



AGENDA

PHOENIXVILLE REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE – COMMITTEE WORKSHOP PRPC-13 May 30, 2018

1. Charlestown PC Review Comments
2. Economic Development Plan - Revisions per PRPC-12
 - a. Agricultural Security Areas
3. Community Facilities Plan – Revisions per PRPC-12
 - a. West Vincent Sewer operation
 - b. Fire and Police services
 - c. Schools, Libraries
4. Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan – Revisions per PRPC-12
 - a. Regional Parks – add FCSP
 - b. EPT recreational needs assessment
 - c. PHX private recreation facilities
 - d. WVT recreational needs assessment
 - e. Municipal trails
 - f. Open Space Planning – references to municipal plans
 - g. Implementation Strategies – agriculture as regional open space resource
 - h. Map 7 Open Space and Recreation – Open space types/Schuylkill Freedom Trail
 - i. Map 8 Bicycle Plan – Revise Cromby Trail
5. Transportation Plan – Initial review
 - a. Goals, objectives
 - b. CCPC Phoenixville Regional Multimodal Plan
 - c. Regional Road Improvements
 - d. Scenic Roads
 - e. Bike and Pedestrian Access
 - f. Parking
 - g. Public Transit
 - h. Future Trends
 - i. Implementation
6. Announce Next Workshop – June 27, 2018 – Draft Cultural Resources Plan
7. Adjournment

Ctown PC comments May 2018

Regional Comprehensive Plan –Chapters 2 & 3

The Planning Commission continued its review of the draft Phoenixville Regional Comprehensive Plan, which will also serve as the Charlestown Township Comprehensive Plan. The PRPC is reviewing part of the 10 chapters each month in preparation for their public meeting introducing the Plan in August. It was suggested that each member municipality review 2 chapters per month leading up to that meeting.

Tonight, the Planning Commission reviewed Chapters 2 and 3 and had the following comments:

1. **Figure 3 DVRP Population Forecast**
 - 1.1. Limiting the Forecast period to 2035 (as a Forecast for 2040 and 2045 seems to be in the too distant future, and Members were not sure where all 2,646 persons would fit in the next 30 years given the current level of development, existing zoning, and existing conservation easements).
2. **Future Land Use Map**
 - 2.1. Mr. Comitta suggested that there should be a reduction in the area shown in red for “Mixed Use”. The area across from Spring Oak, on the north side of Whitehorse Road, is contemplated as a Recreational Area (not for intense development) even though it is part of the TND-2 Overlay District.
3. **Household Income**
 - 3.1. Change the title of Figure 20 from Employment Forecast to Household Income on the bottom half of page 2.12.
4. **Housing Plan, Objectives**
 - 4.1. Change the wording for Objective 7 so it reads: “Identify and prioritize housing opportunities for seniors and families”.
5. **Transportation Plan, Objectives**
 - 5.1. Add: “Implement the Act 209 Transportation Plans” as another Objective.
6. **Chapter Three – Land Use Plan**
 - 6.1. Change the word “off” to “of” on the first line of the first paragraph.
 - 6.2. Change the dates “2007 – 2008” to “2008 – 2009”, relative to the Great Recession.
 - 6.3. In the last paragraph of section 3.2 pertaining to Historic Land Use, change the last sentence as the TNDs were approved in 2011 and 2012.

- 6.4. In section 3.5 Future Land Use Categories, under “Mixed Use” add another bullet point to indicate: “Vertical mixed- use buildings with ground floor non-residential use and upper floor residential use”.
- 6.5. On page 11, under LU-7 the term village was discussed (edits are in process).

this industry in a manner that blends with the community should be considered. The Borough could initiate a planning study in coordination with Phoenixville Hospital to look at the area surrounding the hospital for opportunities to support the growth of a healthcare district within the Borough. In addition to healthcare opportunities around the Phoenixville Hospital, the villages within the Region provide opportunities for small-scale health services being conveniently provided to communities.

Agriculture

Agriculture has maintained a key role in shaping the landscape of the Region, despite its decreasing economic importance in the last half century. Dairy and cattle operations that were once common have given way to horse farms, specialty crops and organic farming, and community supported agriculture (CSA). Along with this change, traditional agriculture supporting businesses including farm equipment and supply stores have left the Region.

According to Chester County's 2017 Local Farm Guide, the PRPC Region includes one CSA, two specialty farms with retail components, and the weekly in season Phoenixville Farmers Market. Numerous other CSAs and specialty farms surround the Region, making the area an Economic Cluster for these activities. In addition, horse farms are numerous in West Vincent and Charlestown Townships, and some facilities facilitate boarding, instruction, and trail rides. In addition, contract farmers from outside the Region actively lease lands for cash crop production including soybeans, corn, and small grain.

In 1981, Pennsylvania established law allowing the creation of municipal Agricultural Security Areas (ASAs), which entitles participating landowners to special consideration and protection. Specifically, it prevents local government from imposing nuisance regulations of farms that would prohibit normal agricultural operations. ASA designation, however, does not prevent government from regulating actions with a direct bearing on public health and safety. ASA parcels must be at least 10 acres in size and collectively must encompass at least 250 acres with more than one owner. Land in adjacent municipalities can be a part of the same municipal ASA. Charlestown's ASA includes over 1,900 acres, and properties within East Pikeland are eligible for inclusion. West Vincent Township also has a substantial ASA of roughly the same acreage as Charlestown's.

By promoting policies that maintain large areas of contiguous arable lands, the Region can help to assure that agriculture remains viable into the future.

Culture and Lifestyle

After decades of suburban development lacking a sense of place, demand is shifting back to development that offers an experience beyond just driving from business to business, which is often referred to as place-making. This shift has fueled the revitalization of Phoenixville, which has a classic downtown form with buildings oriented to the street in a compact manner combined with wide sidewalks that encourage pedestrians to stroll up and down the streets. This shifting of priorities has also encouraged the appreciation of the uniqueness of existing historic villages. The ongoing revitalization of downtown Phoenixville and the villages contributes to the growing desirability of the Region.

As Phoenixville continues its revitalization it becomes more of a regional destination and the cultural center of the Region. The greater mix of retail, food and breweries combined with walkability, access to

All sewerred areas of the Township have public water. Most of the Township is served by Aqua PA, except for small areas south and west of Phoenixville, which are served by the Phoenixville Water Department. Some non-sewerred areas have public water, most notably residences on Valley Forge Mountain.

West Vincent

In West Vincent's denser developments, sewer service is generally provided by systems dedicated to the specific developments [and owned and managed by the Bucks County Water and Sewer Authority](#). The exception is Eagle Farms, which is connected to the Upper Uwchlan Township Municipal Authority. Stonecroft, Stephens Green, Mathews Meadows, Weatherstone, and Stone Rise Apartments each have their own sewer systems. A part of the older Valley Dell development and houses along Kimberton Road are served by Valley Forge Sewer Authority.

Aqua PA Uwchlan provides public water to larger developments in the western part of the Township, including Weatherstone, Stone Rise, and Eagle Farms. Saint Stephens Green, Weatherhill, and Camp Hill have private community water service. The Kimberbrae development adjacent to East Pikeland is served by PA American Royersford.

Upper Uwchlan Township Municipal Authority

The Upper Uwchlan Township Municipal Authority (UUTMA) provides sewer service to the Ewing Tract residential development in western West Vincent Township. The allocation is set by inter-municipal agreement with PADEP, and there is no current mechanism to expand service to West Vincent Township.

Valley Forge Sewer Authority

The Valley Forge Sewer Authority (VFSA) provides sewer service to Charlestown, East Pikeland, [West Vincent](#), and Schuylkill townships and each of these municipalities [has](#) no available further allocation beyond current commitments. However, two of the eight VFSA member municipalities outside of the PRPC Region have as much as two million gallons of excess capacity that could conceivably be reallocated by inter-municipal agreement. Without any such agreement, expansion of the VFSA service area in the Region would require increased plant capacity.

8.3 SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL

In Phoenixville, solid waste disposal is managed by the Borough Sanitation Department, which provides receptacles for trash and recyclables and a regular weekly pickup schedule. The Borough also offers bulk and yard waste pickup and operates a composting site.

One of the challenges of waste management in the Borough is the presence of waste and recycling receptacles on the streetscape. The Phoenixville Area Business Association has expressed a concern with Phoenixville Borough trash totes that continuously line the fronts of many businesses due to lack of rear alley access with many properties. They have suggested shared dumpsters (screened from view) that would serve localized sections of the business blocks that do not have the ability to store totes in the rear of their properties.

- Natural meadow cover in place of lawns
- Decentralized infiltration measures rather than concentrated basins and conveyances
- Green areas for infiltration and temporary containment dispersed throughout developed areas
- Natural plant communities in basins and as stream buffers

When stormwater management facilities are integrated with other design aspects in planning and land development, they can become positive attributes with multiple functions, including recreation, parking, accessibility, habitat enhancement, food/crop production, and aesthetics. They can also add to community resiliency through superior function in terms of flood control, groundwater infiltration, and water quality.

Municipalities can implement the following strategies to promote effective stormwater management:

- Zoning Ordinance Provisions with BMPs
- Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance Provisions
- Standalone Stormwater Management Ordinance
- Official Map to Designate Existing and Planned Stormwater Facilities
- Municipal or Multi-municipal Environmental Advisory Council
- Monitoring Programs
- Stormwater Facilities Mapped and Monitored on GIS Database
- Easements
- Restoration and Remediation Projects
- Collaboration with Environmental and Watershed Protection Organizations
- Community Educational Events, Printed and Web Informational Resources, and Landowner Outreach

8.4 EMERGENCY SERVICES

Emergency services within the PRPC Region include hospitals, urgent care centers, police, fire, ambulance and dive and rescue. Four of the five municipalities have police departments in-house, and ambulance service in the region is provided by four different ambulance companies.

