. As Figure 22A shows, the majority of the borough has a relative conservation value greater than the median across the expanded Pennsylvania piedmont ecoregion. Significantly, several areas of the floodplain managed by either the county or borough are rated in the top 10% of lands deserving protection across this large region. Collegeville therefore has a great responsibility to manage this important acreage that retains some of the highest value habitat. By increasing the protected lands within the floodplain and enhancing habitat, the value of these lands will also increase.

Figure 22  
*Expanded Piedmont Ecoregion in Pennsylvania*

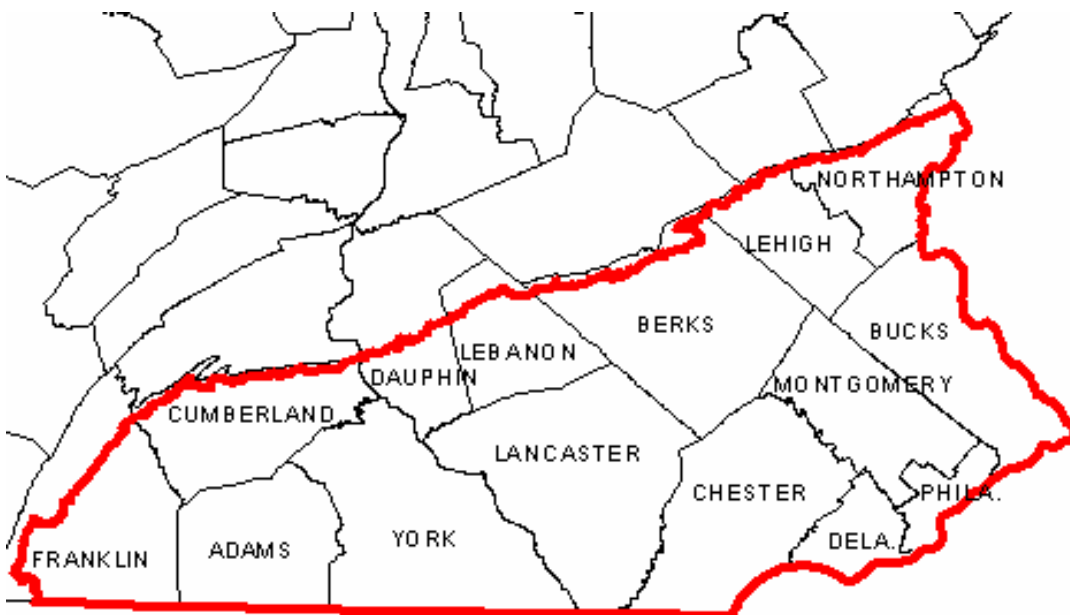
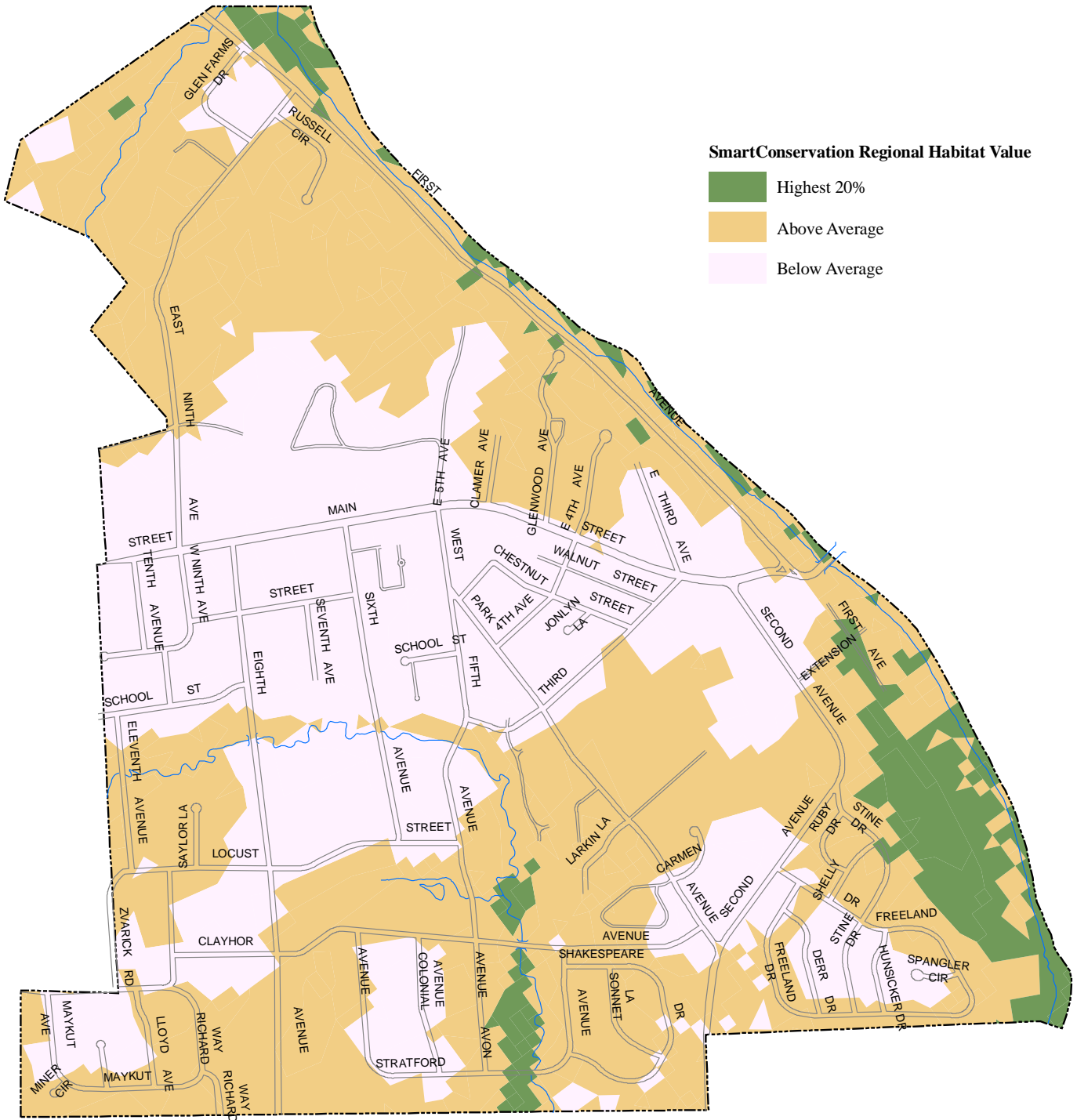
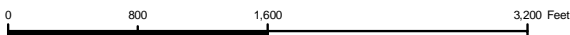


Figure 22A  
SmartConservation Ecoregion Priorities



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 This map is based on 2000 ortho photography and official sources. Property lines were compiled from individual block maps from the Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, with no verification from the deed. This map is not meant to be used as a legal definition of properties or for engineering purposes.



# CHAPTER 5

## POTENTIAL OPEN SPACE LINKAGES

An important aspect of open space is the accessibility of that space to community residents and to the region as a whole. This section of the plan identifies potential open space linkages that can tie together open space sites within the borough and connect to open space and trail opportunities in adjacent communities. Such connections help form a more comprehensive open space system for residents and contribute to the creation of a more effective and enjoyable regional network. They increase accessibility to parks by encouraging pedestrian and bicycle access and also act as recreational opportunities in and of themselves.

Already the site of nearly two miles of the Perkiomen Trail, Collegeville has an existing backbone upon which to base its local trail system. Examples of other potential linkages include utility corridors, stream valleys, abandoned rail lines, sidewalks, and similar linear features. Identification of potential linkages from a regional perspective will help to contribute to Montgomery County's vision of a county-wide trail system complemented by local spurs.

### **BENEFITS OF GREENWAYS**

Greenway networks are generally conservation oriented landscape features. Pennsylvania DCNR's publication, [Pennsylvania's Greenways - An Action Plan for Creating Connections](#) published in 2001, identifies a list of the following specific benefits of greenways:

- Greenways enhance the sense of place in a community or region.
- Greenways accentuate the scenic beauty and majesty of our state.

- Greenways protect our state's water resources by buffering non-point sources of pollution.
- Greenways provide opportunities to protect and manage wildlife, forests and ecological systems.
- Greenways provide recreation opportunities for families and individuals of all ages and abilities.
- Greenways provide alternatives to automotive transportation, reducing traffic congestion.
- Greenways add positively to our economic climate.
- Greenways are a core component of strategies to foster health and wellness, especially as our population ages.

In addition, Collegeville's experience with the Perkiomen Trail can testify that greenways help increase real estate values and promote eco-tourism.

## COLLEGEVILLE CONNECTIONS

As described in Chapter Three, 138 acres of publicly-owned open space either exist within the borough or are managed by the borough. The publicly owned open space acreage that exists within the borough makes up 14% of the total



*Perkiomen Trail at Route 29*

land area. However, although the total acreage is significant, many of these acres have less than optimal access for pedestrians. For example, the borough-owned acreage in Lower Providence will likely never be developed for any type of public use and access to Hunsberger Woods is extremely limited.

Overall, linkages between most public open spaces, neighborhoods, and commercial districts are insufficient, creating not an open space network, but rather an assortment of individual parks. If parks are interconnected, they create a greener image for a community, a more vibrant pedestrian atmosphere, and more useable public space.

A sidewalk study written in 2000 created an inventory of existing sidewalks in the borough and described needs. This study reveals the areas that have an insufficient pedestrian access network. By improving linkages between these open spaces, residential neighborhoods, the Main Street corridor, and the existing Perkiomen Trail, the borough will add recreation and transportation opportunities for the entire community.

## OPEN SPACE NODES

Defining specific open space destinations, the Collegeville open space system can be divided into the five separate nodes shown in Figure 23. Each node has its own character and offers a different open space experience to the community. This section of the plan will describe how to link these nodes to enhance the open space network. Currently, the Perkiomen Trail acts as both a strong connection through the borough and a strong starting point upon which to affix future local trails and strengthen the sidewalk system. The nodes are listed below.

**Hunsberger Woods**—A former agricultural parcel with a mix of trails, meadows, woodlands, and a practice field owned by Ursinus College.

**Bum Hollow**—A stream ravine adjoining private open space and the Perkiomen Trail. The Scout Cabin lies at the top of this area that leads to a steep stream channel along which an informal trail runs.



**Perkiomen Floodplain**—A natural resource protection area, this site offers plant and wildlife habitat areas, some of countywide importance.

**Memorial Park**—A community park with various active recreation uses including a baseball field, basketball courts, tot lot, and picnic area.

**Waterworks Park**—A joint park with Trappe, this park has shaded picnic areas, athletic fields, and a walking path.

Using a hub and spoke approach, Figure 23 also presents various ways to connect the existing open spaces. Just as each park is different, these conceptual linkages will also differ, in surface material, width, and use.



*Memorial Park*

## REGIONAL TRAIL NETWORK

Surrounding Collegeville are several efforts that will become significant recreation and transportation alternatives to Perkiomen Valley residents. The borough has the opportunity to link into these efforts at strategic points to develop strong connections with its neighbors. They could give the residents of Collegeville a means of accessing other trails and parks that exist outside the borders of the borough. For instance, a strong connection to Evansburg State Park and then the Power Line Trail will add the Wissahickon greenway to the list of destinations with trail access from Collegeville.

Figure 24 displays the proposed County Trail Network. All of these will not be constructed for the same high degree of activity as the Perkiomen Trail, but the county will work with local municipalities and others to create trails suitable for each community.

By placing Collegeville in the center of a regional trail and linkage network, more people using these recreation and alternative transportation facilities will be exposed to the borough as a destination, creating new economic opportunities. Below are some local and regional projects proposed conceptually or in progress outside of the borough that should be considered. Figure 25 displays this regional trail network that complements the Perkiomen Trail, connecting Collegeville's neighbors to its Main Street.

**Evansburg Trail**—Already a network of small trails, this will be upgraded. As part of the county trail system it will use the Skippack valley as it meanders through Evansburg State Park and extends upstream into Lower Salford Township's existing trail system.

**PECO Corridor**—This regional trail will bring together several municipal partners to cooperate with PECO Energy to use its utility corridor to connect the Perkiomen Trail above Rahns with the Schuylkill River Trail near Royersford. Across the Perkiomen Creek, Skippack Township has also proposed a trail along this corridor to Evansburg State Park and Skippack Village.

Figure 24  
Proposed County Trail Network

# Montgomery County Proposed Primary Trail Network

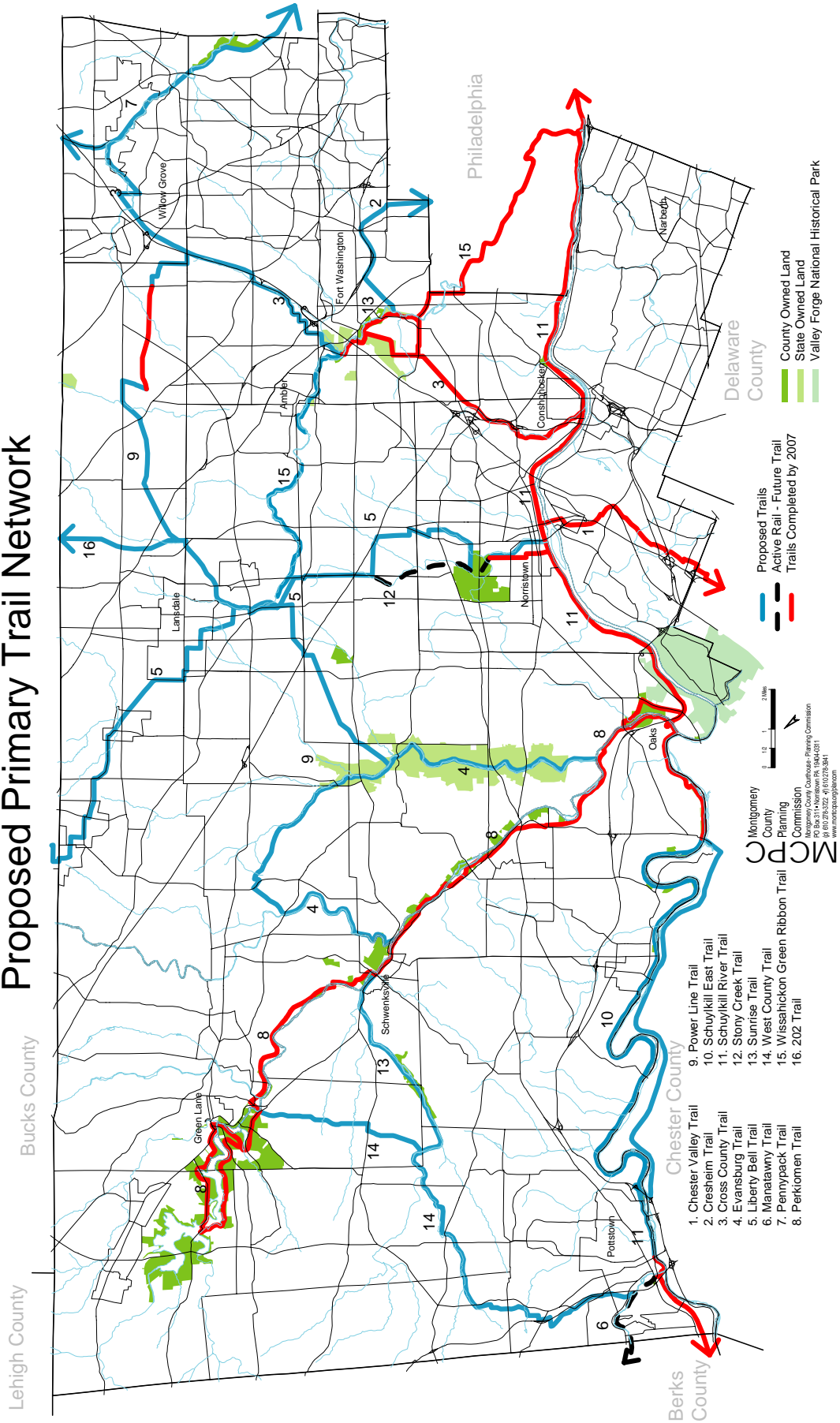
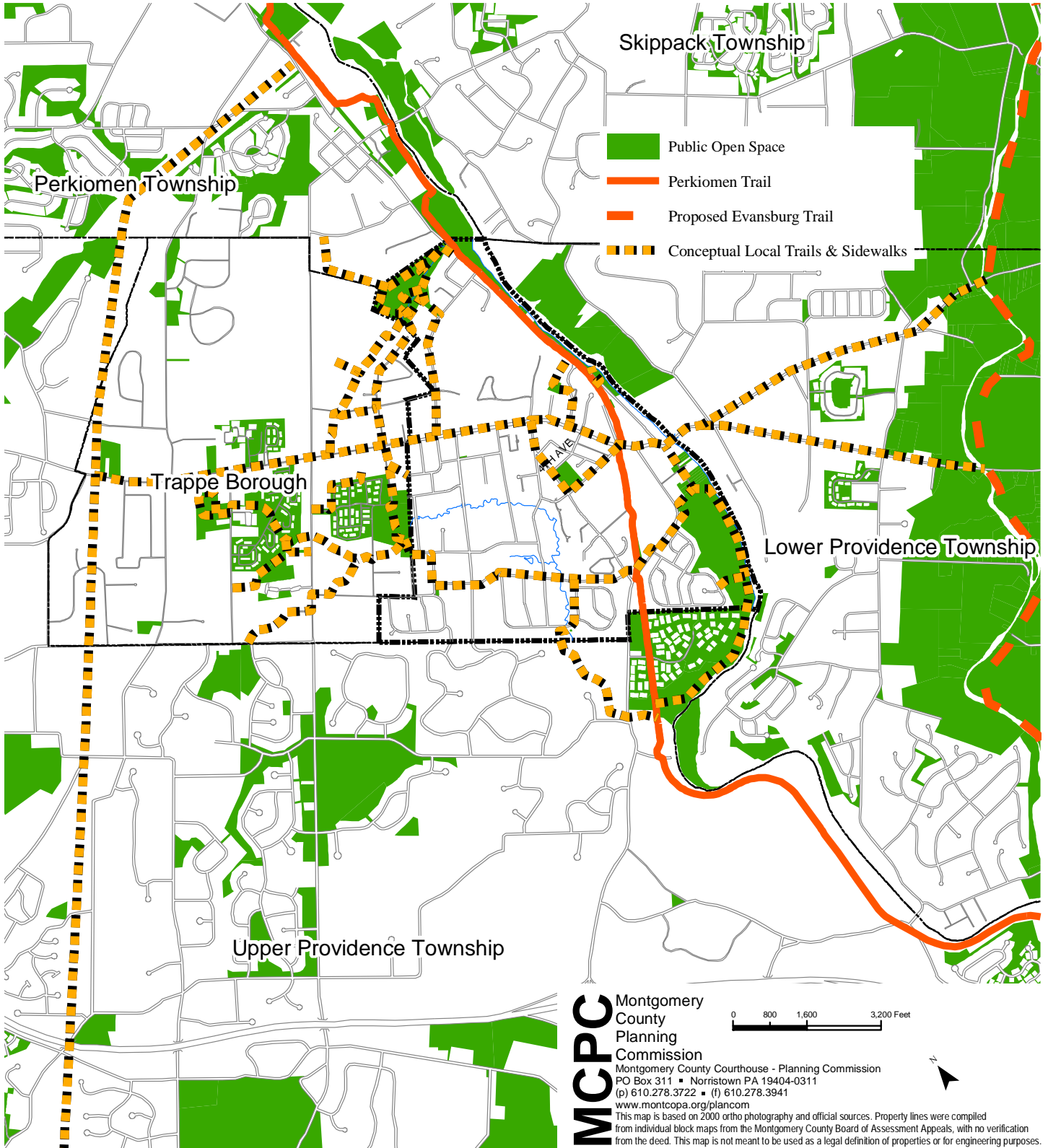


Figure 25  
Conceptual Regional Linkages



**Collegeville Crossing Loop**—Working with Upper Providence and using the Perkiomen Trail, this approximately three-mile loop would take park visitors through an important floodplain ecosystem.

