



JUNE 2022

Phoenixville Borough

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

HRG
Herbert, Rowland & Grubic, Inc.
Engineering & Related Services
AN EMPLOYEE-OWNED COMPANY



Front Cover Photo Source: Phoenixville Local - phoenixvillelocal.com

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INTRODUCTION



Acknowledgements

The Borough of Phoenixville thanks the residents and community members that participated in the planning process and for their commitment to a future guided by the goals outlined within this plan. A special thanks to the Borough's Department Heads and the Task Force that spent many hours helping to prepare this plan.

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This Comprehensive Plan Update was prepared in partnership with Herbert, Rowland & Grubic, Inc.



PLAN FINANCING

Funding was provided by the Borough of Phoenixville through the Chester County Vision Partnership Program, sponsored by the Chester County Board of Commissioners.



Photo Source: www.commons.wikimedia.org

Introduction to the Planning Area

The comprehensive plan for Phoenixville Borough was developed to provide a snapshot of the current community and a roadmap for growth, development, and improvement over the next 10 to 15 years. This plan outlines goals and strategies for ongoing improvements and enhancements for public infrastructure, community facilities, transportation, business development, housing, and parks and recreation facilities that will enhance the health, safety, and welfare of all Borough residents.

Phoenixville Borough offers a high quality of life, ample opportunities for recreation, and is home to several retailers, breweries, and restaurants, that provide an array of shopping, dining, entertainment, and employment opportunities. In addition, the Borough's urban yet, small town character helps to make it attractive to residents and businesses alike. While the Borough does not have an arterial roadway through it, there is access to State Route 422, and Interstate 76. There is also access to State Routes 202 and 30. Phoenixville Borough is 27 miles from Center City Philadelphia. The Phoenixville Area School District helps make the Borough a great place to raise a family. Overall, the Borough is a place where people can do it all – live, work, eat, and play!

LOCAL PLANNING IN PENNSYLVANIA

Municipalities in Pennsylvania are empowered by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) to plan development and to govern development locally through both zoning ordinances and subdivision and land development ordinances. A comprehensive plan provides a vision for what a community wants to look like in the future and the required steps to take to make visions a reality. The MPC authorizes municipalities to prepare comprehensive plans for the purposes of promoting safety, health, welfare, and morals as well as guide the use of land and structures, the type and location of streets, public grounds, and other facilities.

PLANNING AS POLICY

The comprehensive plan serves as a policy for Phoenixville Borough, The plan includes recommendations for implementation over a period of time, through a variety of actions. It reflects a vision for the Borough, providing guidance for decision-making by municipal officials and municipal staff. The plan establishes the priorities of community residents and stakeholders, both today and for the future of the Borough, providing steps to strengthen the economy, grow business, revitalize downtown, adapt housing stock to meet community needs, and improve the overall quality of life for residents.

UTILIZING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The comprehensive plan is a guide for making decisions relative to land use and development. The recommendations included within this document should help elected and appointed officials, as well as municipal staff, address the needs and priorities of the community.

AMENDING THE PLAN

Comprehensive plans are intended to be used as a resource in the daily administration of municipal business and as a policy document to guide long range planning. However, times change, and economies fluctuate, which in turn can change the priorities and needs of the community. These circumstances can call for the need to modify or amend the vision and plan of a municipality. If this occurs, the comprehensive plan can and should be amended to reflect the new priorities of the community, so that future decisions made by elected officials and municipal management continue to reflect this renewed vision.

As a note, the MPC requires that a comprehensive plan be reviewed every ten years.



INTERRELATIONSHIP OF PLAN ELEMENTS

A requirement of the MPC is that the comprehensive plan include an explanation of how the plan elements are inter-related and impact each other. One example of this is revitalization efforts as a catalyst for growth and development. This, in turn, impacts housing, transportation, recreational amenities and public amenities.

RELATIONSHIP WITH SURROUNDING MUNICIPALITIES

When developing a comprehensive plan it is important to make sure that its goals and objectives are consistent with the comprehensive land use plans of the neighboring municipalities, as well as the County. Therefore, as part of the planning process Landscapes3, the County Comprehensive Plan, was reviewed to ensure consistency and compatibility. Phoenixville Borough is part of the Phoenixville Region, which has its own Regional Comprehensive Plan and Regional Planning Committee. Recommendations from previous planning efforts were incorporated into this Comprehensive Plan Update. This ensures that the Borough's Comprehensive Plan aligns with the Phoenixville Regional Comprehensive Plan and Chester County's Landscapes3.

All neighboring municipalities, along with the Phoenixville Regional Planning Committee, Phoenixville Area School District and Chester County, were provided a copy of the draft of the Borough's Comprehensive Plan, along with the opportunity to comment on it. (Upon agreement of the DRAFT Plan)

In addition to consistency with planning documents, surrounding land uses and the proposed land uses were reviewed to determine compatibility. Based on the review of the surrounding communities, this plan and the proposed future land use are compatible. If instances of adjacent incompatible uses arise and are of concern to neighboring municipalities or the School District in the future, Phoenixville Borough staff and officials will work with representatives of these organizations on potential solutions.

The Process

SCHEDULE

Phoenixville Borough selected Herbert, Rowland, and Grubic, Inc (HRG) to facilitate the development of the comprehensive plan. The planning process for this comprehensive plan update started in October of 2020, when HRG held a Kick-off meeting to discuss the project and its goals with the Borough Staff. Over the course of the next fourteen months, the plan was developed based on the included schedule (p. 10).

TASK FORCE

The Borough created a task force that included a cross-section of the community to assist with providing feedback on plan direction. The task force met eight (8) times over the course of the project, covering a variety of focus areas, to develop initial recommendations and provide feedback. The meeting topics were:

- > Introduction & SWOT Analysis
- > Sustainability
- > Review of Key Person Interviews
- > Stormwater
- > 15 Minute Communities & Connectivity
- > Housing
- > LEED Communities & Cities, Sustainable PA Communities, & Economic Development
- > Draft Plan Review



KEY PERSON INTERVIEWS

As part of the planning process, HRG conducted interviews with the Borough's Department heads. This provided perspective on what has, and what has not worked in the past, how to achieve the best results, and what needs to be accomplished.

COMMUNITY SURVEYS

To help further guide the recommendations developed in this plan, there were two community surveys posted on the Borough website for public response. The surveys received 380 and 304 responses; full response results are attached in the Appendix.

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

On June 23, 2021 the Borough hosted a community workshop, held via Zoom, where HRG gave a presentation on why the plan was being updated, the planning process, and status of the schedule. In addition, meeting attendees were asked a series of survey questions, and were given the opportunity to provide feedback.

COVID-19 IMPACT

Starting in the Spring of 2020, with the onset of COVID-19 pandemic, the approach to this project had to adapt and pivot quickly and significantly. The overall goals of the engagement process did not change; the methods of outreach became entirely virtual to protect the public health. Community pop-up engagement events were planned, but these were unable to occur, requiring a shift to online surveys. While the planning process became entirely virtual, meaningful feedback, input and engagement remained a priority in guiding this Comprehensive Plan update.

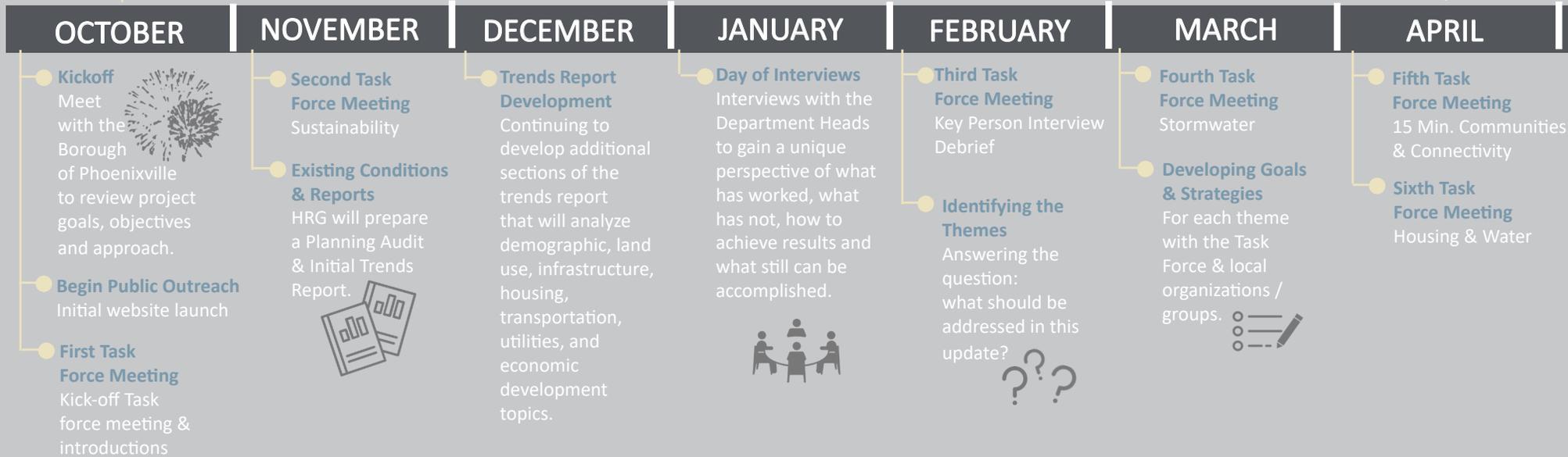


Photo Source: www.commonswikimedia.org

SCHEDULE

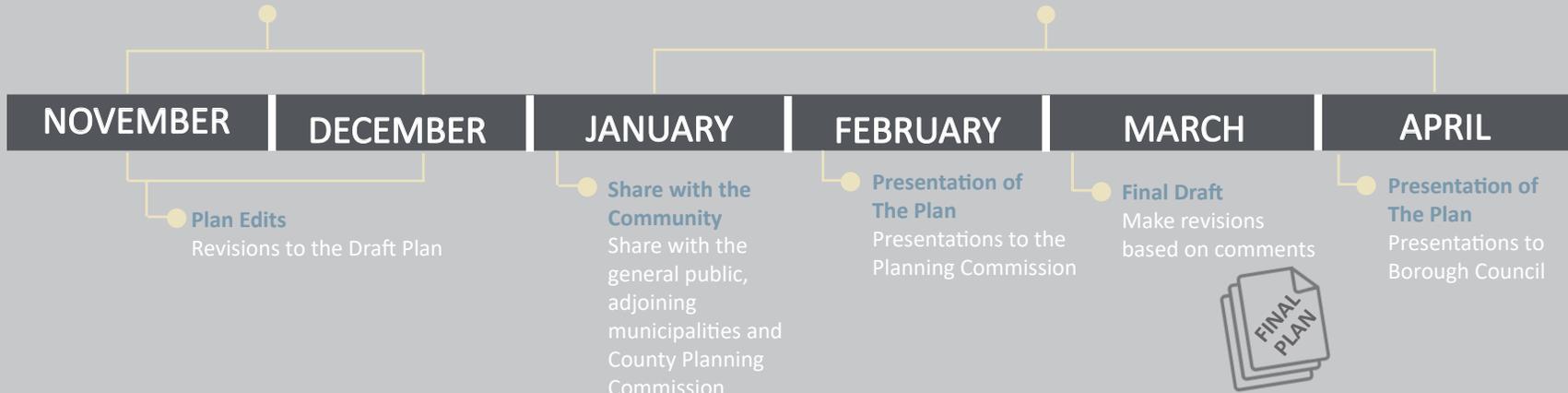
DISCOVERY & OUTREACH

VISIONING

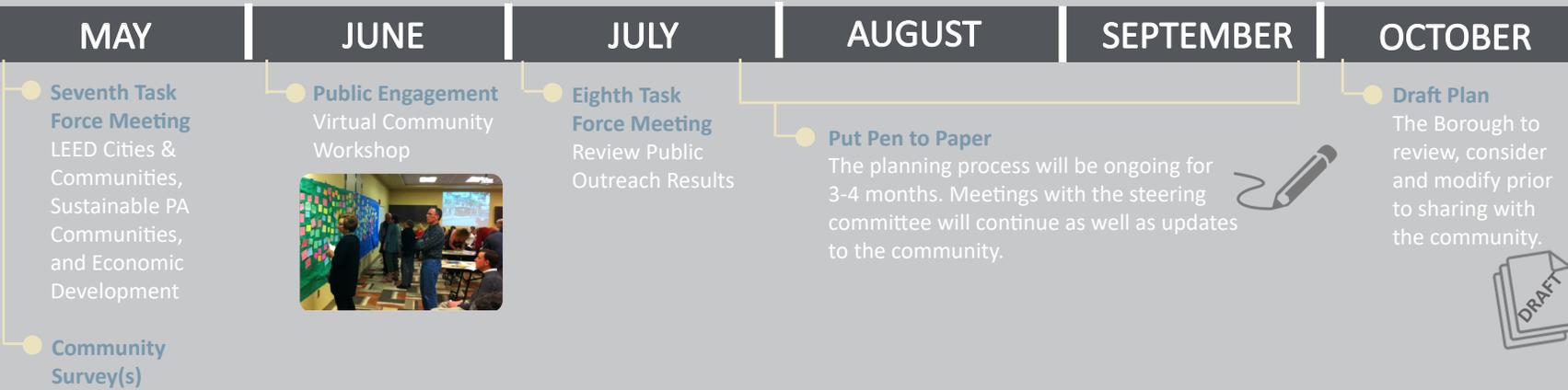


BUILDING IMPLEMENTATION CAPACITY

ADOPTION



SYNTHESIS



ONGOING ITEMS





BACKGROUND

Previous Plans

EXISTING COMPREHENSIVE PLANS

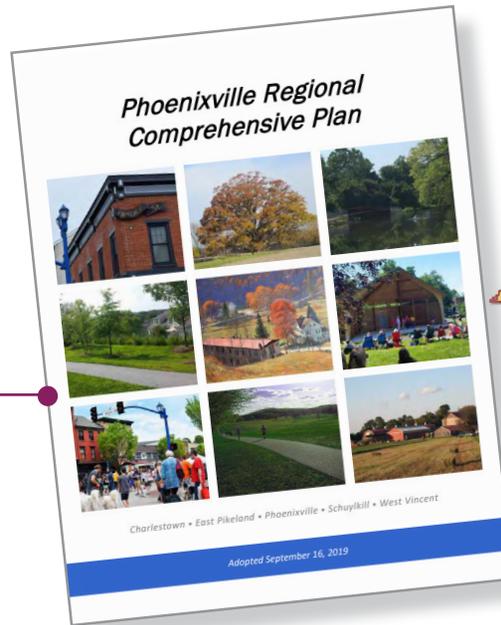
The Phoenixville Comprehensive & Revitalization Plan incorporates and builds upon previous planning efforts completed within the Borough, Phoenixville Region and Chester County. Two of the most notable efforts are the Phoenixville Regional Comprehensive Plan and the Chester County Comprehensive Plan: Landscapes3.

Phoenixville Regional Comprehensive Plan

Adopted September 16, 2019

The Phoenixville Regional Comprehensive Plan includes the Borough and five surrounding municipalities (Charlestown Township, East Pikeland Township, West Vincent Township, Schuylkill Township and West Pikeland Township – joined in 2020). The Phoenixville Regional Comprehensive Plan identified the following goals where regional cooperation is needed:

- Protect the unique historical, cultural, aesthetic, agricultural and natural resources and the quality of life of the Region.
- Promote economic vitality through effective organization and coordination of development, attributes and resources.
- Implement growth management practices to provide for orderly and well-planned new development in the Region.
- Preserve open space, natural resources and agriculture in the Region.
- Develop multi-modal transportation choices for better mobility in and through the Region.
- Encourage walkable communities with a mix of uses and a range of housing options, where appropriate in the Region.
- Maintain and improve recreation options, including the trail system, of the Region.
- Address the specific needs and unique conditions of each municipality in the Region.



PHOENIXVILLE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE
Phoenixville • Charlestown • East Pikeland • Schuylkill • West Pikeland • West Vincent

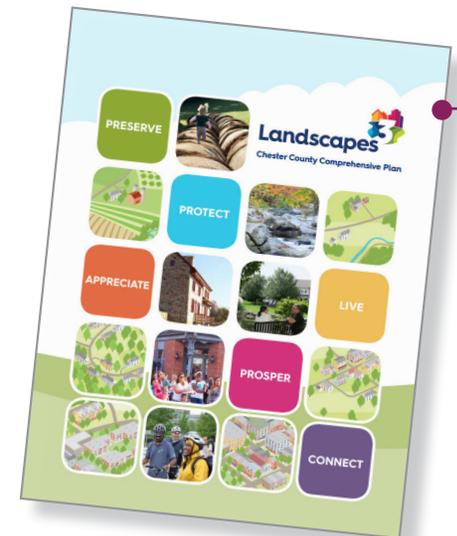
Additional information and a copy of the Phoenixville Regional Comprehensive Plan can be accessed using this link:

<https://www.phoenixville.org/332/Phoenixville-Regional-Comprehensive-Plan>



Additional information about Chester County's Landscapes3 Comprehensive Plan can be found on Chester County's Landscapes3 website:

<https://www.chescoplanning.org/Landscapes3/>



● Landscapes3

Adopted November 29, 2018

Landscapes3, the most recent Chester County Comprehensive Plan, identified the following core principles:

- > Resource Preservation- Recommit to protecting the county's open spaces, natural areas, and historic landscapes.
- > Revitalized Centers- Guide compatible growth to the county's urban and suburban centers.
- > Housing Diversity- Provide for diverse and affordable housing meeting the needs of all residents.
- > Transportation Choices- Expand public transit, pedestrian, and bicycle networks
- > Collaboration Promote effective multi-municipal and partner cooperation.
- > Resiliency- Respond to changing markets, technology and environmental forces.

In addition to the identified core principles, the County has six goals; Preserve, Protect, Appreciate, Live, Prosper and Connect.

Additional Plans & Studies

Park Master Plans

- > Comprehensive Park Plan
- > Andre Thornton Park Master Plan
- > Reeves Park Master Plan
- > Reservoir Park Master Plan
- > Veteran's Park Master Plan

Traffic Study & Road Safety Studies

- > Nutt Road Traffic Study
- > PA Route 23 - Road Safety Study

Parking Studies

- > Park Phoenixville

Pedestrian Accessibility

- > Schuylkill River Trail Master Plan
- > Walk Phoenixville - Pedestrian Accessibility Plan

All previous planning efforts conducted by the Borough can be found here:

<https://www.phoenixville.org/324/Reports-Plans-Studies>

The Phoenixville Comprehensive & Revitalization Plan not only builds upon both of these comprehensive plans, but numerous planning and feasibility studies the Borough has conducted. Recommendations from all previous planning efforts were considered and where relevant have been recommended as part of this plan.



Photo Source: Phoenixville Local - phoenixvillelocal.com

Community Background

The Data Trends section of this plan highlights demographic trends that were considered as part of the plan process. This section provides overarching demographic trends about the community of Phoenixville as a whole; supplemental data is provided in subsequent topic-specific chapters. Where appropriate, the section will compare local data and trends that emulate regional and national trends.

QUICK FACTS



18,602
RESIDENTS



3.5
SQUARE MILES

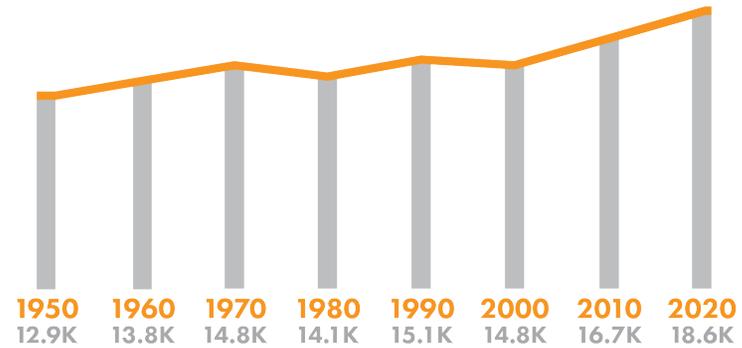


7,111
HOUSEHOLDS

POPULATION TRENDS

Phoenixville Borough had an estimated population of about **18,602** residents in 2020, a **13.2%** increase from **2010 to 2020**.

Phoenixville has seen growth in development, which has begun to create demographic shifts within the Borough. Based on population projections for the Phoenixville Region, the Borough is projected to **grow 54% by 2045**. Chester County as a whole anticipates **20%** growth in their population by **2040**.



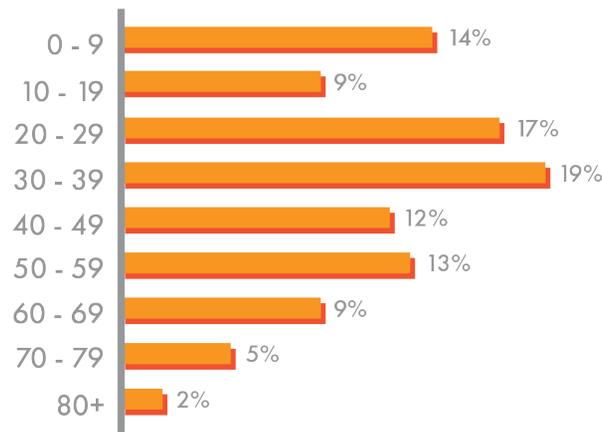
MUNICIPALITY	2010 POPULATION	2045 PROJECTION	PERCENT CHANGE
CHARLESTOWN TOWNSHIP	5,671	8,336	46.50%
EAST PIKELAND TOWNSHIP	7,079	10,334	40.56%
PHOENIXVILLE BOROUGH	16,440	25,710	54.34%
SCHUYLKILL TOWNSHIP	8,516	10,376	20.99%
WEST VINCENT TOWNSHIP	4,567	6,040	19.89%
UPPER PROVIDENCE TOWNSHIP	21,219	29,510	25.79%

2045 Population Projections - DVRPC

Race & Ethnicity

About **76%** of Phoenixville's residents identify themselves as **White**, **6%** identify as **African American**, **3%** of the population identifies as **Asian**, **8%** of the population identifies as **two or more races**, and **7%** of the population identifies as some other race. **11%** of Borough residents identify as **Hispanic**.

Population Age



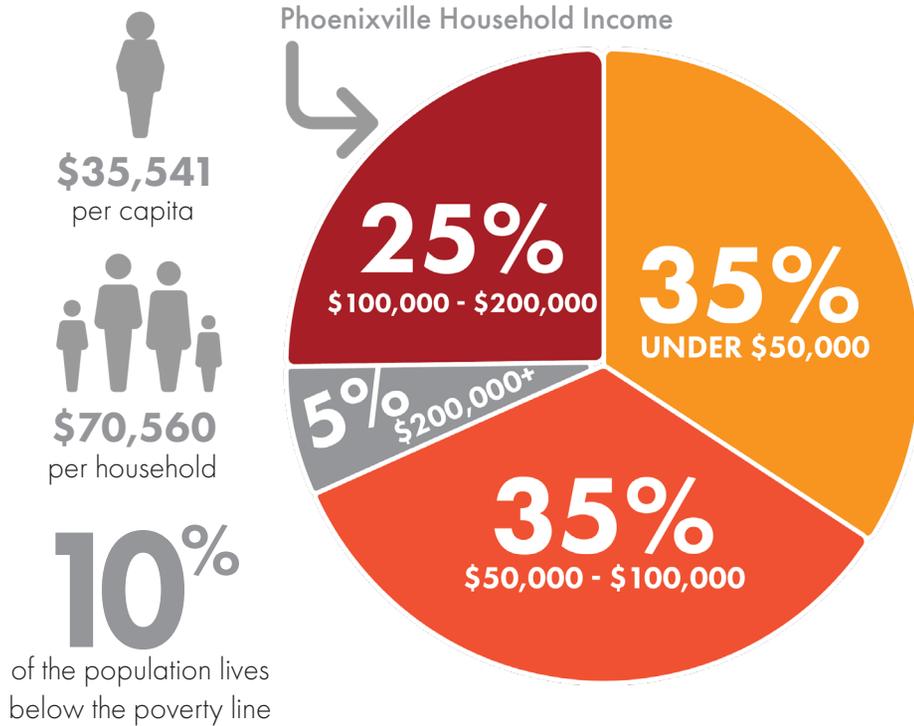
34.7
YEARS

median age in
Phoenixville

ECONOMY TRENDS

The economy of Phoenixville Borough employs around **9,700** people, with the largest industry being Health Care and Social Services at **1,192** employees. The median income is **\$35,541 per capita** and **\$70,560 per household**.

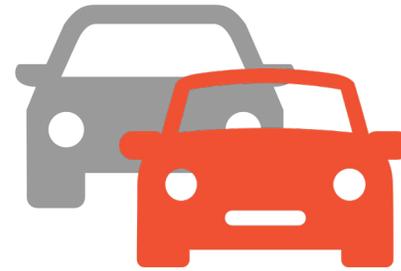
Income



Employment

85% of Phoenixville's working population are full-time employees and about **16%** of Phoenixville working residents work and live in the Borough.

Travel to Work



75% of residents drive alone to work

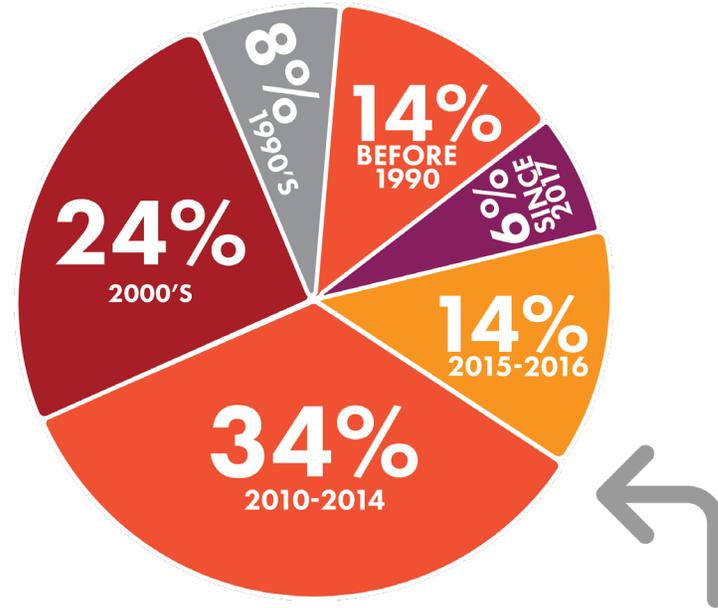
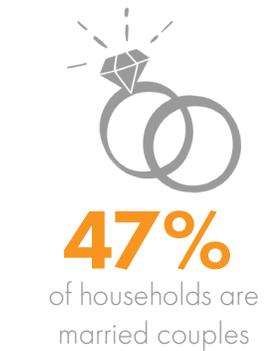


28.5 minutes is the average amount of time residents spend commuting to work

HOUSING TRENDS

Phoenixville Borough currently has **7,111** residential units, **66%** of which are single family units (includes townhomes).

YEAR MOVED IN



Over half of Phoenixville's current population has moved since **2010**.

COMMUNITY HEALTH

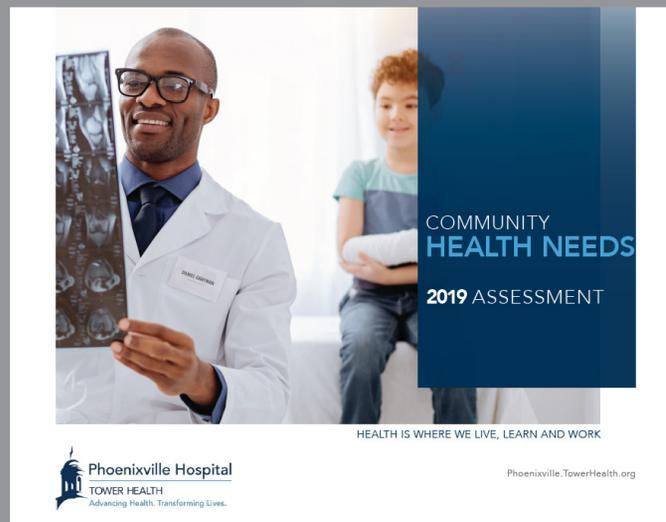
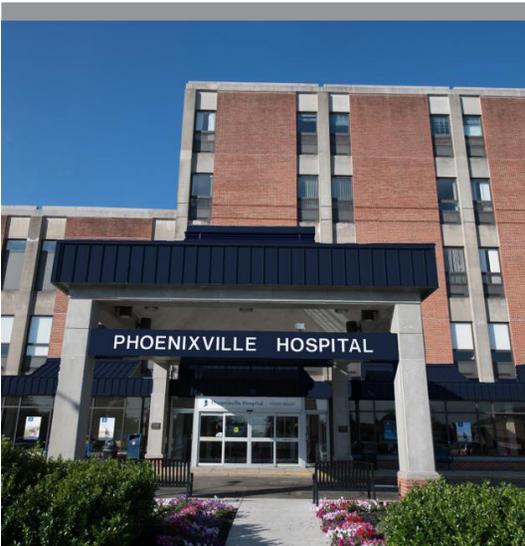
Phoenixville Hospital conducted a Health Needs Assessment in 2019, identifying important health factors within the community. Policy decisions through this comprehensive plan update can directly impact the health of the community. The Borough, in partnership with the Phoenixville Hospital, can address the health needs of community members.

Phoenixville Hospital identified the following top health priorities in their 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment:

- > **Obesity** – reduce the number of overweight/obese residents
- > **Mental Health** – increase access to and ignorenation of mental health services
- > **Addiction** – Increase coordination and availability of services to treat addiction
- > **Access to Care** – Decrease barriers to access healthcare

In addition, The American Public Health Association defines a healthy community as one that:

- > Meets everyone’s basic needs such as safe, affordable and accessible food, water, housing, education, health care and places to play;
- > Provides supportive levels of economic and social development through living wages, safe and healthy job opportunities, a thriving economy and healthy development of children and adolescents;
- > Promotes quality and sustainability of the environment through tobacco and smoke-free spaces, clean air, soil and water, green and open spaces and sustainable energy use; and
- > Places high value on positive social relationships through supportive and cohesive families and neighborhoods, honoring culture and tradition, robust social and civic engagement and violence prevention.



