



AGENDA

PHOENIXVILLE REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE – COMMITTEE WORKSHOP PRPC-6 August 30, 2017

1. Land Use Plan – Policy
 - a. Goals and Objectives – Established at Workshop PRPC-5
 - b. History
 - c. Future Land Use
 - Mixed Use
 - Industrial
 - Village
 - High Density Residential
 - Medium Density Residential
 - Low density Residential
 - Rural
 - d. Revitalization and Adaptive Re-Use
 - e. Implementation Strategies
2. Future Land Use Map
3. Announce Next Workshop – September 27, 2017 – Refine Land Use Plan
4. Adjournment

CHAPTER THREE - LAND USE PLAN

As the functional driver off all other plan interrelationships, the Land Use Plan is the fundamental element of comprehensive planning. Land use dictates impacts on environmental systems, it establishes the locations of housing and economic centers, it generates the need for supporting infrastructure, and it forms the functional, cultural, and aesthetic character of the community. Historically, land use patterns have been shaped by opportunities and constraints afforded by the natural environment. As technology has advanced, it has become possible to separate the interdependency of human activity and environment, which has often led to the unintended consequences of impaired ecological systems and ultimately the degradation of quality of life and culture. Thus, it is critical that land use be conceptualized within the context of all of its complex interrelationships, so that human activity and its physical and cultural artifacts are compatible and sustainable within their natural setting.

3.1 LAND USE PLAN GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

Preserve and enhance the Region's valuable natural, scenic, cultural, and economic assets through development patterns coordinated to integrate land uses appropriately, and to identify and plan for conservation and growth areas that maintain and complement the essential character of the Region. This goal is to be advanced through the pursuit of the following specific objectives:

1. Identify and conserve areas that by virtue of their natural, scenic, agricultural, historic, and/or recreational significance are worthy of protection.
2. Continue revitalization efforts in the mixed use urban core of Phoenixville, with a balance of commercial uses and employment centers that support residential uses and growth in the Borough and throughout the Region.
3. Designate areas for new mixed use development that is safely pedestrian-accessible and context appropriate in terms of design, location, and scale, that creates functional interconnections between adjacent complementary uses, and is coordinated with supporting infrastructure.
4. Promote context-sensitive infill development within existing developed areas, neighborhoods, and villages, including provisions for adaptive re-use of historic sites and structures.
5. Encourage redevelopment of brownfield sites and underutilized buildings, including consideration of adaptive re-uses and zoning.

3.2 HISTORIC LAND USE

Historically, Phoenixville grew as a steel mill community, and current land use remains somewhat reflective of the original pattern. Following the closure of Phoenix Steel Corporation in the early 1980's, Phoenixville endured a nearly two decade period of decline, but has re-emerged as a vibrant center of dining, entertainment, culture, and urban lifestyle. With this revitalization, the steel mill site is being redeveloped as a multifamily residential area with some supporting commercial. In addition, a number of former industrial buildings throughout the Borough have found new life as residential apartments, offices, cultural centers, and educational institutions. Challenges remain, as some feel the commercial resurgence has been largely eating and drinking establishments and may not be sufficiently diverse.

The amount of land designated for industrial uses has declined significantly in the Region since the 1970's and 1980's, particularly in Phoenixville. Industrial jobs have historically been associated with good paying, blue-collar skilled jobs, but industrial uses have also been associated with pollution and other undesirable impacts such as noise, dust, and truck traffic. Industrial businesses and industrial land continue to play an important role in the Region's economy. With the shift away from an industrially based economy, the Region continues to redefine the employment centers to maintain a healthy balance between jobs and housing.

The Region's Townships were originally agricultural communities with interspersed villages that formed around mills, at road intersections, and along rail lines that have since gone to inactive and abandoned status. The post World War II exurban housing boom transformed much of the area permanently. In the 1950's and 60's, residential subdivisions of modestly sized single family housing sprung up in places like Bevan's Orchard and surrounding Kimberton. From 1970 to the early 2000's, the housing trend continued, with ever larger houses and more affluent households occupying large tracts of previously farmed land. Within this period and increasing subsequently, multi-family housing established in the Townships, beginning with apartment and townhouse projects in East Pikeland and Schuylkill Townships, close to Phoenixville. In addition, Planned Residential Developments (PRD) and more recently Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TND) including various residential types have proliferated in Charlestown, Schuylkill, and West Vincent. Despite these Regional changes, the pastoral agricultural landscape remains largely intact in West Vincent, and in parts of Charlestown, East Pikeland, and Schuylkill.