**Hunsberger Woods Access**—Partnering with Trappe, the County Parks Department, and Ursinus College, several access points to this valuable park could be established.

**Donny Brook Greenway**—Trappe Borough is currently working to extend this greenway from Waterworks Park upstream. Collegeville could continue this natural resource corridor through the borough into Upper Providence. Where the Donny Brook flows under Stratford Avenue, a trail should be considered to link the borough's sidewalk network, through Upper Providence towards the Perkiomen Trail.

Further, by offering alternatives to the automobile for transportation the pedestrian scale of Collegeville will be enhanced. This will complement other efforts in the borough to create a denser, greener environment in neighborhoods and the commercial districts.



# CHAPTER 6

## ANALYSIS OF UNPROTECTED RESOURCES

As outlined in Chapters Three and Four, important resources such as community parks, floodplains, woodlands, scenic views, and historic sites are found throughout the borough. This chapter identifies areas where those resources important to the borough have no permanent protection or lack adequate management. The unprotected resources are those lands and resources that add to the character of the borough, are ecologically significant, contain unique visual elements, and generally help define the sense of place that is inherent in Collegeville.

Generally, the priority categories presented in this chapter are based on the extent and concentration of resources found in a given area, their contribution to community identity, and the open space goals established in Chapter Two. The reason that the following resources are identified as vulnerable is because they are potentially developable, privately owned, or require more attention to planning and maintenance. Any change from the present state of these resources may have adverse impacts on the community land matrix.

### VULNERABLE RESOURCES ANALYSIS

Collegeville's vulnerable resources are much more than woodlands and stream valleys. They include the streetscapes and neighborhoods that give the borough its sense of place. Street trees on Main Street and tree-lined residential neighborhoods are part of the green infrastructure network important to borough residents.

Parks and open spaces also add a variety of interesting features to Collegeville neighborhoods, such as wetlands and stream access along the Perkiomen Creek, walking trails and habitat meadows at Hunsberger Woods, and active recreation facilities at Memorial Park. These parks offer recreation opportunities while preserving features found no where

else in the borough. However, these existing resources, both natural and manmade, are vulnerable in that they require monitoring and maintenance to sustain their usefulness to the community.

The borough has limited resources with which to protect and enhance places in which valuable resources and vulnerable features exist. Therefore, priority areas are described below to guide decisions. These priorities are based on the goals set forth in Chapter Two and discussions by the Borough Open Space Committee, the Borough Planning Commission, and the Main Street Committee. It is important to note that these priority areas often overlap. This is evidence of Collegeville's efforts to integrate the open space network with the greater community.

## PRESERVATION PRIORITIES

Below is a discussion of each priority region including the rationale for its priority status. The vulnerable resources and features as defined here and located within these regions reflect the goals of this plan. Figure 26 shows the generalized location of four categories of vulnerable resources found in the borough.

1. Green Infrastructure
2. Community Accessibility
3. Recreational Opportunities
4. Natural Resources

### HIGHEST PRIORITY AREAS Green Infrastructure

One of the borough's main goals is the economic development and vitality of its Main Street corridor. Historically, Collegeville was one of the major crossroads of the Perkiomen Valley. The mix of shops and services available on Main Street and the accompanying cultural amenities made the borough an attractive place to live, work, and shop.

The commercial district on Main Street has a core of three or four blocks generally located between Third and Sixth Avenues. Recent efforts that expand the green infrastructure on Main Street include street tree plantings, infill development, a draft Main Street Plan, and Transportation Enhancement funding to enhance pedestrian safety and overall aesthetics.

As highway access and industry have expanded in neighboring municipalities, so has the population of Collegeville. The borough is becoming a bedroom community for these surrounding employment centers. Although two large shopping centers exist within the borough, the Main Street commercial corridor remains the focus of the borough's economic development efforts. Promoting this asset by enhancing the pedestrian image of this district is important for Collegeville to make it stand out from competing commercial districts. This will help it fulfill its role as a local destination and a regional center of the Central Perkiomen Valley.

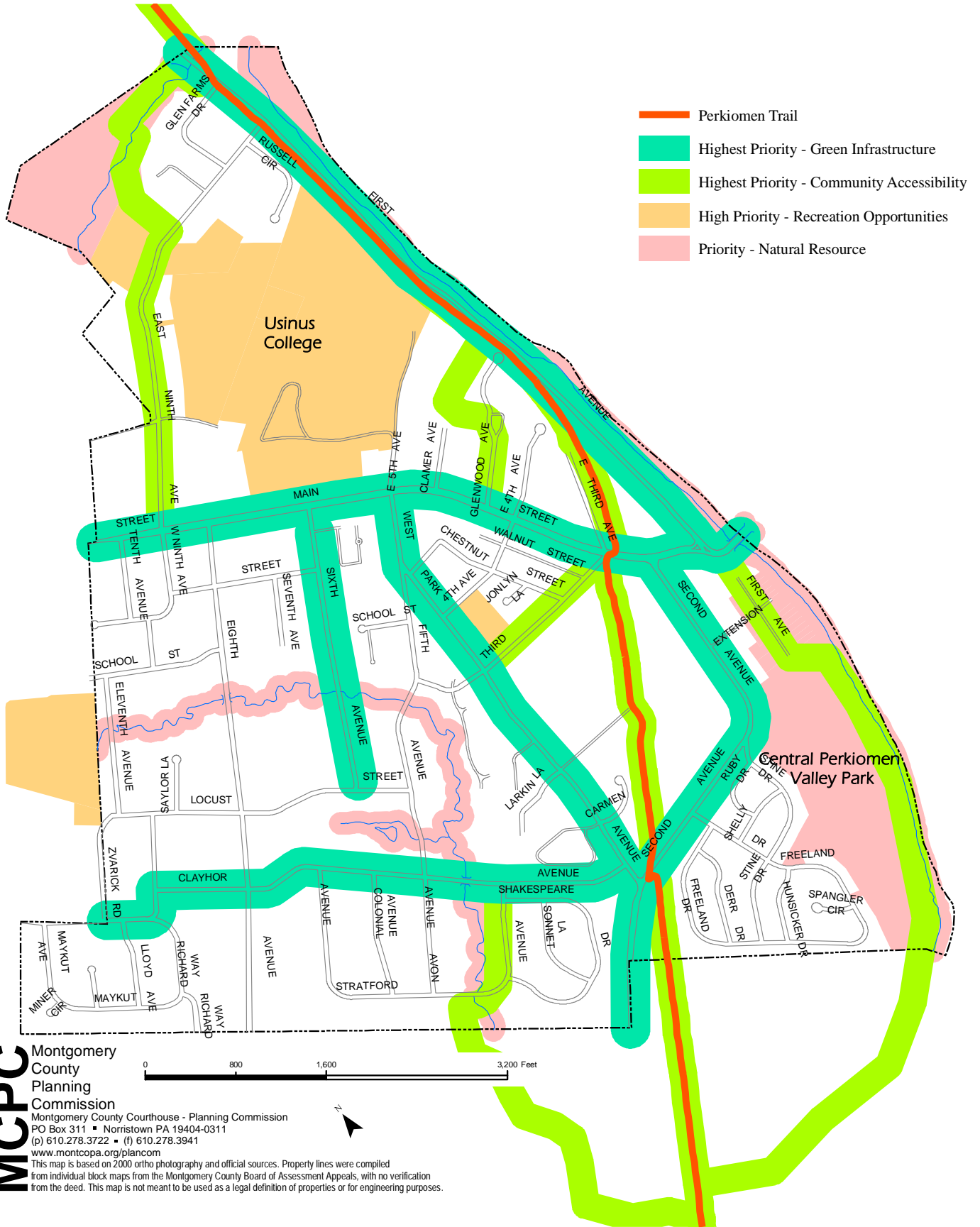
Further, by extending green infrastructure themes across the borough on the roads most visible to motorists, Collegeville can promote its image as a green town. Open space efforts that focus on building this green image for both Main Street and the borough as a whole are the borough's first priority as discussed in Chapter Two. Examples of ways to preserve and enhance Collegeville's green image could include borough gateways, street tree plantings, plaza creation, and park enhancements. The general road corridors to focus on for this priority are shown in Figure 26.

### Community Accessibility

By preserving and enhancing connections throughout the borough between neighborhoods, open space, the Perkiomen Trail, commercial districts, and other pedestrian destinations, local quality of life will also improve. Decreasing the necessity of using cars to access destinations will lead to a more pedestrian-oriented community. Enhancing the accessibility of pedestrians and bicyclists will also support Collegeville's goals for its Main Street district.

This priority item also includes strengthening appropriate connections with neighboring communities. The Perkiomen Trail is a regional model of this and an anchor for a local trail system. Examples of actions to increase walkability include upgrades and maintenance of the sidewalk system, requirements for trail connections in new development and redevelopment, additions of pedestrian amenities such as benches and signage, and education about trail opportunities. Often coincident with the Green Infrastructure priority region,

Figure 26  
Vulnerable Resources



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0 800 1,600 3,200 Feet



the Community Accessibility region is displayed on Figure 26.

## HIGH PRIORITY AREAS

### Recreation Opportunities

Through the 1990's and into this decade, the number of children living in the borough dramatically outpaced total population growth. The needs of families with children include park and open space facilities that allow for organized, active recreation. Currently, the borough manages these facilities at Waterworks and Memorial Parks. As children remain a large fraction of the local population, the maintenance of these facilities as well as their expansion will grow as a priority.

Recreation opportunities also exist on the Ursinus College campus. The tennis and track facilities on campus are open to the public when not in use for college needs. These opportunities, however, may be vulnerable as no formal agreement currently exists between the borough and college. Those recreational facilities located within the borough at which the preservation or enhancement of functionality is important are shown in Figure 26.

## PRIORITY AREAS

### Natural Resources

Collegeville is a largely developed borough with the majority of its vulnerable natural resources concentrated in the floodplain of the Perkiomen Creek. The borough has been successful in protecting the greater part of this floodplain. This floodplain and its surrounding area is undeveloped and protected except for several remaining tracts near the Perkiomen Bridge. Another concentration of natural resources lie along the Donny Brook. This stream runs predominantly through the backyards of residents in the western portion of the borough, therefore existing in various states of protection and management.

The woodlands present along these streams and the neighborhood trees throughout the borough add to the borough's green infrastructure network. These features can function as scenic amenities, shade trees and windbreaks for homes, habitat for migratory birds, and working floodplains. However, past and present management of these resources may not let them reach their full potential. For instance, the trees in Hunsberger Woods create a functioning forest canopy along this steep valley. However, the woodlands are vulnerable because no plan exists to ensure the growth of appropriate new canopy trees instead of invasive shrubs. In Waterworks Park, a tree management plan would improve local aesthetics and make the area even more inviting for residents. Management schemes must be evaluated in order to maintain these resources.

In other areas, where these features lie in private hands, other methods of protection must be implemented. Of specific concern are the street and neighborhood trees that exist throughout the borough on both residential and non-residential properties. Studies have found that trees found in urban environments benefit not just the aesthetic landscape, but also enhance energy savings. Well-placed mature trees can reduce air-conditioning costs up to 30%. Evergreen trees acting as windbreaks can significantly reduce heating costs. Tree canopies reduce urban heat islands by providing shade to paved surfaces, filtering air, and buffering sources of noise, increasing downtown walkability. Also important to the borough's efforts, the Wharton School's Real Estate Department found that minimal investments in street trees can increase property values by as much as 10%.

# CHAPTER 7

## **EVALUATION OF GROWTH AREAS**

In addition to establishing open space preservation areas, it is important to identify areas that will accommodate the projected community growth. While less than 20 acres within the borough remain in an undeveloped state, there are many opportunities for infill development. As described in the Montgomery County Comprehensive Plan, the borough is located in the Existing Suburban District characterized by single family homes and community commercial districts. However, with the exception of existing stable neighborhoods, the entire borough is a growth area as redevelopment opportunities continue. Therefore, the County plan also designates the borough as a Development Center, defined as an area that will become more walkable with a greater mix of uses.

This chapter analyzes current demographic trends and planning efforts and how the needs of a changing borough will help shape open space planning. This analysis is then used to support the borough's open space needs and goals in developing recommendations found in Chapter Ten.

### **POPULATION PROJECTIONS**

Many districts within Collegeville are quite stable, with little change expected. However, some areas are underutilized at which redevelopment or revitalization opportunities are ripe. A trend is beginning that will result in continuing infill development on formerly underutilized lots. As the me-

dian housing price in the borough is one of the highest in the county, this trend towards higher density is expected to continue.

As described in Chapter One, DVRPC projects that Collegeville's population will remain over 5,000

after 2015. Using this projection and current household size of 2.67 people per household, at least 140 new housing units would be required to house these new residents. New proposals for developments, including Claymont at Collegeville on Park Avenue, show that at least 41 of these projected units are in the approval process.

It is important to note that these projections performed by DVRPC do not take into account the zoning changes accompanying the Central Perkiomen Valley Regional Comprehensive Plan which effectively reduces density in other parts of the region, possibly placing higher demand for even greater infill within the borough to. This plan is described below

## CENTRAL PERKIOMEN VALLEY REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Collegeville is participating in a regional planning effort that will allow future development to be directed to the most appropriate regional locations. Regional planning, among other things, increases energy efficiency and decreases future tax burdens on local residents and businesses. This regional approach allows some municipalities to shift more intense uses to the most appropriate areas of the region. The Central Perkiomen Valley region is comprised of the townships of Lower Frederick, Perkiomen, and Upper

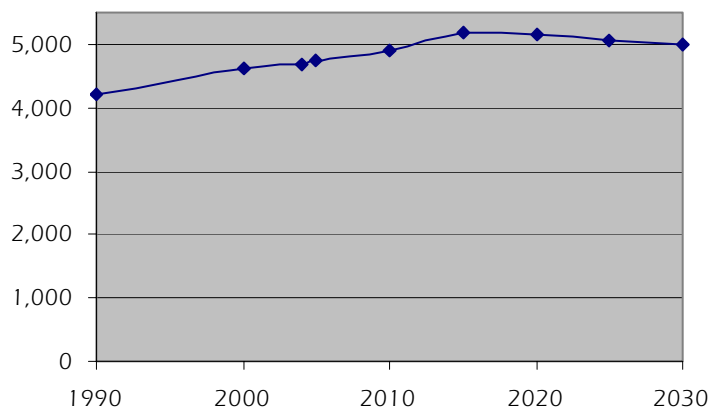
Frederick, and the boroughs of Collegeville, Schwenksville, and Trappe.

Over the past several decades, development in the Central Perkiomen Valley has occurred at a rapid pace. The region is experiencing the burdens of a growing school-age population, loss of open space, diminishing natural, historic, and scenic resources, and a congested road network. The effects of this growth will only continue to increase without implementation of the region's Future Land Use Plan. The region can then look forward to growth and economic vitality.

The Future Land Use Plan will guide the six municipalities in implementing land use policies. Understanding existing land use patterns in each municipality, and properly integrating future land use as part of one unified plan will result in a more efficient land use pattern that preserves open space, encourages sustainable development and preserves the small town character that is so important to residents. The Land Use Plan designates appropriate areas for new growth and directs revitalization, new development and infrastructure improvements into those areas. Outside of the designated growth areas, the primary land use objective is preservation of the region's rural landscape and its natural and cultural resources, through less intense development that is sensitive to such resources.

Figure 27  
*Population Projection*

Year	Population
1990	4,227
2000	4,628
2004 **	4,676
2005 *	4,750
2010 *	4,900
2015 *	5,200
2020 *	5,160
2025 *	5,050
2030 *	5,000



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 2000; DVRPC projections and estimates.

\* Projected population  
\*\* Estimated population

## GROWTH AREAS

As a result of its geographic location in the county, continued growth is inevitable in the Central Perkiomen Valley. Growth, if properly managed, can have many positive benefits on the region. It will help to enhance the economic vitality of the region and to provide new opportunities for residents. Goals for growth include ensuring better management of future growth, encouraging investment in open space, and the promotion of responsible integration of historical, cultural and natural amenities with new development.

To maximize the positive impacts of growth, it is important that the development model make more efficient use of land that has already been developed, encourage reuse and infill opportunities, and provide guidelines for future development. By locating new growth around existing

growth centers, existing services and infrastructure can be utilized, thereby reducing the need for expansion of public utilities and road networks. Additionally, concentrating growth into suitable locations preserves open space and natural resources that may have otherwise been sacrificed to accommodate new development.

To this end, the future land use plan characterizes land for more intensive development within the growth areas and characterizes land in the non-growth areas for less intense development, as detailed by the four generalized Future Land Use categories. They are: Borough Conservation Area, Designated Growth Area, Future Growth Area and Rural Resource Conservation Area. The future land use plan details both the residential and non-residential uses that are permitted in these areas. Refer to the Future Land Use Map, Figure 28, for the boundaries of these categories.