All municipalities are served by fire companies primarily composed of volunteer firefighters, and some of the fire companies have a limited number of career firefighters. For fire service, the PRPC Region is served by five different fire companies. These include Phoenixville Fire ~~Company~~Department, Kimberton Fire Company, West End Fire Company, East Whiteland Fire Company, Ludwigs Corner Fire Company, and Valley Forge Volunteer Fire Company. Each of the fire companies within the Region depend on volunteers for the provision of emergency services and additional volunteers are always needed.

A detailed breakdown of emergency services by PRPC municipality is provided as follows.

Phoenixville Borough

Phoenixville Hospital is the one hospital located within the Phoenixville Region. The Phoenixville Hospital is located within the Borough of Phoenixville on Nutt Road between Main and Gay Streets and offers a wide range of health care services including, but not limited to, a 24-hour emergency room, cancer care, surgical services, maternity- with a newborn intensive care unit, and a range of rehabilitation services.

The Phoenixville Police Department has ~~28-30~~ full-time officers and 1.75 civilian employees serving the Borough and a fleet of 13 cars as reported in the 2016 annual report. The Phoenixville Police Department also includes bicycle patrol in the downtown area and a detective unit.

As reported on the Phoenixville Fire ~~Department~~ website, the Department is a multi-service department that provides fire and rescue services to Phoenixville Borough and surrounding communities. The Department is staffed by a combination of career and volunteer firefighters operating out of the Phoenix Hose, Hook & Ladder Co., No 1 on Church Street. Apparatus includes three pumper engines, a ladder truck, Ford F350 equipped with traffic control devices, EMS equipment and rescue equipment. Additionally, the Phoenixville Fire Department has an ambulance vehicle ~~and staff~~ that is subcontracted ~~and staffed by the employees of the Trappe Fire Company, which serves as the primary EMS response unit for the Borough of Phoenixville from outside parties.~~

In addition to the Phoenixville Fire Department, the Friendship Diving Rescue Unit is an all-volunteer Unit located on W. High Street in Phoenixville that provides specialized search, rescue and recovery services to police and fire departments in the Phoenixville Region and beyond. Services include underwater body recover of drowning victims, water rescue, ice rescue and underwater searches for evidence and items.

Schuylkill Township

The Schuylkill Township Police Department consists of 10 full time patrol officers and two part-time patrol officers that provide 24 hour service for the community. The Police Department is based out of the lower portion of the Township building at 111 Valley Park Road.

For fire service, Schuylkill Township is served by Valley Forge Volunteer Fire Company, which has its primary station in the Village of Valley Forge and a substation located on Pothouse Road. The Valley Forge Volunteer Fire Company is an all-volunteer fire company serving all of Schuylkill Township, with approximately 60 volunteers. Major apparatus includes three engines with pumping capabilities, a rescue truck with extraction capabilities, a tanker truck, four smaller utility vehicles with varying EMS and traffic control capabilities and an ATV with brush firefighting capabilities.

The West End Fire Company primarily serves as an EMS/ambulance provider for Schuylkill Township and as a back-up EMS provider for Phoenixville Borough.

East Pikeland Township

The East Pikeland Township Police Department consists of 10 police officers and two administrative staff. The department has officers assigned to the Chester County Drug Task Force, Accident Investigation Team, and the Regional SWAT Team.

In 2017 the OJR School District redistricted students from West Vincent Elementary to the French Creek Elementary School to accommodate the anticipated growth in the West Vincent attendance area. West Vincent Elementary hosts two Autistic Support classrooms for elementary children in the district. The school district anticipates the completion of the new East Coventry Elementary School building in the summer of 2018.

Great Valley School District

The third school district serving the Phoenixville Region is the Great Valley School District, which includes Charlestown Township. ~~According to data available on the Great Valley School District website 2016/2017 2017-2018~~ school year enrollment ~~was 3,987~~ is 4,145 students with ~~296-329~~ students at Charlestown Elementary School, which is the only school located in Charlestown Township. ~~According to historical and projected enrollment data available on the Great Valley website based on 2016 3rd day enrollment counts, enrollment projections show enrollment dropping slightly until the 2019/2020 school year and then slightly increasing back to 2016/2017 levels by the 2021/2022 school year.~~

The Charlestown Elementary School capacity is 378 students. With current enrollment at ~~296-329~~ students the school is at ~~78-318~~ 78-318 percent of its capacity, which is lower than ~~three-two~~ of the three other elementary schools. ~~Redistricting may occur to balance out the number of students in each of the elementary schools. The District is considering options such as architectural changes, establishment of a 5-6 grade center, and redistricting to address capacity issues in some of the elementary schools.~~

Other Educational Facilities & Alternatives

In addition to the public schools, the Phoenixville Region is home to a top-rated charter school, Renaissance Academy which provides education for kindergarten through 12th grade. The school has a new campus in the Borough of Phoenixville and serves approximately 1,000 students from the Region and beyond. Within the Borough is also Holy Family School which is a Catholic school providing primary education for pre-school through 8th grade.

Located in Schuylkill Township is the Technical College High School, which is operated by the Chester County Intermediate Unit (CCIU) on behalf of the 12 school districts of Chester County, Pennsylvania. This high school offers a range of technical area for students to focus on to help prepare them for careers in these various fields. Also located in Schuylkill Township is campus of the University of Valley Forge, which is a private Christian college with approximately 1,146 students.

For kindergarten there are also additional options within the Region including Charlestown Play School and the Valley Forge Kinder House Montessori School.

A growing education alternative is homeschooling, which is the education of children at home by a parent or tutor. Families that choose homeschooling may still take advantage of some resources available through the local school district such as sports and/or specialty classes.

8.6 LIBRARIES

PRPC has two libraries operated by the Chester County Library System. These include the Henrietta Hankin Branch Library near Ludwigs Corner in West Vincent Township, and the Phoenixville Public

Library at 2nd Avenue and Main Street. In addition, the Chester Springs Library is nearby in the village of Historic Yellow Springs. Libraries are invaluable resources that provide public access to information, facilities, and programs free of charge. They receive funding from County and local government sources, as well as grants and voluntary contributions. In addition, ~~Some businesses and institutions operate informal mini libraries that operate as honor system book exchanges.~~

The Phoenixville Public Library includes approximately 69,000 items, including books, videos, CDs, periodicals, special collections, etc. It also has computer resources, meeting rooms, tutoring facilities, and offers passport, tax, and document services. The Phoenixville Public Library also has seasonal and year-round programs for children, teens, and adults.

The Hankin Branch Library opened in 2003 and includes 93,600 items. The library also serves as a community center providing work space, meeting rooms, homework and research help, and a wide variety of educational and cultural programs. The collection includes books, DVDs, audiobooks, magazines, eBooks, and eAudiobooks for early literacy, education, and the enrichment of residents. The Hankin library also provides programs for children, teens, and adults and includes computer facilities and a business center offering resources and workshops on small business, jobs and careers, and personal finance.

~~Some businesses and institutions operate informal mini libraries that operate as honor system book exchanges.~~

8.7 ~~HEALTH AND~~ SOCIAL SERVICES

There are several social service organizations in the PRPC Region that provide a range of assistance and resources to residents of the Region. Those organizations whose primary function is to provide social services are typically based in Phoenixville, likely due to the higher density of jobs and residences, and lower median income of Phoenixville residents. In addition to the primary organizations discussed in the following section, there are also many churches and other organizations that contribute to the social service community helping those in need. Many social service organizations that provide housing assistance and other services were discussed in the Housing Chapter. The following is a non-exhaustive list of organizations that have a primary function of providing social services to those in need in the PRPC Region.

Municipalities within the Region can use their websites as a resource for people in need by including links and contact information for social services organizations available in the Region.

Phoenixville Community Health Foundation

The Phoenixville Community Health Foundation (Foundation) in Phoenixville was created in 2005 to help establish a health care safety net for low income people who are uninsured or under-insured. It helps eligible residents of the greater Phoenixville Area with access to a variety of health care needs including dental, vision, mammograms, emergency orthopedic, prescription assistance, and mammogram assistance. The Foundation also publishes a “Help Book” every three years, in both Spanish and English, to help increase access to services for adults and children in the greater Phoenixville region.

- Valley Park, which is a 15.75 acre parcel located along Valley Park Road,
- Schuylkill Township Park which is 2.4 acres of passive open space surrounding the municipal building, and
- Pickering Preserve located along Route 29 adjacent to the Phoenixville YMCA property, which contains 25 acres preserved as a natural area.

Within the Township is 206 acres of Valley Forge Natural Historic Park. This National and Regional asset provides a variety of recreational opportunities as discussed later in this chapter.

Privately held open space maintained by homeowner’s associations can be found in six developments located throughout the Township. The combined total acreage of open space associated with homeowner’s associations is 175 acres with the distribution shown in the in the following table.