The pace of housing growth in the Townships steadily accelerated from 1940 up to the Great Recession of 2007-2008. In the post-Recession recovery, there has so far been a greater emphasis on multi-family development including significant townhouse and apartment projects. From 2008 to the present, there have been no large single family residential projects approved, although some previously approved TND projects are under construction.

3.3 EXISTING LAND USE

Existing land use patterns are described on **Map _____**, which shows the urbanized core area of Phoenixville, with largely moderate density residential uses generally closer to the Schuylkill River and lower residential densities and agricultural uses predominant as one moves westward across the Region. Commercial and industrial areas occur within Phoenixville and in pockets along major roads in each of the other municipalities. Industrial areas are also located along the Schuylkill River in those municipalities located along the Schuylkill River. Institutional uses serving educational and cultural purposes are distributed regionally in general relationship to centers of population, but also include organizations dedicated to historical settings and events. The breakdown of existing land uses by area is as follows:

Existing Land Use	Acreage	% Total Area
Agriculture	8,978.20	27.07
Commercial	922.03	2.78
Industrial	142.62	0.43
Institutional	474.28	1.43
Mining	119.40	0.36
Recreation	623.53	1.88
Residential - Single Family Detached Houses	9,479.01	28.58
Residential - Mobile Homes	29.85	0.09
Residential - Attached and Multi-Family Housing	759.52	2.29
Utilities	288.55	0.87
Vacant	888.86	2.68
Water	563.83	1.70
Wooded/Natural Landscape	9,896.92	29.84
Total	33,166.60	100.00

3.4 FUTURE LAND USE PLAN AND POLICY

The future land use plan and policy of the Region is in keeping with the stated goal and objectives to conserve natural resources and strategically guide future development and use to the most appropriate areas. It provides the basis for the Region to coordinate inter-municipal zoning, as well as coordinating with the municipalities adjacent to the Region. The land use categories shown on **Map** are generalized by type and range of intensity, with further specification decided by the individual municipalities. Designated growth areas are also included in the future land use map to limit non-rural zoning intensities outside of these boundaries and to ensure that transportation and utility infrastructure improvements are coordinated with areas designated for the appropriate use and intensity of development.

The future land use map was created using a variety of resources. First, generalized land use categories were developed using the policy vision, goals, and objectives developed by the Phoenixville Regional Planning Committee and through the public visioning process. The future land use map was then created with generalized land use categories and in consideration of the following:

- Natural features analysis
- The County Landscapes Comprehensive Plan
- Existing municipal zoning
- Existing land use patterns
- Current and anticipated development trends

Rural areas are intended to protect natural resources such as prime agricultural soils, wooded areas, watercourses, wetlands, and steep slopes, as well as maintaining viable agricultural uses and permanent open spaces. Mixed use and industrial areas were located based on the location of established commercial and industrial areas and the capacity of transportation, wastewater, and water

infrastructure, including any anticipated extensions of that infrastructure. Redevelopment is an important part of the plan's development strategy, and includes context appropriate adaptive re-use, infill and expansion of existing urban, commercial, and village settlements. Residential uses are proposed at appropriate density depending on adjacency to existing development and supporting infrastructure.

The future land use pattern for the Region is based on preserving the rural areas and improving the quality of the built environment in the areas with existing development and infrastructure. The Borough of Phoenixville will continue in its role as the Region's economic and residential hub. Although Phoenixville has little remaining vacant land, investments in the existing infrastructure and redevelopment parcels will continue to strengthen the Borough and regional economy while providing opportunities for desirable infill development. Other favorable locations for commercial and mixed use development and redevelopment include the 724 corridor in East Pikeland, Ludwigs Corner in West Vincent, and Devault in Charlestown. Smaller village areas exist in Kimberton, Wilmer, Birchrunville, Charlestown, and Valley Forge, offering opportunities for appropriate small scale uses within a historic resource preservation context.

Overall, the future land use policy strives to conserve the rural character and natural and historic resources of the Region. The goal of this plan is to direct growth away from the rural areas and into traditional economic centers such as Phoenixville and the supporting villages and commercial centers, each with its unique character and cultural and economic vibrancy.