*Zvarick Road entrance to Waterworks Park*

## DESIGNATED AND FUTURE GROWTH AREAS

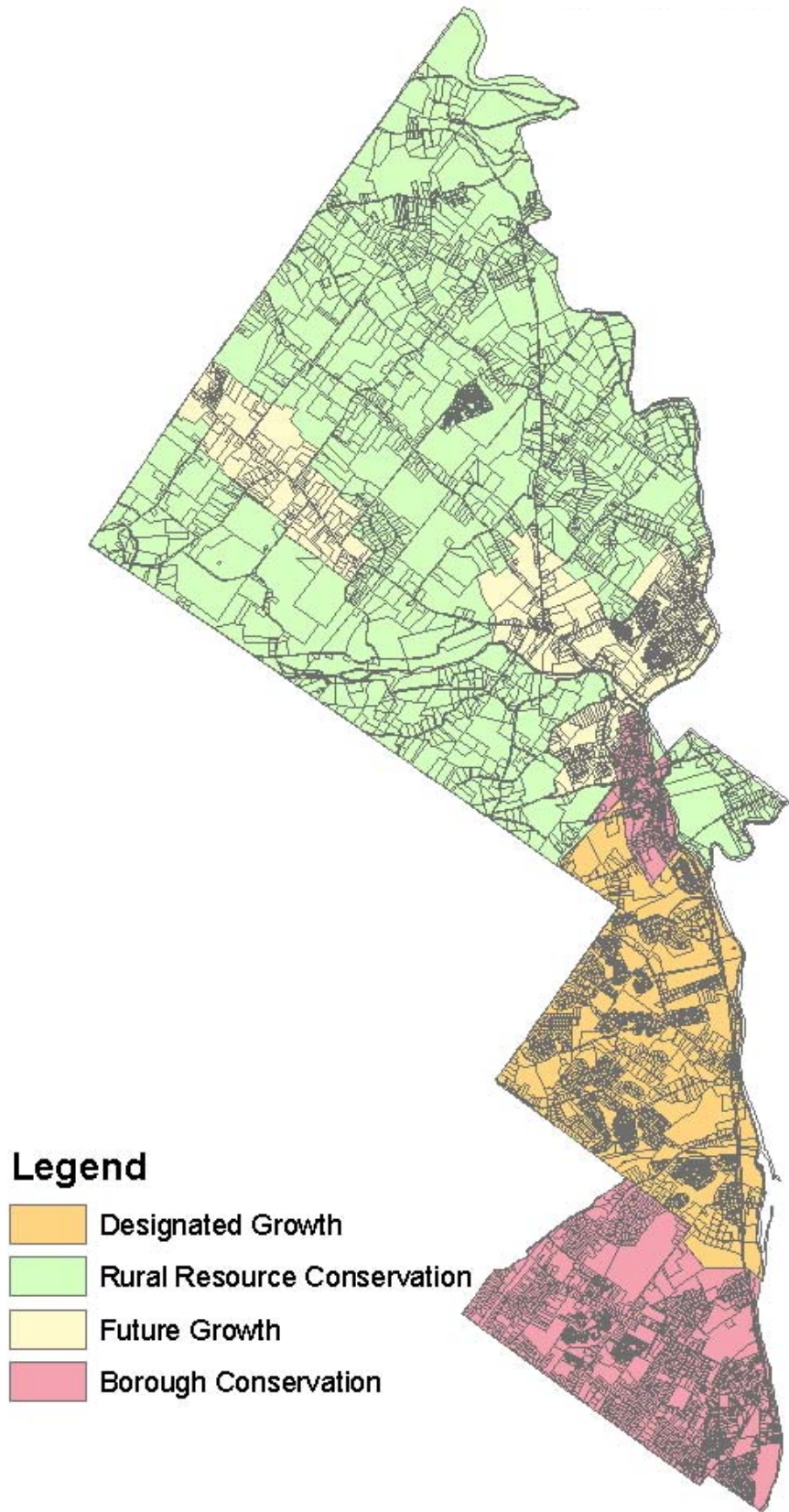
The Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) recognizes two types of growth areas: designated growth areas and future growth areas. A designated growth area is defined as “an area that preferably includes and surrounds a borough or village and within which residential and mixed use development is permitted or planned for at densities of one unit to the acre or more; commercial, industrial and institutional uses are permitted or planned for; and public infrastructure services are provided or planned.” Future growth areas are similar, but recognize that while “public infrastructure services...may not be [currently] provided, future development at greater densities is planned to accompany the orderly extension and provision of public infrastructure services.”

In order to accommodate future growth and development within the Central Perkiomen Valley the following areas have been identified as designated and future growth areas.

### **Borough Conservation Area**

The Borough Conservation Area is Collegeville, Schwenksville, Trappe and a small portion of Lower Frederick, adjacent to Schwenksville. Historically, this area has been the economic and social center for the region and was the original site of early development in the Central Perkiomen Valley.

Figure 28  
*Central Perkiomen Valley Future Lane Use Plan*  
*As taken from the Central Perkiomen Valley Regional Comprehensive Plan*



**Legend**

-  Designated Growth
-  Rural Resource Conservation
-  Future Growth
-  Borough Conservation

The area is primarily developed and characterized by a mix of land uses, existing public infrastructure, and a variety of housing types at varying densities. Future development in the Borough Conservation Area will be in the form of infill development and should be compatible with the character of the area and the heritage of the region.

Municipal codes should encourage new development in this area by providing for flexible standards that are supportive of infill development and that provide standards for the preservation of the existing character of the boroughs.

### **Designated Growth Area**

The Designated Growth Area includes the majority of Perkiomen Township. Areas located in the Designated Growth Area contain a variety of land uses, with the predominant land use being “suburban-type” residential. In regard to infrastructure, the Designated Growth Area is primarily served by public sewer and water. It contains a variety of land uses that range in type, intensity, and age. It is anticipated that this development pattern will continue.

Future land use objectives shall ensure that new development, both residential and non-residential, enhance the community character of the Designated Growth Area. Emphasis shall be placed on the development of standards that encourage good project design that preserves open space and encourages the protection of natural and historic features.

### **Future Growth Area**

The future growth areas exist along Route 73 in Upper Frederick and the area surrounding the Village of Zieglerville in Lower Frederick. These areas are characterized by a mix of old and new development occurring on primary road networks in rural areas. The majority of development is served by public sewer and water.

It is anticipated that new development in the Future Growth Area will be of a scale and intensity characteristic of a rural village. With regard to uses, a variety of residential and non-residential uses will be permitted. New development shall be sensitive to the existing character of the area by adhering to standards that promote pedestrian

circulation and access to buildings and community open space.

### **RURAL RESOURCE AREAS**

By directing the majority of new development into the growth areas through the provision of public infrastructure and higher densities, rural resource areas outside the growth area can be established to preserve the Central Perkiomen Valley’s natural and cultural resources. As defined in the MPC, a rural resource area is, “an area within which rural resource uses including, but not limited to, agriculture, timbering, mining, quarrying and other extractive industries, forest and game lands and recreation and tourism are encouraged and enhanced. Development that is compatible with or supportive of such uses is permitted and public infrastructure services are not provided for except in villages.”

Preserving the open spaces, farmland, woodlands and other natural and cultural resources within these rural resource areas is very important to sustaining the natural environment, agricultural economy, and the quality of life in the Central Perkiomen Valley Region. The rural resource areas include the majority of Upper and Lower Frederick and a small portion of Perkiomen, east of the Perkiomen Creek. The rural resource area includes the undeveloped and environmentally sensitive land in the region. To preserve the remaining undisturbed natural features and cultural resources, public infrastructure will not be permitted. Future development will be compatible with rural preservation and the predominant land uses will be low-density residential, farmland, preserved woodlands and reforested areas.

### **FUTURE LAND USE PLAN**

The Future Land Use Plan establishes the framework for the type and character of development that the municipalities are authorized to permit. Implementation of the Future Land Use Plan shall be achieved via local zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances. In accordance with the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, municipal ordinances are required to be “generally consistent” with the regional plan. In an effort to aid the municipalities in achieving general consistency with the Plan, Future Land Use Policy Matrices have been developed for each Future Land

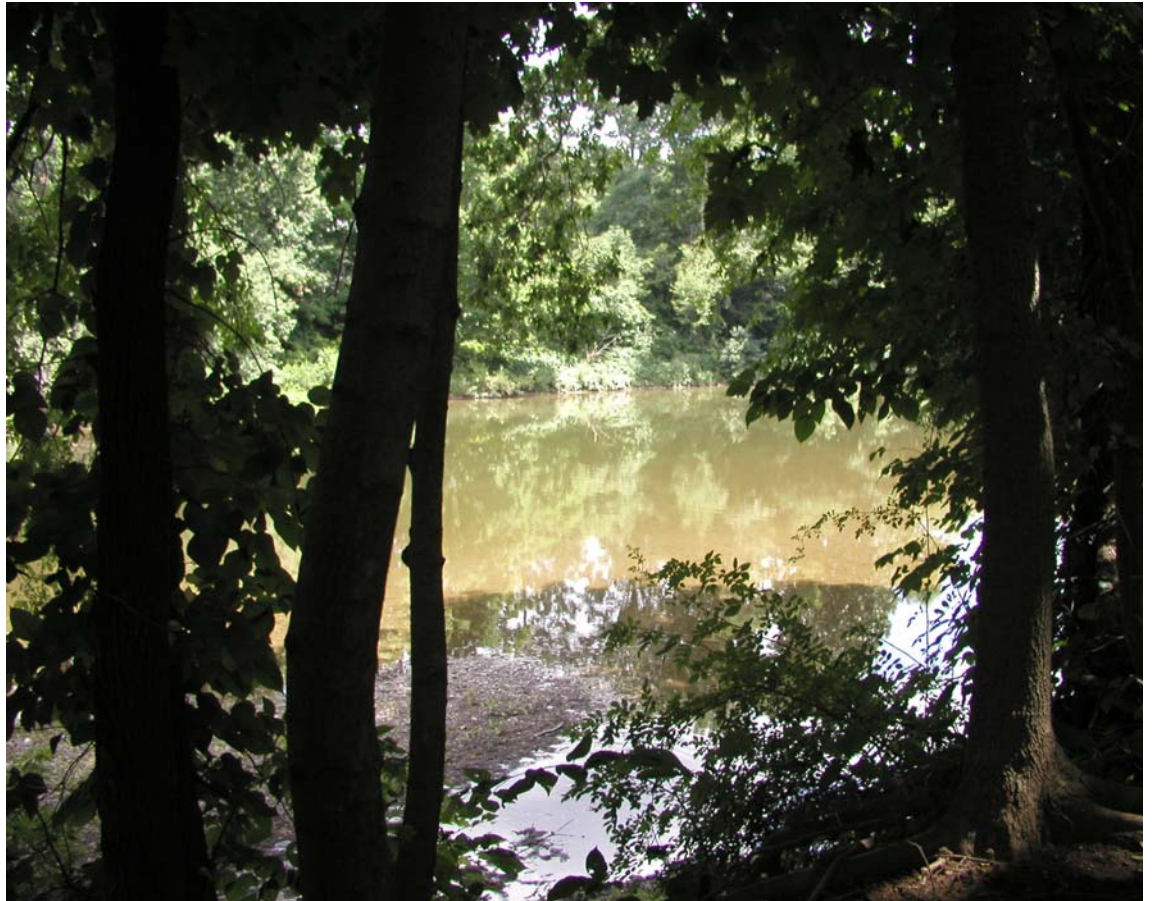
Use Category. When determining general consistency between local zoning ordinances and the Future Land Use Plan, individual municipalities shall reference the Future Land Use Map and Future Land Use Matrices.

## COLLEGEVILLE'S REGIONAL POSITION

There is room in the borough for further development. In recent years in fact, the borough has seen a number of submissions for the subdivision of larger lots into smaller lots as well as multi-unit residential buildings. Collegeville is in a strong regional position to see a population increase in the years ahead. As growth is focused by the Regional Comprehensive Plan into Collegeville's Borough Conservation Area, the demand for housing will increase. Further population growth in the borough will be driven by the nearby em-

ployment centers such as the one in Upper Providence Township and nearby access to the Route 422 corridor. However, although population figures are increasing for the borough, forecasts show employment opportunities will fall behind population growth.

Collegeville's population is projected to grow by approximately 500 residents in the coming decades. However, the borough will not expand outward, but inward through infill development. Activity in the Perkiomen Valley may also be able to refocus inward into the borough. The vitality of the borough is expected to increase with greater transportation, recreational, commercial, and cultural amenities. This will allow Collegeville to remain a core area of the Central Perkiomen Valley.



*Perkiomen Creek from Central Perkiomen Valley Park*

# CHAPTER 8

## **EVALUATION OF OPEN SPACE NEEDS**

Collegeville is a relatively small geographic place of 1.6 square miles with a population of over 4,500. The borough has the advantage of having had the foresight to preserve parks that provide open space opportunities within this limited space. Hunsberger Woods and Memorial Park together cover the broad spectrum of recreation opportunities. The borough is committed with Trappe Borough to jointly manage Waterworks Park which is available to borough residents. The presence of the Perkiomen Trail adds much to the recreation opportunities of borough residents. This chapter evaluates existing open space, its ability to serve the community, and plans for Collegeville's future need.

### **EXISTING PARKS**

Two categorizations exist that are important when evaluating Collegeville's existing and future open space needs.

#### **ACREAGE CATEGORIZATIONS**

One way the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) defines open space is by using acreage. A community park is generally 20 to 100 acres in size and intended to serve people living within one or two miles of the park. Because community parks serve a wide area of an approximate one-mile radius, people usually drive to

them. Typically, these parks include natural open areas, athletic complexes, swimming pools, and other large scale recreational spaces. Community park facilities in the borough include Hunsberger Woods and the preserved floodplain along the Perkiomen Creek.

Traditional neighborhood parks are usually less than 20 acres and can accommodate a wide range of recreational activities. Neighborhood parks are used by people living from a quarter to a half mile away who can walk or bike to the

park. These parks support those desiring informal recreation as well as facilities for short term, frequent, and active use. Good examples are playgrounds, tot lots, and pocket parks. These are most valuable in areas that are not conveniently served by community parks because of distance or inaccessibility. In the borough, Memorial Park serves this role.

Neighborhood parks can also include very small mini-parks. Mini-parks are usually less than one acre and have facilities designed to serve only a very limited segment of the community. Mini-parks are used by people that live within a quarter mile radius of the park. Example of mini-parks include everything from tot-lots in residential communities to urban plazas in a commercial district. The Scout Cabin helps fill this role in the borough.

**PARK & OPEN SPACE SETTING & USE**

Where population densities are high and land is highly valued, activity on open spaces may need to be intensified on less space. Parks may need to provide for playing fields for an active community, leaving little room remaining for resource protection areas. In other settings, the development of an urban plaza inserts green spaces into highly developed districts. Conversely, in less developed areas, the protection of large blocks of natural resources may be a high priority, allowing

for a use of the land that requires less maintenance.

Three corners of a triangle emerge as the far extremes of potential open space settings as shown in Figure 29. Every parcel within an open space system will have varying proportions of each of these setting types as described below. Some will line up near a vertex, while other open spaces will have mixed uses.

**“NO SINGLE PARK, WOULD PROVIDE PEOPLE WITH ALL THE BENEFICIAL INFLUENCES OF NATURE.”**

*Frederick Law Olmstead, Sr. - Landscape Architect of New York’s Central Park*

**RESOURCE PROTECTION**

Open space in this setting would include streams, wetlands, and steep slopes. Special flora or fauna species may exist in these protected areas. If amenities exist at all, they may include only a small parking lot and walking path. These settings may be used by schools or summer camps for habitat studies, fishermen, or nature enthusiasts. The floodplain area of Central Perkiomen Park offers passive recreation opportunities and lies in this corner of the triangle.

**RECREATIONAL FACILITY**

Various forms of fields and courts exist here to serve an active population throughout the year. This type of site requires a good deal of maintenance and should expect intense use during sports seasons. This is the case at Memorial Park which has become a popular spot for outdoor sports. Waterworks Park, although a mixed use park, also provides some active recreational opportunities.

**COMMUNITY GATHERING PLACES & CONNECTIONS**

These areas can serve as gathering areas or play areas for a community. Main Streets and village centers can benefit from the green space provided by these places. Included here is the Perkiomen Trail system that link different uses. The Scout Cabin also falls into this category.



## OPEN SPACE NEEDS

As demographics, land use, and development pressure change within a community, so do the needs of the population. For instance, a younger population may utilize active open space in the form of playing fields. Active recreation facilities should be located where significant residential density exists or is proposed. Where older populations exist, less intense open space uses such as walking trails and jogging routes may better serve the community. These passive recreation areas often allow for natural resource protection opportunities. The following is a discussion of current open space needs.



*Scout Cabin*

## GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Green infrastructure amenities such as street and neighborhood trees make up a significant part of Collegeville's character. A need exists to maintain these existing resources.

**Public Trees** - On public lands such as Memorial Park and Hunsberger Woods, existing mature trees should be supplemented with the next generation of trees to take their place.

**Private Trees** - On private lands, policies and programs should be created to ensure these neighborhoods maintain their green character as part of the larger green infrastructure network.

**Gateways** - To further enhance the image of the borough, a series of green gateway entrances along the main arterial roads are needed. These gateways could consist of enhanced streetscaping and pocket green spaces that work to delineate the entrance into Collegeville.

**Plazas** - As the development of Main Street continues and redevelopment occurs, pocket parks and urban plazas could contribute to this green image.

**Streetscape** - The above features should be integrated into a streetscape plan with appropriate pedestrian amenities. Other areas within the borough that would benefit from these streetscaping and green infrastructure concepts include the intersection of Park Avenue and Route 29 and the Acme and Redner's shopping centers.

## OPEN SPACE NETWORK & ACCESSIBILITY

### LOCAL ACCESSIBILITY

Collegeville has several significant individual parks. On a map of the borough, the Perkiomen greenway and Memorial Park stand out as significant features on the landscape. But it is not enough to have good parklands. Recreation opportunities could be expanded using trails and sidewalks to create a diverse and accessible open space system. As described in Chapter Five, upgrading the existing sidewalk system and accompanying streetscaping will increase local accessibility to the park system as well as the overall appeal of the borough. To complement the sidewalk and trail network, bicycle lanes would increase accessibility to parks, specifically on Ninth and Clayhor Avenues.

Figure 30 reveals those areas that are currently underserved by open space facilities as they lie outside a quarter-mile radius. For a developed borough existing at current densities, these are significant gaps in open space service. There will be a need for more recreational areas here in the future as further infill occurs and density increases. Although most neighborhoods have a reasonable degree of accessibility, upgrading linkages, including sidewalks, will enhance accessibility. Expansion of existing parks or development of pocket parks will also add accessibility.

### **OPEN SPACE LEVEL OF SERVICE**

It should be noted that although some areas are presented as having adequate open space accessibility, some existing open spaces offer little for local neighborhoods. An example here is the Collegeville Crossing community. Although townhomes here border public open space, in the Central Perkiomen Valley Park, other than hiking over often wet terrain, few opportunities exist. Therefore an effective service gap also lies here.

### **REGIONAL NETWORK**

Improved linkages, including both trails and sidewalks, would not only connect communities within the borough, but can act regionally to connect Collegeville to the larger county-wide trail network. The Perkiomen Trail plays a significant role in activities of this type. Opportunities to work jointly with neighboring municipalities, the county parks department, the school district, and other partners will increase the level of service provided by the open space network.

### **ACTIVE RECREATION**

Collegeville is one of ten youngest municipalities in Montgomery County based on 2000 Census data. Household size is growing. These trends usually correlate to more households with school-aged children. The number of households with children increased by 14% in the 1990's, therefore a need exists to plan for more active recreation opportunities.

Collegeville will densify. With at least 41 units in the pipeline for construction in the next few years in the borough, the projections for future population growth seem to be on target. This also results

in a greater need for active open space here, especially as more coordinated sports programming is desired by new young families moving in.

### **EXISTING RECREATION FACILITIES**

Currently, only 18% of the existing permanently-protected open space is used for active recreation, located at Memorial and Waterworks Parks. This causes many families to take advantage of parks and youth leagues in neighboring communities for organized active recreation opportunities. Therefore, to fulfill municipal responsibility, proper maintenance and expansion of these existing active recreational lands is of great importance.

### **PARTNERSHIPS**

Ursinus College is an open space and recreational resource within the borough that is relatively untapped. A relationship with the borough and the college should be considered to make use of existing and proposed recreational facilities on campus that may be of use to residents. This is important with the loss of the fields currently located at Superior Tube in Lower Providence.

Evansburg State Park, located less than a mile from the borough is another area where local residents could enjoy all types of recreation. As this park is currently underdeveloped to serve active recreational needs of the growing community, the borough and other municipalities should consider approaching DCNR to create partnerships.

### **NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION & PASSIVE RECREATION**

These two needs often go hand in hand. During the last round of open space preservation sponsored by the county, Collegeville used its allocation to protect natural resources in Hunsberger Woods. This in turn preserved a great deal of land available for passive recreation.