Schuylkill Township Homeowner’s Association Open Space	
Pickering Glen HOA	16 acres
Valley Park HOA	8.21 acres
Dogwood HOA	19 acres
Valley Forge Meadows HOA	51.40 acres
Fernleigh HOA	54.60 acres
Potters Pond HOA	25.90 acres

A third category of open space in Schuylkill Township is open space easements that are monitored by a land trust. In 2006 the Township residents passed an earned income tax increase of .25 percent to acquire open space easements. These funds have been used to purchase easements on multiple properties within the township. The Schuylkill Township Open Space Commission works to identify properties suitable for preservation and whose owners are willing to sell development rights. Approximately 113 acres have been preserved through open space easements, including the Phoenixville Country Club property.

Finally, within Schuylkill Township several educational campuses exist that provide recreational opportunities during non-school hours.

- Phoenixville Early Learning Center/Manavon School - this recently developed campus has a variety of playground equipment, a trail and athletic fields.
- Schuylkill Elementary has playgrounds and open fields
- The Technical College High School Pickering Campus makes its fields available for use by the Phoenixville Area Soccer Club.

West Vincent

West Vincent Township has one active municipal park and another one proposed as part of the conservation plan for Bryn Coed Farms. There are also significant areas of public open space in the vicinity of Ludwigs Corner. Privately held open space is scattered across the Township, consisting mostly of properties with conservation or agricultural easements. The Township has an Open Space Advisory

Committee to ~~advise-work~~ on identification and protection of priority open spaces. In addition, the Township has a park and recreation Commission that advises on equipping, maintaining, and operating recreation facilities. Prominent park and open space assets in West Vincent are summarized as follows:

- ~~Evans Park is a 12.9 acre facility that includes sports fields, a pavilion, playground, basketball, parking, and an approximately ½ mile paved walking path.~~
- Cooks Glen Park, a 54 acre wooded piece along French Creek, has hiking and horseback trails, and is used for fishing.
- School House Park is a 2 acre wooded site on Flowing Springs Road in Birchrunville.
- Wilsons Corner Park is a 4 acre wooded park along French Creek and adjacent to French Creek Road. It is a favored destination for fishing.
- The most substantial Township open space achievement is the recent preservation of the 1,500 acre Bryn Coed Farms in conjunction with Natural Lands (formerly Natural Lands Trust). The conservation plan includes (39) large deed restricted conservation lots, a 520 acre Natural Lands Preserve, and a 72 acre future Township Park, with a 10.5 mile trail system connecting the park and preserve areas with some of the lots and to trailheads on the perimeter roads.
- ~~The Regional French Creek Trail goes through~~ West Vincent ~~owned~~ lands along the French Creek ~~accommodate a portion of the French Creek Trail.~~

Regional Park and Recreation Assets that serve the PRPC Municipalities

In addition to local resources, the PRPC Region has nearby access to a number of federal, state, and county public parks providing a broad diversity of outdoor recreational and educational activities.

- Valley Forge National Historic Park is a 3,500 acre historic site of the 1777-78 encampment of the Continental Army. It attracts over 1.2 million visitors annually to learn about history, enjoy the 5 mile paved fitness loop, and hike or bike the 26 miles of trails. The site also has riparian access, meadows, and woods for horseback riding, canoeing/kayaking, picnicking, nature study, sledding, and cross country skiing.
- Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site encompasses nearly 850 acres in northern Chester County and includes historic structures and a working iron furnace that illustrate the technology and lifestyle of late 18th century America. Most of the site is wooded and includes trails that connect to the Horse-Shoe Trail and that trail network at French Creek State Park.
- French Creek State Park is a 7,526 acre wooded natural park with camping, fishing, hunting, Frisbee golf, boating, picnicking, swimming, and over 35 miles of trails for hikers, equestrians, mountain bikers, trail runners, and orienteering.
- Marsh Creek State Park is a 1,705 acre mostly wooded park that includes a 535 acre lake. The park includes a swimming pool, day use area for picnicking, etc., approximately 12 miles of trails,

Description	Area in Acres
Public Park (National, County, and Municipal)	803
Public Land (Municipal)	661
Private Preserve (Owned by Conservation Organizations)	489
Private Open Space (HOA and Other Deed Restricted Lands)	4911
TOTAL PRPC OPEN SPACE AREA	6864

Table 9.3-2 PRPC Regional Open Space Assets

Park facilities are classified by size and service areas, and include Regional Parks, Community Parks, Neighborhood Parks, and Mini Parks.

- Regional Parks** are large scale parks of 1,000 acres or more serving a broad geographic area. Because of their size and regional significance, such parks are usually owned and operated by federal or state governments. They provide a variety of active and passive outdoor recreation opportunities, particularly those requiring large land or water areas. Regional Parks emphasize heritage and/or resource protection and recreation opportunities beyond the scope of those typically provided at local parks, including camping, hiking, mountain biking, boating, hunting and fishing. Regional Parks serving the Region include Valley Forge National Historical Park, [French Creek State Park](#), and Marsh Creek State Park.
- Sub-Regional Parks** are 400 to 1,000 acres in size that provide functions similar to Regional Parks, with intended service areas of an approximately 7.5 mile radius. Warwick County Park and Exton Park are examples of sub-regional parks that serve the PRPC area.
- Community Parks** are primarily for active recreation serving the needs of residents within a two to three mile radius. These parks usually have various sports facilities, paved walking trails, picnic and game areas, and they may have outdoor performance venues. Often, Community Parks have interpretive natural and/or historic preservation components. Community Parks are 20 to 400 acres in size. Charlestown Park is an example of a Community Park.
- Neighborhood Parks** are one half acre to 20 acres in size and are intended to address the recreational needs within a 15 minute walk. Evans Park and Kimberton Park are examples of Neighborhood Parks.
- Mini Parks** are smaller than one half acre with a service radius of a quarter mile. They are typically placed in urban settings are designed to meet the needs of a local community, with playgrounds, sitting areas, paths, gardens, fountains, small structures, interpretive features, etc. Children’s Plaza and Renaissance Park in Phoenixville are examples of Mini Parks.

The Chester County’s *Linking Landscapes* open space plan establishes a population based methodology for determining the need for acreages of different types of parks. Needs are also determined by whether a municipality is high density/urban (3,265 population/square mile), medium density (376-3264 pop/sq. mi.), or low density (<375 pop./sq. mi.). Based on DVRPC population projections for 2030, Regional park demand will be as follows:

Youth athletic leagues are supported by the Phoenixville Area Soccer Club (PASC), and the Phoenixville Marian Youth Club (PMYC), which organizes football, flag football, lacrosse, field hockey, cheerleading, and basketball. Both of these organizations serve the entire PRPC Region.

Charlestown Park has undergone a substantial restoration of its picnic and playground area, and now includes a youth playground, a tot lot, swings, sand area, six pavilions of varying sizes with barbecue facilities and electricity, a bathroom and maintenance building, and new and refurbished parking areas with rain gardens. The pavilions can be reserved by groups for parties and special events. All of these facilities get regular moderate to heavy use by residents of Charlestown and surrounding communities.

East Pikeland

East Pikeland has over 120 acres of public recreation space, including Kimberton Park, open space and trails along French Creek, and sports fields at the former East Pikeland Elementary School (EPES).

Kimberton Park is the Township's primary recreational resource, with a roller hockey rink, a basketball court, two baseball/softball fields, three tennis courts, a youth playground, a tot lot, sand area, swings, a picnic pavilion, paved walking trail, bathrooms, and a gazebo. The pavilion can be reserved for private parties and other events. An amphitheater for theatrical and musical performance will be completed in 2018.

A recreation demand analysis was conducted as part of the Township's 2013 *Open Space and Economic Development Plan*. In accordance with [Northern Federation PROS methodology cited in](#) this Plan, East Pikeland has sufficient sports fields to meet Township needs, ~~with two rectangular fields and five diamond fields at Kimberton Park and EPES but only if one includes fields at the Kimberton Fire Company fairgrounds and the now closed EPES.~~ ~~However~~Further, parks are not well distributed among all developed areas of the Township, so accessibility is less than optimal. ~~In addition,~~ and a need for additional recreation amenities for senior citizens was identified.

Youth athletics are supported by the Kimberton Youth Athletic League (KYAL), which operates t-ball, baseball, and softball leagues at a variety of skill levels. Because KYAL draws from a broad geographic area, as of 2013 there were 32 baseball teams and 14 softball teams vying for use of six fields. Thus, the need for two to five additional fields was determined by the Township's 2013 *Open Space and Economic Development Plan*.

Phoenixville

Phoenixville has more than 72 acres of municipally owned land dedicated to park and open space scattered throughout the Borough, which is in addition to the 119 acres associated with Black Rock Sanctuary. Additional recreational opportunities are also available at [private facilities such as DeSanno Field](#), local schools, and along the trails along French Creek. When considering the overall acreage of municipal and County parks within the Borough of Phoenixville there appears to be adequate acreage to meet the demands for projected 2030 population. However, a more detailed analysis of facilities required to serve the population should be conducted as part of the upcoming update of the Phoenixville Comprehensive Plan relative to parks and the Civic Center planned by the Borough.

Given the traditionally urban form of Phoenixville, smaller parks have functioned as community and neighborhood parks. In particular, Reeves Park at just 6.6 acres, well below the 20 acres identified as the minimum for community parks, serves as the recreational center of the Borough. With its central location, variety of passive and active activity opportunities, and band pavilion, Reeves Park functionally serves as the community park for the Borough. Plans are underway to install a new sidewalk in Reeves Park in 2018.