3.5 FUTURE LAND USE CATEGORIES

Map _ illustrates future land uses and intensities as follows:

Mixed Use

Mixed Use areas include existing commercial development areas and adjacent lands where those uses may expand in the future. These areas may be developed as commercial retail, service, light industrial/ small-scale start-up businesses or office uses, and may include a residential component as integral to the majority commercial use. They are within urbanized areas or oriented along major roadways and coordinated with supporting sewer and water infrastructure. Mixed use developments shall be walkable with well-integrated uses and interconnections between adjacent lots to ameliorate auto dependency and traffic congestion within the mixed use area. Design standards shall be incorporated to enhance the pedestrian friendly feel of these landscapes, while promoting environmentally sustainable techniques where practicable. These areas may include zoning provisions to enable adaptive re-use of existing underutilized buildings and developed sites as blight remediation and revitalization, which is discussed in greater detail later in this chapter. Intensity of development within mixed use areas shall depend on proximity within or adjacent to urbanized areas, so that commercial uses are adequately supported by residential neighbors. Infill development within mixed use areas shall adhere to design standards that promote compatibility with neighborhood context, particularly within historic settings.

In terms of design, the following attributes characterize appropriate infill and new development in mixed use areas:

- Buildings arranged to reinforce pedestrian scale streetscape
- Combinations of single use and multi-use buildings
- Pedestrian links between sidewalks and building entrances
- Surface parking lots located to the side or rear of buildings, or screened from street
- Complete Street design that accommodates motor vehicles, pedestrians, bicycles, mass transportation, and environmental functions
- Front yard parking no greater than one or two bays deep
- Landscaped areas in parking areas for microclimatic, stormwater, and aesthetic benefits
- Traffic calming measures on streets to promote pedestrian comfort and safety
- Building entrances oriented to the streetscape
- Outdoor landscaped pedestrian areas that serve as gathering spaces and spots for temporary commercial activities.
- Façade and roofline variations to diminish the apparent scale of buildings
- Interior and exterior architectural treatments that create interrelationships between the private indoor realm and the public realm of the sidewalk and street



Typical Street width to building height ratio



Complete Street

The use and intensity characteristics of mixed use areas are:

Uses: Retail, Service, Eateries, Office, Cultural/Entertainment, Sports/Fitness, Innovative Practices and Technologies, etc.
Multifamily Residential permitted as a component of broader Commercial use.

Intensity: Urban – 75-100% maximum impervious
Exurban – 40-65% maximum impervious

Industrial

Industrial areas are those areas with businesses that typically produce, manufacture or otherwise generate goods on a large scale that are later sold to commercial businesses. Industrial areas include existing industrial businesses and adjacent lands where those uses may expand in the future. Typically included in the definition of industrial land are manufacturing facilities, fabrication, building construction, warehouses, factories and storage facilities. Industrial areas are typically characterized by truck traffic and tend to be found on the outer limits of the urbanized areas and oriented to obtain easy and quick access to major transportation routes. In the Phoenixville Region a significant amount of the remaining industrial lands are also located along the Schuylkill River reflecting historical

patterns.

As the land area dedicated to industrial uses decreases in the Region, consideration should be given to opportunities for other types of employment centers to maintain a healthy balance of jobs and housing.

As technology improves and small-scale start-up businesses become more desirable, the integration of low-impact uses that may have traditionally been only permitted in industrial zones should be considered in the mixed-use areas.

Uses: Manufacturing, warehousing, factories, fabrication, building construction, innovative technology, and storage facilities.

Intensity: Impervious Cover: 70-80% maximum

Village

Villages are mixed use areas of low to moderate intensity where a historical context is to be maintained, in Birchrunville, Charlestown, Kimberton, Wilmer, and Valley Forge. Villages shall promote pedestrian and bicycle accessibility, and equestrian accessibility where appropriate. Buildings shall be modest in scale, and design standards for architecture and streetscape shall be in keeping with the specific historical context of each settlement. Mixed residential/commercial use buildings and development are encouraged to maintain a community where people can live and work without commuting by vehicle. Commercial uses shall be neighborhood oriented as opposed to highway oriented, and may include local service/retail, cultural, artisan, farm produce, and similar establishments. High volume traffic generators such as banks, pharmacies, fast food, etc. would not be appropriate. Adaptive re-use of historical buildings is promoted in order to maintain their viability, and this may include flexible zoning standards specific to those buildings and sites. Infill and expansion of village areas shall be fully integrated with the historic neighborhood context in terms of use, scale, and design.