### **WATER RESOURCES**

Chapter Six describes the benefits woodlands, canopy trees, streams, and wetlands offer to borough residents. If these features are lost or degraded, Collegeville's character will be likewise affected. As past preservation efforts have protected the Perkiomen Creek along its length as it borders the borough, the Donny Brook should





*Memorial Park basketball court*

also have appropriate protection. Education, outreach, conservation easements, and land use tools are all viable ways to protect the stream. Also, as redevelopment occurs, stormwater management should be a priority to increase the health of local stream networks for Collegeville residents and those downstream. Stormwater management and aesthetic green infrastructure applications can help advance several of the borough's goals.

One of the benefits offered by the presence of the Perkiomen Creek and its associated floodplain is the passive recreation opportunities it creates. Central Perkiomen Valley Park and the adjacent borough open space has wooded areas, wetlands, and walking trails that make it suitable for passive recreation. The development of passive recreation opportunities at this site and Hunsberger Woods, including jogging and walking trails and nature interpretation could improve the usability of these open spaces. Improper use of these sites including ATV use must be curbed in order to fully integrate the park in to the open space system.

#### **HABITAT**

To support natural resource protection decisions, the Natural Lands Trust's SmartConservation Prioritization Program objectively values land based on its habitat value. In the borough, these areas exist in highest concentration near the borough's flood-

plains, both along the Perkiomen and the Donny Brook as shown in Chapter Four. Collegeville has the responsibility of some of the region's most sensitive and valuable natural resources and greenway corridors. This is especially important in a developed borough setting. Any change in land use in these areas of the borough could have significant affect on these resources.

#### **VILLAGE CHARACTER & HISTORIC PRESERVATION**

The preservation of local heritage is important in maintaining quality of life in Collegeville. Local heritage consists of the historic buildings, landmarks, and landscapes that provide a link to a community's past and thereby make a valuable contribution to current educational, cultural, and social environment.

The inventory of historic places in Chapter Four also describes some of the historic resources in the borough. Protecting these sites, and others not yet on the list, will help to maintain the character of the borough.

#### **NRPA ACREAGE STANDARD**

The NRPA developed national standards for recreation, parks, and open space (Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines; 1983). These standards are widely accepted, although they are viewed only as a guide for planning, not as an absolute standard. The NRPA estimates that a total of 6.25 to 10.5 acres of municipally owned and developed open space per 1,000 people is a useful guide. Generally speaking, the more densely populated an area is the higher the ratio should be, so a developed borough like Collegeville would apply a higher ratio than a designated rural resource like Lower Frederick. For the purposes of this plan, however, both the low and high ratios are used to create a range for evaluating existing conditions and to perhaps establish an acreage goal for the community. Figure 31 shows the results of applying the NRPA acreage standards to accessible and useful open spaces managed by the borough.

As the role of parks and open space expands in local communities, these standards have become a smaller part of the open space needs equation.

Figure 31  
*Minimum Open Space Acreage Needs*

Projected Population*	2000		2010		2025	
	4,628		4,900		5,050	
<b>Recommended Acreage**</b>						
Range	From	To	From	To	From	To
Community	23	37	25	39	25	40
Neighborhood	6	12	6	12	6	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>Existing Acreage</b>						
Community	100.0					
Neighborhood	22.3					
<b>Total</b>	<b>122.3</b>					

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; MCPC; NRPA

\* Projected Population

\*\* Recommended Acreage - Range per 1000 persons as follows:

Community Level = 5.0 - 8.0 acres; Neighborhood Level = 1.25 - 2.5 ac

Total = 6.25 - 10.5 acres

Satisfactory acreage does not equate to a complete open space system. Many times municipally-owned lands contain areas preserved to protect natural resources that may provide little recreational use to the community. Therefore, the optimal acreage amount for the region and each municipality should include all of the various community needs discussed in this chapter and be determined based on the goals of the community, not simply an acreage calculation.

## NEEDS SUMMARY

Collegeville Borough is an attractive place to live in the Central Perkiomen Valley. The borough is poised to strengthen its status as the core of the region. By understanding how growth will occur, it is easier to understand the future needs of the community. Based on the discussion above, the following needs exist in Collegeville to maintain the quality of life residents enjoy. These are generally listed starting with the highest priority.

- Build gateways, plant street trees, and add green infrastructure amenities to grow Collegeville's image as a green town.
- Develop a plan to maintain and enhance existing trees on public and private lands.

- Link commercial districts, neighborhoods, open space, and other pedestrian destinations.
- Ensure sufficient active recreation facilities by working with neighboring municipalities, Ursinus, and others.
- Maintain and expand existing park and open space facilities that serve the community.
- Create pedestrian, bicycle, and canoe/kayak connections with surrounding municipalities.
- Enhance the passive recreation experience with amenities such as trails landscaped as appropriate to their borough or natural setting.
- Preserve heritage resources to build sense of place and compliment green infrastructure and streetscaping.



# CHAPTER 9

## **EVALUATION OF COUNTY AND ABUTTING MUNICIPAL PLANS**

The preceding chapters investigate the resources, needs, and opportunities that exist within the municipal bounds of Collegeville. With this information, recommendations can be made to effectively serve Collegeville residents. However, the land use decisions that Collegeville makes affect the larger region just as decisions made in neighboring municipalities affect Collegeville. Therefore, this open space planning effort should not be performed in the vacuum of the municipal borders, but should consider surrounding planning efforts.

This chapter compares the needs and goals of this plan with those in the County Comprehensive Plan and the comprehensive, open space, and development plans of abutting townships and counties. The intent is to prevent conflicts between plans and to encourage collaboration of efforts. By gaining an understanding of how Collegeville's goals will fit into the larger open space and trail linkage picture, partners can optimize the quality of future open space preservation and management.

### **COMPARISON TO MONTGOMERY COUNTY LAND USE AND OPEN SPACE PLANS**

In 2001, Montgomery County began updating its Comprehensive Plan. Adopted by the County Commissioners in September 2005, this plan will help guide the growth of housing, transporta-

tion, economic development, and natural & cultural resource management, through 2025 and beyond. Each of these factors could potentially bear great significance on open space

needs and opportunities in Collegeville. Within this plan is the Vision of the County in 2025. This Vision sets up four issues as the highest priority for action:

- Controlling sprawl
- Controlling traffic congestion
- Preserving open space/natural areas
- Revitalizing older boroughs and townships

Collegeville’s Open Space Plan addresses each of these four issues by setting a future course for wise land use, increasing linkages and accessibility, working under a regional plan to guide growth into the borough, and developing the economic plans of its central business district.

The draft version of the County Comprehensive Plan lists 48 goals that describe and expand upon the Vision of the County in 2025. Several of these goals parallel those in this plan, adding strength to the recommendations that are set forth in the table below.

The County Comprehensive Plan identifies the borough as a Secondary Development Center, described as functioning as a community focal point for the Central Perkiomen Valley. This plan anticipates Collegeville to see continued development and revitalization. Much of the borough’s future land use is proposed to become more dense with a greater mix of uses.

## RELATION TO PLANS OF ABUTTING MUNICIPALITIES

Four municipalities abut Collegeville. The pertinent principles from the current zoning map, open space policies, and other information of each municipality are briefly summarized below. Adjacent, yet incompatible, land uses may result in conflicts while potential linkages could lead to cooperative partnerships between municipal neighbors.

To participate in the Montgomery County Open Space Program of 1993, each of these municipalities developed open space plans. In the ten years since these open space plans were written, parcels have been preserved, trails proposed and developed, and the needs of the communities have changed. It is therefore vital that Collegeville keep abreast of the continually evolving planning efforts of its neighbors and the county.

Two of Collegeville’s neighbors, Trappe Borough and Perkiomen Township are partners with the borough in the Central Perkiomen Valley Region. As described in Chapter Seven, this region works together to plan better land use for the future. This should also include planning together for a better park, recreation, and open space system.

### *Selected County Comprehensive Plan Goals*

#### **LAND USE**

- Direct Development to Designated Growth Areas
- Enhance Older Developed Areas
- Preserve and Create Community Identity & a Sense of Place

#### **OPEN SPACE, NATURAL FEATURES, & CULTURAL RESOURCES**

- Preserve Large Interconnected Areas of Significant Open Space
- Develop a Countywide Network of Interconnected Trails
- Provide Park Facilities to Meet the Public’s Recreation Needs

#### **TRANSPORTATION**

- Increase Opportunities to Take Public Transit, Walk, Ride a Bike, or Other Nonautomotive Transportation Means

#### **WATER RESOURCES**

- Protect Water Quality

#### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

- Revitalize the County’s Downtowns & Main Streets

#### **HOUSING**

- Promote Walkable & Well-Designed Residential Developments

## LOWER PROVIDENCE TOWNSHIP

The borough owns 12 acres in Lower Providence Township along the Perkiomen Creek on River Road. This forested wetland formerly gave access to the Collegeville Dam. Collegeville has no plans to develop this open space.

Lower Providence completed an update to its Recreation Plan in 2002 and a draft of the updated Open Space Plan in 2005. In these plans, it proposed to purchase two parcels that would help make up the Perkiomen greenway (Superior Tube Perkiomen Creek Property and Orioles Park)

The township also created a Trail Plan which includes an extension of the sidewalk system along as Germantown Pike as it approaches the Perkiomen Bridge. The township is also proposing a trail along River and Pechins Road. This includes a creek crossing to Upper Providence at a bridge at Yerkes Road.

## PERKIOMEN TOWNSHIP

Through Perkiomen Township to Collegeville runs the Perkiomen Trail and Route 29. Perkiomen's Light Industrial District spans the township's entire border with Collegeville. In this district, discussion

has occurred with the owner of the Gorski Tract to create a walking trail through some of the required landscape buffer and stormwater management areas. As this site is adjacent to Hunsberger Woods, cooperation between Collegeville, Perkiomen Township, and the landowner could allow for greater access to the Perkiomen Trail, Hunsberger Woods, and privately managed trails.

From a regional perspective, Perkiomen is also considering partnerships with other neighboring municipalities in order to create a regional trail system that will complement the Perkiomen Trail. Of significance, although not passing through the borough, is the PECO power line corridor. The utilization of this corridor for a new trail could create a loop, accessible to Collegeville residents, that would connect the Perkiomen and Schuylkill River Trails. This project requires cooperation from PECO, Upper Providence, Perkiomen, and Trappe. As this planning proceeds, Collegeville should understand how their regional position may contribute to this network.

## TRAPPE BOROUGH

Sharing a mile and a half border with Collegeville, Trappe also shares management of Waterworks Park. Increased connections between the boroughs along sidewalks and through open space are active considerations of Trappe's planning efforts. Land use in Trappe is generally the same as in Collegeville, although somewhat less dense in Collegeville. Therefore the interface between the two communities is relatively smoothly. As infill development occurs, especially along the Main Street corridor, consistency should be retained across the municipal border. This will be supported as both communities are active in the same regional planning effort.

Trappe is specifically looking at two proposals that will add linkages with Collegeville. The first includes a land development in the early stages proposing to significantly extend a greenway upstream along the Donny Brook corridor. The second proposal Trappe is considering is a development along First Avenue that could extend the road network from Collegeville towards the Trappe Center shopping area.

Two other connections considered by Trappe relate to Collegeville's open space network. The



*Collegeville's preserved floodplain contributes to the Perkiomen Greenway*

first is a trail connection from Trappe to Hunsberger Woods either through the Oak Road cul-de-sac or along a proposed easement on adjoining agricultural lands. The second is the PECO corridor in cooperation with Perkiomen and Upper Providence.

### UPPER PROVIDENCE TOWNSHIP

Upper Providence is placing a high priority on trail connections in its Open Space Plan update. Potential corridors that are important to Collegeville include the following:

- The Floodplain Loop could begin near Collegeville Crossing in the borough, extending through homeowner association open space to meet the Perkiomen Trail.
- The PECO corridor that runs through the western side of the township could create a loop to connect the Schuylkill River Trail and Perkiomen Trail in cooperation with Perkiomen and Trappe.
- Anderson Farm Park lies to the west of the borough and can be accessed by the sidewalk network. Improvements to this park for active recreation and future connections to the Perkiomen Trail through preserved open space, may offer opportunities for cooperation.

## RELATION TO OTHER PLANS

### LOWER PERKIOMEN WATERSHED CONSERVATION PLAN

Expected completion in 2006, this plan is funded by Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Preliminary drafts show that this plan will shed light on the future management of groundwater resources.

### MAIN STREET STREETSCAPING

A project resulting from this plan created to enhance the pedestrian and aesthetic environments of both Trappe and Collegeville has recently received funding through DVRPC. Other funding sources are being considered that will continue efforts to upgrade sidewalks and crosswalks, better delineate on-street parking, and improve the green image of both boroughs.

### ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT VISIONING

A process initiated by the Collegeville Economic Development Corporation acquired the services of the Pennsylvania Downtown Center developed a vision for the borough's business district. Begun in Spring 2005, this series of public input meetings will result in a "unified vision for Collegeville's Main Street."



*The Perkiomen Trail towards Upper Providence*

# CHAPTER 10

## RECOMMENDATIONS

This portion of the plan details the borough's specific intentions for open space, parks, and resource protection. The logic behind these recommendations is a result of the data gathered in the previous chapters and the decisions by Collegeville that identify lands of community and ecological importance.

The following recommendations include proposed target areas for acquisition of new public open space as well as other non-acquisition recommendations. They correspond to the borough's overall preservation plan and goals and focus on creating a sustainable network of synergistic park and open space parcels. These recommendations are divided into four categories.

- Green Infrastructure
- Community & Neighborhood Parks
- Community Connections
- Natural Resources Protection & Passive Recreation

As a result of the desire of the borough to create a more integrated landscape, there is a great deal of overlap between these categories. To allow for the description of specific recommendations, detailed facets of the same project are often placed under different categories. Also described here are a number of acquisition methods available to the borough in addition to outright purchase.

## GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Green infrastructure, as applicable to Collegeville, is comprised of amenities that give relief to the urban environment. If implemented, the recommendations given here will also help reach the economic development goals of the borough. Green infrastructure recommendations described below include the following.

- Develop Borough Gateways
- Create Urban Plazas
- Maintain Street Trees & Upgrade Streetscapes
- Preserve Heritage Resources
- Develop an Urban Tree Inventory

## DEVELOP BOROUGH GATEWAYS

More motorists and trail users travel through the borough everyday as development increases and the Perkiomen Trail becomes more popular. All entrances to the borough, if well landscaped and delineated, could add greatly to the borough's green image. These gateways should include street trees, plazas, and signage as appropriate to promote a green image for the borough. Selected in Figure 32 are five main entrances to the borough along arterial roads and the Perkiomen Trail.

These gateways will increase the awareness of those entering the borough of the green neighborhoods and districts found here. These gateways can be on either public or private lands. On private land, agreements should be developed with land owners to ensure appropriate maintenance.

Symbolically, they should begin to define a sense of place by utilizing uniform common elements that provoke feelings of the borough's cultural resources, history, and future direction. Amenity features include, and are not limited to:

- Decorative Walls (Stone, Stucco)
- Decorative Fences (Stone, Iron)
- Benches
- Landscaping (Permanent & Seasonal)
- Decorative Period Lighting
- Bollards
- Fountains, Clocks & Sculptures

### ROUTE 29 - SOUTH GATEWAY

As Second Avenue approaches the borough from Upper Providence Township, it changes from a moderate-speed suburban arterial road to one surrounded by more dense land use and a regional shopping area. To aid in traffic calming and promote the green image, a gateway could begin near the Collegeville Professional Center and extend to the intersection with Park Avenue. Figure 32A depicts what this gateway may look like as part of the development plan proposed there. This theme could be extended onward to the intersection of Park Avenue.

Figure 32  
Borough Gateways

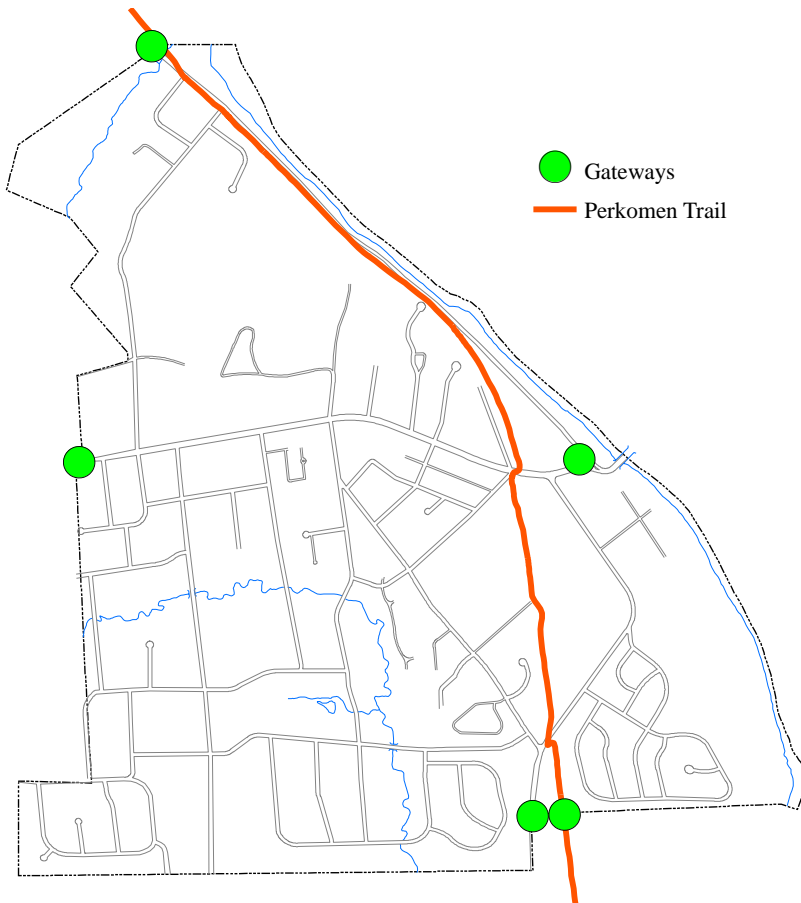
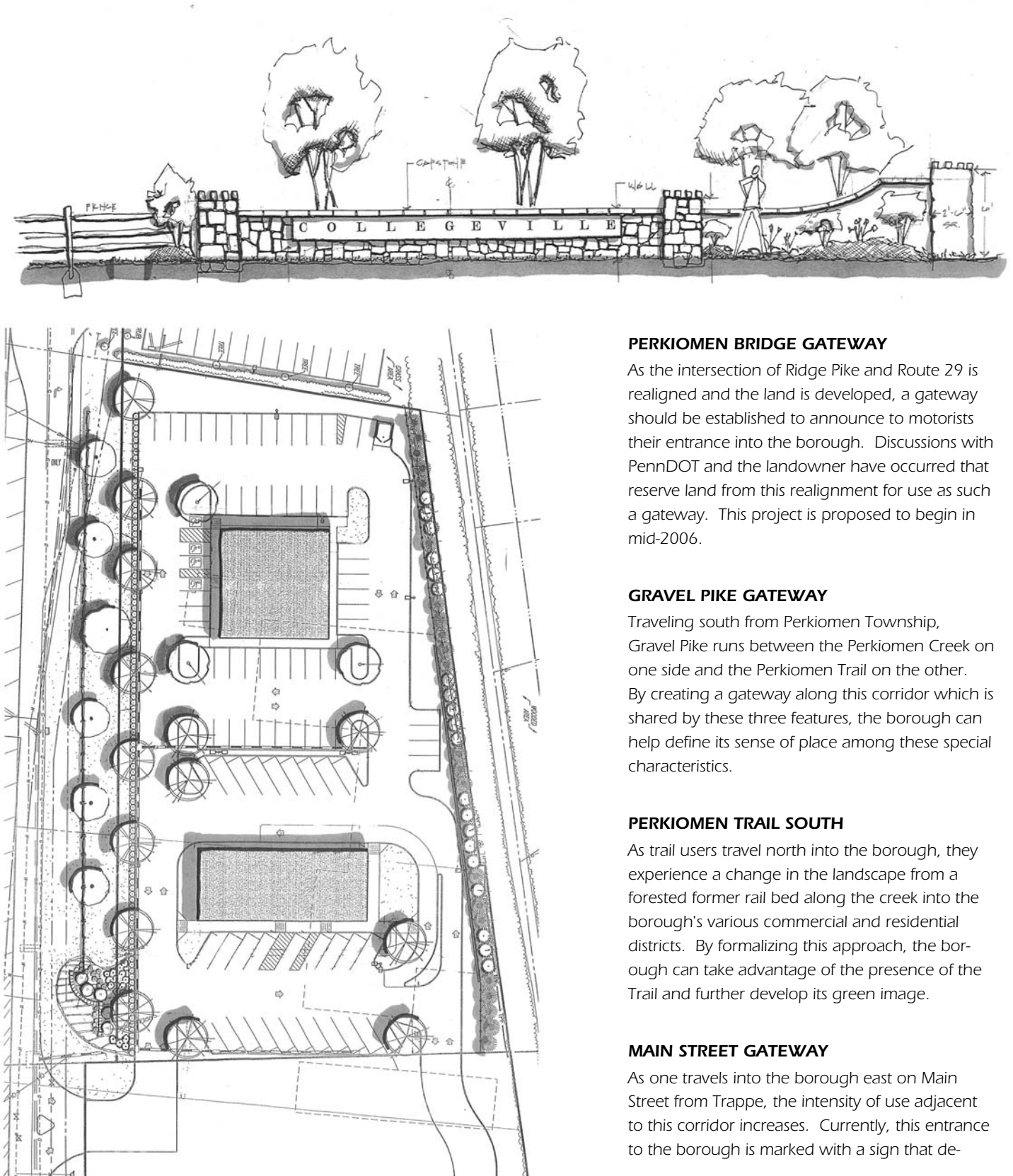