Neighborhood parks are distributed throughout Phoenixville offering localized recreational opportunities. These parks typically have small playgrounds for families with young children, benches and varying additional facilities. Neighborhood parks in Phoenixville are typically walkable to the surrounding community. As part of the update of the Phoenixville Comprehensive Plan for Parks, an assessment should be conducted to determine if there are areas of the Borough that are deficient in neighborhood parks and facilities.

As identified in the Borough of Phoenixville Park Amenities & Recommended Improvements table, signage was a priority in nearly all the Borough parks and has been installed since the preparation of the 2015 Park Plan. As the Phoenixville population increases and the demographics change, opportunities for additional park facilities within the existing parks should continue to be revisited.

During the community visioning process associated with the Regional Comprehensive Plan Update, participants revealed a desire for a park facility in downtown Phoenixville and the creation of additional trail linkages between downtown Phoenixville and other villages in the Region.

Schuylkill

With a combined area of 43.15 acres between three parcels owned by Schuylkill Township, the Township has fewer municipally-owned acres than called for by demand projections. However, Schuylkill Township's location adjacent to Phoenixville Borough with its variety of municipal parks, the Phoenixville YMCA, and Valley Forge National Historic Park provide substantial recreational and open space access for residents. Considering the relatively low density of the Township and the close proximity to recreational facilities, the Township appears to be adequately served.

In addition to the municipally owned parcels and Valley Forge National Historic Park, the higher density developments within the Township also have open space maintained by homeowner's associations. The YMCA maintains athletic fields for a variety of sports offered through their organization.

West Vincent

West Vincent's existing recreational attributes are Evans Park, three natural parks, and trails in the western end of the municipality and along French Creek. Evans Park includes a soccer field, a baseball field, a pavilion, playground, basketball, parking, bathrooms, and a paved walking path. Currently, the Township has a deficit of active recreation facilities. Using the methodology of the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities in their 2012 *Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan*, the Township currently needs one more baseball/softball field, and by 2030 will need an additional soccer field. Part of the Township's recreational demand is met by two soccer fields at the privately owned Ludwig's Corner Horse Show grounds.

Youth athletics for West Vincent Residents are supported by the Glenmoore-Eagle Youth Association (GEYA) for baseball, softball, and soccer, [the Coventry Soccer Association](#), and Kimberton Youth Athletic League (KYAL) for baseball and softball.

Complementing the municipal park lands, the Ludwig's Corner Horse Show Grounds is a private facility with limited public accessibility for events.

With the preservation of Bryn Coed Farms, the Township has acquired 72 additional acres of park land along Saint Matthews Road [that will include connections to an over ten mile trail system](#). Programming for this park could include new recreation facilities as needed.

9.4 TRAILS

Trails are critical components of the recreational system that promote public health, intermodal accessibility, environmental awareness, and sustainability. Hikers, equestrians, bicyclists, and special needs people of all ages use trails for recreation, commuting, and to experience the natural and historic heritage of the Region. In addition, trails are essential in generating public support of open space preservation efforts, by giving citizens accessibility to the open space preservation that taxes and municipal policies and plans enable. Public opinion surveys repeatedly demonstrate that trails are the most broadly popular of all open space and recreation assets.

The PRPC Region has a well developed network of formal and informal trails. These include trails that extend through and beyond the Region, such as the Horse-Shoe Trail and the Schuylkill River Trail. The PRPC and its member municipalities have signed Official Resolutions in support of The Circuit, an ongoing project to construct a 750 mile system of [multi-use](#) trails throughout the Philadelphia metropolitan region, including the Schuylkill River Trail and the proposed Devault Rail Trail. In addition, Charlestown, East Pikeland, Schuylkill and West Vincent Townships each have trail plans and policies to protect and expand the network of public trails and informal unimproved trails. Phoenixville recently undertook completing the extension of the Schuylkill River Trail from Mont Clare to the Cromby trailhead in East Pikeland.

Significant Regional Trails with connections beyond the PRPC area are shown on Map 8 and include the following:

- **Brandywine Trail**, a proposed hiking and biking link from the Horse-Shoe trail and developments near Ludwigs Corner into Upper Uwchlan and eventually to the Struble Trail and Downingtown.
- **The Devault Line Trail** is a proposed multi-modal extension of The Circuit extending from the Schuylkill River Trail in Phoenixville/Mont Clare to Devault in Charlestown Township. From there, future connections through East Whiteland and Tredyffrin Townships will eventually link to the Chester Valley Trail, which now extends from King of Prussia to Exton. This trail was the subject of a 2015 Feasibility Study.
- **The French Creek Trail** is a generally unimproved surface trail that on completion will extend from Phoenixville and the Schuylkill River Trail northwest to Warwick County Park and the Horse-Shoe Trail. The French Creek Trail is part of the Sow Belly-French Creek Regional Recreation Corridor, as identified in Chester County's *Linking Landscapes* open space plan. French Creek Trail includes a quarter mile paved ADA accessible trail in the vicinity of the

documents plan for a Township-wide system of primary corridors and loops that connect neighborhoods and community assets with regional trails and local trails in adjacent municipalities. Certain high priority trail corridors are to have improved surface to promote multi-modal trail use. Significant planned local trails include:

- **Cromby Trail**, a proposed improved trail connecting the Route 23 corridor and associated development with the Schuylkill River Trail.
- **Pickering Valley Railroad Trail**, a proposed improved trail connecting Kimberton and the French Creek Trail westward to the Bridge to Bridge trail in West Pikeland Township.

Phoenixville

Phoenixville undertook the layout and construction of the Schuylkill River Trail in 2015 within the Borough boundaries. In addition, the Phoenix Iron Canal and Trail Association has been working with the Borough, Norfolk-Southern Railroad, and landowners to establish a formal trail along the Schuylkill River and canal that would connect the Borough and the Schuylkill River Trail with Black Rock Sanctuary, and provide canoe/kayak accessibility to the Schuylkill River, a designated water trail.

Schuylkill

In 2017, Schuylkill Township adopted a Multi-Modal Map showing existing and proposed bicycle routes, trails, and sidewalks. A primary purpose of the plan is to promote the pedestrian interconnection of mostly existing neighborhoods to one another and with the Borough of Phoenixville. In addition, the Plan indicates a proposed trail-Schuylkill Freedom Trail that will provide connection from Valley Forge National Historic Park through the Township to Phoenixville.

West Vincent

In 2014, West Vincent adopted a Multi-Modal Study showing existing and proposed bicycle and pedestrian routes connecting cultural destinations, open spaces, and neighborhoods. Significant proposed trails include:

- A proposed multi-use trail along Saint Matthews Road.
- Completion of the **French Creek Trail**, including a section through Cook's Glen Park.
- Improved surface trails around Ludwigs Corner and Weatherstone, including the **Brandywine Trail**.

9.5 SENIORS AND SPECIAL NEEDS POPULATIONS

As the population ages and communities recognize the importance of having recreational amenities for special needs population, opportunities should be pursued to incorporate ADA accessible facilities into the park system including trails that are wheelchair accessible and well-maintained to avoid tripping hazards such as cracks in pavement.

Bicycle routes can be made safer through multi-modal street design. In many cases, existing roads can at minimal expense be made into safer bicycle routes through installation of signs and/or pavement markings. Specific strategies to create safe bicycle routes include:

- Complete Streets, which are designed with specific accommodations for pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and public/mass transportation, as well as traffic calming measures. These are covered in detail in Chapter 10.
- Where conditions permit, an existing paved shoulder can be designated as a bicycle lane.
- Bike route signage can consist of share the road signs, and/or could contain specific local or regional route information (e.g. PA Bicycle Route S signage).
- Bicycle “sharrow” markings are painted symbols on roadways that indicate that travel lanes are shared by motorists and cyclists.

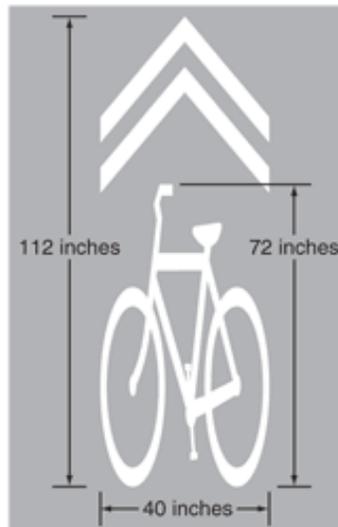


Figure 9.6-1 Sharrow Marking

9.7 OPEN SPACE PLANNING

Regional and municipal open space planning should strive to achieve all objectives and maintain balance where multiple goals are in apparent conflict. This requires the setting of priorities in determining how open space objectives are to be met. For example, East Pikeland’s Open Space Plan establishes organizing principles based on riparian greenway corridors, high quality mature forests, and agricultural lands that in turn define locations for trails. Charlestown and West Vincent have identified critical large properties upon which to focus efforts to secure conservation easements. Schuylkill Township and Phoenixville seek to connect existing and developing communities with trails linking important cultural destinations. Other priorities may include the need for recreational facilities or the identification of critical environmental or historical resources. [Park, Recreation, and Open Space Plans adopted by Regional municipalities include the following:](#)

- [Charlestown Township has a 2012 Parks, Recreation, Open Space & Trails Plan, adopted as an addendum to the 2001 municipal Comprehensive Plan.](#)

- East Pikeland Township has a 2013 Plan for Open Space and Economic Development, adopted as a supplement to the municipal Comprehensive Plan. In addition, the Township is a member of the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, which has its own PROS Plan.
- Phoenixville Borough has a 2015 Comprehensive Parks Plan, plus master plans for a number of the municipal parks.
- West Vincent Township has a 1992 Open Space and Recreation Plan. In addition, the Township is a member of the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities, which has its own PROS Plan.