In terms of design, the following attributes characterize appropriate development of infill and expansion of village areas:

- Buildings of 2 or three stories, with façade length no greater than 80-100 feet
- Combinations of attached and detached buildings
- Combinations of single use and multi-use buildings
- Building facades and entrances oriented toward the street
- Parking lots to side or rear of buildings only
- Sidewalks or other pedestrian accommodations, such as trails or pedestrian streets required
- Architecture that is compatible with or that complements the historical neighborhood precedents
- Streets designed with traffic calming measures

The use and intensity characteristics of village areas are:

- Uses: Local oriented retail, service, professional office, destination dining, artisan, cultural, civic, residential.
- Intensity: Impervious Cover – 30-60% maximum
Residential – 1 to 3.5 dwelling units per acre maximum

Residential

Residential areas are typically separated from non-residential uses to support dedicated living opportunities for residents. Residential communities are classified into three categories; low-density, medium-density, and high-density residential. The future land use plan reinforces historical development patterns while concentrating high density multifamily housing where there is available transportation and utility infrastructure. Low density residential is located in areas with less supporting infrastructure and configured to maximize protection of open space and environmental resources. Medium density residential consists of mixed unit types and is located adjacent to existing developed areas and where there is available supporting infrastructure.

As opposed to the postwar sprawl pattern of development where all available land is placed within private lots, all new residential development should include open space for recreational, aesthetic, and environmental protection purposes. High density and medium density residential areas should have park and public gathering spaces, which may consist of private resources within a development or municipal parklands. Medium density developments in exurban settings should have at least 40% open space. Low density residential areas should have clustered arrangements of lots or dwellings with at least 40-50% open space that is dedicated to environmental protection, viewshed preservation, recreation, and/or agricultural purposes.

- Uses: High Density – Single-family attached and apartments
Medium Density – Single-family detached, single-family attached, TND, PRD developments with open space
Low Density - Single-family detached, cluster developments arranged to maximize open space
- Intensity: Low-density residential – <1 dwelling unit per acre
Medium-density residential - 1-4 dwelling units per acre
High-density residential - 4- 15 dwelling units per acre

Rural

Rural areas constitute the open signature landscapes that define the character of the Region and of Chester County, and consist of agricultural and natural landscapes to be preserved to the maximum extent possible. These areas are critical to maintaining headwater quality in the Region's Special Protection watersheds and they also preserve the expansive contiguous undeveloped lands necessary

for viable farming. Rural uses shall consist of agriculture, resource conservation, and very low density residential. Residential density should be limited to the lowest legally sustainable, and clustering/open space design should be required in all non-minor subdivisions to assure that prime agricultural soils, environmentally sensitive lands, and highly valued open space resources remain protected. When locating development within rural areas, planning should begin with prioritizing the most important lands for conservation, rather than the regrettably common practice of designating left over areas as open space after development planning. In addition, land conservation measures including agricultural/conservation easements and public purchase or transfer of development rights are most appropriate in rural areas. The general characteristics of rural areas are as follows:

Uses: Agriculture, conservation, parks/recreation, very low density residential.

Intensity: Residential Density – 0.3 to 0.45 dwelling units per net developable acre maximum
 Minimum Open Space – 40-70% required

Future Land Use	Charlestown		East Pikeland		Phoenixville		Schuylkill		West Vincent		Region	
	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%
Mixed Use	193.83	2.42%	460.98	8.11%	609.26	25.64%	291.03	5.11%	201.80	1.77%	1,756.90	5.30%
Industrial	332.39	4.15%	315.47	5.55%	77.70	3.27%	451.07	7.92%	42.19	0.37%	1,218.82	3.67%
Village	32.03	0.40%	184.74	3.25%	11.88	0.50%	154.91	2.72%	53.59	0.47%	437.15	1.32%
High Density Residential	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00%	609.73	25.66%	0.00	0.00%	23.94	0.21%	633.67	1.91%
Medium Density Residential	851.41	10.63%	2,354.39	41.42%	1,067.63	44.93%	1,657.90	29.11%	641.90	5.63%	6,573.23	19.82%
Low Density Residential	2,354.00	29.39%	224.54	3.95%	0.00	0.00%	1,427.24	25.06%	2,144.60	18.81%	6,150.38	18.54%
Rural	4,245.84	53.01%	2,144.08	37.72%	0.00	0.00%	1,713.15	30.08%	8,293.38	72.74%	16,396.45	49.44%
Total	8,009.50	100.00%	5,684.20	100.00%	2,376.20	100.00%	5,695.30	100.00%	11,401.40	100.00%	33,166.60	100.00%

3.6 REVITALIZATION AND ADAPTIVE REUSE

Revitalization of brownfield sites and underutilized buildings is an important objective of the Land Use Plan. A number of historical and current trends have led to a growing number of underutilized sites and buildings in the Region. The most obvious of these was the closing of the Phoenix Steel Company, which created a 130 acre vacant and contaminated brownfield area that persisted for decades until recent redevelopment activity, which has transformed most of the site to viable use. Still, the revitalization of the site is not yet completed, and there are other former industrial sites throughout the Region that would benefit from redevelopment.

