



Planning For A Bright Future

FALL 2021

Prepared in cooperation with:

Environmental Planning & Design, LLC

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF

ELIZABETH TOWNSHIP

ALLEGHENY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

RESOLUTION 2021-22

WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, Act of 1968, PL 805, No 247 as reenacted and amended, empowers Townships of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to plan their development through provision of comprehensive planning; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Elizabeth, Allegheny County, last adopted a multi-municipal Comprehensive Plan, entitled Twin Rivers Council of Governments Comprehensive Plan, dated December 2003,

WHEREAS, the Township of Elizabeth, Allegheny County, began the process of updating the Comprehensive Plan in 2020; and

WHEREAS, the process of updating the Comprehensive Plan included: Community Outreach; appointment of a Steering Committee; and review, analysis, and reflection of short- and long-term planning ideas, impacts, and implementation; and

WHEREAS, the Elizabeth Township Planning Commission conducted all Public Meeting activity in accordance with the Municipalities Planning Code, Section 302. (a) and considered the balance of impacts and implementation of all comments received; and

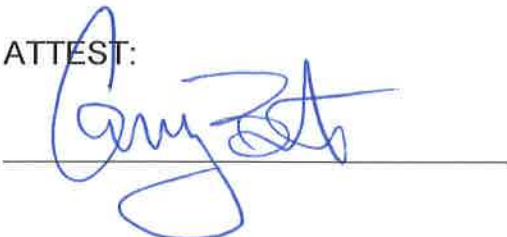
WHEREAS, the Elizabeth Township Board of Commissioners held a Public Hearing pursuant to public notice, in accordance with the Municipalities Planning Code, Section 302.(b) and considered the balance of impacts and implementation of all comments received; and

WHEREAS, the update process has produced a document, titled Elizabeth Township Comprehensive Plan 2021, containing maps, charts, textural matter and other data (Section 302(c)).

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Commissioners of Elizabeth Township, in accordance with the Municipalities Planning Code, Section 302(c), that the 2021 Comprehensive Plan is hereby adopted for use as the planning document for Elizabeth Township.

DULY RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of Elizabeth Township, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania this the 1st of November 2021.

ATTEST:



Bart Rocco - President



Acknowledgements

The 2021 Elizabeth Township Comprehensive Plan is anchored in the contributions of many, including the project's steering committee, residents, business owners, Township Staff, and Board of Commissioners. Throughout this planning process, participants have navigated complex and challenging topics with a respectful and genuine enthusiasm for realizing achievable actions that equip the community for continued future successes.

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INTRODUCTION

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

Simply put, a Comprehensive Plan outlines the community's overall vision for the future. It is a planning and policy guide for directing key decisions and projects that impact the community as a whole. As its name suggests, a Comprehensive Plan addresses a variety of topics, such as the use of land, parks & recreation, housing, transportation, and municipal services.

Keep in mind that the goals and actions of a Comprehensive Plan are generally broad and overarching and not meant to detail every specific community effort. The Comprehensive Plan also acts as a key communication tool for the Township by clearly informing and engaging external partners and stakeholders. Foremost, the Comprehensive Plan unlocks how and to what extent the investments of time, policy, resources, and efforts are directed for the advancement of the Township, its residents, and business community.

Report Organization

The Elizabeth Township Comprehensive Plan is organized into two main parts:

1. **WHERE WE ARE: Existing Conditions**
2. **WHERE WE'RE GOING: The Action Plan**

The plan begins by considering WHERE WE ARE as a community. This includes a discussion of relevant data and observations, followed by commentary from community members and expert analysis. This section celebrates the many unique qualities that make Elizabeth Township a great place for residents, businesses, and visitors. It also highlights immediate challenges as well as the many opportunities for growth and enhancement moving forward. This section is organized by the three planning lenses of Land Use, Open Space, and Municipal Services.

The plan concludes by considering WHERE WE'RE GOING as a Township. This includes an outline of goals and practical action steps aimed at bringing the community's aspirations to reality.

Relation to County & Neighboring Municipality Planning Efforts

The proposed direction of growth and land development in Elizabeth Township, as outlined within this plan, is compatible with the existing and proposed development and plans of all contiguous portions of neighboring municipalities. In addition, the existing and proposed development of Elizabeth

Township is generally consistent with the objectives and plans of the Allegheny County Comprehensive Plan, *Allegheny Places*, December 2008.