Open space and recreational facilities should be required in all new developments to accommodate the growing population. When new open space and recreational facilities are not feasible, require fees in lieu to expand existing park facilities.

Open space programming should include agricultural preservation. This includes facilitation of agricultural preservation grants and easements for productive lands. In addition, public and other open spaces could be used for agricultural and horticultural recreation programs, including CSAs and Community Gardens.

Planning should also include allocation of resources to assure that open space and recreational resources are monitored and maintained. Charlestown Township conducts biannual monitoring inspections of public and eased private open space and recreation resources to assure safety, to mitigate any environmental/management concerns, and to prevent illegal or hazardous/nuisance use of open space.

9.8 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

The following policy recommendations will implement the goals and objectives of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan:

PRO-1 Evaluate local and regional resources in need of open space designation to promote their protection.

Critical resources to protect as open space may include environmentally sensitive areas, valuable habitats, agricultural lands, historic structures and landscapes, viewsheds, desired trail connections and greenways, and farms.

PRO-2 Assess municipal needs and provisions for recreational facilities for everyone.

Assure adequacy of recreational resources for children, adults, senior citizens, and those with special needs.

Encourage senior programs at a variety of community facilities such as municipal buildings, school facilities, libraries and churches.

CHAPTER TEN – TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Land use, economic development, viable housing, recreation, and environmental resource protection are all dependent on a functional and efficient multi-modal transportation network. This element of the Regional Comprehensive Plan advances strategies to efficiently move goods and people, to maintain a high quality of life, and to promote environmental and energy sustainability, and is intended to supplement the *Phoenixville Region Multimodal Transportation Plan*.

10.1 TRANSPORTATION PLAN GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

Encourage the expansion a variety of transportation opportunities in the region to reduce congestion and dependency on automobiles while improving interconnectedness. This goal is to be advanced through the pursuit of the following specific objectives:

1. Encourage the prioritization of roadway improvements that lessen congestion and improve roadway safety in the region.
2. Identify scenic corridors of regional significance and develop regional policies and design standards for them.
3. Develop a regional bicycle and pedestrian connection plan to identify and prioritize missing alternative transportation linkages for interconnections of residential areas, villages and commercial and employment centers.
4. Work with SEPTA, Chester County and the Transportation Management Associations to develop additional affordable public transportation service within the Region.
5. Develop strategies to provide an adequate parking supply that will sustain revitalization efforts in downtown Phoenixville, villages and economic activity centers.
6. Promote and advocate for passenger rail service to the Region.

10.2 PHOENIXVILLE REGION MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

In response to projections for substantial population growth and development, the Chester County Planning Commission has prepared a *2018 Phoenixville Region Multimodal Plan (PRMP)* that identifies transportation goals, objectives, issues and priorities, and is incorporated by reference as part of the Transportation Element of this Regional Comprehensive Plan. The PRMP includes the five municipalities of the Phoenixville Region plus Upper Providence Township in Montgomery County and emphasizes the following:

- Safety;
- Access for all users;
- Regional connections;
- Mobility within the growth center of Phoenixville Borough;
- Planning policies and programs;
- Promotion of walking and biking; and

- Awareness.

The PRMP specifically addresses sidewalks, trails, bicycling, public transportation, and traffic volume/congestion through (26) specifically identified multi-modal projects, of which (13) are priority projects (identified in green below).

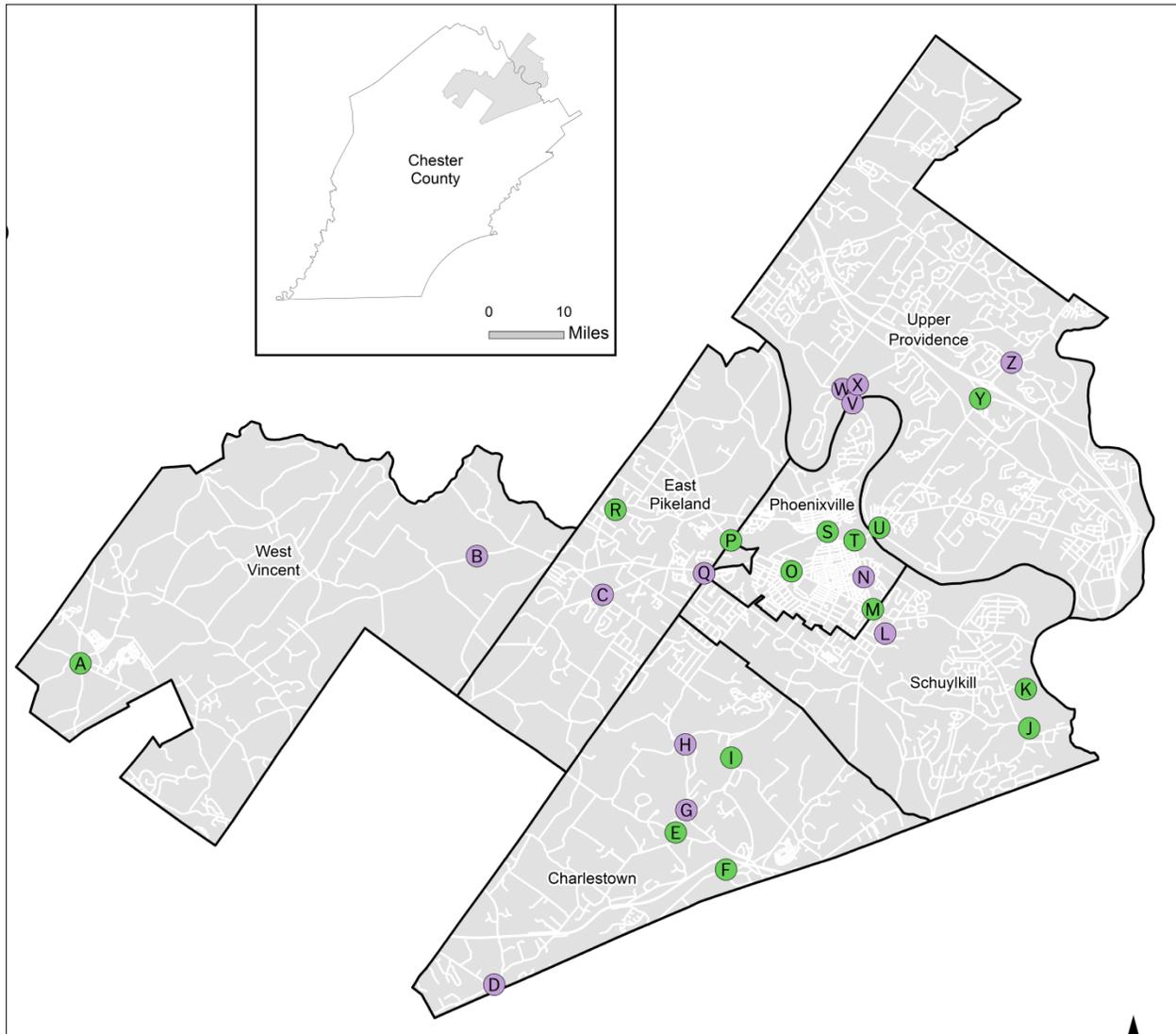


Figure 10.2-1 PMRP Multimodal Projects (Map by Chester County Planning Commission)

Specific Projects are as follows (**Priority Projects** in bold):

- A. Ludwigs Corner Pedestrian Access**
- B. West Vincent Trail
- C. Pickering Valley Railroad Trail
- D. PA 401 and Valley Hill Road Intersection
- E. Charlestown and Hollow Road Intersection**
- F. Devault Rail Trail**
- G. Pickering Trail Parking

- H. Charlestown Road Multimodal Connection – Phoenixville to University of Valley Forge
- I. PA 29 Narrow Bridge**
- J. PA 23 and Valley Park Road Pedestrian Accommodation and Congestion**
- K. Schuylkill Freedom Trail
- L. Schuylkill Township Sidewalks
- M. Starr Street/Nutt Road Turning Movements and Pedestrian Access**
- N. Starr Street Width/Speeding
- O. Bridge Street/Nutt Road Intersection**
- P. Township Line Road and PA 23 Intersection**
- Q. Pothouse Road Trail
- R. French Creek Trail Connection through Schuylkill/Phoenixville**
- S. Phoenixville Transit Access**
- T. Starr Street and Bridge Street Intersection**
- U. Mont Clare Intersection**
- V. PA 113 Black Rock Bridge Pedestrian Crossing
- W. Black Rock Road and Second Avenue Intersection
- X. Schuylkill East Trail
- Y. Route 29 Trail Link**
- Z. Arcola Road and PA 29 Pedestrian Accommodation

In addition to these, the PRMP identifies establishment of a Transportation Center in Phoenixville as a mid-term goal, and the restoration of regional passenger rail service to Phoenixville as a long term goal.

The remainder of this Comprehensive Plan element strives to support the PRMP and address transportation matters not specifically addressed therein.

10.3 ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

Within the Phoenixville Region there a limited number of major road improvement projects in the planning phases. In Phoenixville, the extension of Ashburn Road to Township Line Road is planned as an arterial road to offer an alternative to going through downtown Phoenixville.

The 2017 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) maintained by DVRPC, identifies the following projects in the Phoenixville Region.