Other trends that have created vacant and underutilized sites in the Region afflict office uses. Thanks to computerization and changes in workplace practices, office buildings have seen a reduction in the amount of space required for employees, from approximately 250 square feet per worker in the 1990’s to 195 square feet today. Traditional suburban office parks have been abandoned by many employers for a more downsized and walkable environment offered in urban areas. Another factor has been the increasing popularity of flexible work schedules. The shifting generational preferences of Millennials have driven much of this change.

In the commercial environment, there have also been shifts that have increased vacancy. Most prominent is the growing public preference for on-line shopping, which is forcing the closure of small, medium, and large traditional retail stores. In addition, there has been a history of developers building newer and trendier shopping centers that cannibalize the older centers, leaving them in disuse. The

result is increasing amounts of vacant retail space, including “big box” stores and shopping centers with now-unutilized broad expanses of asphalt.

Common examples of candidate underutilized sites and buildings for revitalization and adaptive re-use are:

- Industrial buildings and industrial parks
- Contaminated sites such as gas stations, car dealerships, repair shops, etc.
- Office buildings and office parks
- Vacant institutional buildings and sites
- Shopping centers and large retail buildings

In order to revitalize these blighted and vacant landscapes, innovation in terms of use, design, integration, accessibility, infrastructure, financing, and taxing can serve as catalysts. This chapter shall examine the aspects of use and design. Other considerations are treated in the chapters on Economic Development and Community Facilities. For further examination of revitalization issues, Chester County Planning Commission has published three policy manuals offering analysis and practical solutions and methodologies:

[Reinventing Office Parks for the 21st Century](#) (April 2017)

[Stimulating Community Revitalization through Brownfields](#) (April 2017)

[Transforming Greyfields into Dynamic Destinations](#) (April 2017)

Underutilized office parks, industrial parks, and commercial centers can be revitalized as mixed use areas including residential, commercial, and office components in a walkable configuration with accessibility to mass transit where available. Included in the use mix could be sport/entertainment uses, dining, hotels, and institutional/civic facilities, as well as seasonal or “pop-up” uses like farmers/artisans markets, festivals/fairs, temporary retail, and beer gardens. Revitalized centers should also include public and/or recreational spaces that anchor the community and contribute to pedestrian activity and the sense of place. An important benefit of revitalization is the capacity to direct development pressure to previously altered landscapes, thus potentially sparing undeveloped woods and fields from conversion to housing and other uses.

From the design standpoint, pedestrian accommodation is critical to foster interrelationships between various uses. Part of this is the creation of so-called “third places” that create nexuses of social gathering where the private and public realms of commerce and the street/sidewalk coexist. Shared parking between uses with differing peak demand times, and parking that is either screened or located away from the street frontage diminishes negative visual and environmental impacts on the landscape. In addition, minimizing driveway entrances to the main road and interconnecting parking lots internally can serve to decrease the apparent auto-dominance of revitalization sites.

In order to promote the desired use and design conditions, revitalization zoning can employ a number of incentives. Changes to maximum building heights, maximum impervious cover, and minimum setbacks can be utilized to create density incentives to finance costly environmental remediation, design amenities, and infrastructure, and can lead to improved streetscape aesthetics and place-making.

Often, derelict sites were built at higher impervious and/or building coverages than are allowed under current zoning, and with impacts on environmental resources that would not currently be permitted. In

fact, these conditions have in many places contributed to the lifeless and barren aesthetic that contributes to their current state of disuse. In such cases, it is useful to look at the revitalization site in terms of improving upon existing conditions, rather than meeting all of the current objective standards of the zoning ordinance that would apply to an undeveloped site. For example, instead of requiring a revitalization project to meet an otherwise required 100 foot stream setback where a lesser setback exists, rain gardens, green roofs, pervious parks and parking, and landscaping can be utilized to promote stormwater infiltration and water quality throughout the site. Features such as these vastly improve on the environmental impacts of the development while creating a human environment that is conducive to economic activity, living, and enjoyment. These considerations unique to revitalization can be achieved through special use districts or overlay zoning.