Left: Phoenixville Hospital
Tower Health Entrance

Right: Phoenixville Hospital's
Community Health Needs
2019 Assessment Cover

Transportation & Health Care

54.4% of Key Informant Survey Respondents said that transportation to medical appointments is not available in the area, and **50%** feel that transportation is needed to access care.

45% of Intercept Survey Respondents and **60%** of Stakeholders said that transportation impacts health.

87.5% of Focus Group Participants said that transportation is an issue getting to and from work and appointments.

In addition to these key points the assessment found that issues related to a lack of transportation included:

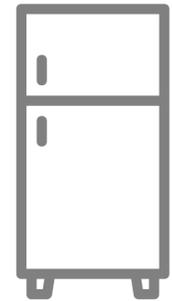
- > Better access to transportation is needed
- > Need cheaper transportation
- > Lack of evening and weekend transportation options
- > Transportation options are limited and time intensive
- > Hours spent accessing transportation in order to get to an appointment; often causes cancellations
- > Affordable transportation is needed throughout the region
- > Can't access grocery stores that sell fresh produce or exercise areas as no transportation
- > Inability to navigate the transportation system
- > Need for more senior transportation
- > Needed transportation outside of cities; more rural area transportation

Overall, improved access to transportation is needed, especially for medical appointments along with lower costs and more routes.

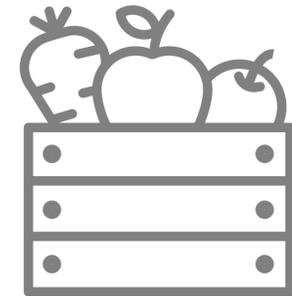
Food Security

All residents should feel they have access to a grocery store and healthy food options. This is impacted often by the lack of corner stores, neighborhood grocery stores, or corner stores lacking healthy food options. The Phoenixville Hospital's Community Health Needs Assessment found:

14.1%
of respondents
are considered
food insecure



34.4%
eat 5+ servings of
fruits/vegetables
daily



15.0%
said they found it
very/somewhat
difficult to buy
fresh produce





DATA TRENDS



Transportation

The Borough has approximately **54 miles of roadway** and almost **80 miles of sidewalk**. The Borough is also serviced by **two bus routes**: Route 139- Limerick to King of Prussia and Route 99 – Phoenixville to Norristown Transportation Center. From the Norristown Transportation Center riders have access to a number of public transportation options including the Manayunk / Norristown Rail Line to Center City Philadelphia, the High Speed Line from Norristown to 69th Street transportation center and seven additional bus routes.

QUICK FACTS



54
MILES OF
ROADWAY



80
MILES OF
SIDEWALK



2
BUS
ROUTES

Note - All data is from the U.S. Census Bureau unless noted.

ROADWAYS

Phoenixville Borough is located with regional highway access nearby via U.S. Route 422 (approximately 4 miles away), U.S. Route 202 and Interstate 76 including the Pennsylvania Turnpike (approximately 10 miles away). In addition, the Borough is connected through more localized connections such as PA Routes 23, 29, and 113.

Roadway Ownership

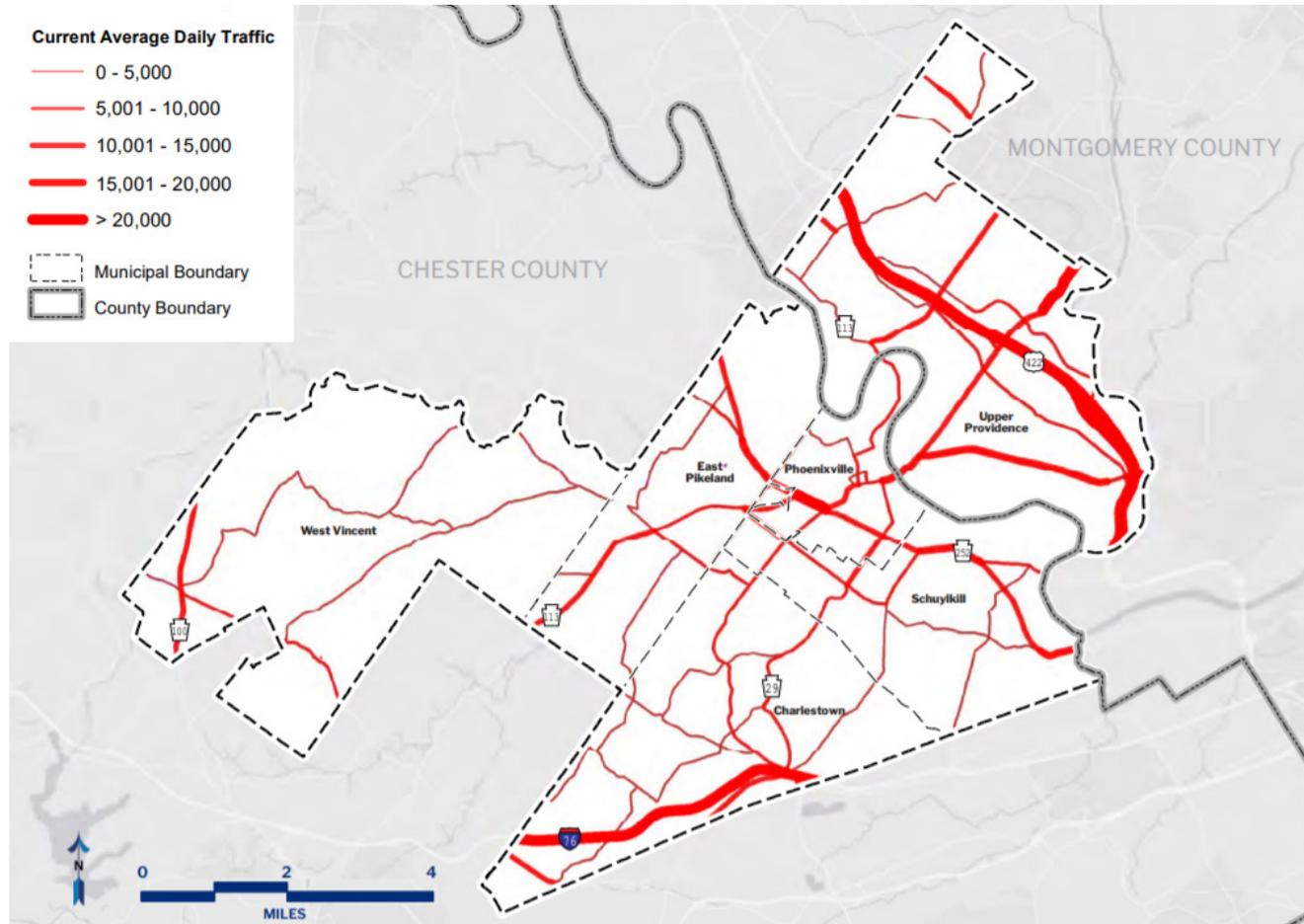
Of the 54 miles of roadway in the Borough, approximately **47 miles of roadway are owned by the Borough; 7 miles are owned by the State**. This is important when planning, as the Borough must plan and budget to maintain and improve the roads they own. Depending on the condition of the roads, this can pose a large financial burden on a municipality.

There are less barriers to improve the roads owned by the Borough (approximately 87%), as compared to those owned by the state (i.e. Nutt Road). This is due to the added regulations for state-owned roadways.

Roadway Projects in Phoenixville

- > Gay Street Streetscapes : Design Phase
- > Pedestrian Bridge over French Creek : Design / Engineering Phase
- > Ashburn Road Extension : Planning Phase
- > Phoenixville Train Station : Conceptual
- > Mowere Road Realignment : Design / Engineering Phase
- > Bridge Street & Starr Street Intersection Improvements : Planning Phase

Traffic Volume - Major Roadways



The Traffic Volume - Major Roadways Map shows the average daily traffic volume for major roadways (PennDOT roads only) in the Phoenixville Region. The map shows PA Routes 23, 29 and 113 are the most traveled roads. In addition, High St., Gay St. and Main St. show significant daily traffic volume. The roadways that are traveled by a higher number of vehicles often see a large number accidents. This is consistent with the crash data from the Borough.

Roadways with higher traffic volume often run through the downtown areas of communities, which can create concern about conflicts that involve pedestrians. The Walk Phoenixville Plan identified the majority of accidents that involved a pedestrian occurred on Bridge Street or Nutt Road.

Another potential issue that can arise in with high traffic volume is the impact of road closures on the roadway network. If a major roadway such as Bridge Street is closed, the cars that normally travel it need alternative options that are capable of handling increased traffic volume.

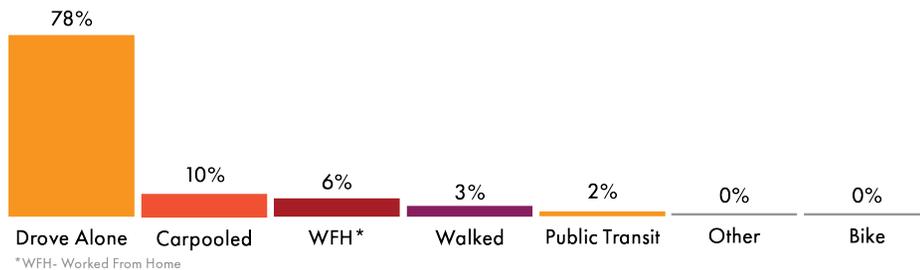
Source: PennDOT from the Phoenixville Regional Multimodal Transportation Study.

Note: The above map is from the Phoenixville Regional Multimodal Transportation Study, which was completed prior to West Pikeland joining the Phoenixville Region.

COMMUTE TO WORK

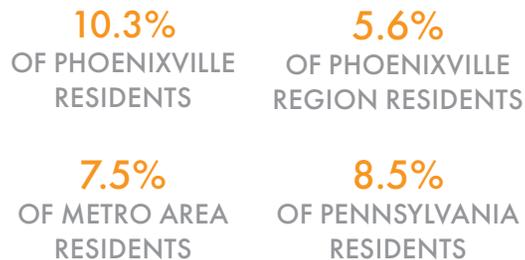
Phoenixville residents commute to work similarly to their counterparts throughout the Phoenixville Region, Pennsylvania and the Philadelphia, Camden and Wilmington Metro Area. About **78% of Phoenixville residents drive alone to work**, which is consistent with the Phoenixville Region, where about 73% percent of residents drive alone to work.

How Residents Commute to Work



One area where Phoenixville and the Phoenixville Region differed from the State and Philadelphia, Camden and Wilmington Metro Area, is the percentage of residents that work from home. Phoenixville (6%) was closer to the trends of Pennsylvania and the Metro Area, (4.7% and 4.9% respectively); the Phoenixville Region has a higher rate (about 14%) of residents working from home.

Percentage of Residents Carpooling to Work



Phoenixville residents were above the average in the percentage of residents that carpool to work. The largest difference is 4.7% between the Borough and the Phoenixville Region.

Average Commute Time



28.5
minutes

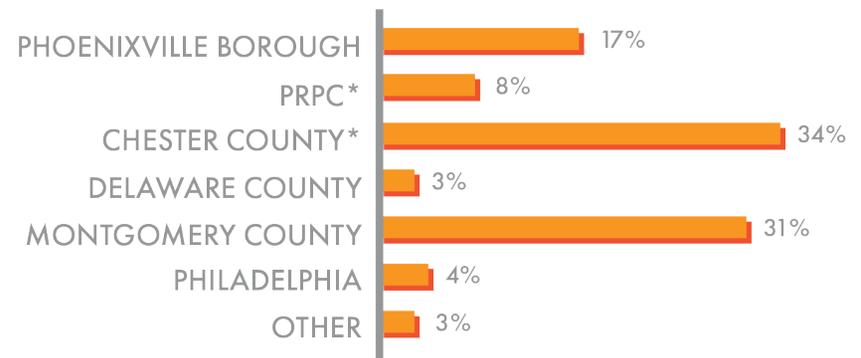
is the average amount of time Phoenixville residents spend commuting to work. This is similar to the average commute time for Pennsylvania (26.9 minutes), the Philadelphia, Camden and Wilmington Metro Area (29.9 minutes), and Chester County (27.9 minutes).

Average Vehicle Miles Traveled Per Day



In Phoenixville, the average daily vehicle miles traveled per day is **36.65 miles**. This is significantly lower than Chester County, which is an average of 55.98 miles daily. The Walk Phoenixville Plan stated that this could be due to the vast pedestrian infrastructure and access to public transit that the Borough has in comparison to Chester County as a whole.

Where Residents Commute to for Work



* PRPC - Outside of Phoenixville Borough, Chester County - Outside PRPC
Source: ACS 2013

CAR OWNERSHIP

Within the Borough **91% of households have access to a car**. 45% have one car, 35% have two cars, and 11% have 3 or more cars.



There are several factors that can contribute to car ownership including, the number of residents per household, the number of residents that commute outside of the Borough for work and the limits to the current public transportation to name a few.

Households without Access to a Car

In Phoenixville **9% of households do not own a car**, the highest percentage of households without cars in the Phoenixville region. The second highest percentage is in East Pikeland where 7% of households do not own a car. The remaining municipalities in the Phoenixville Region have about 1% of their households without a car.



Impacts of Car Ownership

Car ownership within the Borough can have a number of impacts on a community. One major issue related to car ownership is parking. When a household has more cars than they have parking space, the additional vehicles are often parked on the street. This is problematic for developing additional infrastructure to roadways, such as dedicated bike lanes. This is challenging since, due to the nature of how the Borough is built out, making roads wider is also not an option for adding infrastructure to the roadways. With trends changing in how and where people work, the Borough could see an increase in those working from home, which in turn could reduce the number of cars per household.

Future Car Ownership

If the trends in car ownership continue in the Borough, and the proposed developments are completed by 2024 (2,230 dwelling units), the Borough could have an **additional 3,056 cars on their roads**. This increase in cars will further stress the roadways, and parking infrastructure in the Borough. It is important that the Borough consider improving their alternative transportation network, such as public transit, walking and biking, to reduce the demand on the roadway and parking infrastructure.

POTENTIAL COVID-19 IMPACT

COVID-19 has changed the way we work and shown that some jobs are able to be completed from home. Many jobs transitioned to a remote (work from home) and some companies may look to continue that indefinitely. This will change commuter patterns and miles traveled but ultimately alter the complexion of the community.

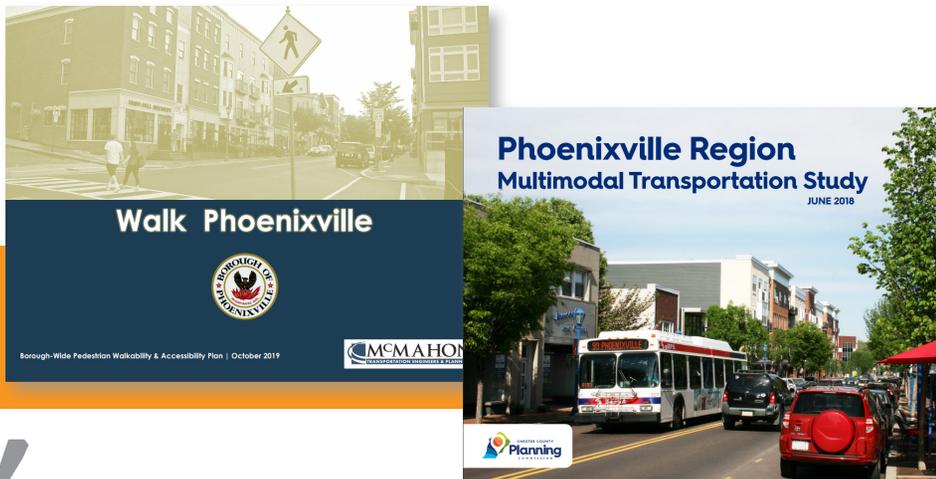
Connectivity & Active Transportation

The Borough completed their Walk Phoenixville Plan in October of 2019. This plan looked at pedestrian infrastructure in the Borough. The study found that the Borough has about **80 miles of sidewalk and 477 intersections** with crosswalks, only 17 of which have signals. The Borough has an overall score of 14.95 out of 20 in the EPA's Walkability Index.

The plan identified that approximately **80% of crosswalks do not meet the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements** and there is currently no on-road bike infrastructure in the Borough. The Borough has installed a maintenance station on the Schuylkill River Trail and several bike racks throughout the Borough.

The plan identified the following as key corridors and priorities:

- > Downtown (Bridge Street) and connections to get people downtown
- > Student commuting corridors
- > Gaps in the sidewalk network
- > Connections to shopping centers
- > Barriers to people living with disabilities



The Borough also was part of the Phoenixville Regional Multimodal Transportation Study, completed by the Chester County Planning Commission in June 2018. This study looked at multimodal transportation options and their respective infrastructure, ultimately recommending the creation of a network for the Phoenixville Region.

The Phoenixville Regional Multimodal Transportation Study identified the following projects within the Borough:

- > Trail Projects
 - Devault Trail
 - French Creek Trail
 - Freedom Trail
 - Schuylkill East Trail
- > Starr Street & Nutt Road Intersection
- > Starr Street Traffic Calming
- > Bridge Street & Nutt Road (Intersection Study)
- > Township Line Road & PA 23 (Intersection Study)
- > Transit Access to Phoenixville
 - Update Bus Service
 - Develop Phoenixville Transportation Center
 - Restore Rail Service to Phoenixville
- > Starr Street & Bridge Street Intersection Improvements
- > PA 113 & Schuylkill River (pedestrian bridge)

In addition, the study made the following recommendations for the municipalities included in the study area:

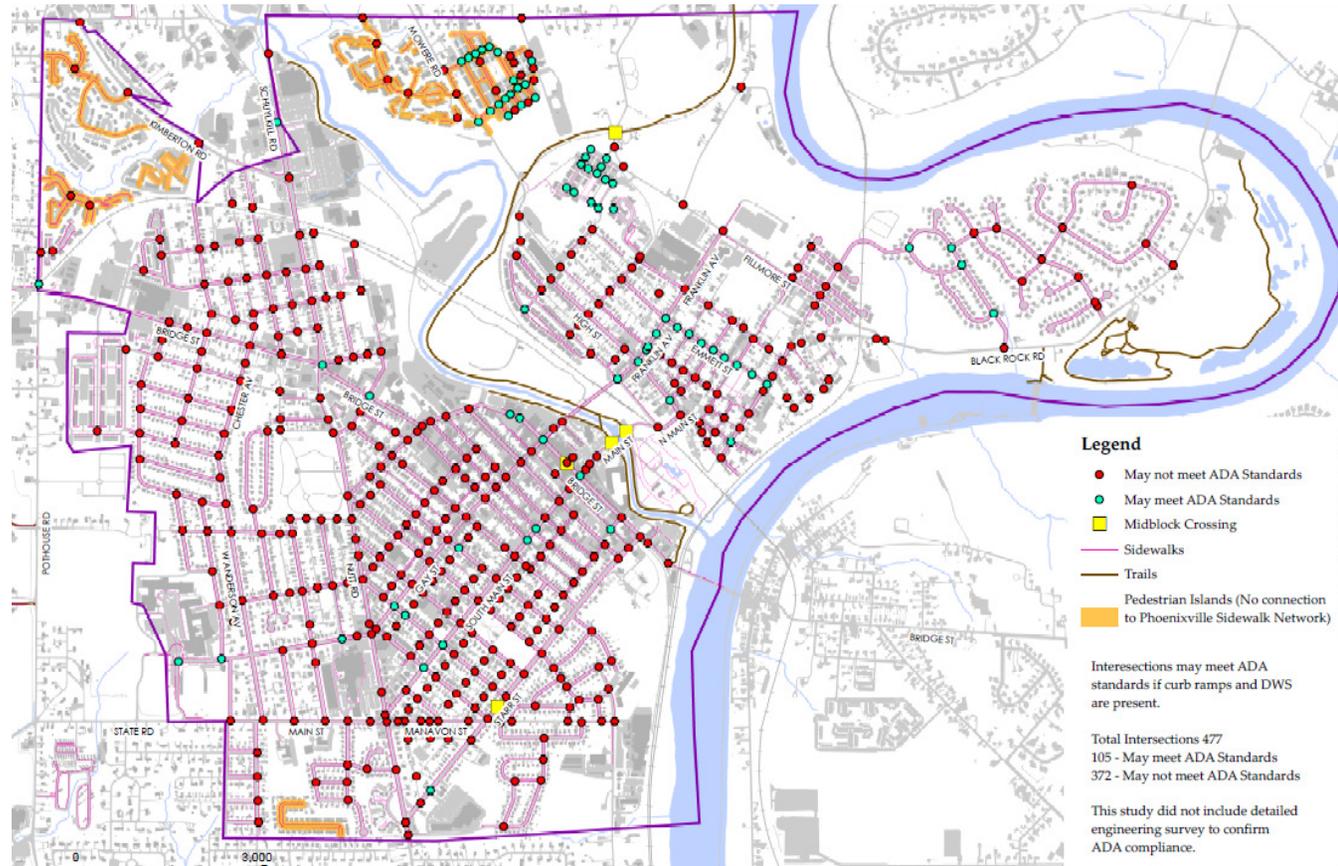
- > Ordinance review of Pedestrian Facilities (sidewalks), Multi-use Trails & Bicycle Facilities
- > Official Map
- > Traffic Impact Studies for all new developments
- > Transportation Impact Fees

Walk Phoenixville and the Regional Multi-Modal Plan focus on the infrastructure within the Borough to help with the circulation of people through alternative modes of transportation. Both plans emphasize a need to bring people downtown, and identify projects, recommendations and policies that will help to enable greater access.

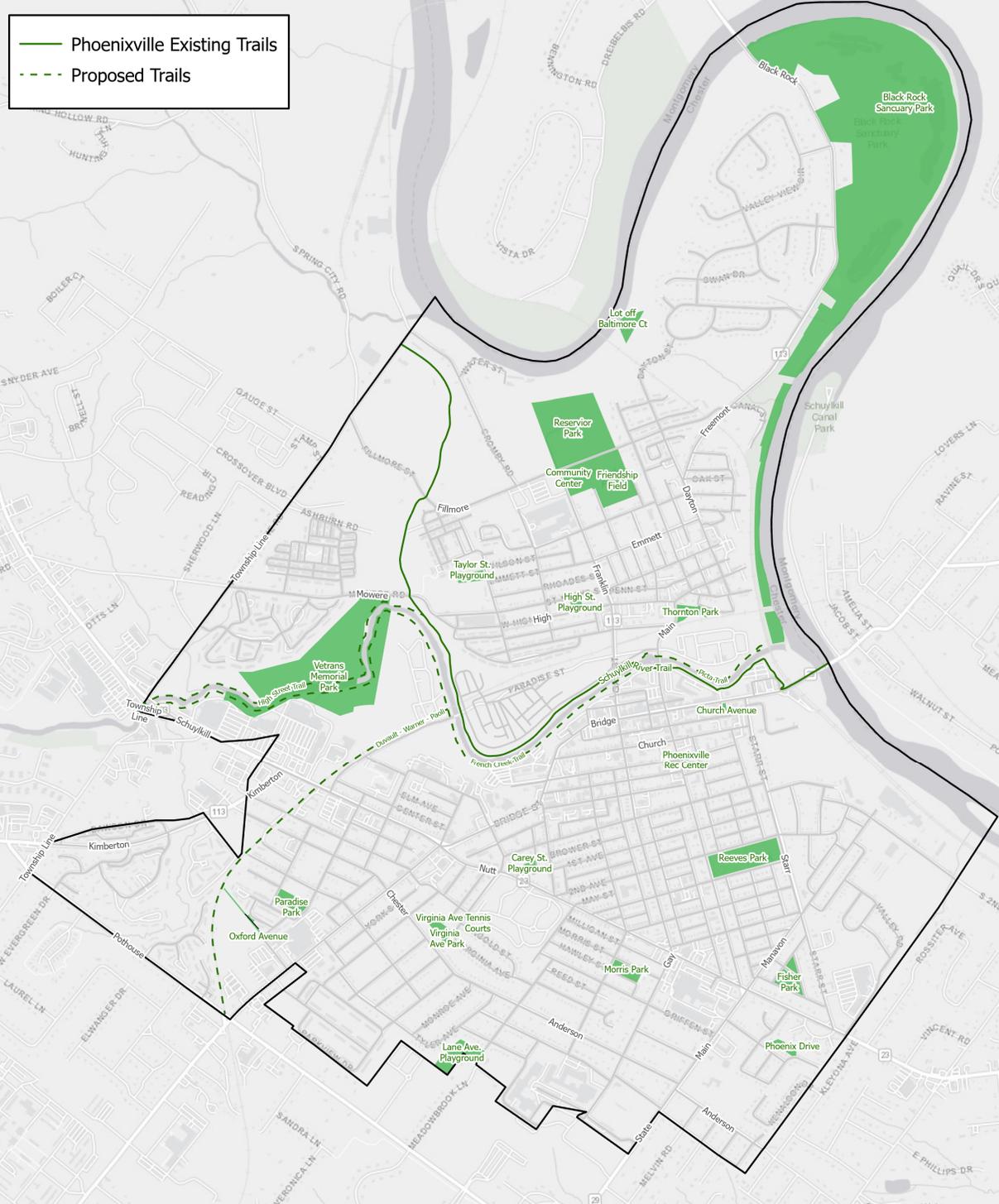
The Borough should continue to make improvements based on the recommendations identified in Walk Phoenixville and the Phoenixville Regional Multi-Modal Plan,, and continue to identify gaps and areas for improvement within their alternative transportation network, including the “first and last mile”.

Existing Pedestrian Features

Map of the existing pedestrian features from the Walk Phoenixville Plan.



Source: Walk Phoenixville Plan
<https://www.phoenixville.org/DocumentCenter/View/1107/Walk-Phoenixville---Report-PDF>



Parks & Recreation

The Borough has **fifteen parks** with a **total acreage of about 72 acres**. The parks vary in size from .1 acres to 27.3 acres and provide a number of amenities to the community. In addition to the fifteen parks, **the Borough has about 4 miles of trails** that connect to a larger regional trail network. The Borough also has about 94 acres of Homeowner's Association Open Space, and the 119-acre Black Rock Sanctuary. The sanctuary includes 3.75 miles of trail, with 0.8 miles of the trail being ADA accessible.

Black Rock Boat Launch is managed by the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission and provides access to the Schuylkill River.

QUICK FACTS



15
PARKS



72
ACRES OF PARKS



~ 4
MILES OF TRAILS

PARKS

The fifteen parks in the Borough include:

- > Andre Thornton Park
- > Balder Park
- > C. John Saunders Memorial Park
- > Carey Street Playground
- > Cascaden Park
- > Joe Rowan Park
- > Lane Avenue Park
- > Manavon Park
- > Morris Street Park
- > Pasquale "Pat" Nattle Field
- > Reeves Park
- > Reservoir Park
- > Taylor Street Park
- > Veterans Memorial Park
- > Virginia Avenue Park

Black Rock Sanctuary is a County Park within the Borough. This 118-acre park is a great asset to the community that is dedicated to wildlife habitat and public use. It is a Green Park that includes natural landscaping, and a .80 mile ADA-accessible interpretive trail, among many other amenities.

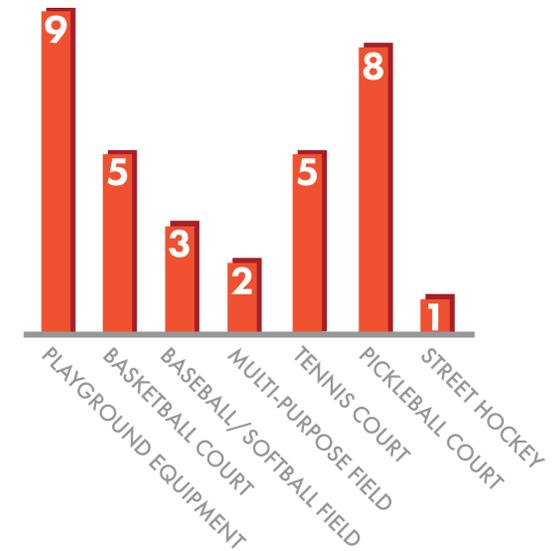


PARKS & RECREATION AMENITIES

Phoenixville meets or exceeds the National Recreation and Park Association's (NRPA) Park Metrics for communities. Lacking amenities include a soccer field and a public football field. However, these amenities are supplemented with multi-purpose fields, and amenities at public schools. Therefore, even though the amenities are not located within the Borough's public parks, they still have them as amenities for the public and recreation programs.

Existing Park Amenities

In addition to the amenities listed, Phoenixville has 8 pickleball courts which are tennis and pickleball combination courts. This is a great amenity that the Borough has already implemented as pickleball is a relatively new recreational activity that has increased in popularity. Conversion courts and multi-purpose fields are great assets to the community, as it will allow the Borough to adapt with the wants and needs of the community as it changes over time.



All-Abilities Playground

In 2019 the Borough added an all-abilities playground in Reeves Park. The goal of this playground was to create a place where children of all abilities, including those with physical or sensory challenges are able to play together. The design of the play structure includes a rolling slide, rock climbing wall and a roundabout with seating. This not only is an asset to the Phoenixville community, but the Phoenixville Region and even Chester County.

Community Recreation Center

The Borough is currently construction a new recreation center, located next to Friendship Field at 501 Franklin Ave. Construction began in early 2021 and is estimated to be completed in 2022. The 38,000 square foot recreation center will include a large gymnasium with a basketball court and walking track, two preschool classrooms, recreation department office space, and two multi-purpose rooms, and group exercise rooms. The new recreation center will be an asset to the community and should only strengthen recreation opportunities in the Borough.



Photo Source: www.phoenixville.org

IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON PARKS & TRAILS

COVID-19 has impacted how public space is viewed. There was an immediate increase in park and trail usage all over the country once people were asked to isolate in their homes in mid-March of 2020. As communities begin to adapt to the new normal, they will have to notice where the values of their residents may have changed, and how public parks and trails may need to be adapted.