- Upgrades to three traffic signals in East Pikeland Township along Route 113.
- Multiple bridge rehabilitations.
- Improvements to the Mont Clare Bridge to convert the five-foot sidewalk to a 10-foot wide multi-use path.
- Phase I of the design and construction of French Creek Parkway. It will provide a roadway connection between Main St. and Taylor Alley in the Borough of Phoenixville, and include a new traffic signal, a new bridge over French Creek, and 0.4 miles of new collector roadway and sidewalk network.
- Route 100 Corridor safety improvements.

Complete Streets

As vehicular congestion continues to challenge many parts of the Region, opportunities to maximize other modes of transportation within the existing rights-of-way and improve efficiency come to the forefront. The phrase ‘Complete Streets’ has been developed to encourage a change of approach to developing rights-of-way. Rather than focusing primarily on the roadway for the movement of motor vehicles, the Complete Streets concept encourages communities to prioritize the full use of the right-of-way with improvements that enable safe access for all users, including pedestrian, bicycles, and transit users, in addition to motorists. Complete Streets emphasizes safe circulation for all users of all abilities. The Phoenixville Region Multimodal Plan identifies priority projects within the Region that, once completed, will help to implement the Complete Streets concept by improving key areas with significant transportation deficiencies.

By municipalities adopting Complete Streets policies, it provides each community with more leverage when reviewing new development and encourages community representatives to think about improvements beyond the roadway. Given that much of the roadway system in the Region is developed, Complete Streets within the regional context needs to emphasize opportunities to improve existing segments of right-of-way that are lacking critically needed infrastructure.

Regional Policy for street layout, interconnections

Municipalities within the Phoenixville Region have made great strides emphasizing interconnections and Complete Streets in the last several years resulting in quality developments such as Weatherstone in West Vincent that emphasize interconnectedness and Complete Streets. Municipalities should regularly revisit ordinances to ensure that requirements associated with street layout and interconnectedness maximize the Complete Street policy.

10.4 SCENIC ROADWAY CORRIDORS

Outside of Phoenixville and the more heavily developed adjacent areas, the Region’s road network is largely comprised of country roads and two lane rural highways. The preservation of visual quality along these roads is essential to maintaining the rural aesthetic that is treasured by residents and visitors. Therefore, this plan identifies scenic roads to be protected by effective use and design requirements.

Given the visual resources of the Region, one could conceivably describe nearly all of the roadways as scenic. However, designating all roads as scenic could lead to ordinance challenges that the rigorous design standards and restrictions are too broadly applied. Therefore, this Comprehensive Plan designates only those roads exhibiting the very best of the Region’s visual qualities as scenic, based on the following characteristics, alone or in combination:

- Agricultural landscapes
- Long or broad viewsheds
- Historical structures or landscapes
- Exceptional natural landscapes, such as mature forests, meadows, wetlands, ponds, and streams

Municipal design standards and restrictions would vary based on factors such as road functional classification, proximity of adjacent features to be preserved, pedestrian/bicycle/equestrian accessibility, topographic and other environmental conditions. Recommended design standards and restrictions for scenic roadways include the following:

- **Deep building and structure setbacks in rural areas** – New buildings and other structures in close proximity to scenic roads significantly detract from scenic quality through the destruction of trees and natural features, disruption of views, and the interjection of incongruent elements into the landscape. Keeping new buildings back from scenic roads is achievable through setbacks in the General Requirements of zoning ordinances, and through standards requiring swaths of open space along scenic roads.
- **Driveway restrictions along scenic roads** – Subdivisions with lots fronting on scenic roads can significantly deteriorate scenic quality (and public safety) with a proliferation of driveways. This can be avoided by requiring major subdivisions to provide access to lots from a secondary street off of the scenic road. For small subdivisions of just a few lots, common driveways could be used in place of streets.
- **Clearing restrictions** - Woods, hedgerows, and large trees are often essential to the visual quality of scenic roads. Restrictions on clearing within designated scenic viewsheds can assure that new development does not adversely alter the landscape character.
- **Billboard and illuminated sign prohibition** – Billboards and illuminated signs are completely incongruent with scenic road aesthetics and should be prohibited by municipal zoning codes.
- **Signage design requirements** – Municipalities should enforce enhanced restrictions on size and spacing of signs specific to scenic roads. Where there are few existing signs, municipalities could create a uniform design palette of size, color, font, text size, borders, etc. consistent with a consensus aesthetic standard for scenic roads.
- **Landscape requirements** – Scenic roadways should have landscaping requirements for new development based on preserving/enhancing scenic qualities, such as preserving long views, or providing screening where needed. For example, the normal street tree requirement could be altered or eliminated in cases where the viewshed quality requires that it be uninterrupted. Conversely, screening in excess of ordinary requirements may be necessary to prevent views of parking, buildings, etc. from introducing visual incongruity into the scenic landscape.
- **Cartway width** - Narrower road cartways than normal may be appropriate to historic settlements and the protection of critical landscape features. In conjunction with other traffic calming strategies, these can enhance safety while preserving scenic qualities.
- **Bike/pedestrian/equestrian access** – Scenic rural roadways often attract many users besides motor vehicles, which can create user conflicts and safety issues. Municipalities should determine where traffic volumes make enhanced paved shoulders appropriate. When used in conjunction with narrower vehicular travel lanes, this can be done without significantly increasing the apparent width of the roadway. Alternatively, multimodal trails can be provided separate from and parallel to the roadway where budget priorities allow
- **Underground utilities** – The Region should seek ways to upgrade pole mounted utilities along scenic roads to less obtrusive and more resilient underground trenches. This effort may require legislative support and funding partnerships.

- **Road Design Standards** – Land development ordinances often require substandard existing road frontages to be upgraded to current requirements, which can include increased widths, turning lanes, and vertical concrete curbs, all of which degrade the aesthetics of scenic roads. Scenic roads should have special provisions for narrower cartways, exemption from turn lane requirements, and flat or rolled curbs.
- **Lighting design** - Street lighting that is appropriate to an urbanized, suburban, or village areas can be grossly incongruent with scenic roadways. Lighting on scenic roads should only be utilized only when essential to public safety, and should be designed to be aesthetically compatible. Such design would include full shielding for dark sky and glare protection and color temperature ratings of 3000° K or lower.

10.5 BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ACCESSIBILITY

Bicycle and pedestrian accessibility are addressed in part in the trail components of Open Space and Recreation element of the Comprehensive Plan (Chapter 9, Maps 7 and 8), as well as the County's Multimodal Plan for the Phoenixville Region. The aim of these is to promote a comprehensive network of accessibility for non-motorized commuting and recreation.

This Transportation element focuses on gaps in sidewalks and multimodal access to streets and trails. Charlestown, East Pikeland, Schuylkill, and West Vincent Townships each have municipal plans for multi-modal accessibility, identifying areas where enhanced bicycle and pedestrian connectivity is desired. Regionally, the following areas and projects are priorities:

- **Villages** – Provide sidewalk and/or pedestrian path connections in the historic villages of **Kimberton, Valley Forge, and Wilmer.**

Traffic volumes are sufficiently low in **Birchrunville** that sidewalks are not necessary and may detract from the historic context. Traffic calming measures combined with signage to alert motorists of shared roadway with pedestrians should be implemented along Hollow Road.

In **Charlestown Village**, wide shoulders on Charlestown Road could be demarked as pedestrian ways. In addition, trailhead parking for the Pickering Trail could be accommodated on the shoulders of Charlestown Road, or possibly in a future lot at the historic Woolen Mill. Along Church Road and Pickering Dam Road, traffic calming measures combined with signage to alert motorists of shared roadway with pedestrians should be implemented.

- **Downtown Phoenixville-** Improve pedestrian and vehicular interactions.

At major intersections along Bridge Street automate the pedestrian walk signals so they automatically change with the traffic signal rather than manually being trigger by pedestrians. Pedestrian activated buttons sometime fail to activate signal and pedestrians cross without walk symbol.

Consider lighted signage at mid-block crossing to improve vehicular awareness of pedestrian crossing.

On the 100-block of Bridge Street consider a designated mid-block crossing and/or relocate the crosswalk at Church Avenue and Bridge Street to the west side of the intersection.

- **Mixed Use Areas** – Pedestrian connectivity is essential to successful mixed use and redevelopment areas. This may be provided in the context of complete streets as described in section 10.3, or with development of sidewalk infrastructure. In Phoenixville Borough, pedestrian ways and signage should be implemented to promote wayfinding and accessibility to parking areas serving downtown. Other planned walkable mixed use areas include Ludwigs Corner, Devault, and along highway corridors in East Pikeland and Schuylkill Townships.
- **Multi-modal Trails** – Continue with planning, design, and construction of the Regional Trail Plan as described in Chapter 9 and the *Phoenixville Region Multimodal Transportation Plan* to create a comprehensive Regional network. This network will complete and interconnect with The Circuit, the Philadelphia Region’s proposed 750-mile system of multi-use trails. The most vital multi-use trail links to be developed include:

Devault Line Rail Trail, which connects Phoenixville, Schuylkill, and Charlestown, with potential future connections to the Chester Valley Trail to the south and the Schuylkill River Trail and Schuylkill Canal Park to the north.

French Creek Trail, which requires links between the Schuylkill River Trail in Phoenixville, and through Schuylkill Township to the completed section in East Pikeland that includes the Continental Powder Works Revolutionary War historic site. In addition, future unimproved surface trail requires completion to extend from Hares Hill Road in East Pikeland and along the French Creek to Warwick County Park.

Cromby Trail, which will connect redevelopment areas and existing neighborhoods near Routes 23 and 724 with the Schuylkill River Trail.