3.7 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

The following policy recommendations will implement the goals and objectives of the Land Use Plan:

LU-1 Maintain municipal zoning maps that are consistent with the Future Land Use Map.

Assure that land use categories on municipal zoning maps support the Future Land Use Map and that any future changes of zoning maps or use designations remain consistent.

LU-2 Establish use and development intensities consistent with the Land Use policies for each area designated on the Future Land Use Map.

Assure that allowable uses and development intensities support the Future Land Use Map and that any future changes of zoning requirements remain consistent.

LU-3 Revise zoning for commercial and certain industrial areas to be mixed use districts.

Implement zoning classifications to allow for innovative combinations of uses and design standards to create lively and synergistic development around principles of place-making and pedestrian accessibility where people can live, work, and play. Commercial zoning districts should be re-classified as mixed use districts that include low-impact flex and incubator uses to support a broad range of employment opportunities.

LU-4 Implement bulk and design standards for infill development that is compatible with the context of established neighborhoods and historical settings.

Consideration of front setbacks, streetscape/building interface, pedestrian access, and architecture that complements neighborhood/historical context shall be invoked for successful infill development.

LU-5 Dedicate the remaining industrial areas identified on the Future Land Use Map to larger-scale industrial uses.

Coordinate between municipalities for potential redevelopment of industrial areas that are adjacent to one another, but in different municipalities. Discourage non-industrial uses on the remaining land zoned for industrial uses. Amend industrial zoning districts to reduce the variety of non-industrial uses permitted in these areas.

LU-6 Create and/or maintain zoning districts for the Villages of Birchrunville, Charlestown, Kimberton, Wilmer, and Valley Forge that allow uses and design consistent with their historical mixed use character.

Establish regulations and standards that maintain the unique and self-sufficient ambiance of village settlements. Focus on provisions that promote viable and consistent adaptive re-use of the historic buildings and landscapes that define the historic character of each village, and consider the impact of development that immediately surrounds those areas when zoning for village expansion.

LU-7 Continue to concentrate higher density housing in the core of Phoenixville and designated villages.

Ensure that zoning for high-density residential developments includes requirements for adequate parking and resident amenities. Integration of new high-density development into the existing communities should be maximized via design, pedestrian linkages and continuation of existing amenities.

Encourage new high density residential developments to incorporate affordable housing units into development by providing incentives such as density bonuses.

LU-8 Encourage innovative moderate density housing for infill development in proximity to downtown Phoenixville and the villages to continue the availability of a range of housing types.

Encourage moderate density housing in the form of small-lot single family housing to provide a range of housing opportunities within the urbanized areas of the Region.

LU-9 Establish low-density residential zoning that places housing in proximity to existing development, and that protects large areas of open space within undeveloped areas.

Require new development to be located in a manner that preserves natural resources prioritized for preservation.

LU-10 Work with landowners, conservation organizations, and public agencies to place rural lands into conservation and agricultural easements.

Focus on creating large and contiguous expanses of permanently protected open space.

LU-11 Establish zoning for rural areas that limits allowable development to the lowest legally sustainable density, with provisions that require open space set asides within residential subdivisions to protect environmental resources, prime agricultural lands, and critical viewsheds and landscapes.

Utilize zoning provisions to prohibit suburban sprawl development patterns that degrade environmental resources and eradicate the pastoral rural landscape of the Region.

LU-12 Enact municipal and/or inter-municipal purchase of development rights or transfer of development rights ordinances and programs to facilitate permanent protection of open space in rural areas.

These programs could be funded through open space taxes, bonds, grants, or developer purchases. Transfer of rights programs require that conservation and development parcels be in play at the same time, or else a mechanism for banking of lands and/or purchase funds must be created.

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

Consider factors such as road/mass transit accessibility, neighborhood development context, potential for pedestrian interconnections, and contamination and other remediation required.

LU-14 Create revitalization zoning districts with use, bulk, and design provisions that incentivize redevelopment of blighted and underutilized buildings and sites.

These may be conventional districts or overlays, and shall have density and use advantages over ordinary development. In addition, streamlined permitting and review processes could be incorporated for redevelopment projects. Together, these provisions shall create financial and regulatory incentives to revitalization projects and the design improvements needed to transform blight into vibrant and sustainable new development.

PRPC Comprehensive Plan
Existing Land Use