There are many other ways that parks and trails may need to be retrofitted if the demand for parks is still their post-pandemic. Communities may look to acquire additional park space, expand their trail networks or retrofit existing public spaces, such as creating slow streets.

COMPREHENSIVE PARK PLAN

15 public parks require planning to ensure that all are safe, maintained and updated to serve as true amenities in the community. The Borough has a Comprehensive Park Plan that lists the recommendations with associated cost estimates, in order of priority. Improvements range in size and financial commitment from a small expenditure of updating signage to a more significant improvement of field lighting.

The Borough also created an implementation matrix, listing the recommendations by park, identifying if they are a short term (1-2 years), medium term (3-4 years) or long term (5+ year) recommendation. The Borough has tracked their success in implementation since 2016. They have accomplished a total of over \$695,000 in improvements to their parks, and approximately \$21,000 in improvements to the Schuylkill River Trail.

It is evident that the Borough is committed to making their parks an asset to the community. They have a plan, and work towards implementing the recommendations. However, with the number of parks that the Borough does have, funding improvements is a large task. This requires the Borough to continue to look into funding opportunities to help implement the recommendations.

What are slow streets?

Slow Streets programs took off quickly in many communities as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic, although they had been around prior to the pandemic. The goal of slow street programs is to increase the amount of public space that is available to the community. Slow Streets are roads that are closed to local traffic only, and have soft barriers so residents are able to use the space as they would any other public space, to walk, jog, play, ect.

PROGRAMMING & RECREATION

Within the Borough and the Phoenixville Region there are numerous recreation activities for all ages. The Borough provides the information for all programming opportunities on their website including additional program specific information and links.

The Current programming the Borough offers at the Civic Center include:

- > Dodgeball
- > Open Gym
- > Coed Soccer
- > Badminton
- > Pickleball
- > Volleyball
- > Fall Volleyball
- > Boot Camp
- > Tai Chi
- > Foundations of Fatherhood
- > Gingerbread House Preschool
- > Gingerbread House Camp
- > Sew Much Fun For Kids
- > Family Night Out
- > Mr. Cool Program
- > Miss Love Program
- > Preschool PE class
- > Card Games

The Borough also runs additional programming at other locations due to current limitations on space and time at the Civic Center including:

- > Jump Start Basketball
- > Women's Basketball
- > Computer Camp
- > Bricks 4 Kidz
- > Science Explorers
- > Women's BC Volleyball

Youth Organizations in the Phoenixville area that provide additional programming options include Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Active Phoenixville Area and Phoenixville Area Positive Attitudes.

In terms of additional adult programming a number of options are provided by Valley Forge Sports, Recreation and Fun Group and Senior Programming is offered by Phoenixville's AARP chapter.

The Borough does offer a variety of programming options for both adults and youth, with 38% of programming being for adults, 54% being youth programming and the remaining 2% is family and senior programming. The Borough does offer a good variety of both passive and active youth programming options. However, adult programming is almost entirely active, with the exception of Foundations of Fatherhood.

An area where the Borough could improve is programming offerings for those who may not speak English, or not as their first language. As the Borough becomes increasingly diverse, this need will grow. Offering programming options that include staff or volunteers that are bi-lingual, will help to provide more inclusive programming options.

With the opening of the new Community Recreation Center in 2022, there will be additional programming opportunities; the Borough's Recreation Department may need to adjust offerings accordingly.



Photo Source: www.phoenixville.org

Housing & Affordability

In the Borough there are **8,888 housing units**, with **95% of the units being occupied** (8,444 households). The **average housing cost is about \$230,500**, and the **average cost to rent a residential unit is about \$1,505 per month**.

QUICK FACTS



\$230K
AVERAGE
HOUSING COST



\$1,505
AVERAGE
RENTAL COST



8,888
HOUSING
UNITS

HOUSING UNITS

Housing Types

Phoenixville has an even split in their housing types, with single family detached, single family attached and multi-family each making up about one third of their housing. In the rest of the Phoenixville Region there are far greater percentages of single-family detached housing, ranging from 65-84%. The Region has 56% single family detached, 24% single family attached, 19% multi-family and 1% mobile homes. It should be noted that the majority of Phoenixville's new residential development are planned to be apartments. In total based on approved developments and those currently in the review process there will be an additional 2,230 residential units added to the Borough.



41%
of housing units are
three or more bedrooms



24%
of housing units
are apartments

HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION

Household Size

Household size of residential units in Phoenixville Borough:



42%
ONE
OCCUPANT



29%
TWO
OCCUPANTS



13%
THREE
OCCUPANTS



16%
FOUR (+)
OCCUPANTS

Owner Occupied vs. Rental Units

Nearly **55% of residential units in the Borough are owner occupied**, where 69% of households in Pennsylvania are owner occupied. Additionally, the Philadelphia, Camden and Wilmington Metro Area has about 67% of households being owner occupied. The percentage of owner occupied units had decreased from 56% in 2013, reaching a low in 2016 at 53% but since then, the percentage of owner occupied units has been on the rise in the Borough.



Photo Source: www.phoenixville.org

Housing Stock Age

Phoenixville will have to consider their aging housing stock, as many of their units were **built 50 or more years ago**. In the Phoenixville Region, Phoenixville has the largest number of older housing stock. These units can present a unique opportunity of maintaining the sense of place and historic character of the neighborhoods. When possible, they should be reused, renovated and retrofitted rather than torn down and replaced, to provide modern housing needs.

Residential Development

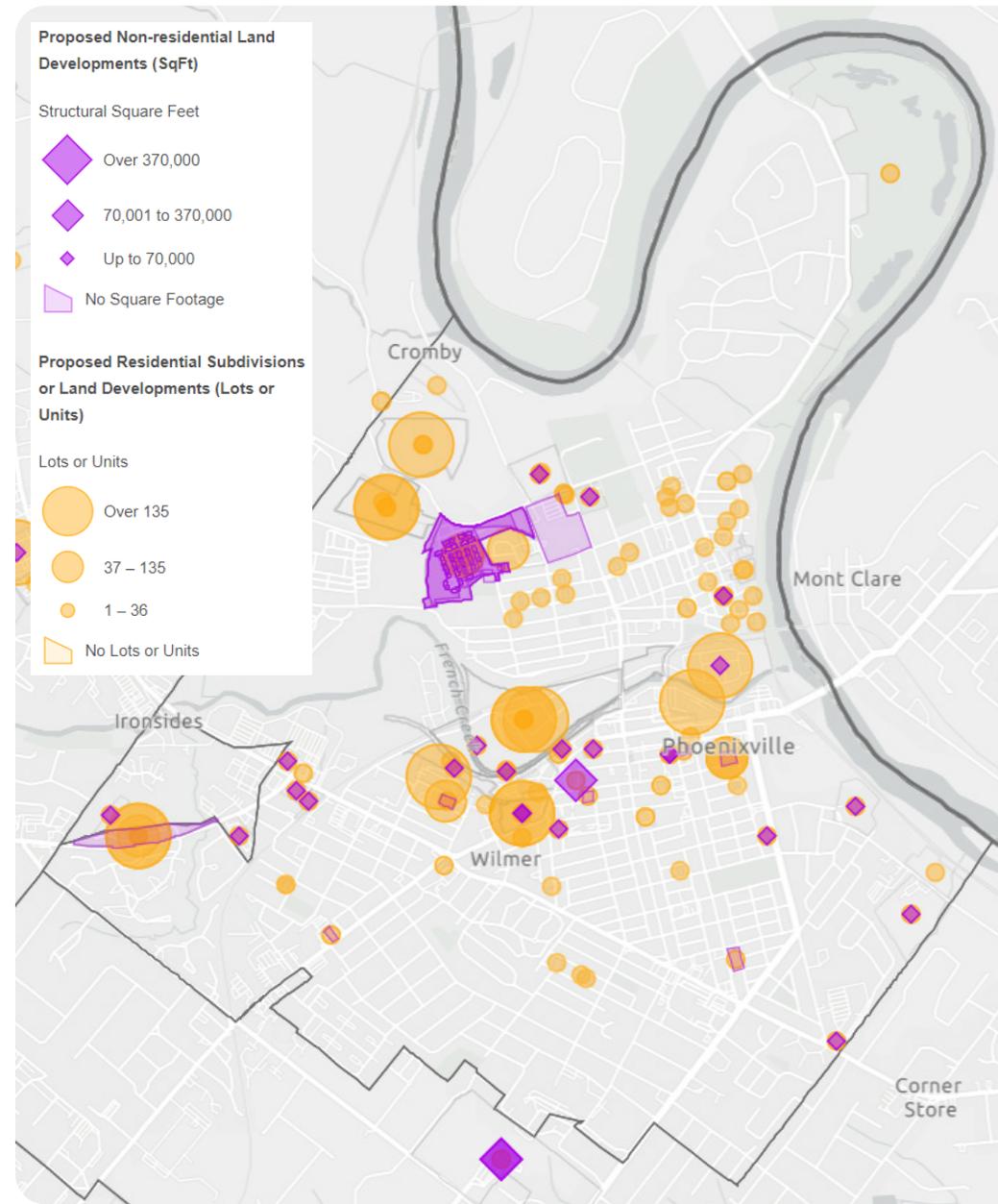
The Phoenixville Regional Comprehensive Plan looked at housing development trends and found that the majority of Phoenixville’s housing stock was built prior to 1970, and about a quarter of the housing stock was built from 1970 to 2000. The Census reported that **from 2010 to 2020 the number of units in the Borough increased by 15.4%** (1,189 units).

Currently the Borough has five approved residential developments with four additional residential projects under review. The five approved projects are:

- > Eland Point Crossing : 5 acre housing development project
- > The Hankin Group (115 Buchanan Street) : 0.9 acre affordable senior housing development
- > Luxor : 4 acre housing development
- > Odessa : 14 acre senior housing development
- > Steelworks: 5.7 acre mixed use project
- > Steelpointe : 37 acre mixed housing development

For up to date information on development projects in the Borough visit:

<https://phoenixville.org/2518/Projects>



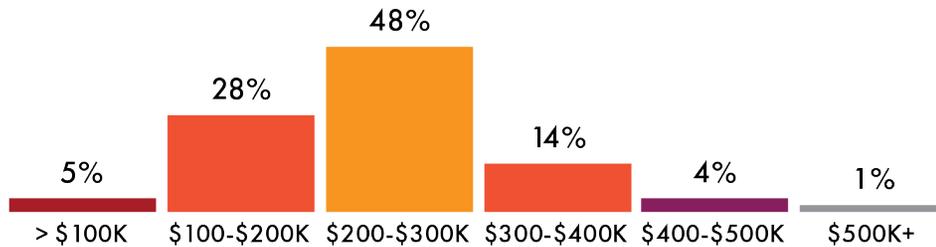
Source: Chester County Planning Commission
<https://chescoplanning.org/PlanReview/Maps.cfm>

HOUSING COSTS

Owner Occupied Units

The median value of an owner occupied unit is \$230,500, with the median for Pennsylvania being \$174,100, and the Philadelphia, Camden, Wilmington Metro Area being \$245,000.

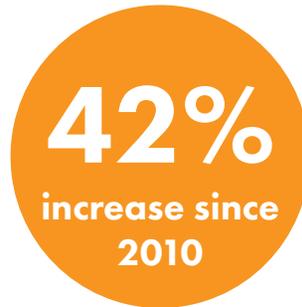
Value of owner occupied units in Phoenixville Borough:



In 2013, the median value of an owner occupied unit was about \$206,000, with a slow gradual increase until 2017 and 2018 was when the Borough saw the largest growth in median housing value.

Rental Units

Median monthly rent was \$944 in 2010 in Phoenixville and increased to \$1,053 in 2015. Since 2015 is when the largest increase occurred where now the median monthly rent is \$1,505, a **42% increase since 2010**. Although there has been an increase in rental prices, there has also been an increase in the number of higher end or luxury apartment units within the Borough, which could explain the increase in median monthly rent.



Affordable & Public Housing Units

Phoenixville Borough has two public housing complexes, King Terrace and Fairview Village. King Terrace is a 50-unit public housing complex for elderly and disabled tenants only. Fairview Village is a 36-unit complex, with 25 public

housing units and 11 income restricted units. Steeltown Village will be adding 48 affordable units, and the Hankin Group development at 115 Buchanan Street will add an additional 50 affordable housing units for seniors. In the Phoenixville Region there is one other unit located in Schuylkill Township, which is Liberty House. Liberty House is a 48-unit residential facility that has one floor of transitional housing for homeless and another floor that is permanent housing units.

In addition to the public housing units there is the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program, which The Housing Authority of the County of Chester administers. The Housing Choice Voucher waiting list has been closed since October 2011, and there has been no notice of when it will reopen.

As of 2016 in Chester County there were 1,470 families on the waiting list for Public Housing, and 430 families for Section 8 Housing. The average waiting time for a family already on the list, was 293 day for an Elderly or Disabled Public Housing Unit and 847 days for a Family Public Housing Unit.

HOUSING RECAP

There are a few items the Borough should consider to create a community characterized by diverse housing options. One item is multigenerational housing options; this structure has seen a recent increase in popularity. Another is accessory dwelling units (a converted garage or an additional space on a property); these have also increased in popularity and can offer an option for multigenerational housing.

A primary housing concern is affordability. With the increase in luxury apartments and other developments, not only have property values increased, but the average rental cost has also seen a significant increase (42% in the last 5 years). The Borough should consider approaches through policy and planning that can help to increase affordability, as there are a number of ways to address this concern.

Economic Development

The income per capita in Phoenixville is about \$35,541, and \$70,560 per household, with **nearly half of the households in the Borough earning less than \$50,000**. Phoenixville has a lower percentage of residents living below the poverty line (10%) than both Pennsylvania (12.8%) and the Philadelphia, Camden and Wilmington Metro Area (12.6%), but is higher than Chester County as a whole.

QUICK FACTS



\$35,541
PER CAPITA



\$70,560
PER HOUSEHOLD



10%
IN POVERTY

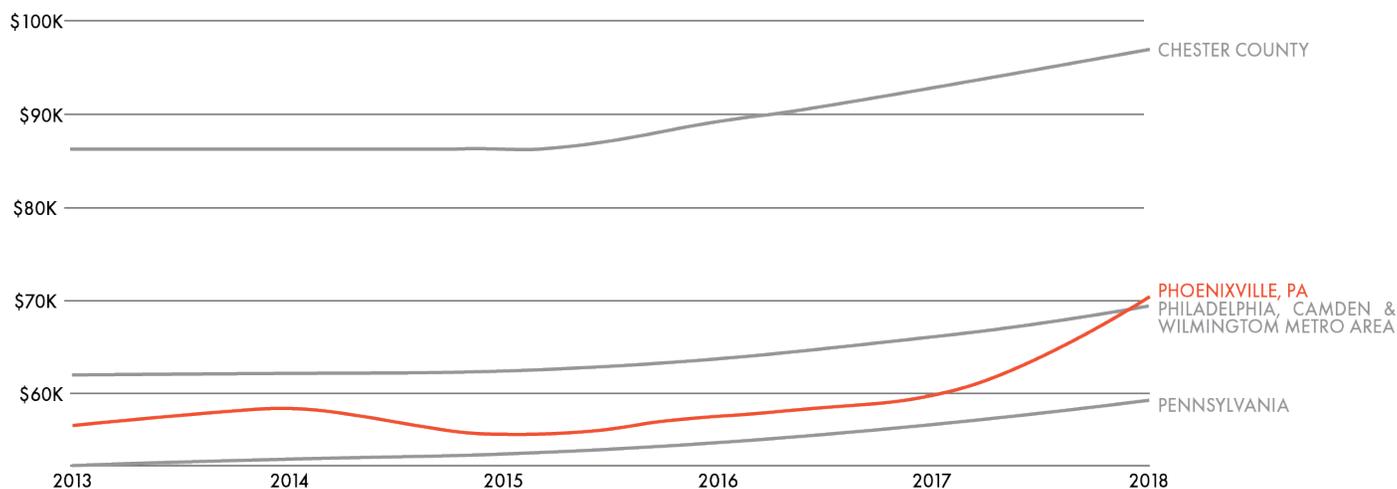
INCOME

Median Household Income

The income per capita in Phoenixville is about 10% higher than Pennsylvania as a whole (\$32,889), and is roughly 5% less than the Philadelphia, Camden and Wilmington Metro Area. These trends are similar to the median household income for the Borough, with the median income being roughly 20% higher than the median household income for Pennsylvania and is 2% higher than the average for the Philadelphia, Camden and Wilmington Metro Area.

Average Household Income of Borough Residents

Since 2013, the median household income of Borough residents has grown by roughly 24%, which is nearly double the growth compared to Chester County (12%), the Metro Area (12%) and Pennsylvania (13%) over the same 5 years.



Poverty

Within the Borough, **10% of households are living below the poverty line** (\$24,000 annual income for a family of four). This is the highest percentage within the Phoenixville Region. The remaining municipalities in the Region have 3-6% of households living below the poverty line. Of the 10% living below the poverty line 14% of the households have children under the age of 18 and 8% of the households are seniors (65 years or older).

EMPLOYMENT

Phoenixville has about **10,308 residents that are employed**. About 1,580 residents of Phoenixville, live and work within the Borough. About 8,728 live in the Borough and work outside of the Borough, and about 9,700 people commute into the Borough for work, but do not live in the Borough. This means that about 15% of residents live and work within the boundaries of the Borough.

Largest Employers in the Borough

EMPLOYER NAME	PRODUCT OF SERVICE	# OF EMPLOYEES
PHOENIXVILLE HOSPITAL CO. LLC	HEALTH CARE	775
PHOENIXVILLE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT	PUBLIC EDUCATION	600
GIANT FOOD STORES LLC	RETAIL: FOOD	215
GGNSC ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES	HEALTH CARE: MANAGED SERVICES	146
BOROUGH OF PHOENIXVILLE	GOVERNMENT: LOCAL	111
GATEWAY PHARMACY	RETAIL: DRUG STORE	71
PMA MEDICAL SPECIALISTS LLC	HEALTH CARE	63
PROFESSIONAL NURSING SERVICES	HEALTH CARE	61
WERNER BUS LINES, INC.	TRANSPORTATION	61
TAGUE LUMBER OF PHOENIXVILLE	RETAIL: HARDWARE	55

Source: Phoenixville Borough
<https://phoenixville.org/298/Demographics>



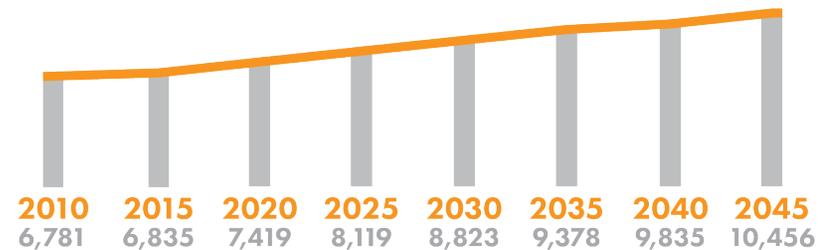
Most Common Occupations in the Borough

The most common occupations of Phoenixville residents are management, office and administration and sales related jobs. However, the largest occupations offered in the Borough are health care and social assistance, professional, scientific and technical services, and manufacturing.



Projected Employment Growth

Over the past ten years the number of **jobs within the Borough has increased by roughly 9%** (2010-2020). Over the next ten years (2020-2030) jobs within the Borough are projected to grow by about 19%. From 2020 to 2045 the projected growth is projected to be 41%. The jobs within the Borough can be impacted by the addition of mixed-use developments as they provide additional job opportunities.



Source: Phoenixville Regional Planning Committee

Potential Impacts of COVID-19 on Employment

It is difficult to predict, and to use past predictions, of employment as COVID-19 has truly impacted the way some jobs look, particularly regarding remote work. Some jobs will always remain with in-person, such as healthcare, but some professional services could remain entirely remote post-pandemic.

This is important when considering potential job growth in the Borough, as the number of jobs within the Borough may completely change due to remote work opportunities. This may impact the importance of holding a job in the Borough and living in the Borough. If someone can hold a job remotely they have the option to pick where they live, which could entirely shift the demographics of the community.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

About 94% of Borough residents that are 25 years or older are high school graduates, and approximately 45% of residents 25 years or older have bachelor's degree or higher. This is important when understanding employment and median income in the Borough, as those with a bachelor's degree earn more on average, not including those who work a trade job. With rising housing costs, the demographics may shift, as it may no longer be affordable for residents earning closer to the median income per capita (\$35,541).

Public Facilities & Amenities

UTILITIES

The Borough provides municipal public sewer service to nearly the entire Borough, except for a few single-family residences on Township Line Road, that will be tied into the sewer extension when facilitated by planned development.

Public Water is provided to nearly all residences in the Borough by the Phoenixville Water Department.

There are a number of broadband and wireless options in the Borough, and there are no gaps in coverage within the Borough.

WASTE & RECYCLING

Solid Waste disposal is managed by the Borough Sanitation Department. The Sanitation department provides trash and recyclable receptacles and a weekly pick-up. The Borough also offers bulk and metal pick-up on Mondays, but must be scheduled by noon the Friday before. There are fees associated with bulk pick up that are listed on the Borough's website.

The Sanitation Department also provides yard waste pick-up and operate the Borough's existing composting site. The current Borough Composting Site only accepts yard waste, and are open for composting drop off.



Photo Source: www.phoenixville.org

RENEWABLE ENERGY

Phoenixville is the first municipality in all of North America to use the hydrothermal carbonization process to treat the communities wastewater. More than a wastewater treatment plant, PXVNEO is a resource recovery system. Hydrothermal carbonization (HTC) converts biomass and organic wastes into value added products. The first phase of the project will focus on converting sewage sludge into the base solid product known as hydrochar, which meets Class A Biosolids requirements. Hydrochar has similar characteristics to biochar and mid-grade coal. The conversion process will greatly increase the solids processing capacity at the wastewater treatment plant, resulting in higher revenues from tip fees, and the potential to sell the hydrochar, eliminating disposal costs altogether.



The second phase of the project introduces food waste into the HTC process. Including food waste as a feedstock has both economic and environmental benefits. The Borough is unique in that they collect and haul their own waste, so diverting food

waste to the HTC process will save the Borough tip fees at the landfill. The Borough WWTP can also generate revenue by charging a tip fee for food waste from outside the Borough. Food waste based hydrochar has a higher energy density than sewage sludge based hydrochar. This higher energy density and lower ash content food waste based hydrochar creates a better opportunity for energy generation. Gasification of the hydrochar generated from the Borough's WWTP can create enough energy to run the WWTP, the HTC process, and still put electricity back on to the grid. Energy generation from hydrochar is a key step in meeting the Borough's goal of being 100% renewable energy by the year 2035.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Stormwater management is important to every community to help mitigate, limit and reduce stormwater runoff. In 2014, the Borough adopted a Stormwater Management Ordinance to help minimize the impacts of new development, redevelopment and other earth disturbance activities. The ordinance aims to protect, sustain and enhance the quality and quantity of all water resources, and promote the health, safety and welfare of all citizens and natural resources and assets within the Borough, Chester County and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

The State also requires the Borough to have a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Program. The MS4 Program has six elements that are known as minimum control measures (MCM). By the Borough following the six MCMs it will result in immediate and long-term reductions in pollutants that are discharged into waterways.

The six minimum control measures include, Borough Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping,

- > Construction Site Runoff Control
- > Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination
- > Post Construction Runoff Control
- > Public Education and Outreach
- > Public Participation and Involvement

FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Borough's Fire Department is currently fully funded by the Borough and has the ability to perform all necessary fire services including high angle and special water rescue training. The staff includes a full-time Chief of Fire and Emergency Services, two full-time staff and twenty five part-time staff. The fire department is in the process of switching to full-time paid staff, and 36 volunteers. The new fire station, that was completed in 2022, includes living quarters for up to 10 personnel and six drive-thru apparatus bays that allow for safe and efficient operation.



Photo Source: www.phoenixville.org

The Phoenix Hose, Hook, and Ladder Company (PHH&L) provides volunteers to support the efforts of the Borough to improve the fire and emergency services delivery system. PHH&L was founded 1874 and is a registered 501(c)(3) non-

POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Borough's Police Department is an Accredited Department and current with the National Standards. The Police Department is composed of three detectives, 31 officers as well as a part-time and a full-time administrative assistant. In 2019, the police department bought a license plate reader and received funding (remaining funds were provided by the Borough) for body cameras. In 2021, several purchases were made to expand their software, and conduct a study by the Center for Public Safety Management for both the Fire Department and Police Department.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

EMS is currently contracted through a third-party provider. This includes the provision of basic and advanced life support services, including one ambulance stationed in the Borough at all times. The Borough is analyzing the feasibility and

operational efficiency of incorporating EMS under the Fire Department in the future. Population growth, call volume, and other key factors will guide decision making.

SCHOOLS

For the 2018-2019 academic year there were 3,906 students enrolled in the Phoenixville Area School District. The school district estimates their enrollment to grow by 2% per year. Based on the school district estimated growth, with the construction of the early education center and Manavon Elementary School, there should be adequate capacity to accommodate student enrollment for the foreseeable future.

The Phoenixville Area School District includes:

- > Phoenixville Early Education Center
- > Schuylkill Elementary School
- > Manavon Elementary School
- > Phoenixville Area Middle School
- > Barkley Elementary School
- > Phoenixville Area High School

Additional Education Institutions in the Borough and nearby:

- > Kiddie Academy of Phoenixville
- > Phoenixville KinderCare
- > Renaissance Academy Charter School
- > Holy Family School
- > Valley Forge Kinder House Montessori School
- > Valley Forge Baptist Academy
- > Kimberton Waldorf School
- > The Camphill School
- > Lansdale School of Business – Phoenixville Campus
- > Technical College High School – Pickering Campus
- > University of Valley Forge



VISION & GOALS

Vision

In 2031, Phoenixville residents will have a community that is a model for sustainability, equity and innovation. They will have more affordable choices of housing in close proximity to jobs, shopping and recreation. Residents will safely walk to stores and offices, past new mixed-use buildings and familiar landmarks. Parks and open space will provide green, tranquil places for community members to gather, socialize and relax.

The vision stems from the goals and recommendations within this Comprehensive Plan to enhance Phoenixville Borough over the next 10 years. The aim of the Plan is not to radically transform the community but to improve the economic, social, and environmental future through incremental measures.

OVERARCHING GOALS

This Plan builds on the past successes of Phoenixville, focusing on components that will bolster the elements most in need of development.

The recommendations increase:



Parks & Recreation



Affordable Housing



Environmental Innovation



Economic Competitiveness



Connectivity

Strengthen Neighborhoods

Phoenixville is distinguished by its neighborhoods that were identified in previous planning efforts. The Plan explores ways to build upon these distinct areas through economic, social, and environmental aspects of sustainability.

What will Phoenixville be like in 10 years?

A truly sustainable Downtown (economic competitive and innovative, social (unique and affordable), environmental (greener and connected)

... with strengthened neighborhoods

... and this is how to get there: (improved walkability, design excellence, innovative infrastructure, ...)

Performance Areas

Phoenixville's diverse, mixed-use and residential districts have each formed a distinct character and an identity that is valued by residents and attractive to visitors and newcomers. Over the past 20 years, Downtown Phoenixville has reemerged as a center of economic vitality. Building on this success, Phoenixville will continue to promote all the elements that are fundamental to keeping the Borough unique and competitive for years to come. This Plan establishes five interrelated performance areas with targeted goals and objectives for each performance area. Performance areas are the building blocks to which the Plan can be defined and measured. They are indicators for how the community is performing economically, socially, and environmentally. The performance areas are interlinking chapters for long-range planning. When each performance area is addressed, the Plan becomes implemented.

Active

Improve the public health through increase access and quality of parks and open space.

Connected

Increase and improve alternative modes of transportation; reduce vehicle miles traveled, improve pedestrian mobility; improve all circulation systems.

Growing

Provide growth and development opportunities; encourage flexibility in space and programming to adapt to future needs.

Sustainable

Incentivize energy efficiencies and conservation to improve quality of life.

Vibrant

Improve identity and character; support innovation and design excellence; beautify and activate the Borough through improved landscaping, streetscapes, and programming.

Many of these performance areas are already well integrated into the fabric of Phoenixville's urban landscape. Phoenixville has a thriving identity, walkable street grid, and many features of a well-planned community. On the other hand, improvements can be made to all performance areas. Water quality can be improved through the installation of stormwater features and reduced impervious cover. Equity can improve by increasing affordable housing, access to transit options, age in place potential, and improved park resources. The Plan has identified and made recommendations where performance areas can improve.

Active

Goal A.1 Implement Regional Trail Plans.

Goal A.2 Magnify the power of Phoenixville's Parks by making open spaces exciting, inviting, and ecologically dynamic.

Goal A.3 Create well rounded parks and recreation opportunities within the Borough.

Connected

Goal C.1 Identify and market Phoenixville Borough as a 15 Minute Community where residents can safely access all their needs within a 15-minute walk.

Goal C.2 Promote and support Complete Streets Standards using alternative modes of transportation through an enhanced network.

Goal C.3 Expand Public Transportation options within the Borough.

Goal C.4 Build upon the Park Phoenixville study recommendations to provide holistic solutions for all parking concerns and needs.

Growing

Goal G.1 In partnership and collaboration with the entire region, and area developers work to define what affordability is to the Phoenixville Region and set a goal to increase the supply of affordable housing units annually for the next decade.

Goal G.2 Review ordinance requirements and solicit broad feedback to provide ordinance provisions to increase affordable housing supply and not place prohibitive or onerous recommendations.

Goal G.3 Provide for a variety of housing types that meets the needs of present and future Phoenixville Borough residents that are suitable for every stage of life.

Goal G.4 Strengthen and enhance Bridge Street character with contextually compatible development.

Goal G.5 For development or redevelopment activity in primarily residential neighborhood streets that may not be able to support a mix of uses with active frontages, encourage features that create visual interest at the pedestrian level.