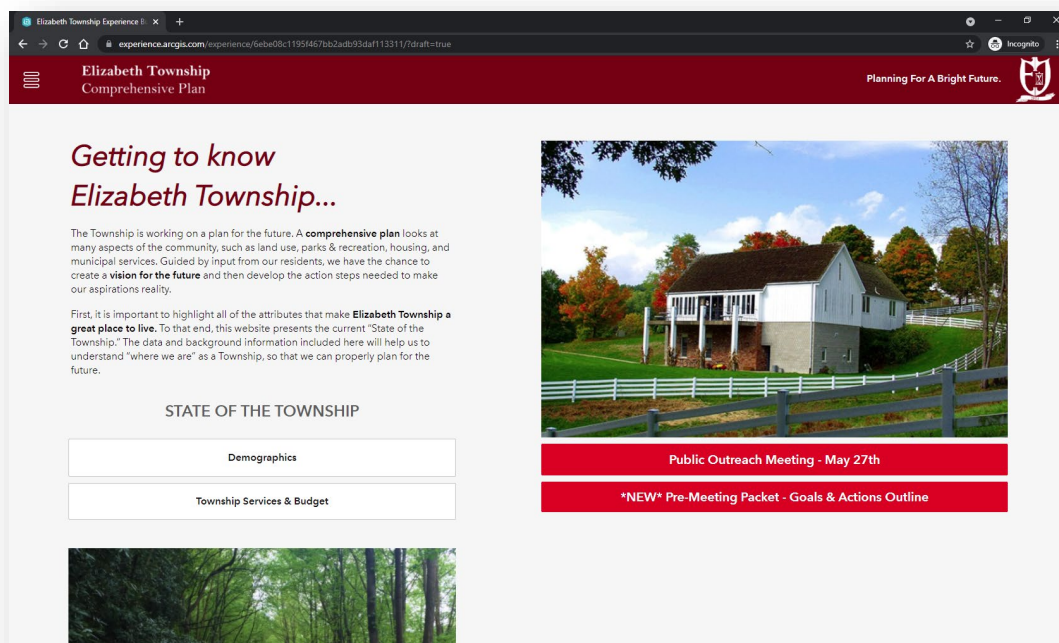
Public Outreach

A Plan BY the people, FOR the people

The Elizabeth Township Comprehensive Plan is directed by the voices of local residents and stakeholders. Three (3) public outreach events, including (5) live (virtual) sessions, were held over a three-month period, engaging more than 150 active participants. In addition, online questionnaires garnered the input and feedback of over 600 community members. Throughout the process, the input and feedback of the public was incorporated directly into the Plan document. The robust nature of these public outreach opportunities ensures that the plan truly represents the desires and aspirations of the community.

Online Web Presence - STATE OF THE TOWNSHIP

An online interactive platform was created to present the current State of the Township, including a variety of background information and analysis. As the Plan moves forward into implementation, this platform will continue to communicate information and engage the public. Follow the link to visit: <https://arcg.is/0OjSbW>



PART 1:

WHERE WE ARE – Existing Conditions

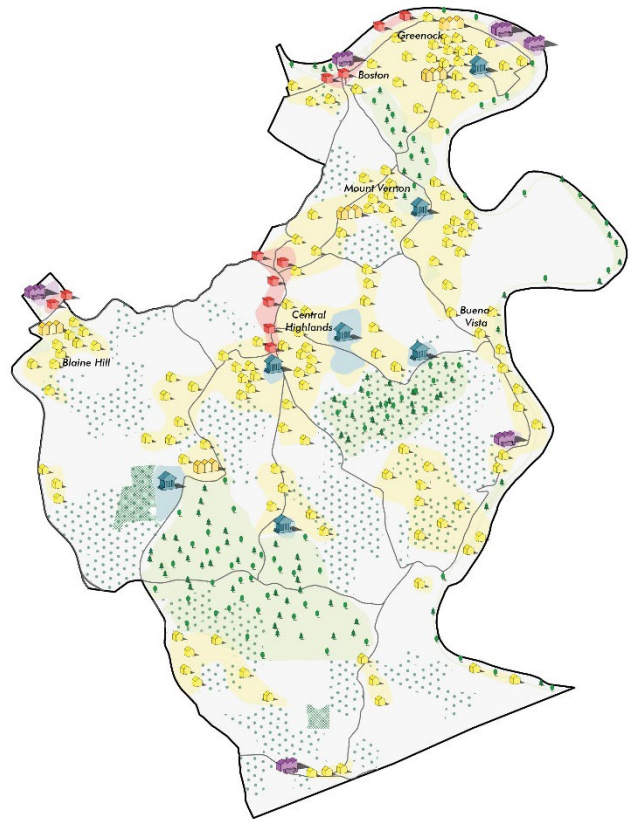
Land Use: Land development and conservation