Pickering Valley Trail, which would connect a walkable historic Kimberton village with the French Creek Trail, and extending westward to West Pikeland’s Bridge-to-Bridge Trail, and ultimately to the village of Byers in Upper Uwchlan Township. From there, existing trails connect to the County’s Struble Trail.

Schuylkill Freedom Trail, which will extend from Valley Forge National Historic Park and the Horse-Shoe Trail, through Schuylkill Township to Phoenixville, with connections to the French Creek trail, Devault Line Trail, and the Schuylkill River Trail.

Brandywine Trail, which will link Ludwigs Corner to the Horse-Shoe Trail to the east, and Upper Uwchlan trails leading to the Struble Trail to the west.

Schuylkill River Trail is the Region’s primary multimodal trail, which currently links the Region from Parker Ford to the Perkiomen Trail in Montgomery County, Valley Forge National Historic Park, and Philadelphia. Upon Completion, the trail will extend to Pottstown and beyond to Reading and Pottsville, and will include connections to the Chester Valley and other important trails in the Philadelphia metropolitan area. An improved dedicated crossing of the Route 29 bridge from Phoenixville to Mont Clare is scheduled for construction in 2018-2019. In order to

accommodate broader and heavier use while reducing ongoing maintenance costs, it is recommended that gravel surfaces between Phoenixville and Parker Ford be paved in asphalt.

- **Bicycle Routes** – On-road bicycle routes should be designated with signs and/or sharrow markings as described in Chapter 9, section 9.6. If the Region elects to use signage, a uniform Regional design should be developed, which could include information on destinations and route difficulty (e.g. beginner, intermediate, advanced).

10.6 PARKING

Each municipality within the Phoenixville Region establishes parking standards differently. Each municipality, except for Phoenixville, establishes minimum parking space requirements by use, with varying allowances for reduction for shared parking or establishment of reserve parking areas. Phoenixville has established parking standards that require an analysis be submitted with each application for development to determine the amount of parking required.

Given the lack of alternative transportation available and the rural nature of much of the Region, it is understandable that many municipalities are hesitant to reduce the required parking for new development. However, it is recommended that each municipality revisit the effectiveness of existing standards and update parking requirements as appropriate. Municipalities should also consider incentives for developments willing to provide parking spaces for carpooling or ridesharing, or make spaces available during non-business hours near villages and Phoenixville downtown. The following section provides a brief overview of the individual municipal parking requirements.

Schuylkill Township

Parking standards within the Schuylkill Township Zoning Ordinance utilize traditional parking standards, which require a parking space per designated square footage of buildings depending on the use. Three or more establishments on adjacent lots in any commercial district, but not in a shopping center, may combine their off-street parking facilities and reduce parking by 10 percent, subject to an approval process. Schuylkill Township also has provisions for reducing parking as long as a reserve parking area remains available in the future.

East Pikeland

East Pikeland requires non-residential development to provide cross easements for vehicles and pedestrians when required by the Board of Supervisors to reduce the number of driveways and provide for efficient traffic circulation. The Township requires minimum off-street parking spaces based on spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area, or dwelling type. The Township maintains shared parking provisions that allow for a reduction in parking spaces based on a shared parking analysis based upon Urban Land Institute standards for shared parking. The Township also includes an alternative where a parking reserve area can be established for up to 25 percent of the required parking, subject to certain conditions and approval by the Board of Supervisors.

Charlestown

Parking standards in Charlestown Township are based on a set number of spaces per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area depending on the use proposed. Regulations establish that the Board of Supervisors

may require the interconnection of parking areas via access drives within and between adjacent parking areas. The Board of Supervisors may also reduce the number required parking spaces by not more than one-fourth of the total number of parking spaces required, but the site must still be able to accommodate the total amount of parking required, in case it is deemed necessary in the future.

West Vincent

West Vincent parking standards require one parking space for each employee working on the largest shift plus additional parking spaces to be provided based on the applicable formula for each use. A reduction in the number of off-street parking spaces may be authorized where an applicant can justify or demonstrate the reduction will still provide adequate facilities. In the case of mixed uses, a shared parking analysis can be provided, and the Township may authorize a reduction in the number of parking spaces.

Phoenixville

Parking requirements are determined by the submittal of an analysis, based on accepted methodologies, calculating the parking demand of the proposed land use. For mixed-use developments a shared parking analysis must be completed based on the peak hour of parking demand. In the Town Center Zoning District, parking is not required for buildings fronting Main Street, Gay Street, and Bridge Street east of Church Street, except that parking is required for changes to existing buildings. In 2010 the Borough implemented a parking meter program in the Borough-owned parking lots together with a parking permit program for residents and businesses in the downtown area and surrounding neighborhoods.

In response to ongoing perceived parking problems in the Borough, particularly in the area around downtown, a parking study was undertaken in 2017. The study was prepared by McMahon Associates, Inc. and was completed November 15, 2017. The study reviews the inventory of parking available and its utilization within the Borough of Phoenixville's commercial and residential areas. The study highlights the various parking management strategies Phoenixville has in place in its downtown (Chapter 5) to reduce parking demands and make use of available parking, identified below. McMahon Associates, Inc. made recommendations in the study to enhance the effectiveness of the current strategies, which appear after each strategy listed below.

- **2-hour time limits:** replace time limits with parking meters to promote turnover in commercial core.
- **User designations:** continue to provide sufficient handicap parking throughout the Borough's commercial and residential downtown area.
- **Wayfinding:** expand the wayfinding plan for the approach routes and provide more information to visitors after they park.
- **Shared parking:** expand partnerships for shared parking opportunities with private lot owners during mutually beneficial times.
- **Employee parking:** strategize with business owners to develop policies/pricing to incentivize employees to use permits and discourage use of on-street parking.

The following are eight strategies the parking study identifies as alternatives to private vehicle use that are effective for managing downtown parking for a community that has had significant commercial and residential growth, and will continue to do so, in the coming years.

- Provide bicycle parking
- Expand residential parking
- Alternative transportation incentives
- Walk/bike incentives
- Ride back-up programs
- Carpooling incentives
- Bus shelters
- Promote ride sharing/ride hailing services

The study identifies three key focus areas for long-term parking strategies to further address future parking demands. These are summarized as follows:

- **Future Land-Use Build-out and Zoning Analysis-** Recommends an evaluation be conducted of the potential build-out based on existing zoning and market demands to provide a greater level of clarity for future parking demands.
- **Additional Parking Capacity-** Recommends a feasibility study be conducted to identify locations for new parking areas, which may require structured parking.
- **Future Transportation Trends-** Consider transportation trends such as reduction of vehicle ownership that could reduce future parking demands.

The final chapter of the study, Chapter 6, details recommendations in actionable items by time horizon: short term (0-2 years), midterm (2-4 years), and ongoing and groups labeled: organizational, educational, regulatory, and future study/engineering for improving vehicle parking in the downtown commercial and residential areas. The approximately 35 recommendations include strategies to improve Phoenixville's current parking management plan, along with introduction of alternative parking options for the growing commercial and residential occupancy that is anticipated.

10.7 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

In the Phoenixville Region public transportation is currently limited to SEPTA bus service, and this service is limited to Phoenixville, Schuylkill Township, Charlestown Township and East Pikeland Township. Phoenixville is served by two SEPTA bus routes, Route 99, which provides regular transit service between Royersford and King of Prussia including stops in Audubon and Norristown. Route 39 also serves Phoenixville, Schuylkill Township, and East Pikeland Township with stops along Route 724 in East Pikeland and stops along Route 23 in all three municipalities. The portion of Charlestown Township associated with the Great Valley Corporate Center is served by bus 206, which connects the Great Valley Corporate Center with the Paoli Train Station and points in-between. West Vincent Township does not have SEPTA service available. SEPTA previously provided bus service between Phoenixville, the Great Valley Corporate Center and the Paoli Rail Station, but ridership was low and the service was cancelled in 2014.

Providing transit opportunities throughout the Region remains challenging because much of the Region is rural in nature and does not lend itself to opportunities for high volumes of riders outside the more urbanized areas. While increased frequency and coverage could help increase ridership, the SEPTA routes tend to be circuitous between major destinations such as Norristown and King of Prussia resulting in long commutes that are often not practical for employees who have other alternatives.

Opportunities for express buses during peak hours should be considered, particularly along major roads in the Region including Route 23, Route 29, and Route 724. Reestablishment of the SEPTA service previously provided between Phoenixville, the Great Valley Corporate Center and the Paoli Rail Station should be considered and establishment of a bus route along Route 100 in West Vincent connecting Ludwigs Corner to the Exton train station should also be considered.

Due to limited funding for public transit, the amenities associated with bus stops tend to be minimal, further reducing the appeal of choosing transit. Improved amenities such as protected shelters at bus stops, bicycle parking, wifi on the buses, and more comfortable seating should be considered to increase ridership. Some amenities could be sponsored by the local municipality and/or businesses to make transit more appealing.

Public transportation accessibility is addressed in part in the County's Multimodal Plan (Chapter 3). The aim of the plan is to enhance rider experience on SEPTA's bus service in the Phoenixville Region, as well as other service hubs across the county.

The transportation ridership focuses on the design of bus stops and curbside amenities needed to improve the safety, circulation, and comfort of this region's SEPTA riders. Phoenixville is a bus transit hub with more than 50 riders per day; therefore, a priority for enhancing bus ridership and experience. As a hub, the Multimodal plan identifies, at a minimum, the amenities required for the best ridership experience, which includes, signage, ADA platform access, real-time transit information, bike racks, shelters, system map, benches, and paved walkway connections.