Goal G.6 Continue to enhance the Borough pedestrian experience through the provision of pedestrian oriented banners, wayfinding, signage, and other related infrastructure.

Goal G.7 Private and public development should contribute to the creation of new, and/or expansion of existing, public realm parks and open space areas throughout the Borough.

Goal G.8 Encourage innovative and moderate density housing for infill development in proximity to downtown Phoenixville.

Goal G.9 Work with regional municipalities to enact municipal and/or inter-municipal purchase of development rights or transfer of development rights ordinances and programs.

Goal G.10 Create and update a regional inventory of brownfields and other underutilized buildings and sites that are suitable for revitalization initiatives.

Goal G.11 Support Phoenixville Borough's prominent role as a hub for culture, dining, entertainment, tourism, events, and employment.

Goal G.12 Promote private investment in and attract new development to Phoenixville.

Goal G.13 Continue to strengthen the Borough's economy.

Sustainable

Goal S.1 Invest in infrastructure to encourage more sustainable choices.

Goal S.2 Embrace and explore innovative solutions to enhance infrastructure and service delivery.

Goal S.3 Continue to provide exemplary emergency services through regular assessments and updates to address evolving community needs.

Goal S.4 Continue making strides in terms of sustainability to be a leader in the region and county.

Vibrant

Goal V.1 Phoenixville’s sense of place is derived from its historic structures and natural areas, within the greater context of the Schuylkill Highlands Landscape. Continue to work to preserve and where possible feature these resources.

Goal V.2 Work towards incorporating green infrastructure by providing bioretention and infiltration services that are interconnected. This will increase the Borough’s green infrastructure land area to support a safe and healthy community.



Source: phoenixvillefirst.org



Phoenixville is...
ACTIVE

In Phoenixville, as in all urban areas, residents, employees, and visitors seek an attractive and convenient system of parks, trails, and open spaces accessible by walking and transit. Phoenixville Borough has the highest density areas within the region and is projected to grow more dense. This requires parks, trails and open space, rightly situated to make ensure Phoenixville remains a place where people want to live, work and play.

The positive effects of parks on people cannot be overstated, particularly in urban areas. Urban living can result in disengagement of people from their natural environment and be detrimental to health and well-being. Parks can be the vital link to nature that people need to be healthy. They offer space for leisure and sport, and their natural green settings help reduce stress. Parks help create community cohesion and identity by providing spaces for gatherings and events, with opportunities for people to meet each other, socialize and bond with neighbors. This phenomenon was never more witnessed than during the COVID 19 pandemic where residents visited parks and trails at an unprecedented level.

Parks & Recreation

The preservation of open space and recreation in Phoenixville Borough parks is essential to the quality of life of its residents. Recreation in Phoenixville includes both natural areas - for nature walks, bird watching, hiking, biking and kayaking through Black Rock Sanctuary, as well as activities needing constructed amenities - such as playgrounds, ballfields, and courts through the neighborhood parks.

Phoenixville has 15 borough-owned parks that constitute about 72 acres of total park space, nearly 94 acres of homeowner's association open space, and 119 acres of open space associated with Black Rock Sanctuary. Owned by the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, the Black Rock Boat Launch provides boat access to the Schuylkill River. It is located less than a half mile north of the entrance to Black Rock Sanctuary on Black Rock Road. The Phoenixville Area School District provides areas for recreation through their campus along with

the Technical College High School Pickering Campus which makes its fields available for use by the Phoenixville Area Soccer Club. Park and recreation lands are located on private facilities such as DeSanno Field which further supplements the Borough's park, recreation and open space offerings.

These local resources are supplemented by over 14,000 acres of federal, state, and county parks through French Creek State Park, Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site, Lock 60 at Schuylkill Canal Park, Marsh Creek State Park, Valley Forge National Historic Park, and Warwick County Park. These public parks provide a broad diversity of outdoor recreational and educational activities to Borough residents through a relatively short commute.

At the corner of Franklin and Filmore Avenue construction started in April 2021 for the Borough's new recreation center. The recreation center includes a large gymnasium with a basketball court and walking track, other multipurpose rooms, classrooms, and an exercise room. The facility will also house the recreation department for the Borough.

When considering the overall park acreage Phoenixville Borough appears to have adequate acreage set aside for its residents based on National Standards. However, based on the projected 2030 population of 22,482 residents and feedback from public input the community may wish to supplement its acreage particularly closer to the town center.

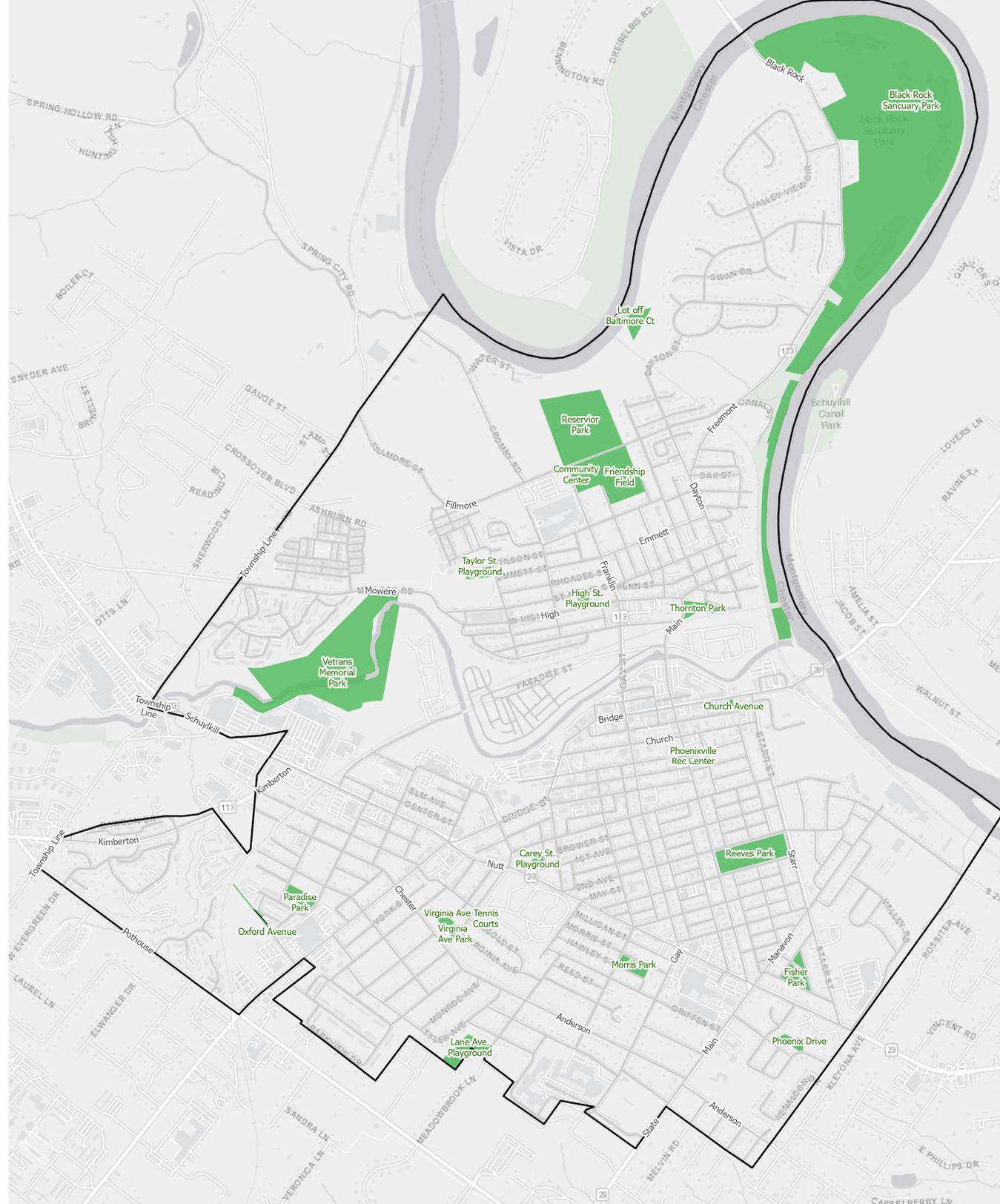
PROXIMITY/LOCATION

The type and pattern of parks and open spaces best suited to urban populations is different from the suburban model of large tracts of land filled with fixed, single-use facilities. This plan recognizes that while the majority of the Borough has neighborhood parks the town center could benefit from an additional park or open space. This opportunity may come in the form of incorporating a plaza, green or parklet in a redevelopment site or possibly as an area to be enhanced as part of the Farmers Market Area or in connection with the SRT. Phoenixville

Borough needs to provide a system of parks and open spaces at the core of every neighborhood and urban area, provided through a combination of public and private efforts. The Borough should also consider temporary pop-up parks within parking lots or on-street space conversions.

ADMINISTRATION & PROGRAMMING

When people think of parks, they think of children as the main users, but people of all age ranges benefit from using outdoor spaces. Today's parks need to be multi-generational and multi-functional, requiring designs and plans that create spaces that accommodate all ages. Communities must balance the diverse needs of empty nesters seeking outdoor space in which to relax, young adults seeking a space for an evening kickball game, teenagers who want to hang out with their friends, and young children who want to play. Various experiences can be integrated and overlapped, incorporating seating options, shaded areas, viewing gardens, open spaces conducive to informal games, and a playground. Integrated experiences allow all community members to enjoy the space simultaneously.



The Borough does , and must continue, monitoring how to activate the parks, offering a variety of year-round recreational and leisure activities for all ages, in every neighborhood. The Borough's Parks and Recreation Department offers a variety of active, passive, and non-competitive programs that currently serve many interests. The new Borough Recreation Center will provide updated indoor areas that were previously lacking, and open a host of opportunities for new recreation programming within the Borough. Adjusting recreational programming to residents' needs is often necessary. This should be carefully evaluated over the coming years given the significance of Phoenixville's changing population and distribution within the Borough neighborhoods. One area for consideration is program communication and offerings within the Borough given the increase in Spanish speaking residents.

Phoenixville also offers many community events that attract numerous visitors and satisfy all age groups. Some examples include: First Fridays, Food Truck Festival, Summer Music Series, Movie in the Park, Firebird Festival, Blobfest and various seasonal festivals.

MAINTENANCE

The Borough takes pride in their parks by making improvements that not only help to enhance them and promote safety, but also help to develop a more inclusive environment. An example of this is the all-abilities playground that was completed at Reeves Park in 2019. Phoenixville Borough's Public Works Department is responsible for the maintenance of all the Borough owned park land. Phoenixville's park infrastructure is robust with some amenities reaching the life expectancy or just needing routine maintenance. The Borough continues to monitor its long-term equipment replacement needs through annual capital improvements planning.

TRAILS

Trails serve an important role within the transportation and recreation network by providing convenient, safe routes for biking and walking that promote equity, vibrancy, health and resiliency. They enable people of all ages and abilities to comfortably travel for any purpose including access to work and services. The trails within the Borough provide an opportunity for visitors to experience Phoenixville and the trailheads provide gateways into the community. Conversely the trail systems within the Borough offer an opportunity to connect to regional open space outside of the community. Similarly to parks, during the COVID 19 pandemic trail usage increased exponentially within the Borough.

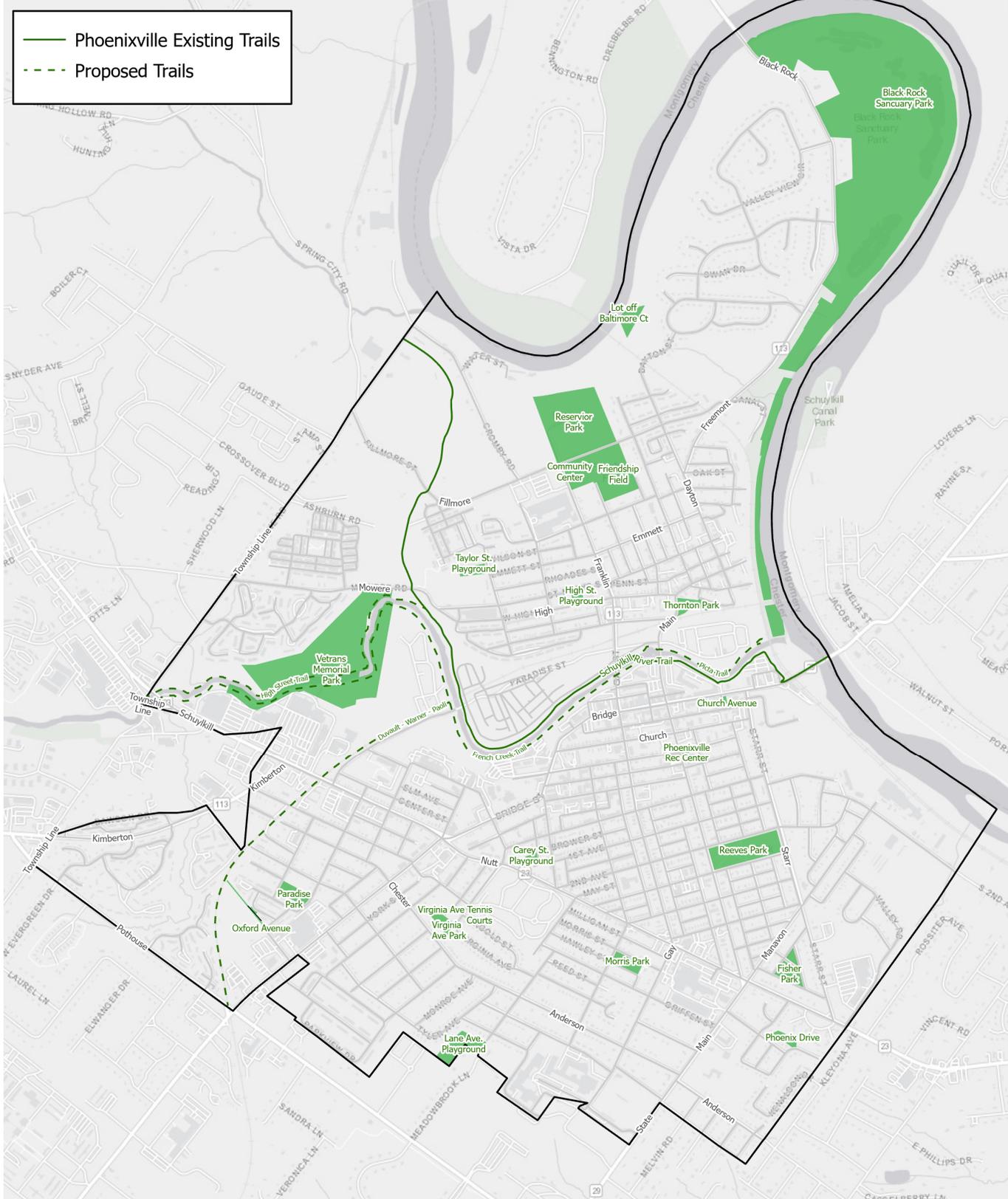
The Phoenixville Region is developing a network of trails that allows travelers to visit locations both within- and outside of, the region. There are opportunities to improve pedestrian connections from surrounding neighborhoods to downtown Phoenixville and to surrounding villages in the Region. This network will remove the islands associated with the bicycle infrastructure identified in the DVRPC Plan. The following trail network is currently in progress:

- > **The Schuylkill River Trail (SRT)** is a multi-use recreational path following the Schuylkill River stretching 128 miles from the southernmost foothills of the Appalachians to tidal lands in Philadelphia. Stretching across four counties and numerous communities, it is a regional connector that drives heritage and recreation tourism. The SRT is also now being utilized by commuters as an alternative transportation route. Along with other project partners, Phoenixville Borough completed the Phoenixville and Mont Care Connector which addressed one of the most challenging gaps in the entire system. The project also provided an opportunity to improve one of the gateways into Phoenixville Borough by repainting the columns, adding murals, decorative lighting, and a gateway sign.

- > **The Schuylkill River Water Trail** is a federally designated National Recreation Trail and extends from Schuylkill County to the confluence with the Delaware River in Philadelphia. This 147-mile length trail has an access point near Black Rock Sanctuary.
- > **The Phoenix Iron Canal and Trail Association** has been working with the Borough and multiple landowners to establish a formal trail along the Schuylkill River that would connect the SRT and Black Rock Sanctuary.
- > **The French Creek Trail** is another regional trail that looks to extend into Phoenixville, where it will connect to the SRT and west to the Horseshoe and Big Woods Trails and French Creek State Park. Trail access in the Borough is yet to be obtained.

PARKS & RECREATION PLANNING

In 2020, Phoenixville Borough completed an update to its 2015 Park Plan which includes a listing of all park amenities, completed projects and recommended improvements for each park. The Plan also prioritizes the list of recommended improvements and prioritizes them into short, medium, and long terms over the course of a five-year period. As part of future evaluations, the Borough should consider how to elevate each park experience with some of the below criteria:



Access

The Borough has many parks within its local neighborhoods but when residents arrive cannot access all equipment or the equipment is in an area that is not connected to by a path. Each park would benefit from an American with Disabilities Act (ADA) evaluation to determine access and identify any risks.

Activation

The Borough needs to evaluate which programs are conducted at the park and the demographic that it serves. A review of the park features may include whether or not the amenity is still necessary or if it could be replaced or reused to bring more residents to use the park.

Neighborhood Parks as a Place

Parks can be the defining feature of the neighborhood. Each park should be evaluated on how it can be elevated to be an outside room (space) for the residents of the neighborhood, providing opportunities for recreation for all age groups. Each park should be evaluated to determine if portions of the park provide upgraded landscaping to soften its edges or whether local art could be added to a wall or as a centerpiece to a garden.

Enhanced Tree & Natural Landscaping

Natural landscapes provide vital undisturbed habitat for plant and animal species. The Borough should evaluate the it's parks to determine where natural landscaping installations of native trees, plants and wildflowers could reduce maintenance to existing turf lawns, assist with filtering pollutants, and prevents erosion.

Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure encompasses a variety of technologies that replicate the natural hydrologic cycle and reduce the volume of storm water entering the sewer system. The Borough should examine where they might use green infrastructure techniques to allow runoff to naturally infiltrate back into the groundwater through the use of rain gardens, vegetative swales, and other methods to remove impermeable surfaces.

Renewable Energy

There are many opportunities to include renewable energy technology and energy efficiency techniques into site design that may include waterless urinals, sensor faucets, sky lights, low cut-off light figures, solar or small wind turbines to power for on-site energy generation.

While most of the Borough neighborhoods have parks within easy access, they should continuously be reviewed to determine whether they fit their overall purpose, in the complete system of providing up-to-date close to home recreation and open space that matches the projected neighborhood demographics.

Goals & Objectives

Goal SA1 Implement Regional Trail Plans.

Objective A.1.1

Establish trail corridors through permanent open space or by easement, and construct the missing trail gaps in the overall regional trail network.

Objective A.1.2

Improve opportunities to connect trail system with the existing neighborhood pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

Objective A.1.3

Work with trail partners to expand wayfinding signage that identifies points of interest within Phoenixville Borough.

Goal A.2 Magnify the power of Phoenixville's Parks by making open spaces exciting, inviting, and ecologically dynamic.

Objective A.2.1

Provide human-scaled outdoor rooms (spaces) for pause and contemplation. Incorporate "ecosystem services" that benefit the Borough, such as reducing

the strain on aging storm water systems, providing critical habitat for wildlife, and improving air quality.

Objective A.2.2

Improve the pedestrian accessibility to allow people to walk freely through the park amenities and through the space to local destinations.

Objective A.2.3

Consider improving park edges by adding greenery and art to extend into the street to highlight the parks' presence and extend an inviting reach.

Objective A.2.4

Explore how to cater to all ages within the Borough parks.

Objective A.2.5

Promote universal design to provide access to all parks and recreation spaces.

Objective A.2.6

Incorporate ways to elevate neighborhood parks more prominently through art and programming to attract new people to the Borough to be a fundamental driver to economic development.

Objective A.2.7

Promote the new recreation center and neighborhood parks for community residents and visitors. These public spaces should be actively programmed with a variety of social, cultural, artistic, entertainment, and sports activities along with special events.

Goal A.3 Create well rounded parks and recreation opportunities within the Borough.

Objective A.3.1

Add to the existing park land by exploring locations within the Town Center.

Objective A.3.2

Consider activating parking lots or entrances to public buildings by designating space for pop-up or mobile services and amenities like health trucks, food trucks, library mobiles or yoga and other exercise work-outs.

Objective A.3.3

Consider cultivating a culinary incubator associated with the community gardens that would include an industrial kitchen and possible greenhouse for local gardeners and chefs to develop their skills and businesses.

Objective A.3.4

Consider the use of temporary pocket parks in conjunction with Bridge Street events.

Objective A.3.5

Consider coordinating with local artists to host a temporary art trail along the SRT.



Phoenixville is...

CONNECTED

Transportation & Connectivity

Phoenixville Borough is in the northeastern corner of Chester County with regional highway access provided nearby via US Route 422, US Route 202, and Interstate 76. PA Routes 23, 29 and 113 provide major routes that travel through the Borough. Street design in the Borough reflects three distinct eras, predicated on mode of transportation: pre-automobile streets, mid-century, and modern/new-urban streets. The Borough provides many alternative modes of travel that connect residents and visitors through and outside the Borough as highlighted in this chapter.



WALKING

With nearly 80 miles of sidewalk Phoenixville Borough is a walkable community receiving an EPA Walkability rate of 14.95 out of a possible 20. Generally, the closer to the Town Center the higher the walkability score. Pedestrian Islands where there is no connection to Phoenixville's sidewalk network is in the periphery in the Mowere Road and Kimberton Road Areas. The Borough's historic development pattern and sidewalk infrastructure coupled with the local and regional trail system provide residents and visitors many alternatives to walk within the community. In October 2019, the Borough prepared Walk Phoenixville, a Borough-wide Pedestrian and Accessibility Plan that studied its walking infrastructure and supporting policies to address weaknesses in its network. Of note, much of the Borough's sidewalks were developed prior to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and do not meet current standards, long-term maintenance issues persist given the age of the infrastructure, and most of the pedestrian vehicular conflicts occur on Bridge Street.

Continued development and growth within the Borough will drive increased demand for improved walkability. The Plan establishes recommendations to effectively budget for future maintenance, capital improvements, and policy

updates that will improve walkability and accessibility. Three Priority Corridors were identified based on engineering analysis and local knowledge of the routes most traveled in the Borough which include:

1. Bridge Street and Main Street
2. Mowere Road and connection with Schuylkill River Trail, Veteran's Park, and Northridge Drive
3. Nutt Road and Gay Street Intersection



Detailed descriptions, desired recommendations, along with project mapping and graphics are found in Chapter 5 of the Walk Phoenixville Plan that will aid in implementation.



BIKING

The Borough does not have any dedicated on-road bicycle facilities; bicyclists must share the road with motorists. The combination of narrow roads and on-street parking makes conditions only comfortable for skilled riders closer to the Town Center. Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) did identify many residential streets on the periphery of the Borough suitable for most riders. These rider “islands” are great for local recreational activity, but as the roadways narrow the closer to the town center the lack of bicycle infrastructure makes it difficult to connect to connections outside of the local neighborhood.

The Schuylkill River Trail passes through the center of town, which provides safe off-road accommodations for bicyclists and pedestrians and bridges some of the gap associated with the rider “islands.” Providing more visible bicycle infrastructure and connections to the Schuylkill River Trail in the downtown could provide an incentive to break-up the rider “islands” and provide an alternative to the automobile and alleviate congestion.



DRIVING

Traffic congestion in Phoenixville Borough has been a concern for many years and with conditions anticipated to become more severe Chester County prepared a Northern Relief Study in 2001, now referred to as the Ashburn Road Extension. This study considered methods to improve the existing road network and improve bypass options around Phoenixville Borough. The Ashburn Road Extension recommends connecting Routes 113 and 23 by creating and road connection through North Phoenixville. A mix of public and private funding has been utilized to implement the recommendations of this study.



PARKING

With increased residents and visitors to the Borough, a perceived parking inadequacy was raised. To address the perceived parking problem, the Borough prepared Park Phoenixville study to assess the existing conditions and development recommendations and strategies for the future. The Borough continues to implement this plan, through a comprehensive range of short-term and long-range parking recommendations. Some specific recommendations include: 2-hour parking limits to promote turnover in the commercial core, shared parking expansion with private lot owners, and employee parking to incentivize employees to use permits and discourage use of on-street parking.

Table 3-1. Existing Parking Capacity and Utilization in Commercial Core

Parking Facility	Parking Capacity	85% Effective Capacity	Peak * Utilization	Surplus Parking	Effective Surplus
Prospect Street Lot (#1)	90	77	87	3	-10
Main & Bridge Street Lot (#2)	36	31	35	1	-4
Mill Street Lot (#3)	78	66	70	8	-3
Taylor Alley Lot (#4)	97	82	81	16	2
Borough Hall Lot (after 7 PM)	80	68	60	20	8
Phoenix Village Public Lot	129	110	9	120	101
Customers Bank Lot (after 5 PM)	128	109	1	127	108
Bridge Street On-Street (all blocks)	159	135	137	22	-1
Other Commercial Core Streets	270	230	236	34	-6
Total Existing Capacity & Utilization	1,091	908	716	351	195

* Peak conditions occur weekends 7-9 PM

Table from Park Phoenixville of Capacity and Utilization in Commercial Core

Parking requirements for a development are based on an analysis, conducted by the developer (using accepted methodologies), and submitted to the Borough. To incentivize economic development in the Town Center zoning district, the Borough does not have parking requirements except when changes in use to existing buildings occur.

The Borough staff manages the parking meter program in its municipally owned lots and a permit program for residents and businesses located downtown and in the surrounding areas. The Borough will begin to manage the new 120 parking space surface parking lot and the 90 on-street parking spaces associated with the Steelpointe project a North Main Street.

The Borough should continue to investigate solutions for parking adequacy. Some areas to look at include: a study of peak event parking, identification of underutilized surface lots on the perimeter of the community and continued active transportation improvements. Park Phoenixville suggested long-term parking strategies that include a build out parking analysis based on Borough zoning, and preparing a feasibility study for future parking locations that may include structured parking. The study also noted the Borough needs to consider the potential parking reductions associated with reduced vehicle ownership, ride-sharing businesses, and active transportation measures.

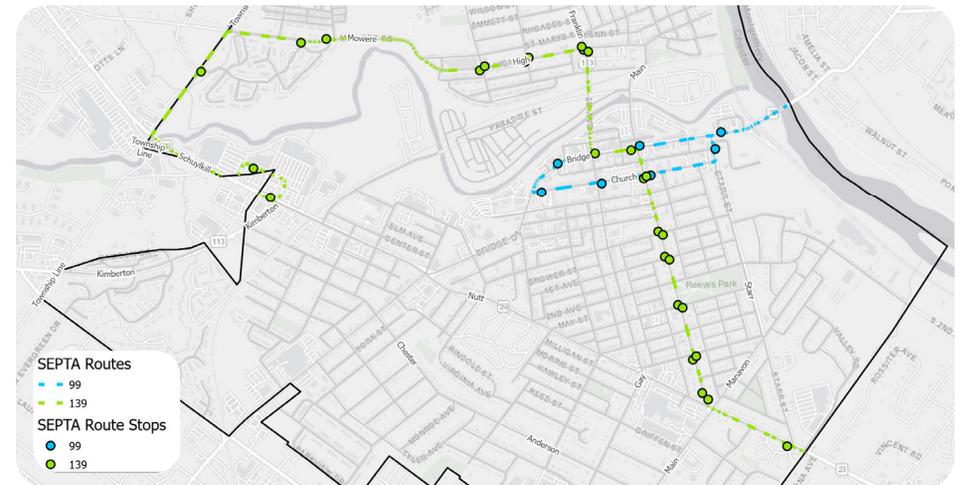
A consideration that was not raised in the parking study is rethinking the allocation of on-street parking and curb space in Phoenixville Borough's downtown. The contested curb and on-street parking in the town center is under pressure from new demands that include pick-up and drop-off services or outside dining and delivery services over the last five years, given the exponential growth experienced during the pandemic. The Borough should shift their thinking for downtown curb and on-street parking and design with people in mind instead of vehicles. The people-centric focus for transportation planning and policy is gaining momentum; recognizing that communities derive economic, cultural, and social strength and resilience by planning for people rather than vehicles. Phoenixville Borough should determine how to prioritize among street and curb functions

based on local context and provide flexibility as new technologies, emerging travel behaviors and evolving regulations co-mingle. Allowing dynamic use of the curb space over the course of the day based on the priority may include public transit space in the morning, delivery space in the mid-day, vehicular travel in the evening, and outside dining and pick-up and drop-off locations for nighttime. Bridge Street should be studied for better on-street parking and curb management to better allocate this space to alleviate traffic congestion as spill over traffic may be caused when motorists cannot access for safe drop-off or pick-up and double-park in the main lane or when vans or trucks cannot find suitable delivery zones.



PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Phoenixville Borough is served by two Southeastern Pennsylvania Transit Authority (SEPTA) bus routes, Route 99, which provides regular transit service between Royersford and King of Prussia and includes stops in Audobon and Norristown. Route 139 also serves Phoenixville through stops along Route 23. The Borough

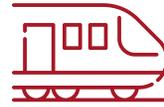


was once served by Route 205, which connects to Paoli Station. The Plan strongly recommends the return of this route to serve the Borough residents. In general, the SEPTA routes are circuitous between major destinations which leads to long commute times. Compounding this issue is the lack of supporting infrastructure in the form of appealing bus shelters, WIFI on buses, bicycle parking, etc. further reducing ridership. Regardless of these issues, Phoenixville's ridership remains high with more than 50 riders per day to qualify as a transportation hub in the Chester County's Phoenixville Region Multimodal Transportation Study. The hub designation promotes improved amenities to increase the ridership experience. Recommendations are provided within the study for better bus stop design and curbside amenities along with other safety, circulation, and comfort suggestions for its riders.