Figure 32A  
Route 29 Gateway



**PERKIOMEN BRIDGE GATEWAY**

As the intersection of Ridge Pike and Route 29 is realigned and the land is developed, a gateway should be established to announce to motorists their entrance into the borough. Discussions with PennDOT and the landowner have occurred that reserve land from this realignment for use as such a gateway. This project is proposed to begin in mid-2006.

**GRAVEL PIKE GATEWAY**

Traveling south from Perkiomen Township, Gravel Pike runs between the Perkiomen Creek on one side and the Perkiomen Trail on the other. By creating a gateway along this corridor which is shared by these three features, the borough can help define its sense of place among these special characteristics.

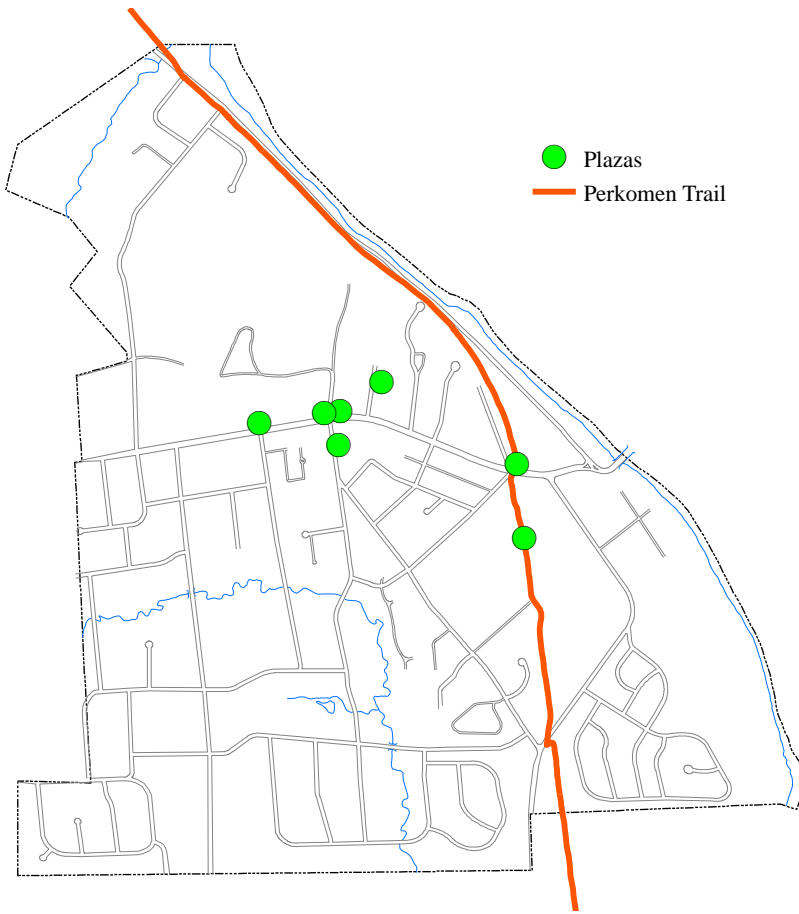
**PERKIOMEN TRAIL SOUTH**

As trail users travel north into the borough, they experience a change in the landscape from a forested former rail bed along the creek into the borough's various commercial and residential districts. By formalizing this approach, the borough can take advantage of the presence of the Trail and further develop its green image.

**MAIN STREET GATEWAY**

As one travels into the borough east on Main Street from Trappe, the intensity of use adjacent to this corridor increases. Currently, this entrance to the borough is marked with a sign that de-

Figure 33  
Borough Plazas



scribes the origin of Collegeville’s name. A gateway at this location should update this sign and continue the streetscaping theme.

**CREATE BOROUGH PLAZAS**

The borough should acquire parcels and create small parks in and around the central business district. This will increase the usability and attractiveness of the district to commercial tenants, shoppers, commuters, and residents. These should be designed within the context of the immediate surroundings to add continuity to the local streetscape. In order for these plazas to build a sense of place for Collegeville, they should include similar amenities of a design consistent with the borough gateways. Proposed locations are shown on Figure 33.

Parcels considered for urban plazas should fit the following criteria:

- Within the central business district with sufficient street access
- At least 2,500 square feet, including surrounding trail and sidewalk areas, to accommodate a variety of public uses
- Able to accommodate landscaping and street trees
- Promote pedestrian activity

**MAIN STREET**

In order to enhance the pedestrian environment on Main Street, the creation of urban plazas could increase the walkability of Main Street to integrate the business district with the Perkomen Trail, Ursinus campus, and surrounding neighborhoods. Specifically, this location should exist between Fifth and Third Avenues.

- **Warren Masonic Lodge** - This lot is owned by the Warren Lodge and was a acquisition recommendations in the borough’s 1995 Open Space Plan. The southern end near Clamer Avenue is used by the Lodge for parking. The rest of the land is open green space. At the northern end privately owned open space with public access connects to the Women’s College Memorial and the Scout Cabin. The acquisition of this undeveloped land would connect these three parcels together and create a neighborhood park that could help enliven Main Street.

This site is also near Borough Hall, so any streetscape or green infrastructure improvements there could be complemented by the acquisition of this site.

- **Borough Hall** - Already the site of a transit stop, this area could be enhanced with street trees, larger landscaped gardens, and seating areas.
- **Tait Tract** - This tract has frontage on both Main Street and Fifth Avenue and surrounds Marzella’s Restaurant. The creation of an urban plaza at this location could include the subdivision of the existing house from the open part of the tract that fronts Fifth Avenue.
- **Ursinus Campus** - Through a partnership with the College, an urban plaza created along Main Street could better integrate the campus with the business district.
- **Collegeville Fire Company** - An approved land development plan exists for this site. Following development, the front yard setback area along Main Street may be available to create an urban plaza that is accessible from Borough Hall, the core commercial district, and Ursinus College.



*Warren Masonic Lodge Tract*

#### **PERKIOMEN TRAIL AT MAIN STREET**

Along the course of the Trail from Main Street to Second and Park Avenues, opportunities exist to create sitting areas and enhanced pedestrian connections from the surrounding neighborhoods and districts. One of the greatest opportunities exist adjacent to the borough's commercial districts, specifically at the intersection of Main Street, Third Avenue, and the Trail.

#### **INFILL & REDEVELOPMENT SITES**

As redevelopment occurs at sites borough-wide, green spaces and urban plazas should be strategically placed and designed to accommodate open space needs. This should especially occur in non-residential districts and should be guided by the borough's Zoning and Subdivision & Land Development Ordinances. To enhance linkage and greenway opportunities, districts near the Perkiomen Creek should be considered. To add to the appeal of the Perkiomen Trail, the creation of plazas in the most intense industrial and commercial stretches should be considered.

#### **PUBLIC ART REQUIREMENT**

As redevelopment of the borough occurs in non-residential districts, a public art requirement should be considered to enhance public spaces and urban plazas.

#### **MAINTAIN STREET TREES & UPGRADE STREETSAPES**

Street trees give relief to the urban landscape and help create a more livable, walkable environment. When strategically placed and maintained in redevelopment areas, commercial districts, parking lots, and neighborhoods, they add aesthetic appeal, filter air, provide shade, and generally improve property values.

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Green City Strategy is a model program currently used by Philadelphia's Neighborhood Transformation Initiative (NTI). The program focuses on abandoned or underutilized tracts, bringing green space and gardens into urban districts. The NTI Green City Strategy is shown in Figure 34. Many of the concepts applied and lessons learned in Philadelphia are applicable to the efforts of Collegeville to create a greener community.

Also, when coupled with regulation concerning façade treatments, public amenities, and building design standards, a complete streetscape aesthetic can be created. This adds continuity to a district, especially when standards are periodically reviewed.

To ensure long term viability of street trees, species diversity should be part of planting considerations. The business community should also be included in the tree selection process to increase available funds and to ensure species suitability. Below are the specific areas on which streetscape efforts should be focused.

**Investments in greening and in vacant land management can increase property values by as much as 30%.**

**The Determinants of Neighborhood Transformation in Philadelphia**, Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania's Real Estate Department, November 2004.

#### **MAIN STREET**

Completed designs developed along the Main Street corridor show the feasibility of installing appropriate tree species along here. Working with the business community is important to ensure all proper amenities, such as lighting and benches are installed and spacing is appropriate.

Figure 34  
Philadelphia's Neighborhood Transportation Initiative Green City Strategy



**SECOND AVENUE/ROUTE 29**

From Ridge Pike to the Upper Providence border, this road generally lacks tree cover. Trees along this corridor could provide shade, a better pedestrian atmosphere, traffic calming, and an improved aesthetic to complement the borough's gateways.

**PARK AVENUE**

Defined as a collector street, this road sees significant traffic from both residents and through-travelers. With improvements from the proposed Claymont subdivision of over 20 homes here, street trees will complement other efforts to fill in gaps in the sidewalk system. Plantings should be coordinated with any gateway project at Park and Second Avenues.

**THIRD AVENUE**

A transition in land use occurs along this street from Main Street into the residential areas of the borough. Street trees would help ease this transition and inform motorists in the change in landscape into a residential neighborhood.

**SHOPPING CENTERS**

Constructed before current landscape standards were established, the existing shopping centers are the site of wide expanses of paved areas. To enhance the local aesthetic and decrease the negative impacts of this impervious cover and heat island, the borough should work with the local business community to plant more trees and improve landscaping.

**SIGN ORDINANCE**

The borough's current sign ordinance could be updated to ensure a cleaner look to Main Street and other commercial districts. More attractive signage will improve the aesthetic and pedestrian experience within the borough.

**PRESERVE HERITAGE RESOURCES**

Although not directly related to open space preservation, saving historic and cultural resources is important to defining the borough's sense of place. Historic resources are listed in Chapter Four. Preservation of these resources can be achieved using a variety of methods. These include designated historic districts, historic review boards, tax incentives for rehabilitation, and historic preservation ordinances.

A façade improvement program can encourage property owners to adopt architectural styles that will become consistent throughout the borough. This will not homogenize architectural styles, rather it will raise the standard for new buildings, additions, and façade upgrades.

**DEVELOP AN URBAN TREE INVENTORY**

An urban forestry plan should be developed for the borough. Trees have been found to save energy costs, improve property values, and add to local visual appeal. This plan should include an inventory of all trees and vegetative communities

as they exist on borough land, including street trees. Significant neighborhood trees and woodland stands should be included to develop a baseline of existing tree cover. Gaps in the street tree network should be identified.

This plan would make recommendations on how to maintain the borough’s current tree canopy and enhance it where appropriate. Sustainability strategies for both public and private parcels should be included. Specifically, before canopy trees die at Hunsberger Woods and Memorial and Waterworks Parks, a forestry plan should be created to plan the planting and maintenance of shrubs, understory trees, and future canopy trees.

## COMMUNITY & NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS

Well maintained parks that have high accessibility integrate the surrounding neighborhoods and build a sense of place. These recommendations are grouped under the following headings

- Provide Open Space Facilities for Underserved Areas
- Acquire Acreage Adjacent to Existing Parks
- Enhance Amenities at Existing Parks
- Facilitate Use of Institutional Recreation Facilities
- Participate in a Regional Open Space Council

### PROVIDE OPEN SPACE FACILITIES FOR UNDERSERVED AREAS

As described in Chapter Eight some areas of the borough are not adequately served by public open space. As population growth will be directed toward the borough through local zoning changes brought on by the Central Perkiomen Valley Regional Comprehensive Plan, this lack of publicly accessible open space should be addressed.

#### CLAYHOR AVENUE

Parcels exist near the intersection of Clayhor and Eighth Avenues that could fill this service gap and provide better access to the Perkiomen Trail from other neighborhoods and Waterworks Park. Figure 35 displays those areas of the borough that are underserved by open space.

#### COLLEGEVILLE CROSSING

Within the borough, the County Parks Department owns and manages 52 acres of forested floodplain. This open space serves Collegeville Crossing, a community of over 200 homes. However, this open space offers little to borough residents as it consists only of informal walking trails through often wet terrain. The borough should open dialogue with the County Parks Department about the ability to develop a small portion of this park in order to provide a tot lot, picnic area, and a small multi-purpose field for this neighborhood. Figure 36 is an aerial photo of this underserved neighborhood.

Figure 35  
*Underserved Areas - Clayhor Avenue & Donny Brook Corridor*



**ACQUIRE ACREAGE ADJACENT TO EXISTING PARKS**

The borough, has insufficient active recreation facilities for its growing population of families with children. Therefore, to improve the level of service provided by existing parks, the borough should remain aware of lots adjacent to these parks for potential acquisition.

**MEMORIAL PARK**

As parcels become available adjacent to this neighborhood park, the borough should give strong consideration to expansion. Facilities here are popular with the local community. Expansion of park area could allow for more basketball courts, an improved baseball field, picnic areas, or improved landscaping and tree cover.

Parking and access are other issues affecting the usefulness of this park. To accommodate all of the park users, sidewalks should provide a high level of service, adequate bicycle racks should be provided, and adjacent blocks should be investigated to find parking opportunities. Figure 37 displays Memorial Park and its surrounding land use.

**HUNSBERGER WOODS**

Although not considered for acquisition, one parcel lies outside the borough could expand Hunsberger Woods. In Trappe, the Wismer Farm is eligible for state and county funding for farmland preservation. Coordination should be considered with Trappe Borough to gain trail access along the periphery of this tract along the stream corridor.

**WATERWORKS PARK**

Mostly lying in Trappe Borough, parcels are adjacent to this large facility that could allow for expansion. An expansion project could build on past cooperative park and open space efforts between the two boroughs.

**SCOUT CABIN**

As mentioned before as an Urban Plaza, the parking lot and associated open space currently owned by the Warren Masonic Lodge would create additional land to expand this open space. Park development at this site would offer greater park opportunities in close proximity to Main Street.

**PRIVATE OPEN SPACES**

College Park and Collegeville Greene are open spaces within the borough managed privately. As parcels become available, the borough should consider acquiring adjacent parcels and form cooperative agreements with the homeowner's associations. These parcels are also shown in Figure 37.

**ENHANCE AMENITIES AT EXISTING PARKS**

Collegeville has four parks that are developed with recreation equipment, fields, walking trails, or other facilities. Many of those parks could be enhanced by adding more facilities and expanding

Figure 36  
*Underserved Areas - Collegeville Crossing*



the existing ones. Specifically, Collegeville would like to enhance the facilities of its existing parks in the following ways to make the parks safe, accessible, and usable.

**HUNSBERGER WOODS**

- Expand parking
- Stronger trail connections to Perkiomen Trail
- Stronger sidewalk connections to Main Street and neighborhoods
- Upgrade stream crossings
- Define walking route
- Natural resource management

**SCOUT CABIN**

- Define access to the Perkiomen Trail via Bum Hollow
- Increased availability for community use

**MEMORIAL PARK**

- Create additional basketball courts
- Improve landscaping and tree cover
- Create additional parking opportunities
- Enhance pedestrian access
- Construct the proposed memorial monument
- Additional picnic areas and pavilions

**WATERWORKS PARK**

- Create forest management plan
- Upgrade playing fields
- Reduce streambank erosion

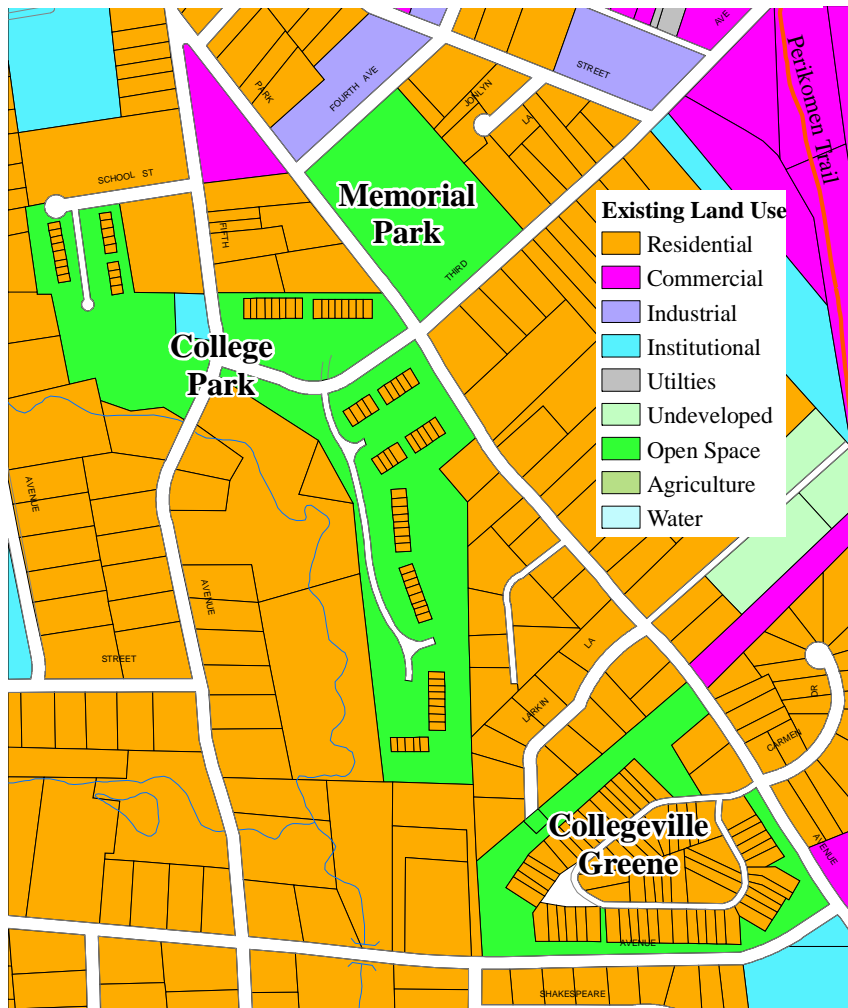
**FACILITATE USE OF INSTITUTIONAL RECREATION FACILITIES**

Collegeville is home to two institutions which occupy large land areas and contain open space amenities, Ursinus College and St Eleanor Church. These two sites each offer limited open space and recreation opportunities to area residents. Generally, as the intensity of active recreation activities increases, more is demanded from existing facilities both public and private. As public access is not guaranteed at these sites, the borough should facilitate a forum that brings together residents that may desire to utilize the facilities with those that manage them to ensure full and sustainable use. Figure 38 displays the Ursinus College Master Plan.