Rail Service

Phoenixville was served by commuter rail service until the 1980's when it was ended. Studies have been completed over the years to reestablish rail service between Phoenixville and Norristown, but adequate funding has not been allocated beyond conducting studies. The possibility of connecting Phoenixville with the Great Valley Corporate Center in Charlestown Township via rail was subsequently investigated, but again funding was not allocated and the project did not move forward. Reestablishment of rail service to the Phoenixville Region should be advocated to help alleviate traffic congestion and to help assure the economic viability of the Region into the future.

Other Publicly Funded Transportation

While not having a fixed daily route, Rover Community Transportation provides transportation service for residents needing to travel within Chester County. While the service is available to anyone in Chester County, the emphasis is on providing a transportation alternative for Chester County seniors and disabled residents. The Rover transportation service is subsidized for residents who are disabled, senior citizens, or those who qualify for certain other government assistance programs. Residents who do not qualify for subsidies can use the service, but must pay the full rate which is dependent on the distance of the trip. Full price rates currently range from \$11.75 (0- 4.99 miles) to \$129.05 (41+ miles). To use Rover, a reservation must be made the prior day by 1 PM and routes may include picking up other passengers along the way to a destination. Given the high price for full-rate customers, Rover tends to be a better alternative for riders eligible for subsidies.

Because there is a fleet of vehicles associated with the Rover Community Transportation system already active in the Region, consideration should be given to potential partnerships between the Rover

program and local employers to offer shuttle services between population and employment centers within the greater region.

Ride Sharing/Carpooling & Alternative Transportation

Ridesharing or carpooling consists of two or more people with similar work schedules riding together to a similar area. Carpooling/ridesharing is typically done in a private vehicle and arrangements can vary from taking turns driving a private car, to compensating a driver for providing a ride. Challenges associated with carpooling/ridesharing including finding another person from your area with a similar commuting pattern and finding safe and secure meeting places from which to travel. Within the Region there are currently no park-and-ride parking lots to encourage ridesharing. Consideration should be given to identifying locations for park-and-ride lots in the Region to better improve opportunities for shared rides. Ridesharing websites exist, but without a better understanding by the general public how such an arrangement could work for them, it is often difficult for people to be willing to try such an alternative.

As technology and innovation continue to advance, municipalities within the Region should support and encourage alternative transportation options. Companies such as Uber and Lyft that function as a taxi cab service that is operated by drivers in their private vehicles can reduce the need for parking because people can easily and affordably get to their destination without having to drive their own vehicle.

Car sharing can also become an option for people who do not need to commute for work. Private car rental options are beginning to appear, where people rent their car during times when they do not need access to it. As Phoenixville downtown and the villages continue to be successful, opportunities for rickshaws to get people around these areas could be another option for moving people with needing vehicles.

10.8 TRENDS/FUTURE TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

Recent technologies are altering work and lifestyles, and transportation systems are changing as a result. The Energy Plan (Chapter 5) describes advances in electric vehicles (EVs), public transportation including passenger rail, ride sharing, non-motorized transportation, and telecommuting. All of these have tremendous potential to reduce single occupancy vehicle traffic on roadways, while minimizing reliance on finite and polluting oil reserves that are subject to wild price fluctuations and geopolitical instability. If the Region becomes a leading edge proponent and adopter of these nascent transportation technologies and practices, it will be well positioned for economic success and high quality of life into the future.

Electric vehicles (EVs) are increasingly popular as batteries improve and costs decrease. According to Bloomberg New Energy Finance, EV passenger car sales are expected to increase from 3% in 2020 to 25% in 2030, and to comprise over half of US new car sales by 2040. New models are coming onto the market at an increasing rate, including some for \$30,000 or less, and government and PECO rebates can reduce this cost even further. Still, even a higher purchase price for EVs can be more than offset by operating and maintenance costs that are approximately half that of petroleum fueled vehicles. EV range on a full charge is from 80 to 250 miles or more, which makes them increasingly practical alternatives for most drivers. A 2018 study by Volta Charging found that over 80% of Americans currently live within five miles of an EV charging station, and the network of charging stations (called EVSEs) will certainly become more robust, with commercial centers, workplaces, and municipalities

providing them. Municipalities in the Region should promote EVs with charging stations at municipal buildings, parking facilities, and at downtown curbsides. In addition, parking ordinances could require the provision of EVSEs for new developments.

EVs are not confined to passenger vehicle applications. SEPTA intends to operate 90% of its bus fleet with hybrid-electric vehicles by 2021, and recently added 25 full electric buses to its fleet as part of a pilot program. Local, regional, and long haul electric trucks are also being developed, and Walmart and UPS have already made pre-orders for Tesla models due out in 2019. This is a critical development, since US trucking accounts for approximately 5% of vehicle traffic and nearly 25% of emissions.

The self-driving vehicle is another existing technology with the capacity to dramatically and favorably change transportation. Personal vehicles could return home after dropping off a work commuter, for use by another family member. Driverless cab services could alleviate the need for or use of personal vehicles, while reducing public risks posed by inattentive or impaired drivers. Electric self-driving buses could operate in tandem or series like a road-based train, bringing rail type passenger service without the heavy and expensive infrastructure. All of these together would greatly reduce the area requirements for parking lots, resulting in greener and more sustainable residential, office, and commercial centers.

10.9 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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

T-1 Undertake studies relating to the improvement of the regional transportation network.

Support the priorities and policies of the *Phoenixville Region Multimodal Transportation Plan*.

T-2 Coordinate regional transportation improvements with FHWA, PennDOT and DVRPC to better achieve common goals. Coordinate on a municipal and regional basis for funding opportunities.

Support the priorities and policies of the *Phoenixville Region Multimodal Transportation Plan*.

Utilize Municipal Act 209 Studies to secure developer funding for necessary transportation improvements.

T-3 Develop traffic calming plans in residential areas, villages and economic centers to improve safety and promote non-motorized travel.

Prioritize pedestrian, bicycle, and public transit safety through complete streets and design measures that slow traffic and create safe ways and crossing points for non-motorized access.

Ensure that proposed transportation improvements support the Complete Streets policy.

T-4 Improve missing pedestrian and bicycle access linkages.

Pursue funding on a Regional basis to identify critical connections, and design and construct necessary improvements. Require all new developments to include pedestrian accessibility, with bicycle provisions where appropriate, and include offsite and Regional connections.

In downtown Phoenixville consider automated pedestrian walk signals at major intersections along Bridge Street that automatically change with the traffic signal rather than manually being triggered by pedestrians. Pedestrian activated buttons sometime fail to activate signal and pedestrians cross without walk symbol.

Consider lighted signage at mid-block crossing to improve vehicular awareness of pedestrian crossing.

On the 100-block of Bridge Street consider a designated mid-block crossing and/or relocate the crosswalk at Church Avenue and Bridge Street to the west side of the intersection.

T-5 Adopt municipal ordinances to identify and protect scenic roadways.

These include setback and screening regulations, viewshed protection measures, and design standards for road surfaces, signage, and lighting.

T-6 Implement the Regional multi-modal trail plan.

Identify critical connections and secure funding for their design and construction. Implement improvements to existing trails where needed, and develop effective plans and programs for ongoing maintenance.

T-7 Develop a Regional network of on road bicycle routes.

Publish a regional bicycle route map on municipal web sites, and implement a signage and/or sharrow marking system.

T-8 Create a network of public electric vehicle charging stations (EVSEs).

Combine public installations with regulatory and incentive provisions for private properties and developments.

T-9 Encourage shared parking and parking flexibility for new developments and developments near villages and Phoenixville downtown.

Revisit the effectiveness of existing parking standards and update as appropriate.

Consider incentives for developments willing to provide parking spaces for carpooling or ridesharing, or make spaces available during non-business hours near villages and Phoenixville downtown.

Implement the recommendations of the Park Phoenixville study relating to parking in and near downtown Phoenixville.

T-10 Improve public transit service within the Region.

Encourage SEPTA to consider opportunities for express buses during peak hours, particularly along major roads in the Region

Encourage SEPTA to reestablish service between Phoenixville, the Great Valley Corporate Center and the Paoli Rail Station.

Encourage SEPTA to establish a bus route along Route 100 in West Vincent connecting Ludwigs Corner to the Exton train station.

Consider improved amenities such as protected shelters and bicycle parking at bus stops.

To increase ridership, encourage SEPTA to improve the bus riding experience by adding wifi on the buses and consider having more comfortable seating. Some amenities could be sponsored by the local municipality and/or businesses.

T-11 Reestablishment of rail service to the Phoenixville Region should be advocated to help alleviate traffic congestion and promote long term economic vitality.

As a region, advocate for funding to be dedicated to the re-establishment of rail service to Phoenixville.

T-12 Support and encourage alternative forms of transportation.

Encourage public/private partnerships between Rover Community Transportation and major employers in the Region to offer shuttle services between population and employment centers.

Encourage park-and-ride opportunities by designating potential areas for establishment of park-and-ride lots in the Region and support/facilitate the development of ridesharing websites.

Establish designated areas near downtown Phoenixville and possibly the villages for taxi cabs, Uber, and rickshaw service to encourage designated pick-up and drop-off locations for alternative forms of transportation to the Region's commercial centers.

T-13 Support a regional policy emphasizing Complete Streets.

Ensure that new development and projects upgrading existing infrastructure include improvements that address all modes of transportation.