MICRO TRANSIT

Effective micro transit can act as a complement to the fixed route service. It can help meet the mobility needs of customers who may have lost their bus route, or who live beyond a reasonable walking distance to the closest bus route. On-demand technology using smaller vehicles offers a low-cost innovative solution to serve the Borough. On-demand micro transit service delivery methods range from complete ownership to fully contracted, depending on whether SEPTA or Phoenixville Borough would consider ownership or would have to be provided through a private partner. On-demand micro transit can be designed to follow a geographic corridor or focus on several neighborhood hubs. A starting point for consideration is to test the need for micro transit in those areas that were removed from SEPTA's fixed transit route. While the Borough has several hub destinations to build a micro transit system, the residents might benefit from a regional study associated with the municipalities that participate in the regional comprehensive plan efforts to expand the geographic service footprint and assist in defraying overall costs. A micro transit study should consider a range of assessments including quantitative statistics regarding service areas, demographics, projected ridership and costs as well as qualitative characteristics, including convenience, modal integration, future partnerships and public support.



RAIL SERVICE

Commuter rail service to the Phoenixville area ceased in the 1980s. The reestablishment of this rail service from Phoenixville to Norristown has been studied several times but there has been no additional funding allocated to this effort beyond the studies. Reestablishing rail service should remain an economic priority given the increased population within the Phoenixville region coupled with the traffic congestion the region experiences.

In April 2022, the Chester County Planning Commission



Photo Source: septa.org

unanimously approved a resolution for the Schuylkill River Passenger Rail Authority. This resolution was previously approved by both Montgomery County and Berks County. This effort helps to restore rail service between Philadelphia and Reading. Phoenixville Borough should support the efforts of the Authority and explore the opportunity to serve as station location.

15 Minute Neighborhood

BACKGROUND

What is a 15-Minute Neighborhood? It is a neighborhood where residents have safe and convenient access by walking, bicycling, or riding transit to many of the places and services they use daily, including local markets and other neighborhood serving businesses, restaurants, schools, and parks within a half-mile walking distance. It is a neighborhood where residents can have a high quality of life without needing to own a personal vehicle. Living in a 15-Minute Neighborhood has many benefits. Residents have more personal disposable income when vehicle ownership and maintenance is not a factor and have the potential for improved personal health when shopping and errands can be completed within a short walk or bike ride. 15-Minute Neighborhoods works

to remove income and accessibility barriers and improve equality. There is the potential for improved local air quality with reduced vehicle emissions, and there are increased opportunities for social interaction between neighbors. A 15-Minute Neighborhood is also supportive of growing a local economy where residents in the area can easily walk or bike to meet their daily needs and support local businesses.

PHOENIXVILLE'S 15-MINUTE NEIGHBORHOODS

Phoenixville Borough has witnessed a significant amount of new and re-development over the past decade. Some of its neighborhoods are being infused with new residents in a more compact format. Phoenixville is served by an extensive pedestrian network of sidewalks and trails, and access to transit through most of the community. Schools and parks are evenly distributed throughout the community with regional open space on its edge. The community offers a variety of celebrations and programming. The transformation is not complete, with both opportunities and obstacles in the future. The previous Borough plan, and the Chester County comprehensive plan, provide a foundation to build 15-minute neighborhoods.

2011 Phoenixville Borough Comprehensive Plan

The previous comprehensive plan delineated the Borough into 15 distinct neighborhoods based on common development and streetscape patterns. A more detailed neighborhood analysis was performed to identify residential and non-residential densities, street composition, and planning issues. Utilizing this information, the neighborhoods were researched on how they could transform a zoning ordinance update.

Chester County Landscapes 3

"Our vision for Chester County focuses on place, choice, and community. We are striving to embrace places, enhance choices, and engage communities as we continue to balance preservation and growth in the County."

The steps to achieve the vision are outlined in recommendations with the goal areas of Preserve, Protect, Appreciate, Live, Prosper, and Connect. Phoenixville Borough is defined as an Urban Center in Landscapes 3 – a historic downtown and established neighborhood that serves as a civic, economic and population center. Goals for Urban Centers:

- > Substantial growth
- > Adaptive reuse of historic buildings/revitalization of brownfields & greyfields
- > Development compatibility
- > Pedestrian-oriented downtown
- > Transit-oriented development
- > Mix of housing options – all types of housing and income levels
- > Upgraded utilities to support revitalization
- > Streets designed to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety & mobility
- > Small parks, central greens, and active recreational facilities

DEFINING THE 15-MINUTE NEIGHBORHOOD: SHED FRAMEWORK

Traditionally planners have focused on the average 5-minute walk shed as the scale of a neighborhood. The 5-minute walk shed remains important but requires the 15-Minute Neighborhood of several neighborhoods nested together, coalescing at a scale that can meet all its resident's daily and weekly needs.

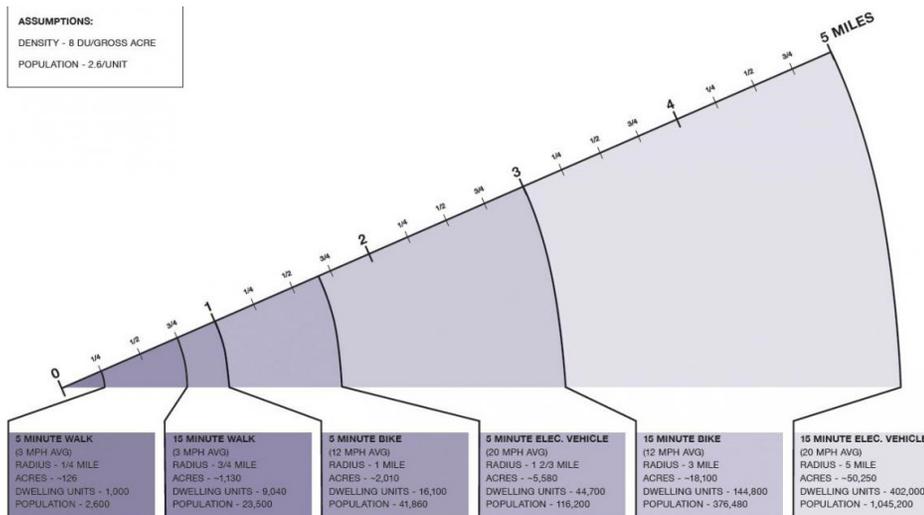
The 15-minute neighborhood implies three levels of walk sheds. Within each of these walk sheds, a gross density of at least eight living spaces an acre may be assumed, including open space, civic facilities, and a variety of housing types. At a lower density, services will be more spread out and/or smaller in scale.

The three shed levels are:

1. The 5-minute walk shed, a quarter mile from center to edge, indicating the individual neighborhood. Each quarter-mile shed must have ordinary

daily needs, a range of housing types, and a center (generally a public square, park or main street with minimal mixed use). Small businesses may be located at this level.

2. A 15-minute walk shed, three-quarters of a mile from center to edge, is the maximum distance that most people are going to walk. Within this shed should be located a full mix of uses, including a grocery store, pharmacy, general merchandise, and public schools. Larger parks that serve multiple neighborhoods will be found here, in addition to larger employers—but not necessarily the region’s biggest. The 15-minute walk shed provides access to regional transit. This shed is similar in size to a 5-minute bicycle shed, and the bicycle can be used to transport purchased goods. The shed provides for weekly and daily needs.
3. The 15-minute bicycle shed would give access to major cultural, medical, and higher education facilities. Regional parks and major employers can be found here. Access to regional transit may be available. This shed provides access to more specialized needs. The total extent of the 15-Minute Neighborhood is therefore defined by the three-mile radius of the 15-minute bike ride.



CREDIT: DPZ CoDes

These standards provide a framework for a Phoenixville to work within. Some neighborhoods may achieve higher density such as the downtown core. Similarly, not every use will be provided within each neighborhood.

DEFINING THE 15-MINUTE NEIGHBORHOOD: CONNECTIVITY

Beyond density, a walkable urban fabric is necessary to make the 15-Minute Neighborhood work. That implies a connected network of thoroughfares (streets, passages, paths, and trails) and small blocks knitting together neighborhoods. A 15-minute walk encompasses typically seven typical neighborhoods. The 5-minute bike ride slightly bigger, can include as many as 13.

Impediments

There are bound to be problem areas within the 15-Minute Neighborhood. The street network will have interruptions and places of discontinuity; pockets of lower walkability will mar the pedestrian experience. Large schoolyards and industrial sites with inactive building frontages are typical examples of these pockets.

Almost certainly the walk shed will include at least one major barrier, such as an arterial thoroughfare. These stunt the neighborhood experience on the adjacent blocks. Barriers can reduce the effective size of the shed and impact the services available within the 15-Minute Neighborhood.

Arterial thoroughfares can be redesigned—or partly redesigned—to provide access to vital services on the other side. Zoning can change and parking lots redeveloped to reduce interruptions. Imperfections can also serve a purpose. A less valuable area could be an opportunity for lower rents and gritty attractions like a nightclub that may be inappropriate elsewhere in the 15-Minute Neighborhood.

Phoenixville Borough should look to identify the physical impediments to its walk sheds and redesign to avoid physical interruptions in the walking path. Further the Borough ordinances should be examined to ensure that the provisions are requiring unintended gaps along walking routes due to no sidewalks or crossing across access drives or driveways.

Quality of Walk

The 15-Minute Neighborhood is not just defined by the ability to walk or bike for 15 minutes, but also by the quality of the pedestrian experience. Truly attractive and useful destinations, people are likely to walk longer distances. If walk appeal is low, most people will tend to get into their cars. While driving is inevitably an option, for health and environmental reasons it should not be the default choice. Improvements to the streetscapes in the town center along with the priority walking areas need to be planned, designed and constructed to improve the quality of walk.

TRANSIT AND ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Transit service is a need that should be fulfilled in the 15-Minute Neighborhood but using it to define the concept presents serious difficulties. An individual riding transit needs to walk to the station, wait for the train or bus, ride the train or bus, then walk to the final destination. That trip will be different for every location and destination and will depend on a level of service that changes. How far a person can get in 15 minutes using transit depends on too many variables to provide the discipline of a shed. Walking and biking do not depend on these variables and are essentially door to door. Although transit must be promoted in the 15-Minute Neighborhood, including transit in the definition makes for an apples-to-oranges comparison that introduces excessive slack into the concept.

Two kinds of transit destinations may be incorporated into the 15-Minute Neighborhood—community transit stops, which are primarily accessed through human-powered mobility, and commuter transit stations, which are accessed by car. The commuter transit stations connect the 15-Minute Neighborhood sectors and allow access to transit from more distant locations.

Another consideration is the growing usage of electric bikes in the 15-Minute Neighborhood. Small electric vehicles are an inexpensive and practical transportation mode with a future and should be accommodated. However, these vehicles may average 20 mph—generating a five-mile radius or nearly 80 square miles. Therefore, while they should be encouraged as a good way to get around, they should not be used to define the 15-Minute Neighborhood.

15 MINUTE NEIGHBORHOOD KEY ELEMENTS

There are many elements that 15-Minute Neighborhoods have in common regardless of where they are happening throughout the world. Several plans layout the three D's of urban walkability: Distance, Destination, and Density. These factors represent having many areas that are easy to walk in a comfortable distance, presence of the most needed business and facilities destinations, and a dense enough resident, employer, and visitor population to financially support all the amenities in a neighborhood. As Phoenixville progresses toward a 15-Minute Neighborhood concept, careful planning is necessary so that the character of the community is not lost. Key elements that assist in providing layered strategies to ensure that the character is not lost are categorized and described below:

Connectivity & Mobility

Access for all ages and abilities, specific locations for walking and bicycling improvements, personal vehicle loading areas, and a plan of action of how to build or obtain them (including bike share).

Housing

Opportunities, partnerships, and locations for a variety of housing types and programs to help residents with the rehabilitation of existing homes.

Jobs

Strategies that improve and support existing business and align them with neighborhood needs, as well as development of new neighborhood businesses and jobs. Recommendations for marketing and promoting the neighborhood as a short ride to regional job centers.

Destinations & Community Events

A hierarchy of potential places and events that support a strong and vibrant community life, providing gathering opportunities and amenities for a variety of ages and interests, including celebrations, events, and food markets.

Marketing & Branding

Strategies to improve the identity of the neighborhood. Priority recommendations that highlight unique neighborhood “brand” that increases awareness of the various neighborhoods.

Healthy Living

Opportunities to increase access to healthy food for people living and working in the neighborhood. Identification of critical food access partners and locations for food production and sales.

PHOENIXVILLE BOROUGH A 15 MINUTE NEIGHBORHOOD

Phoenixville, like most areas built prior to the proliferation of the cars, has the structure of a 15-Minute Neighborhood. However, components have degraded due to heavy automobile use and urban renewal. This Plan should restore those components and continue to add to them. The Borough could then market the benefits of being a 15-Minute Neighborhood to live, work and play. Items to restore include the pedestrian connections, improve mid-block crossings, address gaps in the pedestrian network. Items to enhance the 15 Minute Neighborhood include the working to promote Phoenixville as a SEPTA hub, further the future train station discussion, work to introduce bicycle infrastructure into the streetscape and improving the quality of walk through improved streetscape design on priority corridors.

Complete Streets

Complete Streets are roadways that are designed and operated to provide safe, accessible, and healthy travel for all users of our roadway system, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders and motorists. On a complete street, it is intuitive and safe to cross the street, walk to shops, and bicycle to school. The approach to Complete Streets varies in different parts of the Phoenixville Region but through the regional comprehensive plan it was supported, and implemented, on several projects and developments. The Borough has done some preliminary

work in some of the studies but still needs to determine how to calibrate the Complete Streets concept to its urban setting and its various street types. The Borough should consider the development of a design guide that determines how they would implement the Complete Street approach based on street type, sidewalk section, intersections, addressing speed management, and green street initiatives.

Goals & Objectives

Goal C.1 Identify and market Phoenixville Borough as a 15 Minute Community where residents can safely access all their needs within a 15-minute walk.

Objective C.1.1

Identify and integrate elements needed to complete Phoenixville Borough for housing, retail, and employment opportunities to plan to make a 15-minute living a reality for as many people as possible.

Objective C.1.2

Reinforce the neighborhood level planning promoted in the previous comprehensive plan.

Objective C.1.3

Apply flexible approaches to accommodate infill and redevelopment that improves access to amenities, active transportation, parks and open spaces, and a broader range of housing types at the neighborhood scale.

Objective C.1.4

Promote and provide community services and amenities that are important to residents within a 15-minute walk of their homes.

Objective C.1.5

Work to remove barriers that prevent safe pedestrian mobility.

Objective C.1.6

Integrate improvements that support the public realm that encourages biking, walking, as well as social interaction through the configuration of landmarks and gathering spaces.

Objective C.1.7

Calibrate densities that will support transit for residents to commute within the region for employment and daily needs not supported within the Borough and not have to rely on a personal automobile.

Goal C.2 Promote and support Complete Streets Standards using alternative modes of transportation through an enhanced network.

Objective C.2.1

Adopt a Complete Streets Policy to promote all modes of transportation.

Objective C.2.2

Develop a Complete Streets Design Guide that removes current impediments to active transportation modes.

Objective C.2.3

Incorporate recommendations from the Complete Streets Design Guide into the Borough's Ordinances.

Objective C.2.4

Emphasize streetscape improvements on Priority Corridors within the Borough that connect to local destinations that are safe, comfortable, and irresistible.

Objective C.2.5

Identify methods of incorporating more bicycle infrastructure to connect the rider "islands" to the town center whether through on-street applications or connection through the Schuylkill River Trail.

Objective C.2.6

Incorporate Active Transportation Route Brand into wayfinding program.

Objective C.2.7

Promote the use of Active Transportation or transit use to Borough sponsored events.

Objective C.2.8

Consider policy recommendations for bicycle safety, signage, and electric bikes.

Goal C.3 Expand Public Transportation options within the Borough.

Objective C.3.1

Prioritize seeking financial support for a rail station to support connecting residents to parts of the region and county to jobs, amenities, and services.

Objective C.3.2

Look to partner with SEPTA to develop Phoenixville as the transit hub within the region.

Objective C.3.3

Partner with SEPTA to improve the bus infrastructure and services within the Borough to the fastest, most convenient, and most reliable way to travel to major centers of activity.



Objective C.3.4

Turn transit stops and hubs into neighborhood destinations that leverage a regional system for local benefit.

Objective C.3.5

Ensure that any station or stop is connected to three or more modes of transportation.

Objective C.3.6

Prepare a micro transit study either in connection with the Phoenixville region or just the Borough to focus on providing the gap in mobility that was lost by reduction in fixed lines, convenience, and promote connections to destinations that will alleviate congestion.

Goal C.4 Build upon the Park Phoenixville study recommendations to provide holistic solutions for all parking concerns and needs.

Objective C.4.1

Study solutions for parking inadequacy including peak event parking associated with Phoenixville Borough events and identification of underutilized lots along the perimeter of the Borough for micro transit shuttle service.

Objective C.4.2

Encourage the use of transit by reducing parking requirements or providing bonuses for incorporating transit or micro transit planning into development.

Objective C.4.3

Develop a parking demand analysis with any subsequent zoning ordinance changes.

Objective C.4.4

Identification of potential structured parking locations.

Objective C.4.5

Study Bridge Street for better curb and on-street parking management to better allocate space and focus on planning for people.



Phoenixville is...
GROWING



Over the last 30 years, Phoenixville has transitioned from a mill town, dependent on one industry, to a community with a diversified economy. As a result, building values that have doubled, and in some instances tripled, in the downtown area. The surrounding neighborhoods have also rebounded, shifting the demographics of the community. This plan aligns the Borough's future development pattern with the community vision of 2021. Embodied within this section are the desired community economic development, land use, and housing directions for growth and development.

Housing

Phoenixville Borough has experienced significant growth in its overall population as well as an increase in housing units over the last two decades. While Phoenixville is attracting younger professionals and families due to its vibrant atmosphere, lively downtown, unique neighborhoods, and various other amenities, there are some potential consequences associated with the Borough's fast-paced growth. With this high level of growth comes the risk of displacing the Borough's long-time senior citizen population as well as low- to moderate-income households that reside within the community.

Housing units within the Borough have a 95% occupancy rate and 55% of housing units are owner-occupied. Therefore, the Borough does have a decent mix of owner and rental housing within its housing stock. Affordability is an issue, as the average cost of a rental housing unit in Phoenixville is \$1,505 per month, which is not affordable to many senior citizens and certain family households that live on a more fixed income.

IMPORTANCE OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Decent, affordable housing is important to families but is also important to the economic vitality of communities. Affordable homes can attract and retain employees to a community, which is often a selling point and competitive advantage for area businesses and employers. Affordable homes also support local workers and allow them to live closer to where they work. Having a healthy mix of housing options, from market-rate to affordable rental housing, to single-family detached units, duplexes, townhomes, and developments strictly devoted to seniors, ensures opportunities for all individuals to improve their economic situation and to contribute to their communities.

Current growth patterns show an ample amount of development activity either underway or projected over the next several years in terms of development plans that have been approved by the Borough. These projected developments include a mix of residential use types, including single-family dwellings, apartment buildings ranging from as low as six (6) units to as many as 500 units, twins/duplexes, and townhomes. While these developments on the horizon indicate growth and development, they do not meet all the Borough's current housing needs.

There are several topics that should be examined in relation to any current and upcoming developments. Many of the units proposed are market-rate units with very few affordable options. In many instances the target market is for young professionals or empty nesters.

To meet the current and future needs of the Borough's diverse residents, both rental housing and homeownership are important. For many low- to moderate-income

households, rental housing is the most financially feasible and realistic option. In addition, some people prefer rental housing due to the decreased maintenance involved. For many families, affordable rental housing is an important step that allows them to save and prepare for homeownership in the future.

Homeownership is also a critical part of the housing stock in a community. From a community's perspective, homeownership often provides stability and families often become more invested in a community. Homeownership represents the true American Dream for many working families.

With the Borough already built, policies and tools within the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance should be assessed to promote the development of traditional and non-traditional housing types to enhance affordability. Adaptive reuse and regeneration policies should be strongly considered moving forward to affordable housing development.

HOUSING-RELATED GOALS & CONCEPTS FROM PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS

The Borough's 2011 Comprehensive Plan identified the expansion of mixed-use growth areas and the promotion of new, infill development including a wide variety of housing types and the preservation of the existing housing stock, as top priorities. The 2011 Plan advocated for the coordination of Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) by Regional Planning and the establishment of a regional entity to facilitate the purchase and sale of development rights to assist with conservation and targeting growth in certain areas.

The 2019 Plan completed by the Phoenixville Regional Planning Committee (PRPC) noted the region is at a crossroads in terms of directing growth. The Plan specifies that new, infill development in mixed use areas should include a combination of residential and non-residential uses and a mix of single-use and multi-use buildings. Furthermore, the Plan notes a shift in housing construction trends from single-family homes to rental apartment units. Most of the rental units built to-date have been high-scale, market-rate units that are not affordable.

While many of the recommendations from the 2011 Comprehensive Plan have been incorporated into the Borough's SALDO and Zoning Ordinance regarding infill development and growth areas, there remains a need to address housing needs and affordability within the community while realizing the Borough is primarily built out.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

In 2017, in response to housing affordability issue, Phoenixville Borough Council authorized the Borough Manager to chair a task force charged with developing strategies to address affordable housing in the Borough. The task force identified the following strategies:

- Improve methods of identifying affordable housing needs by different groups.
- Maximize the use of current housing resources.
- Explore the creation of new local housing resources and other funding options.
- Establish regional affordable housing goals and an implementation strategy.
- Establish a public education program.

In 2018, the Affordable Housing Task Force evolved into the Phoenixville Council on Affordable Housing. The council is an independent entity working to implement the task force’s strategies. To date, the council has achieved three significant actions:

- > Phoenixville entered into an agreement with The Hankin Group to develop the former site of the Borough Streets Department at 115 Buchanan Street into 50 units of affordable rental housing for seniors. This project projects to have rents between \$300 and \$700 a month.
- > The council has been actively engaged in raising awareness and regularly presents its strategic approach to advocacy, non-profit, and governmental entities.

APPLICATION OF AFFORDABILITY HOUSING CONCEPTS

One option to help encourage affordable housing development through land use and zoning regulations - that is currently not provided - is permitting accessory dwelling units. Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) will allow the Borough to expand its housing stock and to provide housing options to meet the ever-changing needs of homeowners and renters. ADUs can come in many

different forms – apartments above garages, an in-law suite, or even a stand-alone tiny home.

Given the size of lots within the Borough tiny homes are not likely but could be a viable option in the future with lot consolidation possibilities. Chester County Planning Commission and Delaware Valley Planning Commission provide guidelines and model ordinances to encourage ADUs as a form of affordable housing and should be consulted during implementation.



Photo Source: cityofscramento.org

Land Use

The land use component of the comprehensive plan is designed to clearly identify the community’s vision for new development and mobility in the future. Future development and redevelopment are needed to relate to the transportation network and where the borough services can accommodate new growth. The future land use development framework is built on the foundation of years of planning, changing development patterns and market desires, and the motivations of landowners, developers, and investors that drive construction.

Before we delve into the future, a review of the past is necessary. The Borough of Phoenixville was a mill town, home to Phoenix Iron Company that was later renamed Phoenix Iron and Steel Company; in 1955 the name was changed again to the Phoenix Steel Corporation. Phoenix Steel Corporation was one of the largest employers in the area until its closure in 1987. With a dependence on one employer the borough experienced difficult times. The Borough began to experience a renaissance fueled by suburban growth from Philadelphia, spurring a revitalization that centered around its history in the region. In 2004, the downtown began to flourish and property values throughout the Borough began to increase in value. Since that time, Phoenixville has become a destination for food and beverage establishments within the downtown.

The existing land use for Phoenixville Borough was created using the most recent tax parcel data from the Chester County of Bureau of Land Records. The predominant land uses are broken down below.



The remaining 9% of land in the Borough is Vacant

the Borough will need to maintain utilities and services across the entire Borough and provide opportunities for mobility for all its residents. Land use- the types of businesses, residences, and density thereof- is one of the most important elements of determining how Phoenixville remains prosperous in the future.

The Future Land Use Map graphically depicts the preferred patterns of future development. It should be used as a tool to guide staff, elected and appointed officials, and the development community during times of critical decision-making. Future land uses are a projection of growth, a balance between desired new development in the community, market realities, and protection of existing development. These land uses are intended to signal to the citizens and prospective interests that Phoenixville intends to grow reflective of its values and goals of this plan.

Key issues identified during community conversations include: the need for continued commercial growth (which complements and adds to the Borough's revitalization efforts), managing the market pressure for higher-density residential, building complementary infill and regeneration sites to the neighborhood settings, and connecting the community to its parks and trail systems. These issues have translated into specific goals and objectives within the land use component.

LAND USE-RELATED GOALS & CONCEPTS FROM PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS

Encourage the revitalization efforts of the Borough of Phoenixville to ensure its place as the urban hub of the Phoenixville Region.

Manage adaptive reuse, sensitive infill development, and village extensions in the existing villages of the Phoenixville Region to enhance community character and support the local economy.

FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

A future land use map is a visual guide to planning and policy-making that draws

together and expresses the goal and objectives of the comprehensive plan. It is not predictive and has no regulatory function, but it can be used as a bases for updating zoning codes and subdivision and land development ordinances. The Phoenixville Borough Future Land Use Map features the following designations:

Corridor Redevelopment

This area consists of both sides of Nutt Road (SR 23) where a significant amount of residential conversion activity has occurred due to the large traffic volume witnessed along this corridor. This corridor is not intended for strip commercial nor is expected to be predominantly commercial. Opportunities for business and daily services, high-intensity residential, civic and employment uses, but also traditional single-family residences. Access management is recommended to maintain safe traffic movement along the corridor. Appropriate buffer yards should be considered to ensure adjoining neighborhood compatibility.

Industrial

includes the area along the north side of West Bridge Street to Pothouse Road and the area along both sides of Second Avenue in the southeast corner of the Borough.

Mixed Use Growth

These areas may be developed as small-scale start-up businesses or offices and may include a residential component as integral to a major commercial use. Mixed use developments need to be walkable, with well-integrated uses and interconnections with the surrounding urban environment. Multi-family should be permitted as part of a larger non-residential use.

Mixed Use Infill

The area encompasses the extension of the Borough's Town Center. This area is envisioned to be a very walkable area which encourages a "sense of place" and should represent a high-density urban experience. The area is

desired to be highly activated with first floor storefronts, employment, dense residential and entertainment. Emphasis should be placed more on form and function and less on specific land uses. Important characteristics are building relationship with the street and pedestrian movement, signage, street design, and public gathering spaces.

Neighborhood Center

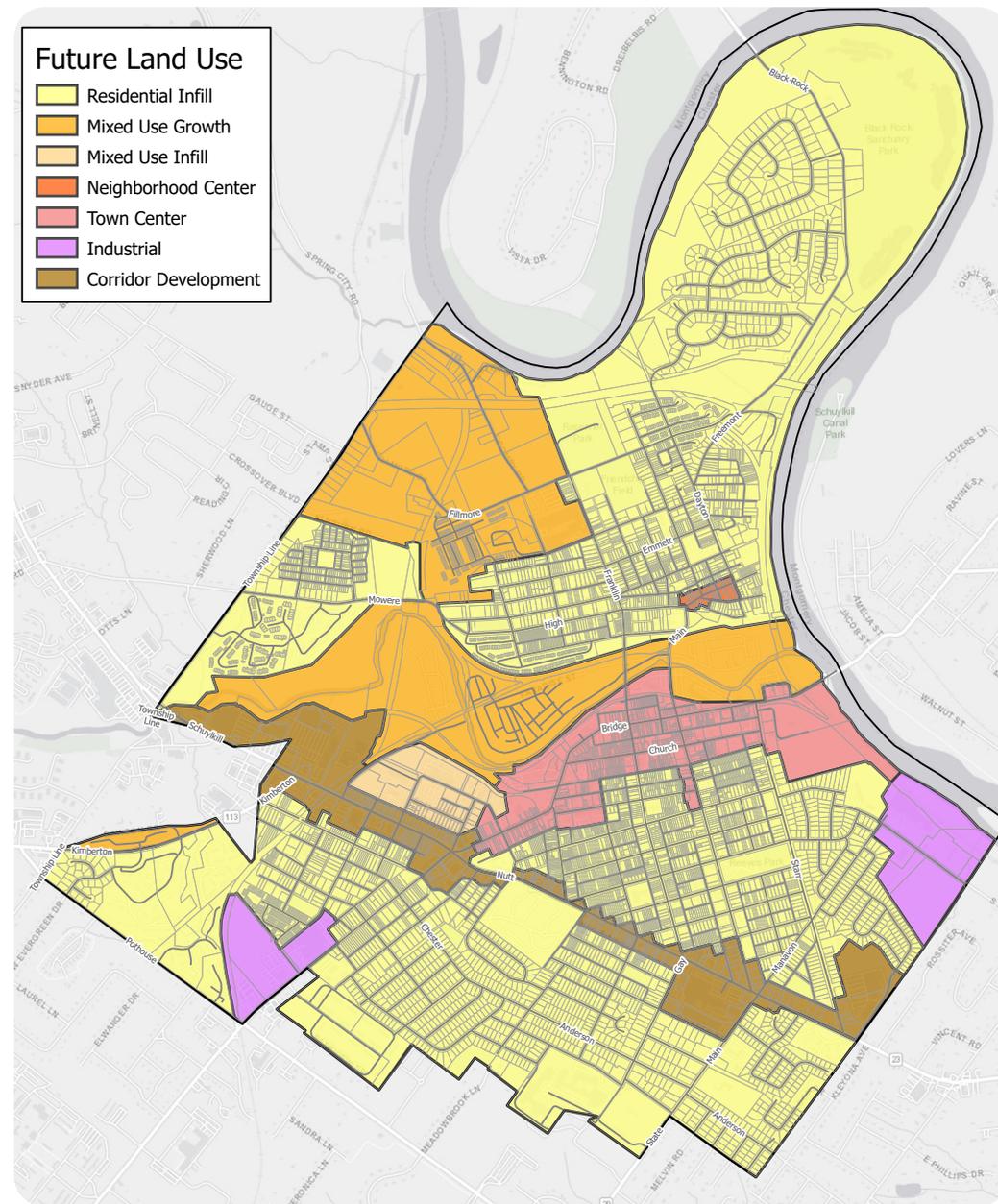
Recognizes the unique sub-area of the North Hill Neighborhood that historically functioned as a small commercial center along East High Street. Site design should be neighborhood-focused, prioritizing walkability, screening, light shielding, street landscaping, and compatible heights, etc

Residential Infill

Continues to express the essential build out of the Borough with the primary development objective is to maintain the existing neighborhood qualities and streetscape characteristics. Existing development patterns and densities should be used to guide/regulate infill development.