**PARTICIPATE IN A REGIONAL OPEN SPACE COUNCIL**

The population of the borough is expected to grow and become younger. As existing parks are already well utilized and little space is available to expand existing parks, the borough should look outside its borders to find adequate parkland for use by its residents. The borough already has joint management of Waterworks Park and is involved in Central Perkiomen Valley Regional Planning efforts. These two existing arrangements may be a springboard for further inter-municipal cooperation.

Figure 37  
*Park Expansion Opportunities*





## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Trails and access are becoming more important to Collegeville as it works to integrate neighborhoods and districts across the community. These recommendations are divided into the following three subheadings.

- Increase Local Access to the Perkiomen Trail
- Build Connections Across the Perkiomen Valley
- Strengthen Collegeville's Internal Linkage Network

### INCREASE LOCAL ACCESS TO THE PERKIOMEN TRAIL

Linkages create a more useful open space system that provides greater accessibility to, and greater diversity of, open space opportunities. To allow for greater access to the Perkiomen Trail and to attract through travelers on the Trail to visit the borough, strong connections should be made. These connections include those listed below.

#### MAIN STREET & THIRD AVENUE

The Perkiomen Trail crosses Main Street at Third Avenue at the core of the central business district. Where these two modes of traffic converge, a strip of underutilized land exists that currently acts as a parking lot. The acquisition of this parcel for mixed use as a trailhead or an urban plaza would both enhance aesthetics at the intersection and allow for greater access to the trail. A decision must be made if acquired to allow for general parking for Main Street or to reserve use for trail users.

#### BUM HOLLOW

The borough's Scout Cabin provides access to this wooded ravine and a paved trail that currently exists along private open space. This ravine intersects with the Perkiomen Trail below Glenwood Avenue. Development of this trail and agreements with private landowners would help connect the adjacent apartment complex and other neighborhoods to the Trail.

#### URSINUS CAMPUS

To complement the campus master plan of 2000 as shown on Figure 38, the college is consider-

ing a link to the Trail from campus through a wooded slope. Although the campus will not encourage general public access to their internal trail system, students and nearby residents will have increased access.

#### HUNSBERGER WOODS

The entrance to this park from Gravel Pike is across from the Perkiomen Trail. However, access is currently difficult and unsafe. A plan should be created to increase safety at this intersection to provide better access opportunities.

#### COLLEGEVILLE CROSSING

To provide an approximately three mile loop for joggers and walkers, a trail marked from this development within the floodplain of the Perkiomen Creek could connect to the Trail in Upper Providence and again on Second Avenue or further upstream at Ridge Pike.

#### INFILL & REDEVELOPMENT SITES

All new development that abut the Trail or can create direct access should be required to link to the network. This will increase the connectivity within the borough that is vital to developing a pedestrian atmosphere.

The borough should also consider amendments to the Zoning Ordinance that could increase the buffer area along the Perkiomen Trail through the redevelopment process. This is especially important where the Trail has a scarcity of green infrastructure amenities surrounding it such as shade trees and landscaping.

#### SIGNAGE & KIOSKS

Working with the County Parks Department, the borough should design signage to complement existing county signage on the Trail. This would give specific information about the borough's commercial districts, jogging trails, park activities, and neighborhoods.

### BUILD CONNECTIONS ACROSS THE PERKIOMEN VALLEY

In the past several years, Southeast Pennsylvania residents have developed a desire for greater variety in an open space network. No longer

does a day in the park mean “just a day in the park.” More frequently, a need exists for more opportunities for active or focused recreation. This includes a regional trail system that allows residents to experience a linear park system.

Building on the success of the Perkiomen Trail, several trails are proposed in the Perkiomen Valley both at the county and municipal level. As mentioned in Chapter Five, the borough’s neighbors have trail plans with implementation campaigns at varying levels of activity. Using a regional perspective, Collegeville should look to partner with its neighbors to increase residents’ accessibility to opportunities afforded to them by local and regional open space. Further, Collegeville should develop its internal trail recommendations with consideration to the points at its border to which neighboring trails are proposed. A regional open space council would be an appropriate forum at which to discuss a networked trail system. The proposed trail network is displayed in Figure 39 and specific links are described below.

#### **HUNSBERGER WOODS**

Several opportunities exist here to work with Trappe, Ursinus College, local landowners, and County Parks to create Perkiomen Trail access and extend links towards Main Street as well as into neighboring communities.

Specifically, in Perkiomen Township, the Gorski Tract is zoned Light Industrial and plans exist that subdivide this undeveloped land adjacent to Hunsberger. The landowner’s conceptual plan lays out a walking trail around this site, that when developed, may tie in to those at Hunsberger Woods.

#### **FLOODPLAIN TRAIL**

Running through Central Perkiomen Valley Park, this trail would require partnership with the County Parks Department, a homeowners association, and Upper Providence.

#### **DONNY BROOK GREENWAY**

The Donny Brook corridor as it flows south from Stratford Avenue, the surrounding land use is relatively undeveloped. The potential may exist to extend a local trail spur from the sidewalk on Stratford Avenue to the Perkiomen Trail.

#### **CONSTRUCT BOAT LAUNCHES ON THE PERKIOMEN CREEK**

The residents of the Perkiomen Valley are looking for more options from the open space network. The Perkiomen greenway is gaining more protection through land acquisition and gaining more visibility with increased popularity of the Trail. Residents have a greater desire to have access to the creek itself. A boat launch at either the former dam access on Gravel Pike or at the acquired floodplain parcels on First Avenue should be considered. This new form of recreation opportunity in the borough may also lead to more economic opportunities as more people are attracted to the Perkiomen greenway and purchase equipment.

#### **PECO CORRIDOR**

Partner with Trappe, Perkiomen, and Upper Providence to create a regional trail to ultimately connect the Schuylkill and Perkiomen Trails.

#### **EVANSBURG TRAIL**

Connect to future Evansburg Trail improvements through Lower Providence connections along Ridge and Germantown Pikes.

#### **BICYCLE ROUTES**

The entirety of Route 29 and Main Street as they travel through the borough are designated in the County Comprehensive Plan as Primary Bicycle Routes. As new development occurs along these arterials and roads are modified, bicycle lanes should be included.

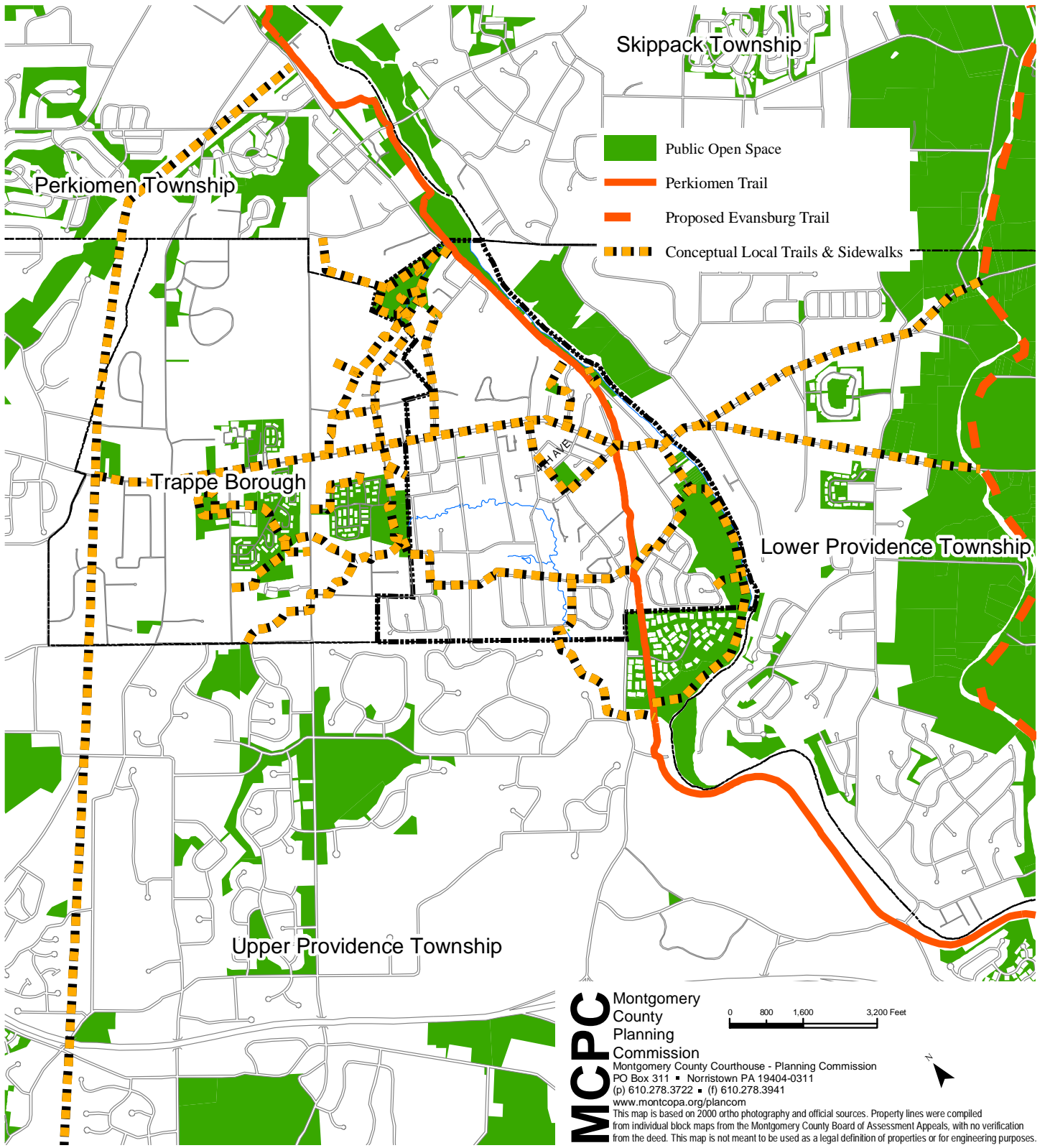
#### **STRENGTHEN COLLEGEVILLE’S INTERNAL LINKAGE NETWORK**

To support the connections to the Perkiomen Trail as described above, the following components of the linkage network as present within the borough should be addressed.

#### **UPGRADE SIDEWALK NETWORK**

The principle mode of pedestrian transportation, Collegeville’s sidewalk network nearly covers the entire borough. However, some portions of the network are in disrepair or are absent. A contiguous sidewalk system that provides reliable links between open space, commercial areas, employment centers, and residential neighborhoods is essential.

Figure 39  
 Conceptual Regional Trails



These sidewalks act as the thread that ties the borough together and provides the environment that allows a mixed use environment to occur. A study of this sidewalk linkage network and all its components was conducted in 2000. This document should be revisited and updated. Recommendations from that plan and specific gaps in the sidewalk network noted by the Borough Open Space Committee are shown in Figure 40.

### **GATHERING PLACES**

Existing community gathering places lie at Memorial Park and on the front lawns of the Ursinus campus. More of these should be created for pedestrians as infill and redevelopment occurs, especially in the commercial districts of the borough. Small pocket parks such as those proposed as Urban Plazas above help fill this need.

### **CROSSWALKS**

A critical part of this network are crosswalks. Major intersections where pedestrian safety improvements should be made include the following:

- Main Street corridor
- intersection of Park Avenue, Second Avenue, and the Perkiomen Trail.
- Freeland Drive and Route 29

### **WAYFINDING SIGNAGE**

To further improve the pedestrian circulation system in the borough, for both residents and visitors, signage should be placed at strategic points. This will guide pedestrians between parks, the commercial center, and other borough destinations, adding a sense of continuity to the community. Cooperation with the County Parks Department may lead to the installation of borough information along the Perkiomen Trail.

### **OPEN SPACE & LINKAGE MAPS**

In concert with appropriate signage, a detailed map of existing open space, community facilities, and recommended linkages will make the open space network more useful. As Collegeville's dwelling units and business districts increase in density, a demand for walking, biking, and jogging routes will grow. Marking routes and providing maps will enable the formation of local running and cyclist clubs. Local business and civic organizations could be partners in this effort.

### **DESIGN STANDARDS**

To ensure a high standard of pedestrian and bicycle mobility across the borough, design standards should be developed. These will also assist developers create these connections and provide for adequate public access and safety.



*Hunsberger Woods*

Figure 40  
Sidewalk Network Needs



**MCPC** Montgomery  
County  
Planning  
Commission  
Montgomery County Courthouse - Planning Commission  
PO Box 311 ■ Norristown PA 19404-0311  
(p) 610.278.3722 ■ (f) 610.278.3941  
www.montcopa.org/plancom  
This map is based on 2000 ortho photography and official sources. Property lines were compiled from individual block maps from the Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, with no verification from the deed. This map is not meant to be used as a legal definition of properties or for engineering purposes.

## NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION & PASSIVE RECREATION

A significant part of the borough's current open space system protects natural resources and is available to residents for passive recreation. These resources play an important role creating regional greenway systems that add continuity to habitat, recreational use, environmental health, and aesthetic quality. However, other natural resources deserving protection in the borough often go unnoticed.

Natural resource protection efforts should expand existing preserved lands, create a more integrated open space network, protect ecologically important features, and have potential for trail access. By concentrating efforts based on these criteria, not only will areas of environmentally sensitive land be preserved in a sustainable form, but public access will be available to unique natural areas within the borough and region. The following are specific recommendations for natural resource protection and public access.

### CONTINUE PROTECTION OF THE PERKIOMEN CREEK FLOODPLAIN

Throughout the Perkiomen Valley, land is being preserved along the creek as municipalities understand the importance of keeping floodplain and riparian areas natural. In the last 15 years, Collegeville has contributed to the Perkiomen green-

way with the purchase of over a dozen residential parcels that lie in the floodplain. Further acquisition of the remaining parcels below First Avenue will protect environmental quality, reduce property damage, and create greater passive recreation areas for borough residents.

The borough should consider the future of this area. One option is to maintain the floodplain as a natural area requiring very little maintenance, similar to the Central Perkiomen Valley Park below it. Another option is to create floodplain gardens or an arboretum that would remain low maintenance, but allow for some environmental education opportunities for camps and schools.

Collegeville also currently owns land in Lower Providence Township that once served as access to the former Collegeville Dam. As surrounding communities work to protect this greenway, the borough should consider transfer of this property with appropriate conditions.

### ESTABLISH THE DONNY BROOK GREENWAY

Nearly one half of the borough drains to the Donny Brook. Almost 40 acres along this stream exist as floodplain, directly affecting at least 68 parcels. Therefore, the water quality of the Donny Brook and its ability to manage stormwater runoff are important borough issues.

Upstream in Trappe Borough, efforts are underway to preserve large stretches of this stream through the development process. Restoration projects have already occurred in Waterworks Park. Further protection of this stream could include conservation easements of the riparian corridor as well as education and outreach to landowners promoting the benefits of streamside buffers.



*Concert in Memorial Park*

## ACQUISITION METHODS

### FEE SIMPLE ACQUISITION

The most direct and sometimes most appropriate means of obtaining land for parks and open space is through fee simple purchase. The main advantage of this procedure is that an entire parcel of land belongs to the organization purchasing the land. However, the expense of fee simple purchase can sometimes exceed available funding sources.

### PURCHASE OF AND LEASE-BACK OR RESALE

In certain cases, it is appropriate for a municipality to purchase land in fee simple, place restrictions on the deed prohibiting certain uses (e.g. residential development) and lease it back to interested parties. One advantage of this method is that the municipality can purchase land for future use (before the price increases, perhaps prohibitively so) and, through leasing, recoup some or all of the purchase price. In this way, land is maintained in open space and can be developed as a park when future demand warrants. Resale of some or all of the land (after placement of deed restrictions) would maintain open space while also relieving the municipality of maintenance obligations and returning the land to the tax rolls.

### CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

Conservation easements are used to preserve land as a relatively low cost without acquiring it. With a conservation easement, the land remains privately-owned. The easement involves the property owner voluntarily agreeing to donate or sell the right to develop the land. The property owner agrees to place a restriction in the deed of the property, which then becomes binding on all future owners of the land. The easement can be written in many different ways to restrict or not restrict certain types of activities. Most conservation easements prohibit the construction of new buildings and cutting down woodlands. Often, the granting of a conservation easement can result in federal income tax and local property tax advantages to the property owner.

### PEDESTRIAN EASEMENTS

A conservation easement can also be combined with a pedestrian easement to allow the public the right to walk, hike, and ride bicycles along specific areas, provided users follow a careful set of rules. These easements can be particularly useful in connecting two or more greenway segments.

### CONDEMNATION

Acquisition can occur by exercising the right of eminent domain: where public purpose is well defined, where fee simple acquisition is desired but not possible at a fair price and where the owner is reluctant to sell. It is legally prudent to view condemnation as a last resort when acquiring land for parks or open space preservation.

### THE OFFICIAL MAP

The official map is a planning tool that is authorized by Article IV of the Municipalities Planning Code. The official map identifies both private and public lands for which the public has a current or future need. Future improvements and extensions of the municipal road network are identified and protected by the official map. The map furthers implementation of the comprehensive plan, open space and recreation plan, and other identified planning goals.

“Under (Article IV of the MPC), the official map legally establishes the location of existing and proposed streets, waterways, parks, and other public lands and facilities. The map provides notification of the location of public improvements, thus preventing construction within future rights-of-way and other future public areas. When a property owner proposes to develop or subdivide land designated on the official map the municipality is given a one-year time frame in which to purchase the property or obtain an easement.” (The Official Map, Planning Bulletin, Chester County Planning Commission, November 1994.)

The official map allows for better coordination between municipality’s goals for open space and other improvements and proposed subdivision and land developments. Developers who ignore the official map and build within designated lands, such as a trail right-of way, are not entitled to compensation by the municipality should the

land be acquired, and would bear the cost of removing any building.