Town Center

The Town Center future land use category is intended for a mix of uses that keep Phoenixville historic downtown interesting and dynamic. The area comprises Phoenixville's Historic District (HARB District). New development and redevelopment within the Town Center should be designed in harmony with the existing character that acknowledges Phoenixville's heritage. This includes older buildings and historic, contributing structures along with a mix of adaptive reuse buildings. All buildings should be activated towards the street, encouraging walkability, eating establishments, central gathering spaces and civic conversation. The Town Center character includes small businesses, professional office, entertainment, shopping, arts and cultural elements, and civic activities, each contributing to daytime and evening buzz. An assortment of residential is suitable and encouraged based on the context, focused on balance of scale among building, site and streets.



Phoenixville's 15-Minute Neighborhoods

Phoenixville Borough has witnessed a significant amount of new and re-development over the past decade. Some of its neighborhoods are being infused with new residents in a more compact format. Besides automobile access, it is also served by an extensive pedestrian network of sidewalks and trails, and access to transit through most of the community. Schools and parks are evenly distributed throughout the community with regional open space on its edge. The community offers a variety of celebrations and programming. The transformation is not complete with significant opportunity and obstacles in its future. The 2011 Phoenixville Borough and the latest Chester County Comprehensive Plans provide a foundation to build 15-minute neighborhoods. In the Connected Chapter, the concept of a 15-minute neighborhood is further explained and recommended for Phoenixville's future. Policy recommendations for a 15-minute neighborhood overlap with the Plan's Future Land Use as it relates to density and a mix of uses and design character at the neighborhood level.

DESIGN

Using a community character approach provides Phoenixville with both a predictable and flexible system of guiding growth. Establishing predictability ensures Phoenixville's growth provides reflects the quality and characteristics associated with the Borough. Flexibility is required to allow community builders and developers to respond to the plan through appropriate design and desired development outcomes.

The concept of "character" is a key component to "land use" in that it accounts for the physical and natural traits of the area, based on either traditional or desired built form. The Borough of Phoenixville has provided a character framework in its zoning and development codes, but further refinement should be considered to continue to enhance the built environment. Since most of the future built environment will be developed by the private sector or on private land, it is critical that the proposed future land uses acknowledge in this plan is aligned through enhancements to the Borough's zoning, subdivision and land development ordinances.

This plan further builds off the neighborhood planning efforts from the 2011 Plan and by adjusting the boundaries, reorganizing the neighborhoods associated with the new construction, and providing policy recommendations based on neighborhood level planning.

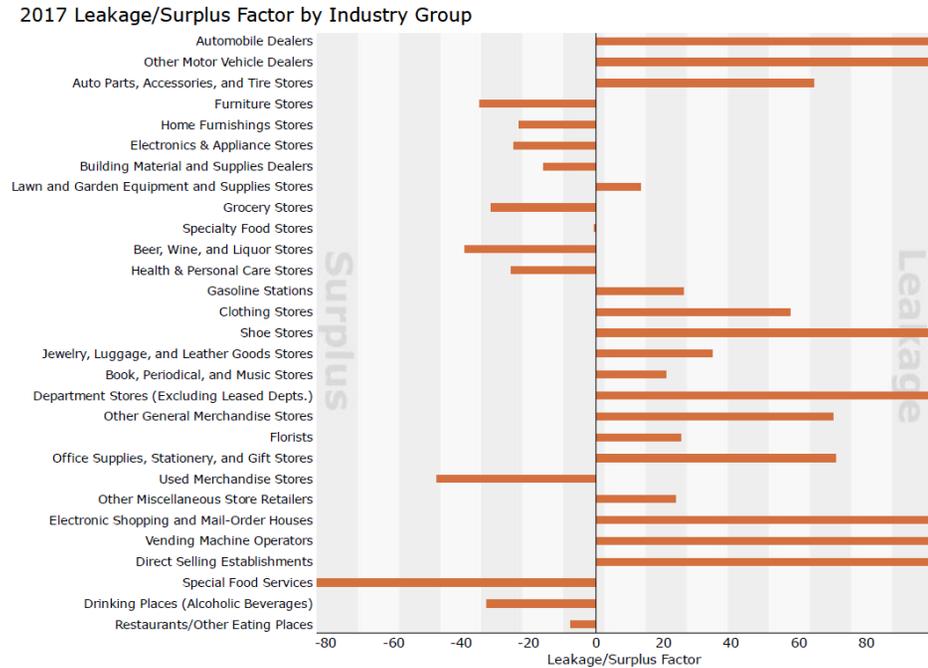
Economic Development

In 2000 the Borough's vision was a revitalization plan centered around a live, work and play strategy. The lack of transportation connectivity prevented the work aspects to be fulfilled. The community pivoted to focus on the live and play aspects of the plan and let the regional municipalities to cover the work element. The Borough's strategy has paid off with the influx of residential units and the community offering multiple entertainment events.

Critical in the transformation were the upgrades to water and sewer capacity and the construction of the Schuylkill River Trail. To implement the revitalization plan, the Borough has assertively fundraised, obtaining grants from public and private sources to supplement its municipal spending. From 2001 through 2010 the Borough formed a Main Street revitalization program that assisted in the facilitation of improvements to blighted conditions along the commercial district, new business attraction and event organization.

A review of Phoenixville Retail MarketPlace Profile (ESRI) affirms the Borough's transformation from a mill town to one centered around food and beverage establishments. The Borough has established itself as a successful restaurant and brewery destination. The ESRI Retail MarketPlace Profile identified additional areas of surplus in furniture and home furnishings and used merchandise stores. The same profile also identified industry areas lacking in the Borough, such as groups that require larger plots of land and square footage for their store footprints typical of suburban settings. These include automobile dealerships, department stores, and direct merchandise stores that should be provided by its regional municipal partners to not compromise the Borough's urban setting.

The same profile also identified areas of leakage in the Borough are in several industry groups that often require larger plots of land and square footage for their store footprints typical of suburban settings. These include automobile dealerships, department stores, and direct merchandise stores that should be provided by its regional municipal partners to not compromise the Borough's urban setting.



Source: ESRI Business Analyst

A strong, diverse, unique retail environment is an essential component of a 15-minute neighborhood. It serves a variety of people, provides neighborhood residents convenient access to daily goods and services, and attracts people near and far who seek shopping, dining, and entertaining experiences. The term "retail" includes not just stores, but also restaurants and bars, personal care business such as salons and tattoo shops, and professional services. Phoenixville established the live and play aspects of their revitalization plan but pivoted away from the work component of their plan. Phoenixville may wish to consider

re-introducing the work component at this time of remote work, which allows people to work from anywhere. As demand for urban environments increases, real estate prices threaten the community's ability to capture new opportunities in retail. The Borough has opportunities to build from what has been created and may wish to explore some of the following concepts:

- > **Community / neighborhood serving retail.** While retail is being disrupted and challenged by e-commerce nationally, most retail sales still occur in a physical store. Small, independently owned retail, particularly in urban environments such as Phoenixville, that offer a unique experience and an emotional connection with the consumer have proven successful. Retail and day-to-day services for nearby residents and workers, should be continuously promoted.
- > **Strengthen the professional services market** by promoting the development of small office space. As the office market is redefined with remote work, or a hybrid of office and remote work, professionals will be attracted to authentic neighborhoods like Phoenixville. The Borough may wish to allow ground floor office uses to increase activation of the streetscape or as part of an apartment development.
- > **Flex/innovation space** should be considered to serve the purpose of craft/maker space, technology, design, and manufacturing. Flex/innovation space have multiple benefits – they support creative industries and take the burden off retail by providing other ways to activate streets and spaces.
- > One area that came up in discussion was access to grocery stores. **Although there are grocery stores within the Borough, access to them is limited, and often requires a car.** The Borough recognizes the importance for the Borough residents to have equal access to food and basic needs and should look for ways to address connectivity barriers to grocery stores. The Borough should also

consider promoting smaller footprint grocery stores, more embedded within neighborhoods or located within new mixed-use developments that are currently being built.

- > Phoenixville Borough needs to **continue its partnership with the Schuylkill Highlands region** to assist in connecting people to the culture of the Borough and the surrounding natural landscapes. The Borough should embrace the idea of a Trail Town as an opportunity for economic development. This approach considers the town's resources, character, and businesses to develop a memorable and inviting trail experience for users - visitors and residents alike.
- > The emergence of the Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape initiative and Place-based marketing, combined with Phoenixville's efforts to revitalize the Borough, Phoenixville has grown into a day-trip destination. **Phoenixville should now push to expand that experience to overnight or weekend get-aways;** travelers searching for culture and landscapes as opposed to one stop destinations such as resorts. Cultural experiences are a high point of many journeys, and many travelers are eager to witness and participate in local traditions. Phoenixville has a rich history and a significant event schedule. The Borough should work with the private sector to establish a boutique hotel or other unique overnight accommodation to enable visitors to expand their length of stay.

Goals & Objectives

Goal G.1 In partnership and collaboration with the entire region, and area developers work to define what affordability is to the Phoenixville Region and set a goal to increase the supply of affordable housing units annually for the next decade.

Objective G.1.1

Consider an annual review of this goal and implementing necessary adjustments to achieve the goal.

Objective G.1.2

A subset of this goal should involve a higher percentage rental goal with a suggested efficiency or 1-bedroom unit target

Objective G.1.3

Continue to communicate with developers, leaders, neighborhood groups and others as to why affordable housing development must be prioritized.

Objective G.1.4

Further explore public/private partnerships for workforce and senior housing to expand funding and implement organizational ways to advance construction.

Goal G.2 Review ordinance requirements and solicit broad feedback to provide ordinance provisions to increase affordable housing supply and not place prohibitive or onerous recommendations.

Objective G.2.1

Review zoning ordinance to determine if affordable housing development options are available in all neighborhoods as low wage jobs are available throughout the Borough and not just limited to one area.

Objective G.2.2

Review ordinances to ensure universal design is encouraged as a cost-effective way for citizens of all ages and abilities to safely remain in their homes and be active in the Borough through all stages of life.

Objective G.2.3

Review all residential zoning districts, to allow for all density types as conversions or new construction as a use by right subject to design, scale, and character of the existing neighborhood.

Objective G.2.4

Consider a transit corridor overlay district for the Borough to allow goals that encourage affordable housing by providing incentives for mixed use development, higher density, sustainability infill development and open space in a comprehensive, holistic approach

Objective G.2.4.1

Consider utilizing Tax Increment Financing (TIF) as an additional tool for creating affordable housing possibly in conjunction with the transit corridor overlay district. Some items that could be supported by TIF are sustainable building, structured parking, and affordable housing.

Goal G.3 Provide for a variety of housing types that meets the needs of present and future Phoenixville Borough residents that are suitable for every stage of life.

Objective G.3.1

Protect the historic character and unique neighborhoods while providing for a variety of housing types and styles to meet the growing demand and the needs of those in different income earning categories.

Objective G.3.2

Investigate opportunities to permit accessory dwelling units to provide another housing option within the Borough to aid in addressing affordability.

Objective G.3.3

Continue to preserve the existing housing stock through code enforcement and maintenance code.

Objective G.3.4

Create zoning and permitting incentives to facilitate affordable housing dwelling units for infill development, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse of non-residential properties.

Objective G.3.5

Create flexibility within the zoning ordinance to allow neighborhoods to evolve over time to address current and future housing needs and become more socioeconomically integrated.

Goal G.4 Strengthen and enhance Bridge Street character with contextually compatible development.

Objective G.4.1

Incorporate the distinctive qualities and character of the surrounding, and/or evolving area context into building and site design.

Objective G.4.2

Encourage public and private development to establish new urban design and architectural character in areas where downtown development patterns are fragmented or are in transition.

Objective G.4.3

Protect prominent historic resources and promote innovative new development that respectfully coexists with the character and context of these historic assets.

Goal G.5 Support Phoenixville Borough’s prominent role as a hub for culture, dining, entertainment, tourism, events, and employment.

Objective G.5.1

Encourage land uses, activities and special events that support Phoenixville as a primary destination in the region.

Objective G.5.2

Promote Phoenixville as an environment attractive community to both leisure visitors and a skilled workforce.

Objective G.5.3

Attract tourism-supporting land uses, activities, and special events to reinforce Phoenixville as a robust destination.

Objective G.5.4

Proactively address economic and social changes by examining Phoenixville Borough’s goals on a regular basis, to ensure responsiveness to shifts in economic, social, environmental, and market conditions.

Objective G.5.5

Appeal to residents, visitors, and workers by creating and delivering programs and services that support high quality, year-round, successful mix of retail, dining, entertainment, emerging enterprises, and small businesses that contribute to Phoenixville’s unique character.

Goal G.6 Promote private investment in and attract new development to Phoenixville.

Objective G.6.1

Encourage investment in development that ensures Phoenixville’s economic competitiveness regionally.

Objective G.6.2

Promote a mix of daytime/nighttime, and weekend activities year-round through development investments and community programming in Phoenixville.

Objective G.6.3

Attract and retain a broad array of economic activities that widen the appeal of Phoenixville and strengthen its tax base.

Objective G.6.4

Recognize that talent is a critical component of business location decisions and enhance Phoenixville’s quality of life amenities and promote its housing choices to appeal to a skilled workforce.

Goal G.7 Continue to strengthen the Borough’s economy.

Objective G.7.1

Promote retail and services that serve the day-to-day needs of nearby residents and workers, including everything from grocery stores to personal care businesses.

Objective G.7.2

Strengthen the professional services market by promoting the development of small office space.

Objective G.7.3

Flex/innovation space should be considered to serve the purpose of craft/maker space, technology, design, and manufacturing. Flex/innovation space have multiple benefits – they support creative industries and take the burden off retail by providing other ways to activate streets and spaces.

Objective G.7.4

The Borough should also consider promoting smaller footprint grocery stores that can be more embedded within neighborhoods or located within new mixed-use developments that are currently being built.

Objective G.7.5

Phoenixville Borough needs to continue its partnership with the Schuylkill Highlands region to assist in connecting people to the culture of the Borough and the surrounding natural landscapes.

Objective G.7.6

The Borough should embrace the idea of a Trail Town as an opportunity for economic development approach that considers the town's resources, character, and businesses to develop a memorable and inviting trail experience for users from visitors and residents alike.

Goal G.8 For development or redevelopment activity in primarily residential neighborhood streets that may not be able to support a mix of uses with active frontages, encourage features that create visual interest at the pedestrian level.

Goal G.9 Continue to enhance the Borough pedestrian experience through the provision of pedestrian oriented banners, wayfinding, signage, and other related infrastructure.

Goal G.10 Private and public development should contribute to the creation of new, and/or expansion of existing, public realm parks and open space areas throughout the Borough.

Goal G.11 Encourage innovative and moderate density housing for infill development in proximity to downtown Phoenixville.

Goal G.12 Work with regional municipalities to enact municipal and/or inter-municipal purchase of development rights or transfer of development rights ordinances and programs.

Goal G.13 Create and update a regional inventory of brownfields and other underutilized buildings and sites that are suitable for revitalization initiatives.



Phoenixville is...

SUSTAINABLE

Sustainability has many meanings and different definitions, but within municipalities it often means using the best practices to create environmental, economic, societal, and fiscal vitality as part of the municipality's overall mission. Phoenixville Borough is characterized by excellent walkability, access to transit, mix of uses with some community serving retail and restaurants, and a cultural hub with a significant identity. These characteristics are strong foundations towards building a lasting and dynamic 21st century urban center. By expanding on these elements, Phoenixville will be well positioned to become a regional and national leader as a sustainable downtown.

Sustainable Initiatives

In 2017, Phoenixville Borough Council unanimously passed a resolution in support of Phoenixville to become the 44th municipality in the USA, and the first in PA to commit to a transition to 100% clean and renewable energy. The transition commits to 100% clean and renewable electricity by 2035 and 100% renewable energy for heat and transportation by 2050 for all municipal operations.



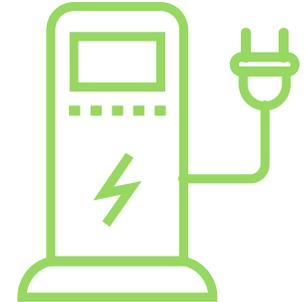
LIGHT-EMITTING DIODE LIGHTING

Over the past eight years the Borough has worked to replace all the 1400 streetlights with Light-Emitting Diode (LED) lighting including those used in Borough owned parking lots. The Borough has budgeted for 2022 the replacement of all the ornamental pedestrian lights with LED lighting. The Borough has also proceeded to replace all traffic signals and holiday décor with LED lighting. Installation of LED light poles are to be installed at Balder Park crosswalk and at Children's Plaza to increase visibility to drivers. The Borough should receive lower electric bills and less costs associated with replacement as each bulb has an estimated timespan of 20 years.

The Borough Hall, Water Treatment Plant and Wastewater Treatment Plant has been retrofitted with LED lighting. The new Recreation Center and Fire Station have been designed for LED lighting. The Borough should continue to evaluate Borough owned properties for LED lighting upgrades along with requirements for new land development and subdivision projects.

ELECTRIC VEHICLES & CHARGING STATIONS

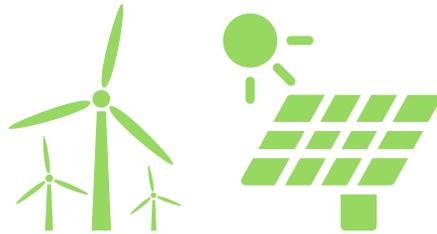
Phoenixville Borough has provided 16 Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations within its Taylor Alley and Mill Street parking areas. The new Recreation Center and Fire Station are required to have locations pre-wired for Electric Vehicle Charging Stations (EVCS) and EV parking. Associated with the management of the Steelpointe development on North Main Street six EVCS and EV parking spaces are provided. This infrastructure is critical as consumers and fleets considering plug-in electric vehicles and all EV need access to charging stations. Adding these charging stations in public parking lots will help bolster market acceptance. In January 2021, Borough Council approved an ordinance amendment that requires new, or replacement of existing, main electrical switchgears to provide sufficient space and capacity for level two EVCS, EVCS standards, EV parking and design standards, and required EV parking capacity requirements based on minimum parking requirements for both residential and non-residential development.



The Borough has also begun to replace some of its fleet vehicles to EV as part of its fleet management system. The transition of all fleet and Borough owned vehicles to EVs will occur when the EVs on the market can meet the daily demands of the vehicle's require use. One ealternative is to consider conversion of refuse and recycling trucks to hydraulic hybrid garbage trucks.



Photo Source: www.americancityandcounty.com



SOLAR & WIND

Solar and wind energy systems are allowed in all zoning districts (wind is permitted as a conditional use). Both wind and solar must conform with the zoning in terms of setbacks and height regulations. There are additional regulations within the zoning ordinance that help to maintain safety in terms of both types of energy systems such as additional setbacks for wind turbines, and noise levels that are permitted. Zoning that pertains to both solar energy systems and wind energy facilities can be found in §27-608 Miscellaneous Provisions. The Borough also incorporated solar panels on its roof as part of the new public works building design in 2018. The new Fire Station and Recreation Center have followed the same approach as the Borough Hall to require the structure to be pre-wired to accept alternate energy sources such as solar.

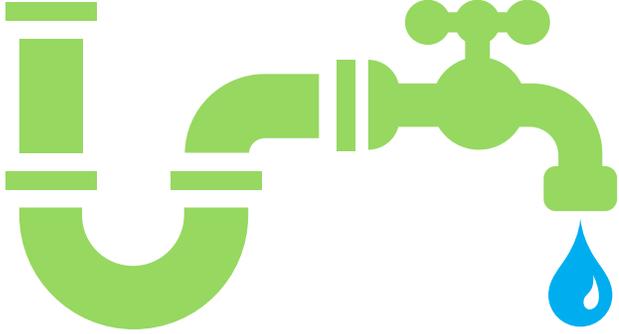
WASTEWATER

Phoenixville Borough provides public sewer service to the entire municipality, except for a few single-family residences that are served by on-lot sewage disposal systems along Township Line Road. These residences may be connected when development occurs in the area. The distribution system has some portions that are a combined sewer system which collects both rainwater, domestic sewage, and industrial wastewater all within the same line. The Borough's typical flow is 2 million gallons per day but peaks at 9 to 10 million gallons during storm events associated with infiltration and inflow caused by aging infrastructure. The Borough utilizes paper records of the distribution system with limited information pertaining to pipe size. Due to the age of the distribution system the Borough should consider conducting a thorough assessment and convert all information into a digital format to better understand the system needs and plan for capital investments.

The Borough wastewater treatment facility is almost entirely automated and has not received any violations or consent orders within the last 15 years. The Borough

is in the process of biomass conversion process. Phoenixville is the first municipality in all of North America to use the hydrothermal carbonization process to treat the communities wastewater. More than a wastewater treatment plant, PXVNEO is a resource recovery system. Hydrothermal carbonization, or HTC for short, converts biomass and organic wastes into value added products. The first phase of the project will focus on converting sewage sludge into the base solid product known as hydrochar, which meets Class A Biosolids requirements. Hydrochar has similar characteristics to biochar and mid-grade coal. The conversion process will greatly increase the solids processing capacity at the wastewater treatment plant, resulting in higher revenues from tip fees, and the potential to sell the hydrochar, eliminating disposal costs altogether.

The second phase of the project introduces food waste into the HTC process. Including food waste as a feedstock has both economic and environmental benefits. The Borough is unique in that they collect and haul their own waste, so diverting food waste to the HTC process will save the Borough tip fees at the landfill. The Borough WWTP can also generate revenue by charging a tip fee for food waste from outside the Borough. Food waste-based hydrochar has a higher energy density than sewage sludge-based hydrochar. This higher energy density and lower ash content creates a better opportunity for energy generation. Gasification of the hydrochar generated from the Borough's WWTP can create enough energy to run the WWTP, the HTC process, and still put electricity back into the grid. Energy generation from hydrochar is a key step in meeting the Borough's goal of being 100% renewable energy by the year 2035. The Phoenixville Regional Comprehensive Plan noted the need for the Borough to update its Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan based on the age of sewerage planning within the community. While this recommendation is still valid, it would be prudent that any 537 Planning should occur after the wastewater treatment plant conversion.



WATER

Public water is provided to the entire Borough by the Phoenixville Water Department. The Borough provides great water quality to its customers for a reasonable rate compared to other areas within the region. The challenge the Borough needs to consider is the age of the distribution system and how costly the repairs have been to fix. The Borough has pursued Community Development Block Grants to aid in making necessary repairs, but this funding source does not allow for extensive portions of the system to be replaced given the current replacement costs. The Borough has done some assessments of portions of the system and has begun to transfer over to digital records. The Borough needs to consider the long-term viability of the infrastructure and should take steps to understand how best to approach this service. It is recommended that the Borough assess their system and identify vulnerabilities, create a digital database for the entire system, and develop an implementation approach that would include a funding strategy.

STORMWATER

Phoenixville Borough maintains a Municipal Small Storm Sewer System (MS4) wherein stormwater is managed to maintain water quality and promote infiltration, in addition to volume rate control. The Phoenixville MS4 consists of the conveyance of water through road drainage systems, municipal streets, catch basins, curbs, gutters, ditches, manmade channels, and storm drains or storm sewer systems. The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) requires the Borough to manage an MS4 Program that includes education and outreach, public involvement and participation, illicit discharge detection and elimination, post construction stormwater management and pollution prevention and maintenance.

As part of this program, the Borough actively promotes its MS4 Program on its web site. In 2020, the Borough prepared an Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination Plan. The priority areas for illicit discharge are typically located in older neighborhoods or historic industrial areas where older sanitary sewer lines are prevalent. Phoenixville Borough's priority area for illicit discharge are those areas adjacent to/or draining to and within a one-half mile of French Creek. The Plan makes recommendations for elimination of illicit discharges within this priority area.

The Borough has an updated stormwater management plan ordinance to minimize the impacts of new development and redevelopment and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Systems (NPDES) Permits are required for land development projects that disturb one acre or more. The Borough stormwater infrastructure should be completely mapped and assessed to determine long range capital improvements planning.

The cost of safe and reliable stormwater infrastructure which meets governmental regulations is growing. Phoenixville Borough is like most communities in Pennsylvania looking for a solution to fund this increasing financial need. Due to the age of stormwater facilities in the Borough, more money than ever before will need to be channeled towards stormwater and related pavement infrastructure in upcoming years. Simultaneously, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has placed additional requirements on municipalities to reduce contaminant loadings in waterways. New requirements contained in the Borough's current MS4 Permit include sediment reduction requirements which necessitate focused efforts on the installation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) along with other administrative and labor-intensive tasks. Borough Council will need to assess whether a sustainable revenue stream, such as those from a stormwater fee, may be necessary in this Plan's timeframe.

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL



The Borough Sanitation Department manages solid waste disposal in the community. Waste and recycling pickup occurs weekly within the community. The Phoenixville Regional Comprehensive Plan noted the public concern of the presence of the waste and recycling receptacles on the streetscape in the town center. The Phoenixville Area Business Association recommended that shared dumpsters with appropriate screening be considered that would serve localized blocks that do not have the ability to store the receptacles in the rear of their properties. Hazardous waste and electronics are collected on scheduled drop-off days operated by the Chester County Solid Waste Authority (CSWA). The Borough should explore alternative methods of disposal and processing and that recycling is occurring at the maximum extent feasible.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

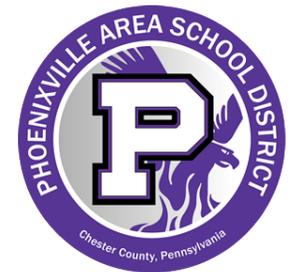
The Phoenixville Borough Fire Department is a multi-service department that provides fire and rescue to the Borough and surrounding communities. The staff which includes a full-time Chief of Fire and Emergency Services, two full-time staff, and twenty five part-time staff have the ability to perform all necessary fire services including high angle, vehicular, and special water rescue. At the time of this Plan the fire department was in the process of converting all its staff into full-time paid employees. Associated with this switch a new fire station was designed and constructed at 150 Paradise Street and has six drive-thru apparatus bays, room for additional equipment storage, and sleeping quarters. A concrete training pad is also planned at the back of the new fire station property to enable vehicle rescue and pump operations training. A fleet management program is in place to manage capital expenses while meeting ISO requirements. The fire chief shared as part of the key person interviews for the Plan, that the fire ordinance and code should be reviewed and updated. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) is currently being provided by a third-party provider, but the Borough is analyzing the feasibility and operational efficiency of incorporating EMS under the Fire Department in the future.

The Phoenixville Police Department has 31 police officers, 3 detectives, and 1 full-time and 1 part-time administrative assistant. The Department maintains its accreditation and is current with all National Standards. The Department has a dedicated drug unit that works with cooperation with the County and State to address local and regional dealers. While major crime has been trending down, the Department has worked with the Borough to provide cameras within major intersections within the Borough to assist with crime reduction. The Police Department expressed interest in expanding the camera program to other high traffic intersections within the Borough. At the time of the Plan, all the emergency service providers to the Borough were being assessed by the Center for Public Safety Management as to how best they can serve the current and projected populations. Results of this assessment will be implemented during the Plan period. All emergency service providers discussed the need to upgrade their software systems in the coming years.

SCHOOLS

The Phoenixville Area School District (PASD) serves students in Phoenixville Borough, Schuylkill Township, and East Pikeland Township. PASD includes the Phoenixville Early Learning Center, Barkley, Manavon, and Schuylkill Elementary along with one middle and one high school. School enrollment is nearly 4,000 students within the district and is estimated to grow by two percent per year. PASD has newly constructed schools that are positioned to accommodate new student population both geographically and from a classroom size perspective for the foreseeable future.

Other educational facilities and alternatives are within the region included Renaissance Academy, Holy Family, Technical College High School, and the University of Valley Forge. Finally, home and cyber school has become another popular option for school children within the Borough.



SUSTAINABLE PENNSYLVANIA COMMUNITY CERTIFICATION

Phoenixville Borough is applying for a Sustainable Community Certification. Sustainable Community Certification is a project of the Pennsylvania Municipal League and Sustainable Pittsburgh. This performance recognition program recognizes municipalities that achieve their sustainability goals to save money, conserve resources, and encourage innovation, and aims to bring recognition to municipalities that are applying the policy and practice of sustainability. There are five certification levels based on how a municipality meets the requirements of nine topic areas that include: Governance and Community Engagement; Healthy Communities; Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; Education; Energy Use, Conservation and Green Building; Environmental Stewardship; Housing; Land Use and Transportation; Local Economy.

The Borough has already begun a number of sustainability initiatives; pursuing Sustainable Pennsylvania Communities aligns with a number of goals, values and the overarching vision of Phoenixville. These certifications would also organize their efforts formally, establish benchmarks, and provide a way of marketing or branding the community.



SUSTAINABLE PENNSYLVANIA
COMMUNITY CERTIFICATION

Goals & Objectives

Goal S.1 Invest in infrastructure to encourage more sustainable choices.

Objective S.1.1

Maintain, expand, and require public Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure.

Objective S.1.2

Transition fleet and Borough owned vehicles to EV's when the EV's on the market can meet the daily demands of the vehicle's required use.

Objective S.1.3

Consider conversion of refuse and recycling trucks to hydraulic hybrid garbage trucks.

Objective S.1.4

Maintain, upgrade and require all lighting to be LED to continue resulting in annual energy savings in land developments and subdivisions.

Objective S.1.5

Continue to convert Borough owned lighting to Light-Emitting Diode (LED).

Objective S.1.6

Explore alternative methods of waste disposal and processing and that recycling is occurring at the maximum extent feasible

Goal S.2 Embrace and explore innovative solutions to enhance infrastructure and service delivery.

Objective S.2.1

Implement phase 1 and 2 of the Hydrothermal carbonization, or HTC for short, converts biomass, organic and food wastes into value added products.

Objective S.2.2

Digitally inventory the Borough's wastewater, water and stormwater assets, identify vulnerabilities and determine capital improvement planning.

Objective S.2.3

Where necessary, complete asset inventory, evaluate life-cycle, determine investment, and prioritize expenditures in a long-term capital investment program.

Objective S.2.4

Consider a smart city strategy to pursue new technologies that will better leverage and enhance the experience of the Borough's assets and improve service delivery.

Objective S.2.5

Pursue approaches to parking, transportation, mobility, public space limitations through a combination of demonstrated best practices as well as early adoption of technology.

Objective S.2.6

Evaluate funding sources and approaches that could include regionalization or privatization for the water distribution system.

Objective S.2.7

Assess whether a sustainable revenue stream, such as a stormwater fee may be necessary in this Plan's timeframe to maintain infrastructure improvements.

Objective S.2.8

Seek funding and allocate budget lines to invest in the need for on-going maintenance (water and wastewater).

Goal S.3 Continue to provide exemplary emergency services through regular assessments and updates to address evolving community needs.

Objective S.3.1

Coordinate the Implementation of the recommendations of the Center for Public Safety Management recommendations.

Objective S.3.2

Evaluate whether to incorporate EMS under the Fire Department.

Objective S.3.3

Update the fire ordinance and code.

Objective S.3.4

Partner with the Police Department to expand the camera program at high traffic intersections in the community.

Objective S.3.5

Make the necessary upgrades to all the emergency service providers' software.

Objective S.3.6

Consider construction of a regional training facility.

Goal S.4 Continue making strides in terms of sustainability to be a leader in the region and county.

Objective S.4.1

Develop programs to incentivize sustainable initiatives to private landowners to create a more sustainable community at all levels.

Objective S.4.2

Seek the Pennsylvania Sustainable Communities certifications to be recognized as a leader in sustainability and to better manage and communicate the Borough's progress in this effort.



Phoenixville is...

VIBRANT

An extensive description of the natural resources landscapes is inventoried in the Phoenixville Regional Comprehensive Plan along with the current preservation techniques. Natural landscapes are not bound by municipal borders and thus the region will need to continue to work towards the protection and management of these amenities. This element of the Plan summarizes the inventory sections and the Borough's approach to protecting and maintaining the resources for future generations.

Preservation & Natural Resources

GEOLOGY

Phoenixville Borough is located in the northeastern section of Chester County within the Piedmont physiographic province. Geology and weathering dictate topography and hydrology. Phoenixville lies within the Piedmont region, and more specifically, the Gettysburg-Newark Lowland. The Gettysburg-Newark Lowland is susceptible to erosion, and is generally flat with small elevated sections. The floodplain of the Schuylkill River is particularly flat. (Page 4-3 PRPC Comprehensive Plan, 9/16/2019)

SOILS

Penn silt loam soil is the major soil type found in the Gettysburg-Newark Lowland within Phoenixville Borough. Penn silt loam is a moderately deep, well-drained soil. Hydric soils, soils under conditions of saturation, are found in proximity to waterways and are often indicative of wetlands, are not suited for development. Hydric soils are located primarily along the river areas of the Borough. (Page 4-4 PRPC Comprehensive Plan, 9/16/2019)

WATERWAYS

The Schuylkill River borders the Borough from the east and north and flows north to south on its way to join the Delaware River in Philadelphia. The French Creek bisects the Borough, flowing west to east towards the confluence with the Schuylkill River. (Page 4-6 PRPC Comprehensive Plan, 9/16/2019)

WETLANDS

Wetlands are areas of water at or near the surface. They are most often found in proximity to waterways and are delineated by the type of vegetation and soils found there. They play an important role in groundwater recharge, while simultaneously providing habitat for particular plant and animal species. Wetlands are protected by local, state, and federal regulations enabled by the Clean Water Act of 1972. (Page 4-7 PRPC Comprehensive Plan, 9/16/2019)

FLOODPLAINS

Floodplains are areas in proximity to waterways that are formed by the movement of water channels, and are subject to flooding in significant rain events. These areas, when uncompromised by development, allow for the containment of flood events and thus help limit the damage to property and loss of life posed by periodic flooding during storm events.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) requires municipalities to regulate development impacts in floodways to preserve their function and to prevent hazards to human life and property. In order for municipalities to participate in FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program, they must delineate 100-year floodplains and strictly limit development within those areas. This includes promoting stormwater best management practices to promote groundwater infiltration and otherwise manage the amount of stormwater runoff reaching the floodplain. (Page 4-8 PRPC Comprehensive Plan, 9/16/2019)

RIPARIAN BUFFERS

In addition to floodplains, it is important to protect riparian corridors with buffers. Riparian buffers are recognized by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), who define them essentially as naturally vegetated areas along waterways that act as filters and provide numerous environmental benefits.

PENNSYLVANIA SCENIC RIVERS

The Schuylkill River and French Creek within Phoenixville Borough are designated Pennsylvania Scenic Rivers. These two waterways are designated for recreational as well as scenic significance. French Creek for its Exceptional Value status and fishing, and the Schuylkill River for boating, fishing, and as a PA State Water Trail. (Page 4-9 PRPC Comprehensive Plan, 9/16/2019)

STEEP SLOPES

Steeply sloping land produces increased stormwater runoff and soil erosion potential, and also present challenges to development. Increased soil erosion and runoff can greatly impair surface water quality and diminish groundwater recharge. The steeper the slopes, the more severe the negative impacts of inappropriate use or management. It is important that steep slopes be maintained in effective natural vegetative cover where possible. Where this is not possible, disturbance should be minimized, and appropriate mitigation practices utilized. (Page 4-11 PRPC Comprehensive Plan, 9/16/2019)

NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION STANDARDS

Phoenixville Borough limits development in areas near floodplains and requires a 35-foot riparian buffers, typical of most urban municipalities. A 25-foot setback is required from any wetland and no new structure is allowed on slopes greater than 25% without a Conditional Use. The Phoenixville Regional Plan recommends that the municipalities should adopt uniform policies for environmental protection that are responsive to the goals and objectives of that plan. This goal must be carefully implemented understanding of where there is a compromised resource existing conditions that generally is located on a brownfield site within an urban Borough. (Page 4-10 PRPC Comprehensive Plan, 9/16/2019)

Preservation & Cultural Resources

CERTIFIED HISTORIC DISTRICT

The National Register of Historic Places defines a historic district as “a geographical definable area, urban or rural, possessing a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united by past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development. In addition, historic districts consist of contributing and non-contributing properties. Historic districts possess a concentration, linkage, or continuity of the other four types of properties. Objects, structures, buildings and sites within a historic district are usually thematically linked by architectural style or designer, date of development, distinctive urban plan, and/or historic associations.” Significant alterations to a property can damage its physical connections with the past, and thus reduce its historic integrity.

Phoenixville NHD comprises areas of downtown Phoenixville developed between the 18th century and the steel boom extending to the mid-20th century. The area includes the commercial downtown area along Bridge Street, as well as much of the residential community in neighborhoods south of Bridge Street. The Borough has a local historic district that includes the NHD and lands north of Bridge Street and French Creek that were occupied by Phoenix Steel and are now redeveloped. (Page 11-5 PRPC Comprehensive Plan, 9/16/2019)

HISTORIC ARCHITECTURE REVIEW BOARDS (HARBS)

A Historic Architecture Review Board (HARB) protects historic resources. HARBS are given authority under ordinances to advise on development and architectural standards within historic districts. Phoenixville Borough’s HARB advises on the protection of the architectural and cultural heritage of the Downtown Phoenixville NHD, specifically the outward appearance of buildings.

While architecture standards are important to the historical integrity of the buildings, a historic building must accommodate contemporary uses to maintain vitality. Phoenixville Borough must continually review its regulations and policies for preservation/adaptation of historic resources. The Borough's ordinance should further consider establishing clear infill and new development guidelines to ensure consistency with the overall neighborhood setting.

HERITAGE AREA AND SCENIC RESOURCES

Phoenixville Borough is part of the Schuylkill Highlands, a designated area of special natural, historical, recreational, and economic importance that extends from Valley Forge to Reading. The Schuylkill Highlands is one of seven Conservation Landscape Initiatives (CLI) regions in Pennsylvania. The Schuylkill Highlands is the overlap of two landscapes identified for protection: The Highlands Region designated by the U.S. Congress; and the Schuylkill River watershed that is designated by PA DCNR, PA DEP, and Philadelphia Water Department. Its importance stems from the need for water quality protection, habitat conservation, and recreational significance in an area expected to absorb significant growth and development in the coming years. (Page 11-9 PRPC Comprehensive Plan, 9/16/2019)

The Schuylkill River and the French Creek are PA-designated Scenic Rivers according to criteria by the Pennsylvania Scenic Rivers Act. The scenic resources within the Borough and the region help to identify the character of the community and should continue to aggressively pursue strategies and seek support on the local, regional, state, and federal levels to advance the goal.

ARTS AND CULTURAL CENTERS

Phoenixville Borough is home to a variety of arts and cultural centers, which together contribute to a vibrant and unique community. Cultural and art resources include the Colonial Theatre, The Schuylkill River Heritage Center, Community Arts Phoenixville, and Forge Theatre.

Phoenixville Borough has become a focal point for a wide range of community events offered year-round that are summarized on the Borough's web site. Several of them are associated with its history and many of them are located within the town center. Many of these events have been long-standing and provide a significant economic boost to the Borough. The Borough needs to continue to leverage its history to support regional tourism.

LANDSCAPE INITIATIVES

Phoenixville Borough lies within the Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape. The Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape is described as the nexus of two geographic features, the Pennsylvania Highlands and the Schuylkill River Watershed. The Schuylkill Highlands Partnership is a group of local, county and state officials, land trusts, nonprofit organizations, watershed associations, and business representatives in a six-county area working together to connect and sustain the natural, recreational, and cultural gems in the Schuylkill Highlands that was developed within the Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape Plan. Conservation Landscapes have been established by Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources in 2006. This collaborative approach acts on goals that protect and preserve the critical landscape that will ensure sustainable economic opportunities for the communities it serves. The Plan's goals center around connecting people to the outdoors, encourage sustainable and compatible economic development, conserve/protect/restore and steward the resources, promote the overall landscape, and leverage funding to accelerate project work.

Place-Based Tourism Initiatives such as the Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape harnesses the tangible and intangible heritage and culture to boost economic growth and sustainable development through cultural tourism, which leads to job creation, urban regeneration, and the protection of cultural and natural resources. Place-Based Tourism with a vibrant cultural scene and natural and historical assets like Phoenixville are not only likely to attract tourists, but also the skilled talent who can advance the Borough's desires to be a destination for people to live, work and play.

Goals & Objectives

Goal V.1 Phoenixville's sense of place is derived from its historic structures and natural areas in concert with its place within the overall Schuylkill Highlands Landscape. Continue to work to preserve and where possible feature these resources.

Objective V.1.1

Continually review historical regulations and policies for preservation/adaptation of historic resources.

Objective V.1.2

Adjust infill and new development guidelines to ensure consistency with the overall neighborhood setting but provide opportunities for affordable housing alternatives that does not compromise the cultural resources of the Borough.

Objective V.1.3

Incorporate structural features characterized in the Borough in new development standards.

Objective V.1.4

Continue to partner with the Schuylkill Highlands Partnership and Natural Trust to implement trail improvements, protect and restore cultural and natural resources, encourage place-based tourism, and its overall mission.

Goal V.2 Work towards incorporating green infrastructure providing bioretention and infiltration services that are interconnected to increase the Borough's green infrastructure land area to support a safe and healthy community.

Objective V.2.1

Coordinate with municipal zoning along resource corridors to create open space greenways for environmental protection.

Objective V.2.2

Evaluate with regional municipalities the implementation of consistent ordinances across borders with the understanding of physical constraints and degraded resources associated with a built environment.

Objective V.2.3

Work to mitigate the impacts of stormwater runoff into the French Creek and Schuylkill River, which may impact its water quality.

Objective V.2.4

Expand protected open space by creating links between larger expanses of protected land within the region often in the form of stream or trail corridors.

Objective V.2.5

Restore degraded areas of open space and practice appropriate land stewardship to ensure essential environmental functions for the well-being of the Phoenixville community.

Objective V.2.6

Consider activating parking lots or entrances to public buildings by designating space for pop-up or mobile services and amenities like health trucks, food trucks, library mobiles or yoga and other exercise work-outs.



IMPLEMENTATION



Photo Source: www.commons.wikimedia.org

Opportunities & Strategies

Phoenixville Borough has accomplished and implemented most of the recommendations from the prior Comprehensive Plan, and implementation will remain just as important moving forward. To aid the implementation, process, this chapter outlines the goals, objectives and actions (where appropriate) that were discussed within the Plan, and further defines the priority level, length of implementation, responsible parties, estimated price range, and potential funding sources, if any.

Implementation of the recommendations in this Comprehensive Plan for Phoenixville Borough, require there to be cooperation and collaboration among several public and private entities that include developers, businesses in the community, Borough Staff and the Council, among others. By using the implementation tables on the following pages, the Borough will be able to determine when the recommendation should be implemented, and develop a phasing plan, as short-term goals are generally completed in one to three years; mid-term recommendations in four to seven years; and long-term recommendations within eight to ten years.

The following implementation tables outline the goals and objectives, and specific actions (where appropriate) for Active, Connected, Growing, Sustainable, and Vibrant.

FUNDING LEVEL KEY

\$ = < 50k

\$\$ = between 50k and 100k

\$\$\$ = 100k to 500k

\$\$\$\$ = above 500k

	Objective	Responsible Party & Resources	Priority Level (Level 1= Highest)	Funding Level
Goal A.1	Implement Regional Trail Plans			
A.1.1	Establish trail corridors through permanent open space or by easement, and construct the missing trail gaps in the overall regional trail network.	Borough Staff	On-going	\$\$\$\$
A.1.2	Improve opportunities to connect trail system with the existing neighborhood pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.	Borough Staff	On-going	\$\$\$
A.1.3	Work with trail partners to expand wayfinding signage that identifies points of interest within Phoenixville Borough.	Borough Staff	2	\$\$\$
Goal A.2	Magnify the power of Phoenixville's Parks by making open spaces exciting, inviting, and ecologically dynamic			
A.2.1	Provide human-scaled outdoor rooms (spaces) for pause and contemplation.	Borough Planner	3	\$\$
A.2.2	Incorporate "ecosystem services" that benefit the Borough, such as reducing the strain on aging storm water systems, providing critical habitat for wildlife, and improving air quality.	Borough Engineer	1	\$\$\$
A.2.3	Improve the pedestrian accessibility to allow people to walk freely through the park amenities and through the space to local destinations.	Borough Engineer	3	\$\$\$
A.2.4	Consider improving park edges by adding greenery and art to extend into the street to highlight the parks' presence and extend an inviting reach.	Borough Staff	2	\$\$\$
A.2.5	Explore how to cater to all ages within the Borough parks.	Parks and Recreation Director	1	\$
A.2.6	Promote universal design to provide access to all parks and recreation spaces.	Borough Engineer	2	\$\$\$
A.2.7	Incorporate ways to elevate neighborhood parks more prominently through art and programming to attract new people to the Borough to be a fundamental driver to economic development.	Borough Staff	On-going	\$

Goal A.3 Create well rounded parks and recreation opportunities within the Borough.				
A.3.1	Add to the existing park land by exploring locations within the Town Center.	Parks and Recreation Director	3	\$\$\$
A.3.2	Consider activating parking lots or entrances to public buildings by designating space for pop-up or mobile services and amenities like health trucks, food trucks, library mobiles or yoga and other exercise work-outs.	Borough Staff	On-going	\$
A.3.3	Consider cultivating a culinary incubator associated with the community gardens that would include an industrial kitchen and possible greenhouse for local gardeners and chefs to develop their skills and businesses.	Borough Staff	2	\$\$
A.3.4	Consider the use of temporary pocket parks in conjunction with Bridge Street events.	Borough Staff	On-going	\$
A.3.5	Consider coordinating with local artists to host a temporary art trail along the SRT.	Borough Staff	On-going	\$

	Objective	Responsible Party & Resources	Priority Level (Level 1= Highest)	Funding Level
Goal C.1	Identify and market Phoenixville Borough as a 15 Minute Community where residents can safely access all their needs within a 15-minute walk.			
C.1.1	Identify and integrate elements needed to complete Phoenixville Borough for housing, retail, and employment opportunities to plan to make a 15-minute living a reality for as many people as possible.	Borough Staff	On-going	\$\$
C.1.2	Reinforce the neighborhood level planning promoted in the previous comprehensive plan.	Borough Staff	On-going	\$
C.1.3	Apply flexible approaches to accommodate infill and redevelopment that improves access to amenities, active transportation, parks and open spaces, and a broader range of housing types at the neighborhood scale.	Borough Planner	1	\$
C.1.4	Promote and provide community services and amenities that are important to residents within a 15-minute walk of their homes.	Borough Planner	1	\$
C.1.5	Work to remove barriers that prevent safe pedestrian mobility.	Borough Engineer	1	\$\$\$\$
C.1.6	Integrate improvements that support the public realm that encourages biking, walking, as well as social interaction through the configuration of landmarks and gathering spaces.	Borough Staff	1	\$\$\$
C.1.7	Calibrate densities that will support transit for residents to commute within the region for employment and daily needs not supported within the Borough and not have to rely on a personal automobile.	Borough Planner	1	\$
Goal C.2	Promote and support Complete Streets Standards using alternative modes of transportation through an enhanced network			
C.2.1	Adopt a Complete Streets Policy to promote all modes of transportation.	Borough Planner	1	\$\$
C.2.2	Develop a Complete Streets Design Guide that removes current impediments to active transportation modes.	Borough Planner	2	\$\$
C.2.3	Incorporate recommendations from the Complete Streets Design Guide into the Borough's Ordinances.	Borough Planner	2	\$\$

C.2.4	Emphasize streetscape improvements on Priority Corridors within the Borough that connect to local destinations that are safe, comfortable, and irresistible.	Borough Planner	On-going	\$
C.2.5	Identify methods of incorporating more bicycle infrastructure to connect the rider “islands” to the town center whether through on-street applications or connection through the Schuylkill River Trail.	Borough Planner	2	\$\$
C.2.6	Incorporate Active Transportation Route Brand into wayfinding program.	Borough Staff	On-going	\$\$
C.2.7	Promote the use of Active Transportation or transit use to Borough sponsored events.	Borough Staff	2	\$\$
Goal C.3	Expand Public Transportation options within the Borough			
C.3.1	Prioritize seeking financial support for a rail station to support connecting residents to parts of the region and county to jobs, amenities, and services.	Borough Council	On-going	\$
C.3.2	Look to partner with SEPTA to develop Phoenixville as the transit hub within the region.	Borough Council	On-going	\$
C.3.3	Partner with SEPTA to improve the bus infrastructure and services within the Borough to the fastest, most convenient, and most reliable way to travel to major centers of activity.	Borough Staff	On-going	\$
C.3.4	Turn transit stops and hubs into neighborhood destinations that leverage a regional system for local benefit.	Borough Planner	On-going	\$\$\$
C.3.5	Ensure that any station or stop is connected to three or more modes of transportation.	Borough Engineer	On-going	\$
C.3.6	Prepare a micro transit study either in connection with the Phoenixville region or just the Borough to focus on providing the gap in mobility that was lost by reduction in fixed lines, convenience, and promote connections to destinations that will alleviate congestion.	Borough Staff	On-going	\$\$\$

Goal C.4	Build upon the Park Phoenixville study recommendations to provide holistic solutions for all parking concerns and needs.			
C.4.1	Study solutions for parking inadequacy including peak event parking associated with Phoenixville Borough events and identification of underutilized lots along the perimeter of the Borough for micro transit shuttle service.	Parking Department	On-going	\$
C.4.2	Encourage the use of transit by reducing parking requirements or providing bonuses for incorporating transit or micro transit planning into development.	Borough Planner	On-going	\$
C.4.3	Develop a parking buildout analysis with any subsequent zoning ordinance changes.	Borough Planner	On-going	\$\$
C.4.4	Identification of potential structured parking locations.	Borough Engineer	On-going	\$
C.4.5	Study Bridge Street for better curb and on-street parking management to better allocate space and focus on planning for people.	Borough Planner	On-going	\$\$

	Objective	Responsible Party and Resources	Priority Level (Level 1= Highest)	Funding Level
Goal G.1	In partnership and collaboration with the entire region, and area developers work to define what affordability is to the Phoenixville Region and set a goal to increase the supply of affordable housing units annually for the next decade.			
G.1.1	Consider an annual review of this goal and implementing necessary adjustments to achieve the goal.	Council on Affordable Housing	On-going	\$
G.1.2	A subset of this goal should involve a higher percentage rental goal with a suggested efficiency or 1-bedroom unit target.	Council on Affordable Housing	1	\$
G.1.3	Continue to communicate with developers, leaders, neighborhood groups and others as to why affordable housing development must be prioritized.	Council on Affordable Housing	On-going	\$
G.1.4	Further explore public/private partnerships for workforce and senior housing to expand funding and implement organizational ways to advance construction.	Council on Affordable Housing	2	\$
Goal G.2	Review ordinance requirements and solicit broad feedback to provide ordinance provisions to increase affordable housing supply and not place prohibitive or onerous recommendations.			
G.2.1	Review zoning ordinance to determine if affordable housing development options are available in all neighborhoods as low wage jobs are available throughout the Borough and not just limited to one area.	Borough Planner	1	\$
G.2.2	Review ordinances to ensure universal design is encouraged as a cost-effective way for citizens of all ages and abilities to safely remain in their homes and be active in the Borough through all stages of life.	Borough Planner	1	\$
G.2.3	Review all residential zoning districts, to allow for all density types as conversions or new construction as a use by right subject to design, scale, and character of the existing neighborhood.	Borough Planner	1	\$

G.2.4	Consider a transit corridor overlay district for the Borough to allow goals that encourage affordable housing by providing incentives for mixed use development, higher density, sustainability infill development and open space in a comprehensive, holistic approach.	Borough Planner	2	\$\$
G.2.5	Consider utilizing Tax Increment Financing (TIF) as an additional tool for creating affordable housing possibly in conjunction with the transit corridor overlay district. Some items that could be supported by TIF are sustainable building, structured parking, and affordable housing.	Assitant Borough Manager	3	\$\$
Goal G.3	Provide for a variety of housing types that meets the needs of present and future Phoenixville Borough residents that are suitable for every stage of life.			
G.3.1	Protect the historic character and unique neighborhoods while providing for a variety of housing types and styles to meet the growing demand and the needs of those in different income earning categories.	Planning Commission	On-going	\$
G.3.2	Investigate opportunities to permit accessory dwelling units to provide another housing option within the Borough to aid in addressing affordability.	Borough Planner	1	\$
G.3.3	Continue to preserve the existing housing stock through code enforcement and maintenance code.	Director of Planning	On-going	\$
G.3.4	Create zoning and permitting incentives to facilitate affordable housing dwelling units for infill development, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse of non-residential properties.	Borough Planner	1	\$
G.3.5	Create flexibility within the zoning ordinance to allow neighborhoods to evolve over time to address current and future housing needs and become more socioeconomically integrated.	Borough Planner	1	\$
Goal G.4	Strengthen and enhance Bridge Street character with contextually compatible development.			
G.4.1	Strengthen and enhance Bridge Street Character with contextually compatible development.	Borough Planner	2	\$

G.4.2	Incorporate the distinctive qualities and character of the surrounding, and/or evolving area context into building and site design.	Borough Planner	2	\$
G.4.3	Encourage public and private development to establish new urban design and architectural character in areas where downtown development patterns are fragmented or are in transition.	Planning Commission	On-going	\$
G.4.4	Protect prominent historic resources and promote innovative new development that respectfully coexists with the character and context of these historic assets.	Planning Commission	On-going	\$
G.4.5	For development or redevelopment activity in primarily residential neighborhood streets that may not be able to support a mix of uses with active frontages, encourage features that create visual interest at the pedestrian level.	Borough Planner	1	\$
G.4.6	Continue to enhance the Borough pedestrian experience through the provision of pedestrian oriented banners, wayfinding, signage, and other related infrastructure.	Borough Planner	1	\$
G.4.7	Private and public development should contribute to the creation of new, and/or expansion of existing, public realm parks and open space areas throughout the Borough.	Planning Commission	1	\$
G.4.8	Encourage innovative and moderate density housing for infill development in proximity to downtown Phoenixville.	Borough Planner	1	\$
G.4.9	Work with regional municipalities to enact municipal and/or inter-municipal purchase of development rights or transfer of development rights ordinances and programs.	Regional Planner	2	\$
G.4.10	Create and update a regional inventory of brownfields and other underutilized buildings and sites that are suitable for revitalization initiatives.	Regional Planner	2	\$

Goal G.5	Support Phoenixville Borough's prominent role as a hub for culture, dining, entertainment, tourism, events, and employment.			
G.5.1	Encourage land uses, activities and special events that support Phoenixville as a primary destination in the region.	Regional Planner and Borough Staff	2	\$
G.5.2	Promote Phoenixville as an environment attractive community to both leisure visitors and a skilled workforce.	Economic Development Corporation	1	\$\$
G.5.3	Attract tourism-supporting land uses, activities, and special events to reinforce Phoenixville as a robust destination.	Economic Development Corporation	1	\$\$
G.5.4	Proactively address economic and social changes by examining Phoenixville Borough's goals on a regular basis, to ensure responsiveness to shifts in economic, social, environmental, and market conditions.	Borough Staff	On-going	\$
G.5.5	Appeal to residents, visitors, and workers by creating and delivering programs and services that support high quality, year-round, successful mix of retail, dining, entertainment, emerging enterprises, and small businesses that contribute to Phoenixville's unique character.	Economic Development Corporation	1	\$\$
Goal G.6	Promote private investment in and attract new development to Phoenixville.			
G.6.1	Encourage investment in development that ensures Phoenixville's economic competitiveness regionally.	Economic Development Corporation	1	\$\$
G.6.2	Promote a mix of daytime/nighttime activities year-round through development investments and community programming in Phoenixville.	Borough Staff	1	\$\$
G.6.3	Attract and retain a broad array of economic activities that widen the appeal of Phoenixville and strengthen its tax base.	Borough Staff	On-going	\$
G.6.4	Recognize that talent is a critical component of business location decisions and enhance Phoenixville's quality of life amenities and promote its housing choices to appeal to a skilled workforce.	Economic Development Corporation	1	\$

Goal G.7 Continue to strengthen the Borough's economy.				
G.7.1	Promote retail and services that serve the day-to-day needs of nearby residents and workers, including everything from grocery stores to personal care businesses.	Economic Development Corporation	1	\$\$
G.7.2	Strengthen the professional services market by promoting the development of small office space.	Economic Development Corporation	3	\$
G.7.3	Flex/innovation space should be considered to serve the purpose of craft/maker space, technology, design, and manufacturing. Flex/innovation space have multiple benefits – they support creative industries and take the burden off retail by providing other ways to activate streets and spaces.	Borough Planner	1	\$
G.7.4	The Borough should also consider promoting smaller footprint grocery stores that can be more embedded within neighborhoods or located within new mixed-use developments that are currently being built.	Economic Development Corporation and Borough Planner	1	\$
G.7.5	Phoenixville Borough needs to continue its partnership with the Schuylkill Highlands region to assist in connecting people to the culture of the Borough and the surrounding natural landscapes.	Borough Staff	2	\$
G.7.6	The Borough should embrace the idea of a Trail Town as an opportunity for economic development approach that considers the town's resources, character, and businesses to develop a memorable and inviting trail experience for users from visitors and residents alike.	Borough Staff	1	\$\$
G.7.7	Phoenixville has a rich history and a significant event schedule that the Borough should work with the private sector to establish a boutique hotel or other unique overnight accommodation to expand the length of stay.	Economic Development Corporation	3	\$\$\$

	Objective	Responsible Party & Resources	Priority Level (Level 1= Highest)	Funding Level
Goal S.1	Invest in infrastructure to encourage more sustainable choices.			
S.1.1	Maintain, expand, and require public Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure	Commit existing staff resources to review and enforce	On-going	\$
S.1.2	Transition fleet and Borough owned vehicles to EV's when the EV's on the market can meet the daily demands of the vehicle's required use.	Utilize existing Borough budget and vehicle replacement program.	3	\$\$
S.1.3	Consider conversion of refuse and recycling trucks to hydraulic hybrid garbage trucks.	Determine grant eligibility	3	\$\$\$
S.1.4	Maintain, upgrade and require all lighting to be LED to continue resulting in annual energy savings in land developments and subdivisions.	Utilize existing Borough budget	On-going	\$\$
Goal S.2	Embrace and explore innovative solutions to enhance infrastructure and service delivery.			
S.2.1	Implement phase 1 and 2 of the Hydrothermal carbonization, or HTC for short, converts biomass, organic and food wastes into value added products.	Implement existing plan commitments	1	\$\$\$\$
S.2.2	Digitally inventory the Borough's wastewater, water and stormwater assets, identify vulnerabilities and determine capital improvement planning.	Utilize existing staff or consider service vendor	1	\$\$\$
S.2.3	Where necessary, complete asset inventory, evaluate life-cycle, determine investment, and prioritize expenditures in a long-term capital investment program.	Borough Manager and Public Works Director	2	\$
S.2.4	Consider a smart city strategy to pursue new technologies that will better leverage and enhance the experience of the Borough's assets and improve service delivery.	Borough Manager and Public Works Director	3	\$\$

S.2.5	Pursue approaches to parking, transportation, mobility, public space limitations through a combination of demonstrated best practices as well as early adoption of technology.	Assitant Borough Manager	1	\$\$
S.2.6	Evaluate funding sources and approaches that could include regionalization or privatization for the water distribution system.	Engineer	3	\$\$
S.2.7	Assess whether a sustainable revenue stream, such as a stormwater fee may be necessary in this Plan's timefreme to maintain infrastructure improvements.	Stormwater Fee Expert	2	\$
S.2.8	Seek funding and allocate budget lines to invest in the need for on-going maintenance (water and wastewater)	Borough Manager and Public Works Director	On-going	\$\$
Goal S.3	Continue to provide exemplary emergency services through regular assessments and updates to address evolving community needs.			
S.3.1	Coordinate the Implementation of the recommendations of the Center for Public Safety Management recommendations.	Borough Manager and Police Chief, Fire Chief and EMS Chief	2	\$\$\$
S.3.2	Evaluate whether to add EMS to the Fire Department personnel.	Borough Manager	1	\$\$\$
S.3.3	Update the fire ordinance and code.	Fire Chief	1	\$
S.3.4	Partner with the Police Department to expand the camera program at high traffic intersections in the community.	Police Chief and Borough Manager	2	\$\$\$
S.3.5	Make necessary upgrades to all the emergency service providers' software.	Police Chief	2	\$\$\$
S.3.6	Consider the construction of a regional training facility.	Borough Manager	3	\$\$\$\$
Goal S.4	Continue making strides in terms of sustainability to be a leader in the region and county.			
S.4.1	Develop programs to incentivize sustainable initiatives to private landowners to create a more sustainable community at all levels.	Borough Planner	3	\$
S.4.2	Seek the Pennsylvania Sustainable Communities certifications to be recognized as a leader in sustainability and to better manage and communicate the Borough's progress in this effort.	Assitant Borough Manager	1	\$

	Objective	Responsible Party and Resources	Priority Level (Level 1= Highest)	Funding Level
Goal V.1	Phoenixville's sense of place is derived from its historic structures and natural areas in concert with its place within the overall Schuylkill Highlands Landscape. Continue to work to preserve and where possible feature these resources.			
V.1.1	Continually review historical regulations and policies for preservation/adaptation of historic resources.	Historic Review Board	On-going	\$
V.1.2	Adjust infill and new development guidelines to ensure consistency with the overall neighborhood setting but provide opportunities for affordable housing alternatives that does not compromise the cultural resources of the Borough.	Borough Planner	1	\$
V.1.3	Incorporate structural features characterized in the Borough in new development standards.	Borough Planner	1	\$
V.1.4	Continue to partner with the Schuylkill Highlands Partnership and Natural Trust to implement trail improvements, protect and restore cultural and natural resources, encourage place-based tourism, and its overall mission.	Borough Staff	On-going	\$

Goal V.2	Work towards incorporating green infrastructure providing bioretention and infiltration services that are interconnected to increase the Borough's green infrastructure land area to support a safe and healthy community			
V.2.1	Coordinate with municipal zoning along resource corridors to create open space greenways for environmental protection.	Borough Planner	1	\$
V.2.2	Evaluate with regional municipalities the implementation of consistent ordinances across borders with the understanding of physical constraints and degraded resources associated with a built environment.	Regional Planner	3	\$
V.2.3	Work to mitigate the impacts of stormwater runoff into the French Creek and Schuylkill River, which may impact its water quality.	Borough Engineer	On-going	\$
V.2.4	Expand protected open space by creating links between larger expanses of protected land within the region often in the form of stream or trail corridors.	Planning Commission	3	\$
V.2.5	Restore degraded areas of open space and practice appropriate land stewardship to ensure essential environmental functions for the well-being of the Phoenixville community.	Borough Staff	On-going	\$

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APPENDIX



Schuylkill East Trail
(Montgomery County) to
Pottstown and Mont Clare

To Reading

Schuylkill East Trail and
Schuylkill River Trail
(Montgomery County)
to Norristown and
Philadelphia

To Coventryville
and West

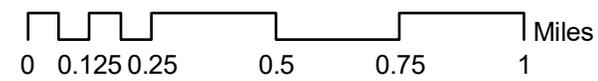
To Horse-Shoe Trail and
Chester Valley Trail

To Proposed
Sidewalk
Improvements
In Schuylkill Twp.