By designating proposed open space acquisitions on the official map, the municipality gives itself a period to raise the necessary funds, including applying for grants. Once a subdivision or development plan is submitted, the borough would have one year to acquire the designated land or begin condemnation proceedings. Placing open space targets on the official map is also a commitment by the municipality, which may be favorably reviewed by a funding agency.

The use of the official map for open space planning purposes should be drafted as follows:

#### **PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES**

Map all existing and proposed facilities so that the municipality has the first opportunity to acquire when the land becomes available. Pedestrian and bike trails, including trails along existing and future roads, should also be included. Stream valley corridors and floodplain districts may be mapped to serve as connections between recreation sites. Protected stream corridors can be the locations for trails to be identified in the future.

#### **NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES**

For protection purposes, the official map may include habitats of rare or endangered species, high quality streams, scenic views, and historically significant areas. Only features, which the borough is seriously interested in acquiring, should be placed on the map. Other natural features such as steep slopes and wetlands, which are more widespread through the borough, are better protected through natural resource protection standards in the Zoning and Subdivision & Land Development Ordinances.

#### **COLLEGEVILLE'S PROPOSED ACTION**

The borough should develop an Official Map that identifies parcels throughout the borough that could contribute to the open space network. As opportunities arise, the borough can act on these parcels for both acquisition and creation of access easements.

## **NON-ACQUISITION METHODS**

Acquisition provides the most control over land use, but can also come at a high financial cost. An important part of open space planning involves understanding and using preservation techniques that are not dependent upon land acquisition which communities can use to preserve vulnerable resources. Such preservation might add to the public open space system or may largely be privately held land. As the borough proceeds through the Subdivision & Land Development Ordinance update process and changes zoning based on the Central Perkiomen Regional Comprehensive Plan, there are several changes it should include with regards to open space. The techniques below are new ordinances and proposed amendments to include into the borough's code to enhance open space planning and natural resource protection.

#### **INCENTIVE ZONING**

Communities can encourage developers through incentive zoning to provide open space, recreation facilities, trails, and parkland. The incentives are placed in specific zoning districts, and might allow a developer to build a higher density than permitted or a smaller lot size. The ordinances should be crafted so that the cost for providing the amenity does not exceed the benefit received from the incentive.

#### **COLLEGEVILLE'S PROPOSED ACTION**

Investigate the benefits and applicability of incentive zoning throughout the borough, especially near proposed linkage areas.

#### **NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION ORDINANCES**

The ordinances discussed below protect natural features to help maintain soil structure, water quality, and aesthetic values.

#### **STEEP SLOPES**

Development on steep slopes, which are typically slopes of 15% or more, can be restricted or prohibited through steep slope ordinances. Development often is permitted on slopes of 15% to 25%

if the minimum lot size is increased and/or the percent of the lot disturbed is limited. Some steep slope ordinances prohibit all development, although typically development is prohibited on extremely steep slopes such as 25% or more.

### **FLOODPLAINS**

Floodplain ordinances restrict or prohibit development within floodplains, especially development within the 100-year floodplain. There are typically three types of floodplain restrictions in the county. One type allows development within the floodplain provided that buildings are flood-proofed. Many ordinances do not allow building within the floodplain. This type of ordinance protects properties from flood damage, protects the environment within the floodplain, and also reduces the possibility of raising the flood level. A third type of ordinance not only restricts development within the floodplain but also requires a minimum setback from the edge of the floodplain. This type of ordinance protects the unique wooded habitat, or riparian woodlands, of the floodplain.

### **STREAM CORRIDORS**

Stream corridor protection ordinances go beyond floodplain ordinances to protect the water quality of the stream in addition to plant and animal habitats. These ordinances have a minimum setback requirement from the stream bank where no development can occur. A minimum setback of 75 feet from each stream bank, for example, will help stabilize the stream bank, control sediment, remove nutrients that would pollute the stream, moderate stream temperature, and preserve wildlife habitat. The area within the setback should be left in its natural state.

### **WETLANDS**

In addition to federal and state governments, municipalities can regulate development that occurs near wetlands. Municipalities should prohibit development on wetlands and require wetlands to be shown on development plans. While developers can locate homes right next to wetlands (after receiving all the federal and state permits needed), such location might lead to future problems. Homeowners might decide to fill in the wet areas behind their home to have a more usable back

yard. To prevent this, local municipalities can require a minimum building setback from wetlands. While federal and state regulations address only the filling of wetland and not the destruction of vegetation within the wetlands, municipalities can take the extra step and require the replacement of destroyed wetlands vegetation.

### **GROUNDWATER**

Wellhead protection ordinances can help protect groundwater quality. Stormwater ordinances which include provisions for groundwater recharge also help protect groundwater quality, non-point source pollution, and the impact on stream temperatures.

Wellhead protection areas are identified by a number of methods, such as a hydrogeologic survey. Wellhead protection ordinances can restrict certain uses such as gas stations, limit the intensity of development (such as limiting the density of single-family detached homes with individual septic systems), and/or by controlling how a land use activity occurs (such as farming with specific types of pesticides and other chemicals) within wellhead protection areas. A municipality can also impose design standards that would not allow, for example, hazardous materials containment structures or large impervious areas such as parking to limit potential groundwater pollution.

### **CANOPY TREES & WOODLANDS**

Protection of existing trees and woodlands can be accomplished with woodland preservation ordinances. Some ordinances provide minimum standards that must be followed during construction for trees that will remain. Other ordinances, when existing trees are preserved, allow developers to put up fewer street trees, buffers, or individual lot trees. Tree replacement is another requirement of some ordinances.

### **STORMWATER MANAGEMENT**

As stormwater management requirements increase, better management techniques exist that effectively reduce the volume of stormwater that leaves a site. Water quality is also a component of stormwater management that must now be addressed in addition to peak rate controls

### COLLEGEVILLE'S PROPOSED ACTION

The borough has in place already ordinances and zoning that protect steep slopes, floodplains, stream corridors, wetlands, and woodlands. These will be reviewed and updated to increase protection of water and soil resources. Specific changes may include the following:

- Require buffer areas through land development that protect water resources and steep slopes.
- Work with the borough's water supplier to ensure groundwater is protected through wellhead protection programs.

- Incorporate woodland and vegetation management ordinances into the Subdivision & Land Development Ordinance.
- Comply with DEP stormwater management standards, but also investigate higher standards for land development projects.

### REQUIRE OPEN SPACE IN DEVELOPMENTS OR A FEE IN LIEU OF OPEN SPACE

Municipalities can require developers to provide open space through their zoning and/or the subdivision ordinance.

An open space requirement when placed in the zoning ordinance must be located in specific zoning districts (for example the high-density residential district). The zoning ordinance can specify the percentage of required open space, for example between 15 and 20 percent, and other criteria relevant to the maintenance of common open space. The municipality can not require the open space to be dedicated or open to the public or to include specific recreational facilities. However, the community can require that the land meet specific standards such as being flat, open land suitable for playing fields.

The subdivision ordinance can also require developers to provide open space but it also allows further provisions. The ordinance can require the land to be dedicated to the borough. If a developer does not want to provide the land, the ordinance can require fees in lieu of land. An adopted recreation plan must be in existence in order to have this requirement and must follow the provisions within the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. A community needs to make a decision of whether fees in lieu of should be accepted so as to create larger central parks for a number of neighborhoods or if there should be smaller scale open space within developments. Requiring developments to provide open space allows municipalities to meet the needs of new residents without building additional municipal parks. The provision of requiring open space or a fee in lieu of allows for a community to have flexibility in establishing their open space priorities.



*Entrance to Water Works Park*

### **COLLEGEVILLE'S PROPOSED ACTION**

The borough currently has open space requirements and public space options for the R-3, R-4, General Commercial, Shopping Center districts. The borough will investigate potential updates to these requirements and options. It will also investigate adding open space requirements to other districts. The borough will encourage the fee-in-lieu of option as a way to develop an extensive and inclusive park system. To enable this, development of a park and recreation plan should be considered.

### **TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS**

This method of preserving rural land transfers development from rural areas to growth areas. With a transfer of development rights program, rural landowners can sell their development rights to developers in the region's growth areas instead of developing their rural land.

For example, a rural landowner who has 50 acres might normally be allowed to subdivide them into twenty 2-acre lots. Instead, with a TDR program, the landowner sells the right to build these 20 lots to a developer in a growth area or borough conservation area. The developer adds those 20 units, or more as appropriate, to the number of units normally allowed to be built. The rural landowner, who has been paid for these development rights, is then required to deed restrict the land against any future development.

### **COLLEGEVILLE'S PROPOSED ACTION**

As part of the Central Perkiomen Region, the opportunities to transfer development rights between parcels are increased. As the borough zoning ordinance is updated after passage of the regional comprehensive plan, this option will be investigated for cooperation opportunities with regional partners.

### **HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCES**

While not directly related to open space preservation, historic preservation ordinances help save historic properties that add to the character of an area. There are a number of techniques that communities can use for historic preservation.

One possibility is that communities can amend their building codes to require a review before demolition permits are issued. This method delays demolition and allows for community input. Communities can also amend their zoning ordinance to encourage historic preservation. One way of encouraging historic preservation is the creation of a village ordinance that gives development bonuses for preserving buildings or restricts the uses within the district. Incompatible uses with historic areas, such as gas stations, are not permitted in these districts. The zoning ordinance can also encourage historic preservation by allowing historic buildings to have more uses than normally permitted in a particular district. For example, apartments, bed and breakfast establishments, or offices might be permitted in historic homes located in a single-family detached residential district.

A third possibility is that communities can create historic districts with approval of the Pennsylvania Museum Commission. This approach is more restrictive than the previous approaches discussed. Once a historic district is created, municipalities have stringent control over design and preservation of facades. A township or borough architectural review board is required to be created to review all proposed changes to historic buildings.

### **COLLEGEVILLE'S PROPOSED ACTION**

The borough encourages the reuse of existing buildings, mixed uses, and the preservation of village and Main Street character. However, practices to further document or protect historic structures will be investigated.

### **DONATIONS OF PROPERTIES FOR PERMANENT OPEN SPACE**

Landowners can preserve their land by donating the full title of their property or by donating their development rights to a nonprofit land conservation group. These two methods permanently preserve open space.

Landowners who donate development rights receive tax benefits and their land must be permanently restricted from future development. Land conservation groups that operate in this region of Montgomery County and who receive donations

include: Montgomery County Lands Trust, Natural Lands Trust, and Heritage Conservancy.

Some land conservation groups can also help local landowners to develop some of their land while keeping the majority of the land open and deed-restricted. This approach ensures that land is developed in a sensitive manner yielding the landowner some monetary compensation, while also preserving the most important environmental amenities on the site.

#### **COLLEGEVILLE'S PROPOSED ACTION**

The borough intends to study means of disseminating the programs of these conservation organizations to its landowners that may want to consider this option. The public should be educated about the preservation options available to them as landowners.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

Figures 41 through 43 display those recommendations with specific geographic settings. The following chapter defines the priority level of these recommendations and describes an implementation schedule.



*Opportunity exists to better utilize Collegeville's floodplain parcels while protecting natural resources*

# CHAPTER 11

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

Implementation is perhaps the most important part of the open space plan. Having identified and examined the open space issues important to the borough, a list of prioritized actions is established here to guide Collegeville toward achieving its goals. In essence, this chapter is Collegeville's action plan.

In the near term, implementation principally involves securing funds from Collegeville's allocation under the County Open Space Program for projects of the highest priority. It also means taking other, non-acquisition actions for open space preservation and recreation network planning and development. This will generally occur in the first phase of the Green Fields/Green Towns Program ending in Spring 2008. Long term priorities will build upon these earlier efforts, and will be implemented in the proceeding five to ten years. For each proposed action, primary responsibility is proposed among specific borough groups and consultants.

### **FUNDING SOURCES**

In addition to the funds allocated through the County Open Space Program, Collegeville is eligible for funds from a variety of sources including grants, general revenue funds, bond issues, and donations (of cash, materials, or labor).

Collegeville will pursue other grants available from Montgomery County, The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), and others. These grants can be used in conjunction with the County's Open Space grants

to help defray the cost of the borough's match. A sampling of possible grant sources is described below.

### **MONTGOMERY COUNTY OPEN SPACE GRANTS (MCOS)**

In 2003, a referendum to fund open space and green infrastructure projects was passed in Montgomery County. Known as the Green Fields/Green Towns Program, this funding was allocated to municipalities, private non-profit conservation organizations and the county to preserve more open space and enhance the livability of existing communities throughout the County.

Collegeville is eligible to receive a total of \$737,199 for open space acquisition and enhancement. This grant requires matching funds equal to 20% of project costs from the municipality. The County grants come with several conditions. The most important condition is that any land purchased with grant money must be permanently preserved as open space or for active recreation. Another condition is that Collegeville must complete and adopt the Open Space Plan. This plan must be approved by the County's Open Space Board before grant money can be disbursed.

### **MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION PROGRAM (MCRP)**

Initiated in 2000, this program is intended to create a strategic, economic development program that will strengthen and stabilize the county's older communities for the long term. It helps these communities become more vibrant, livable, and attractive places. Funding from this competitive program is used for projects consistent with the borough's Community Revitalization Plan.

### **PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION & NATURAL RESOURCES (DCNR)**

DCNR manages a variety of grant and technical assistance programs concerned with a variety of issues. DCNR annually awards about \$30 million in planning, acquisition, and development grants for parks, recreation, rivers conservation, trails, greenways, and protection of open space and

critical natural areas. Most DCNR grants require a 50/50 match. DCNR also provides pre-application workshops to assist applicants in the preparation of their application forms.

A priority goal of these programs is to develop and sustain partnerships with communities, non-profits, and other organizations for recreation and conservation projects and purposes. With this in mind, the Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) was established. It is a combination of several funding sources and grant programs, including the Commonwealth's Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund (KEY 93, described below), the Environmental Stewardship and Watershed Protection Act (Growing Greener, also described below), Act 68 Snowmobile and ATV Trails Fund, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and the Recreational Trails component of the Transportation Equity Act for the Twenty-First Century (TEA-21).

### **PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (DEP)**

The Growing Greener program has funded efforts to clean up Pennsylvania's rivers and streams, reclaimed abandoned mines and toxic waste sites, invested in new alternative energy sources, preserved farmland and open space, and developed watershed restoration programs. Thus far, Growing Greener has generated nearly \$1.50 in matching funds for the environment for every \$1.00 in state money. As the Growing Greener program evolves, it will focus on brownfield redevelopment, farmland and open space preservation, water quality improvements, enhanced state and community parks, and an upgraded fish and wildlife infrastructure. Growing Greener II will accomplish these goals while making critical investments in community revitalization and the promotion of the use of clean energy.

### **KEYSTONE RECREATION, PARK, & CONSERVATION FUND**

The Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund Act was signed into law in 1993. It directs a portion of the state's Real Estate Transfer Tax to the Keystone Fund, establishing a dedicated and permanent funding source for recreation, parks, conservation, and other programming. Grants

from this program require a minimum 50% match from the recipient municipality or nonprofit organization. As of 2002, \$144 million had been granted to more than 2,100 projects. The demand on the Keystone Fund already outstrips resources by a 4 to 1 margin.

**PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (DCED)**

The mission DCED is “To foster opportunities for businesses and communities to succeed and thrive in a global economy, thereby enabling Pennsylvanians to achieve a superior quality of life.” Therefore there are several assistance and grant programs available to Pennsylvania municipalities. Often, local economic and community revitalization efforts are supported by the implementation of green infrastructure and open space plans. Below is a list of programs offered by DCED through which revitalization funds may flow to implement the recommendations described in this open space plan.

- Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) - Provides grant assistance and technical assistance to aid communities in their community and economic development efforts
- Community Revitalization Program (CR) - Provides grant funds to support local initiatives that promote the stability of communities

- Main Street Program - This program provides assistance for revitalization planning and projects.
- Elm Street Program - Grant funds for planning, technical assistance and physical improvements to residential and mixed use areas in proximity to central business districts.
- Industrial Sites Reuse Program - Grant and low-interest loan financing to perform environmental site assessment and remediation work at former industrial sites.

**PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL & MUSEUM COMMISSION (PHMC)**

Many communities value their historic resources and work to preserve them for future generations. These resources can then be integrated into the open space network and cultural amenities of that community to enhance local image and aesthetics. The PHMC offers several programs that aid municipalities in these efforts.

- Certified Local Government Grant Program - Provides funding for cultural resource surveys, national register nominations, technical and planning assistance, educational and interpretive programs, staffing and training, and pooling CLG grants and third party administration
- Keystone Historic Preservation Grant Program - Funding for preservation, restoration, and rehabilitation
- Pennsylvania History and Museum Grant Program - Funding under this program is designated to support a wide variety of museum, history, archives and historic preservation projects, as well as nonprofit organizations and local governments. There are 10 types of grants.

**PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (PENNDOT)**

**SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL**

This category includes projects for bicyclists and pedestrians that permit safe passage for children to walk or bike to school. This includes activities that enhance the transportation system through the construction of new facilities or the improvement of existing facilities to make them more usable for pedestrians and bicyclists. Some examples of eligible activities include: sidewalk improvements, pedestrian/bicycle crossing improvements, bike lanes, traffic diversion improvements, off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities. In addition, this program may fund traffic calming meas-



*A need exists to complete the borough’s sidewalk network*

ures to slow the speed of cars such as the following: curb extensions, bulb-outs, traffic circles, raised median islands, speed humps, textured or raised crosswalks. Funds cannot be used for bicycle and pedestrian facilities that are solely for recreational use.

#### **HOME TOWN STREETS**

This category includes a variety of streetscape improvements that are vital to reestablishing our downtown and commercial centers. These will include activities undertaken within a defined "downtown" area that collectively enhance that environment and promote positive interactions with people in the area. Projects may include sidewalk improvements, planters, benches, street lighting, pedestrian crossings, transit bus shelters, traffic calming, bicycle amenities, kiosks, community "gateway" plantings, signage and other visual elements.

#### **DELAWARE VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (DVRPC)**

##### **TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE**

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;
- Improving the overall character and quality of life within these communities to retain and attract business and residents, which will help to reduce the pressure for further sprawl and expansion into the growing suburbs;
- Enhancing and utilizing the existing transportation infrastructure capacity in these areas to reduce the demands on the region's transportation network; and
- Reducing congestion and improving the transportation system's efficiency.

##### **CONGESTION MITIGATION AND AIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CMAQ)**

This program seeks transportation-related projects that can help the region reduce emissions from highway sources and meet National Clean Air Act standards. The program covers the DVRPC region of Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and

Philadelphia counties in Pennsylvania; and, Burlington, Camden, Gloucester and Mercer counties in New Jersey.

#### **TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (TE)**

Transportation Enhancements is a set-aside of Federal highway and transit funds, mandated by Congress in the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) for the funding of "non-traditional" projects designed to enhance the transportation experience, to mitigate the impacts of transportation facilities on communities and the environment, and to enhance community character through transportation-related improvements.