Legend

- - - Devault Trail, Proposed
- French Creek Trail, Existing
- - - French Creek Trail, Proposed
- Phoenix Iron Canal Trail, Existing
- - - Phoenix Iron Canal Trail, Proposed
- - - Rec Center to Trail Connection, Proposed
- - - Schuylkill River Trail to Black Rock Connection, Proposed
- Schuylkill River Trail, Existing*
- - - Schuylkill Freedom Trail, Proposed
- Schuylkill East Trail, Existing**
- - - Schuylkill East Trail, Proposed**
- Other County Trails, Existing
- Sidewalks

*This section is also part of the Pennsylvania Highlands Trail
 **Trail sections not located within the Borough of Phoenixville



PHOENIXVILLE BOROUGH

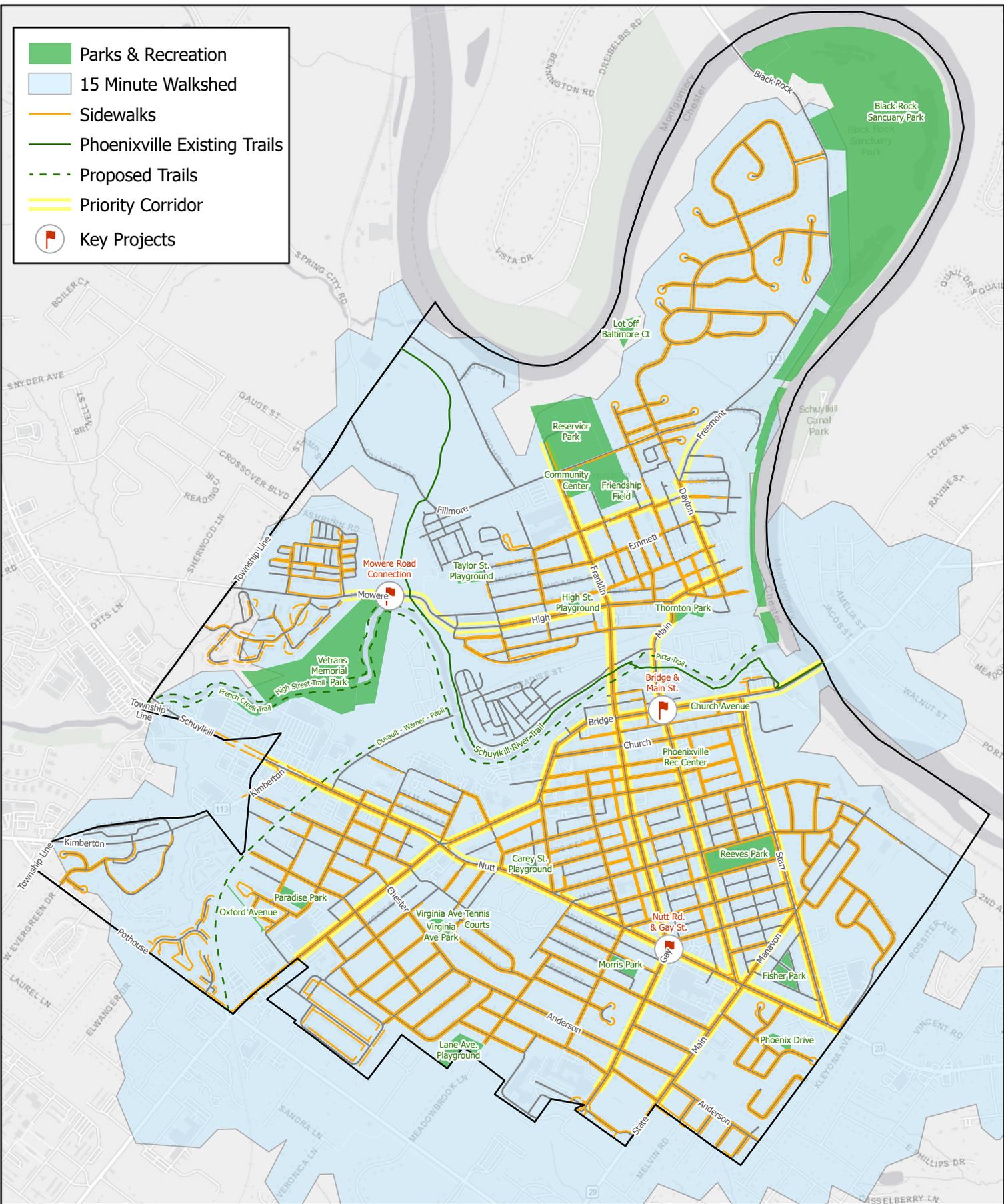
PHOENIXVILLE IS CONNECTED

MONTGOMERY TOWNSHIP, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

GILMORE & ASSOCIATES, INC.
ENGINEERING & CONSULTING SERVICES

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JOB NO: 22-01141	DATE: January 2022	
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- Parks & Recreation
- 15 Minute Walkshed
- Sidewalks
- Phoenixville Existing Trails
- Proposed Trails
- Priority Corridor
- 🚩 Key Projects

Mapping derived from data provided by ESRI, PennDOT, USGS, Chester County, and DVRPC.

10/8/2021 | PM: TJS | GIS: KCM | QA: TJS | R008123.0425



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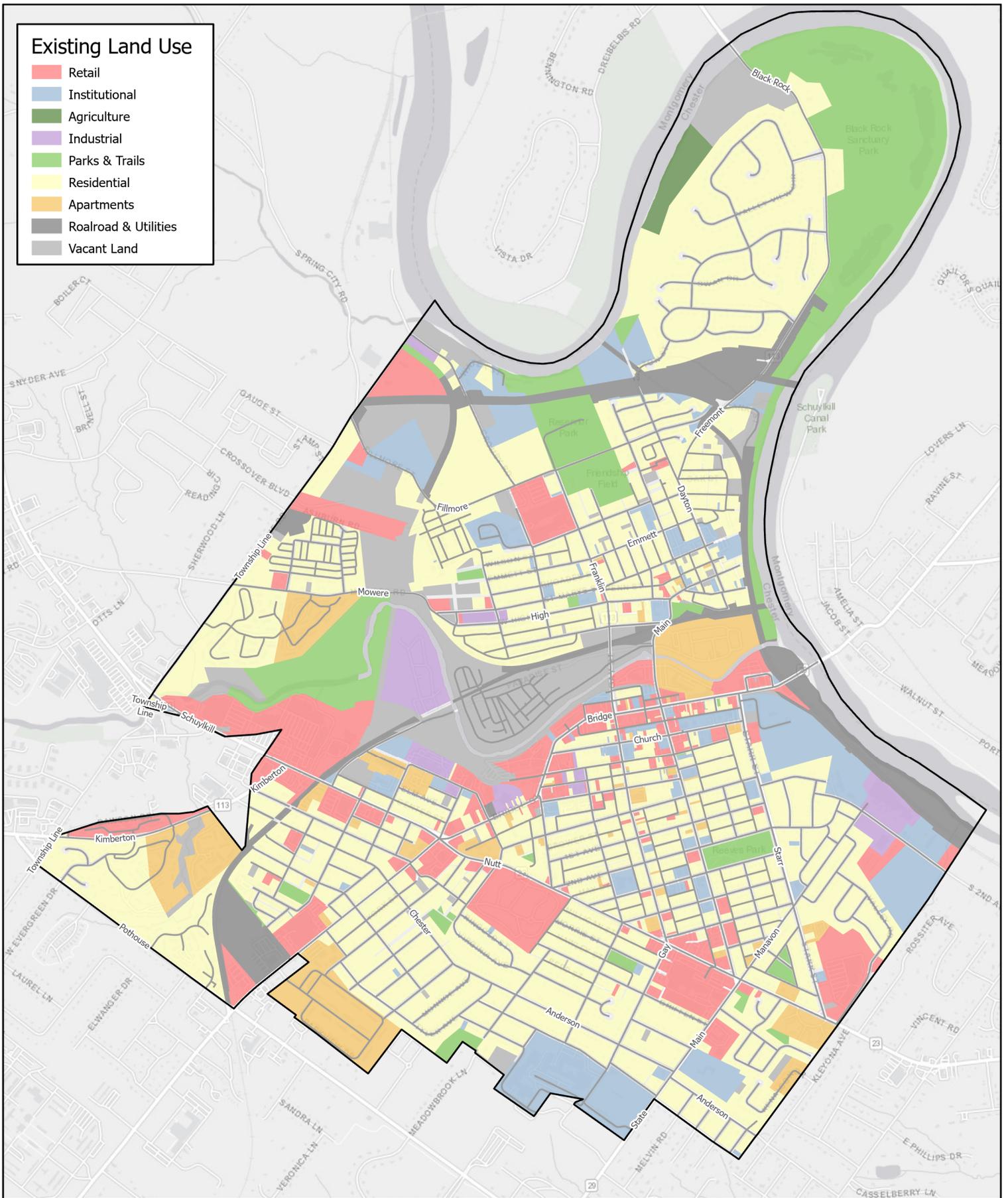


Active Transportation Map

Phoenixville Borough
 Chester County, PA

Existing Land Use

- Retail
- Institutional
- Agriculture
- Industrial
- Parks & Trails
- Residential
- Apartments
- Railroad & Utilities
- Vacant Land



Mapping derived from data provided by ESRI, PennDOT, USGS, Chester County, and DVRPC.

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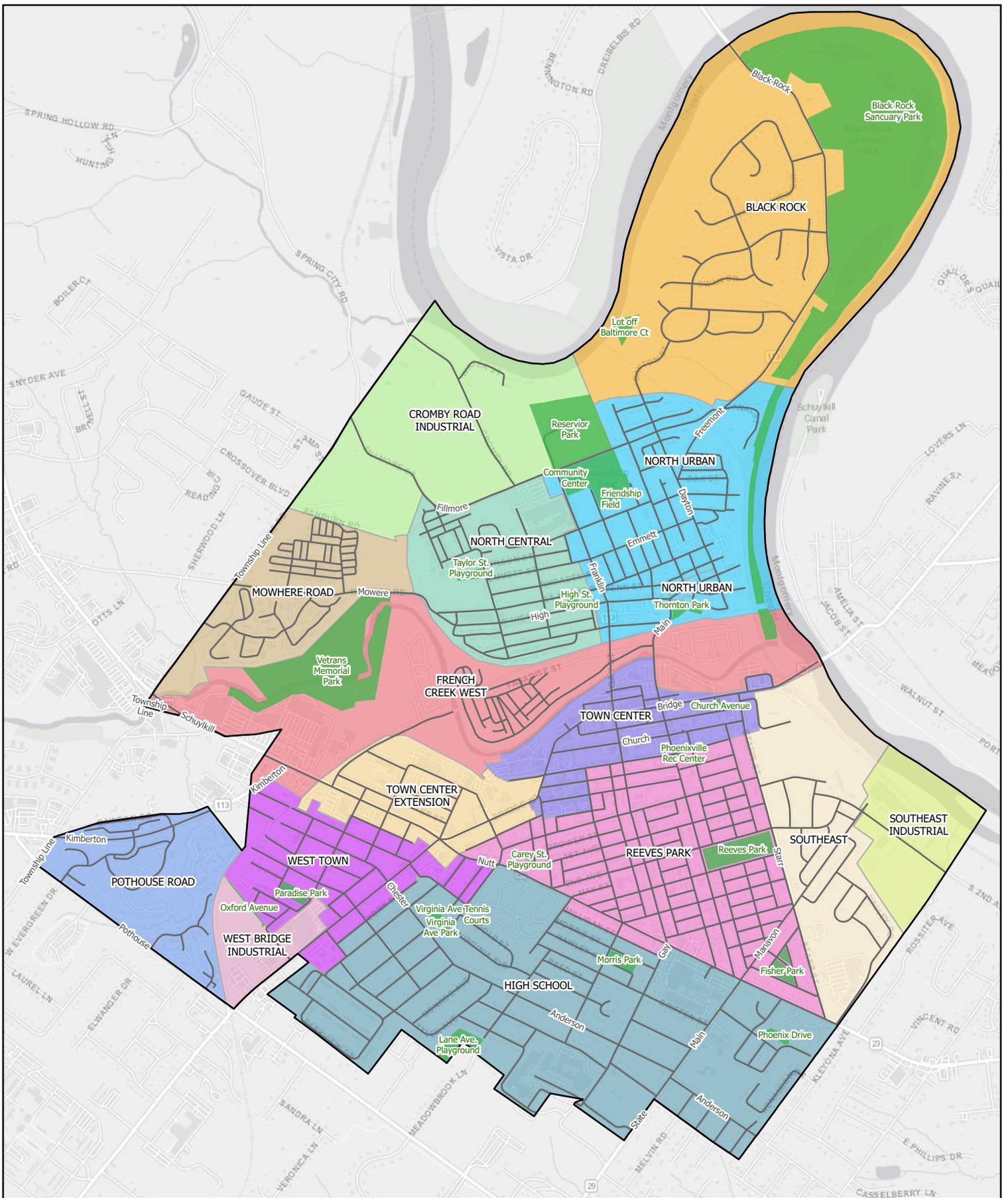


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Existing Land Use Map

Phoenixville Borough
 Chester County, PA



Mapping derived from data provided by ESRI, PennDOT, USGS, Chester County, and DVRPC.

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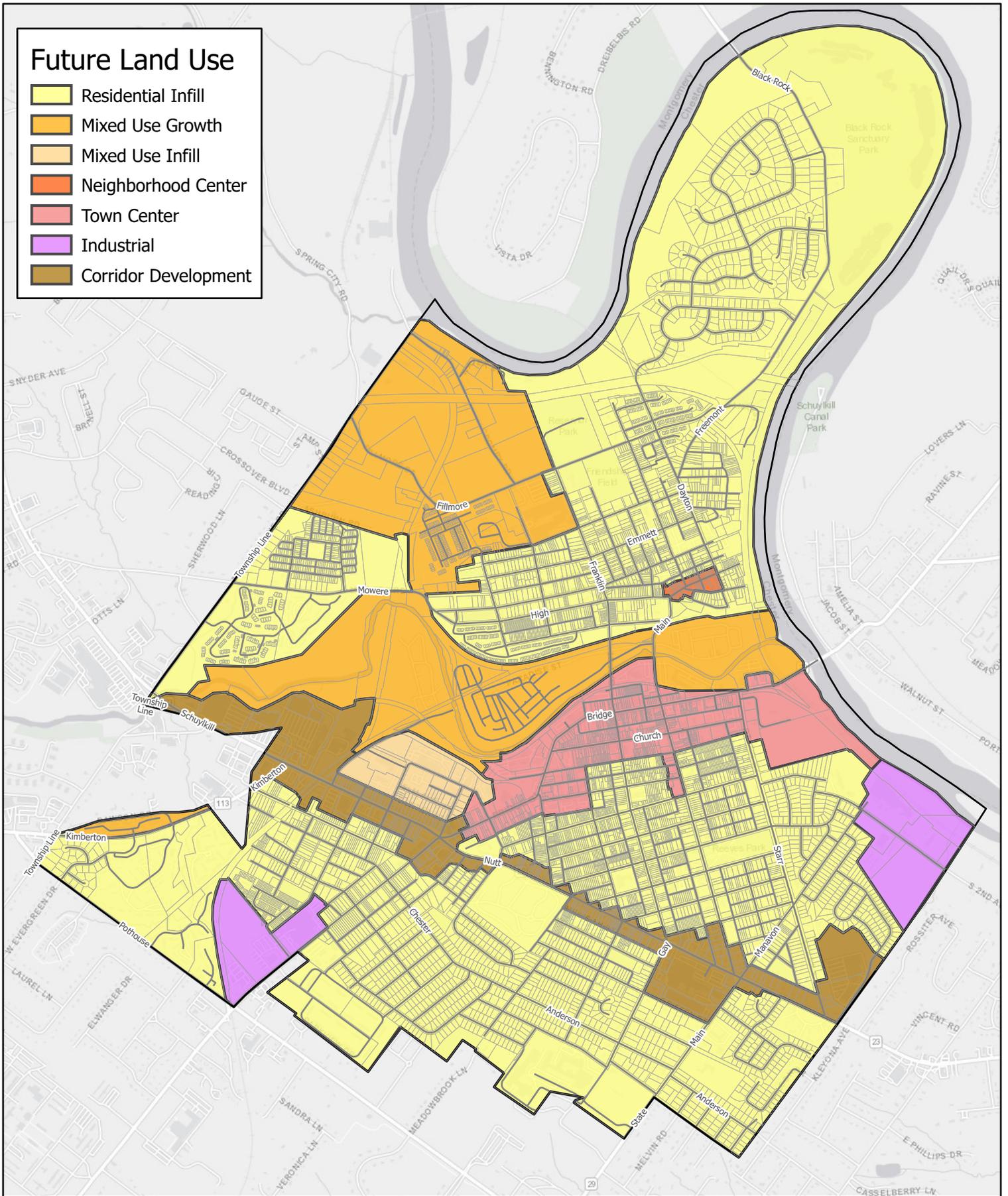
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Neighborhood Map
 Phoenixville Borough
 Chester County, PA

Future Land Use

- Residential Infill
- Mixed Use Growth
- Mixed Use Infill
- Neighborhood Center
- Town Center
- Industrial
- Corridor Development



Mapping derived from data provided by ESRI, PennDOT, USGS, Chester County, and DVRPC.

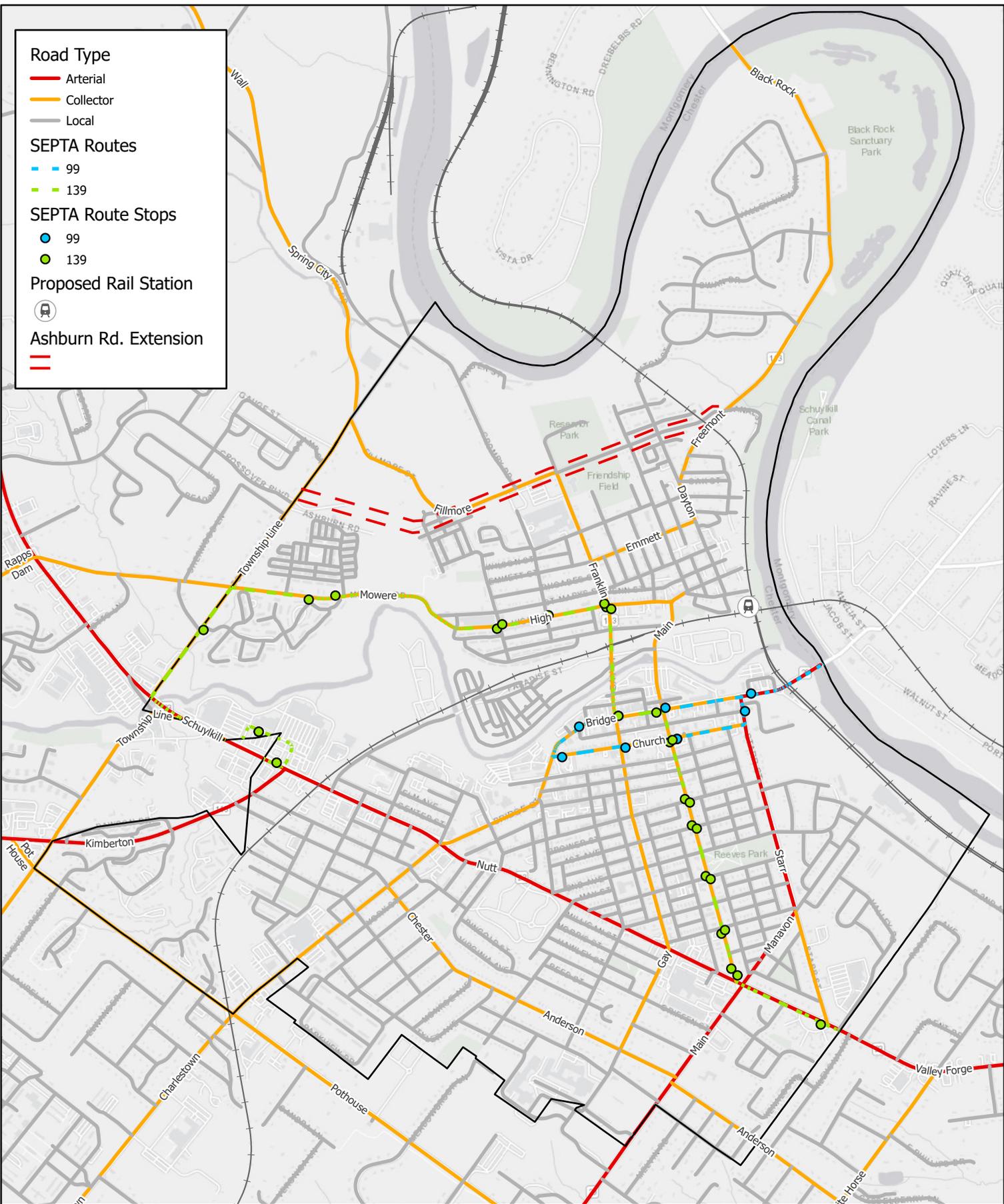
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Future Land Use Map
 Phoenixville Borough
 Chester County, PA



Road Type

- Arterial
- Collector
- Local

SEPTA Routes

- 99
- 139

SEPTA Route Stops

- 99
- 139

Proposed Rail Station

- [Train Icon]

Ashburn Rd. Extension

- [Red Dashed Line]

Mapping derived from data provided by ESRI, PennDOT, USGS, Chester County, and DVRPC.

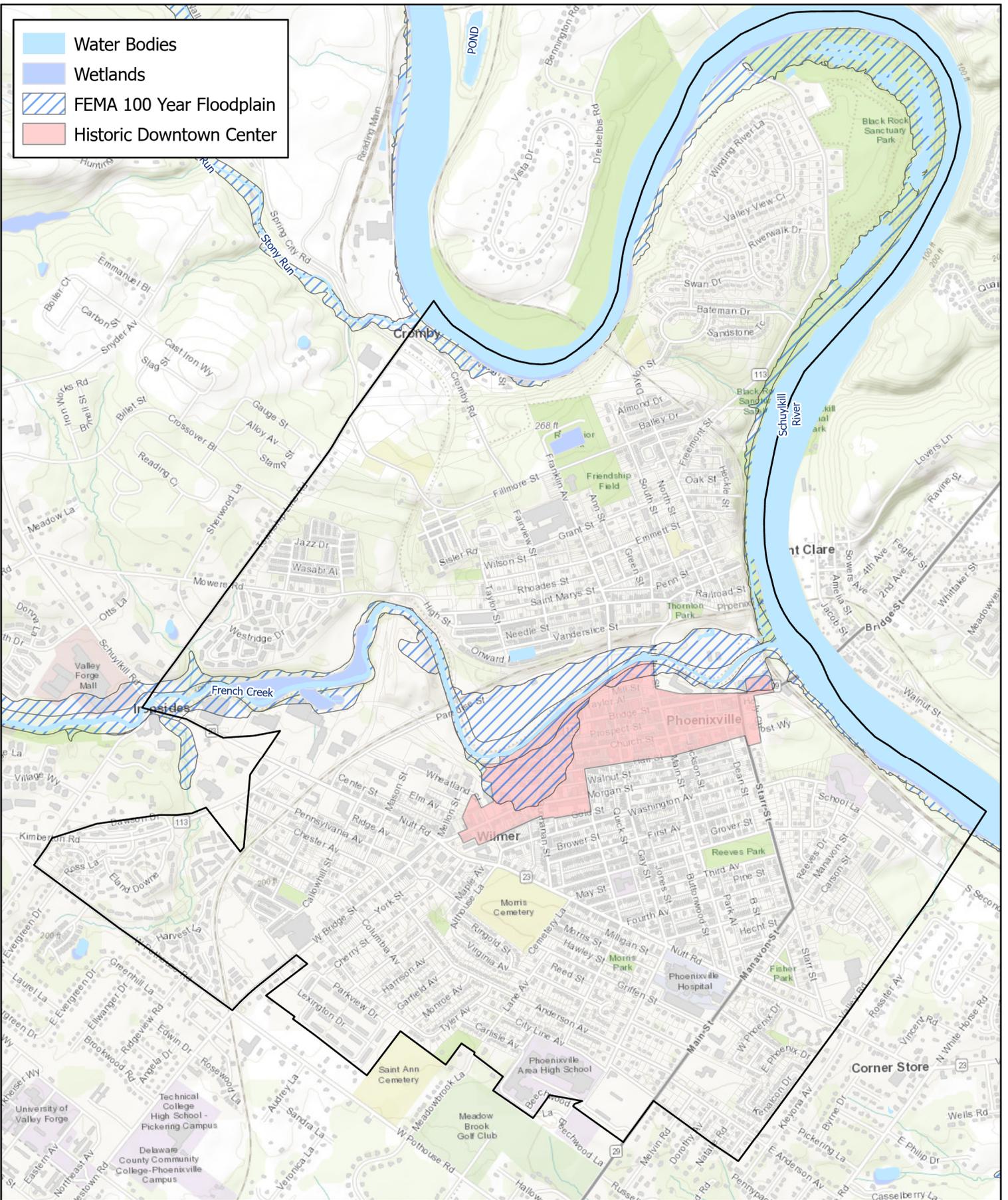
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Motorized Circulation System Map
 Phoenixville Borough
 Chester County, PA



Mapping derived from data provided by ESRI, PennDOT, USGS, Chester County, and DVRPC.

10/9/2021 | PM: TJS | GIS: KCM | QA: TJS | R008123.0425



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Natural & Cultural Resources Map
 Phoenixville Borough
 Chester County, PA