#### **NATIONAL PARK SERVICE RIVERS, TRAILS, & CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

The program offers technical assistance only to non-profit organizations, community groups, and local or state government agencies. Rivers and Trails technical staff offers the following types of assistance for recreation and conservation projects:

- Building partnerships to achieve community-set goals
- Assessing resources
- Developing concept plans
- Engaging public participation
- Identifying potential sources of funding
- Creating public outreach
- Organizational development
- Providing conservation and recreation information

#### **PECO ENERGY GREEN REGION OPEN SPACE GRANT PROGRAM**

PECO Energy, a subsidiary of Exelon, is currently involved in several environmental partnerships including "TreeVitalize," with DCNR, clean water preservation with The Nature Conservancy, and environmental education initiatives with the Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education and Green Valleys Association. Green Region grants are available to municipalities in amounts up to \$10,000. The grants can be used with other funding sources to cover a wide variety of planning and direct expenses associated with development and implementing open space programs, including consult-

ing fees, surveys, environmental assessments, habitat improvement, and capital improvements for passive recreation.

**GENERAL REVENUE FUNDS AND BOND ISSUE**

Collegeville has the option of using general revenue funds for open space and recreation purposes. It also has the option of issuing a bond to pay for the capital costs of parkland acquisition and development. The decision to pursue these options rests with Borough Council after being advised by the administration.

*Implementation Matrix Responsible Party Key*

BC	Collegeville Borough Council
CP	Central Perk. Regional Planning Commission
DOT	Pennsylvania Dept. of Transportation
LPT	Lower Providence Township
MC	Main Street Committee
MCP	Montgomery County Parks Dept.
PC	Collegeville Planning Commission
PT	Perkiomen Township
PW	Collegeville/Trappe Joint Public Works
TB	Trappe Borough
UC	Ursinus College
UPT	Upper Providence Township

**DONATIONS**

Collegeville should encourage donations from individuals, businesses, and groups to help pay for parkland acquisition, development, and tree planting. The donations may be cash, materials, or labor. Collegeville could organize special days during which local citizens and groups could gather to participate in implementing open space projects. The bandshell project at Whites Road Park is an example of using donations to further the open space goals of the borough.

**IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX**

Figures 41 through 43 list each recommendation based on its priority level. This matrix specifies the goal and objective each action targets, the responsible party, and the potential source of funding. The Highest Priority Recommendations should be considered for action in a one to three year time frame.

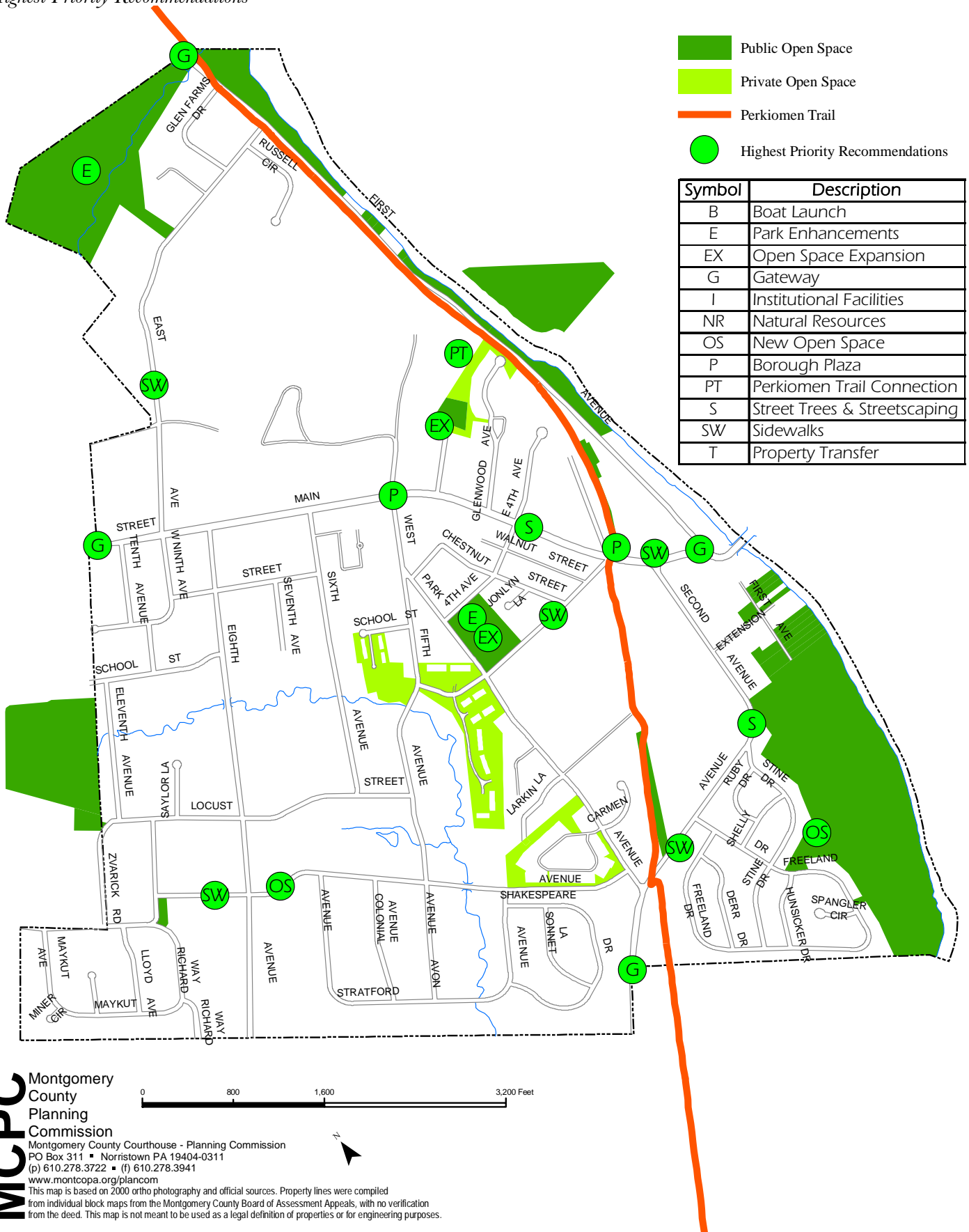


*The Perkiomen Trail above Main Street traveling towards Rahns*

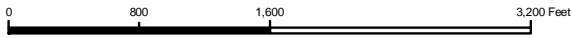
Figure 41  
 Highest Priority Recommendations Matrix (1 - 3 Year Timeframe)

Category	Action	Responsible Party	Potential Funding Sources	
Green Infrastructure	Develop Borough Gateways	Route 29 - South Gateway	PC	Landowner
		Perkiomen Bridge Gateway	BC, DOT	MCOS, DVRPC, DOT
		Gravel Pike Gateway	BC	MCOS, DVRPC
		Main Street Gateway	MC, BC	MCOS
	Create Borough Plazas	Main Street	MC, BC, UC	MCOS
		Perkiomen Trail at Main Street	MC, BC	MCOS, DVRPC, PECO, DCNR
	Maintain Street Trees & Upgrade Streetscapes	Main Street	MC, BC, UC	MCOS, DVRPC, PECO, DCNR
		Route 29 below Main Street	BC	MCOS
Community & Neighborhood Parks	Provide Open Space Facilities for Underserved Areas	Clayhor Avenue	BC	MCOS
		Collegeville Crossing	BC	MCOS, Landowners
	Acquire Acreage Adjacent to Existing Parks	Memorial Park	BC	MCOS
		Scout Cabin	BC, MC	MCOS, UC
	Enhance Amenities at Existing Parks	Hunsberger Woods	BC, MC, UC	MCOS
		Memorial Park	BC	MCOS, DVRPC, DOT
Community Connections	Increase Local Access to the Perkiomen Trail	Main Street & Third Avenue	MC, BC	MCOS
		Bum Hollow	MC, BC	MCOS
	Strengthen Collegeville's Internal Linkage Network	East Ninth Avenue Sidewalk	BC	MCOS
		Third Avenue Sidewalk	BC	MCOS
		Clayhor Avenue Sidewalk	BC	MCOS
		Dogleg Sidewalk	DOT, MC, BC	MCOS, DOT, DVRPC
		Wayfinding Signage & Design Standards	PC, BC	MCOS
		Route 29 Sidewalk - Freeland Drive	BC	MCOS

Figure 41A  
Highest Priority Recommendations



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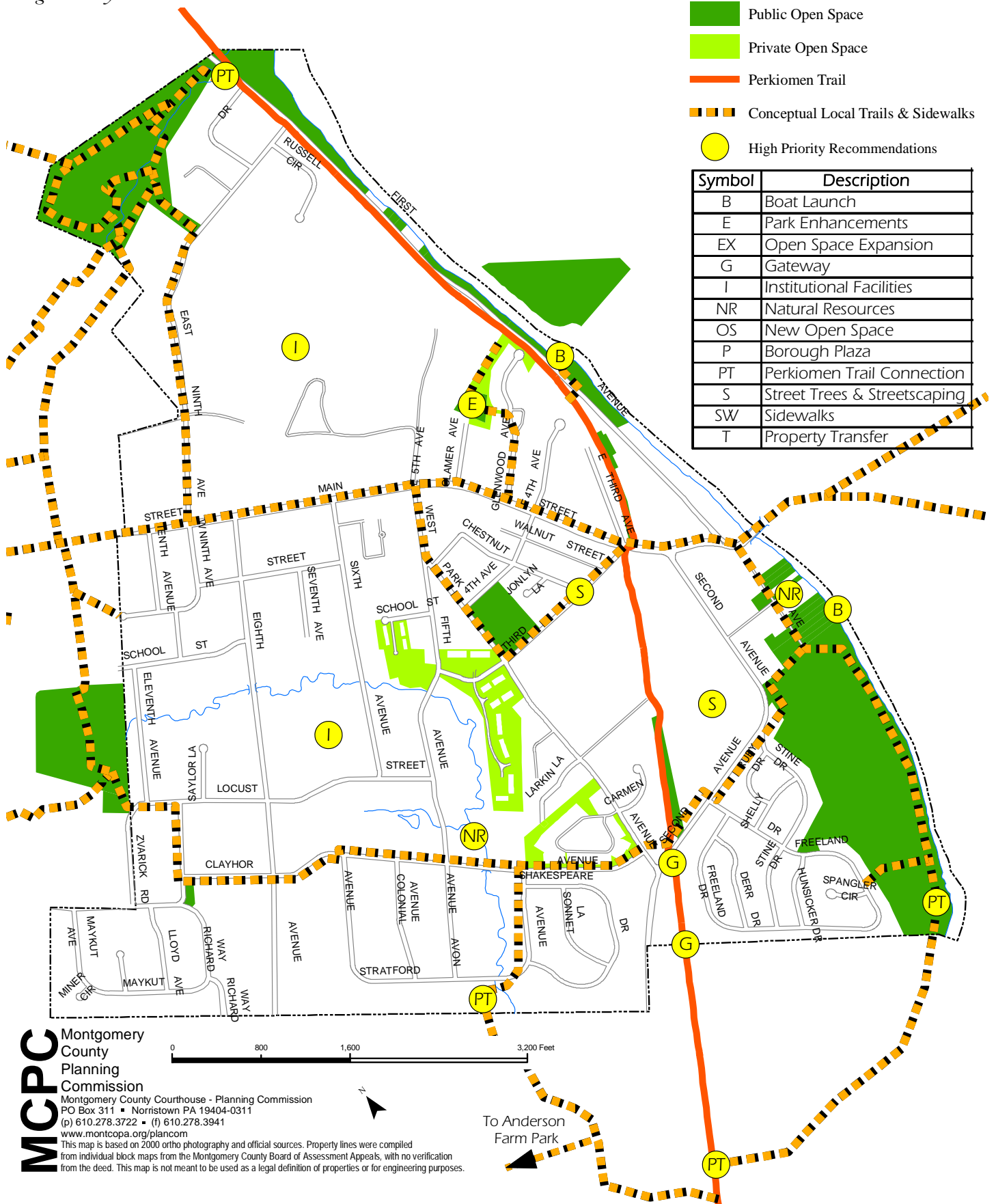


This map is based on 2000 ortho photography and official sources. Property lines were compiled from individual block maps from the Montgomery County Board of Assessment Appeals, with no verification from the deed. This map is not meant to be used as a legal definition of properties or for engineering purposes.

Figure 42  
*High Priority Recommendations Matrix*

Category	Action		Responsible Party	Potential Funding Sources
Green Infrastructure	Develop Borough Gateways	Perkiomen Trail South	BC	MCOS, DVRPC, DOT
	Create Borough Plazas	Infill & Redevelopment Sites	PC	
	Maintain Street Trees & Upgrade Streetscapes	Third Avenue	PC	MCOS, PECO
		Shopping Centers	PC	Landowner
	Develop an Urban Tree Inventory		BC	
	Update Borough Ordinances to Protect Historic Resources		PC	
Community & Neighborhood Parks	Enhance Amenities at Existing Parks	Scout Cabin	BC, MC	MCOS, Scouts
	Facilitate Use of Institutional Recreational Facilities		BC	
	Investigate Raising Open Space Requirements from Development		PC	
Community Connections	Increase Local Access to the Perkiomen Trail	Hunsberger Woods	BC, PT	PT, MCOS
		Collegeville Crossing	BC, UPT, MCP	UPT, MCOS
		Infill & Redevelopment Sites	PC	
	Build Connections Across the Perkiomen Valley	Hunsberger Woods to Gorski Tract	BC, TB, PT, UC	TB, PT, MCOS, Landowner
		Donny Brook Greenway to Upper Providence	BC, TB, UPT	TB, PT, MCOS, Landowner
		Construct Boat Launches on the Perkiomen Creek	BC	LPT, MCOS
		PECO Corridor	PT, TB, UPT	PT, TB, UPT, MCOS
Strengthen Collegeville's Internal Linkage Network	Crosswalks	BC	MCOS, DVRPC, DOT	
Natural Resource Protection & Passive Recreation	Continue Protection of the Perkiomen Creek Floodplain		BC	MCOS
	Establish the Donny Brook Greenway		BC, TB, UPT	MCOS, Landowners
	Update Borough Ordinances to Protect Natural Resources		PC	

Figure 42A  
High Priority Recommendations

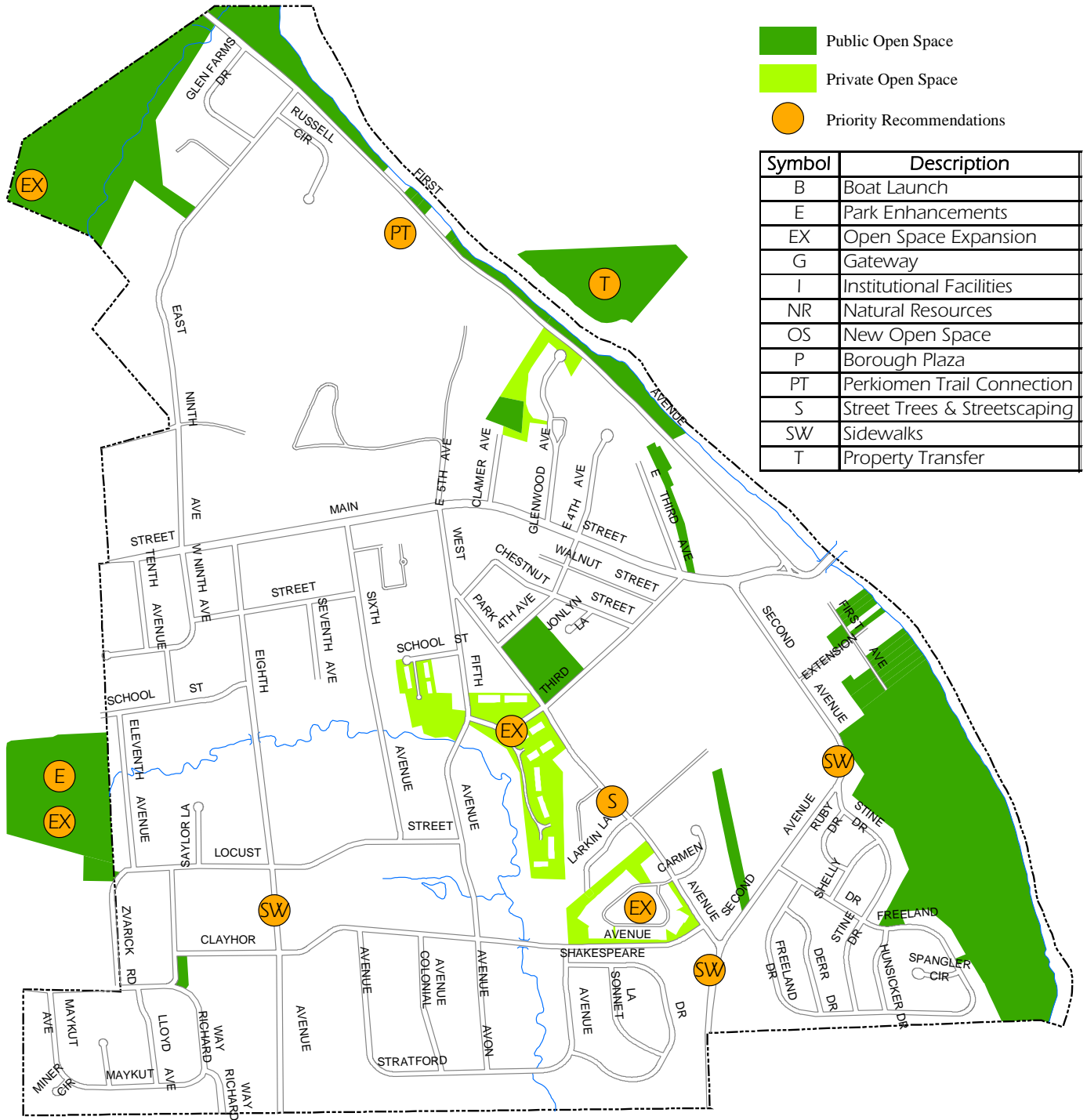


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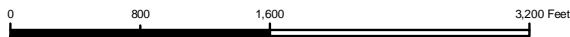
Figure 43  
Priority Recommendations Matrix

Category	Action		Responsible Party	Potential Funding Sources
Green Infrastructure	Create Borough Plazas	Public Art Requirement	PC	
	Maintain Street Trees & Upgrade Streetscapes	Park Avenue	PC	MCOS
		Sign Ordinance	PC	
	Investigate Regional Opportunities to Transfer Development Rights		PC, CP	
Community & Neighborhood Parks		Waterworks Park	BC	TB, MCOS
		Private Open Spaces	BC	MCOS
	Enhance Amenities at Existing Parks	Waterworks Park	BC, TB	TB, MCOS
	Regional Parks, Recreation, & Open Space		CP, BC	
	Develop an Official Map to enable future open space acquisition and linkages		PC	
Community Connections	Increase Local Access to the Perkiomen Trail	Ursinus Campus	UC	UC
	Build Connections Across the Perkiomen Valley	Evansburg Trail	LPT, BC	LPT, MCOS
		Bicycle Routes	DOT, BC	MDOT, MCOS, DVRPC
	Strengthen Collegeville's Internal Linkage Network	Eighth Avenue Sidewalk	BC	MCOS
		Dogleg Sidewalk	DOT, MC, BC	MCOS, DOT, DVRPC
		Route 29 Sidewalk - Stine Drive	BC	MCOS
		Route 29 Sidewalk - below Park Avenue	BC	MCOS

Figure 43A  
Priority Recommendations



**MCPC** Montgomery  
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