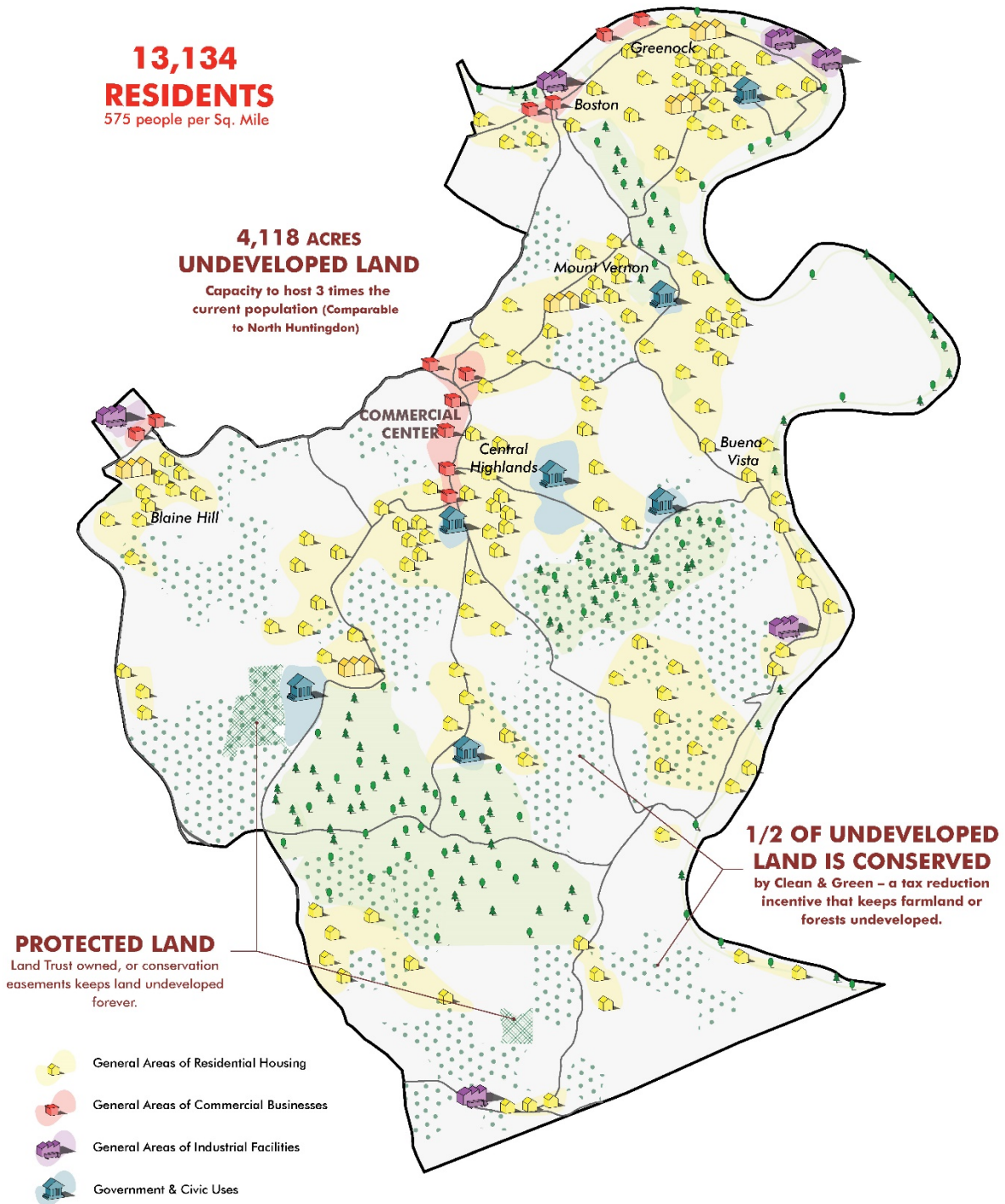
Planning and managing the use and development of land is an important function of a local municipality. Such efforts are aimed to both provide opportunity for landowners as well as ensure the health, safety, and general welfare of the community. In order to plan for the future, it is important to first understand the current land use patterns that exist.

Current Land Use

How is land being used?

- **Rural & Suburban Character** – Low intensity uses (open space, agriculture, parks, golf courses, and cemeteries) cover 8,294 acres, or 59% of the entire Township.
- **Housing** - Single-family housing is prevalent, making up 42% of all developed land.
- **Small Commercial Footprint** - Commercial and industrial uses make up just 4% of developed land.
- **Conserved Land** - Clean & Green tax incentives and conservation easements combine to conserve roughly 1/2 of undeveloped land (excludes public lands and parks).





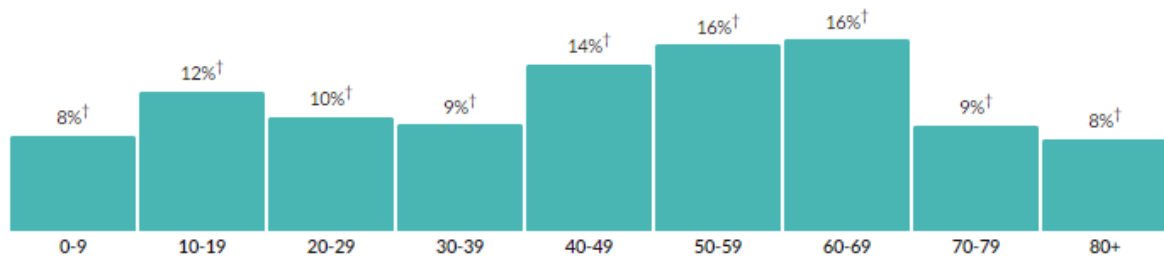
People

Who makes up Elizabeth Township?

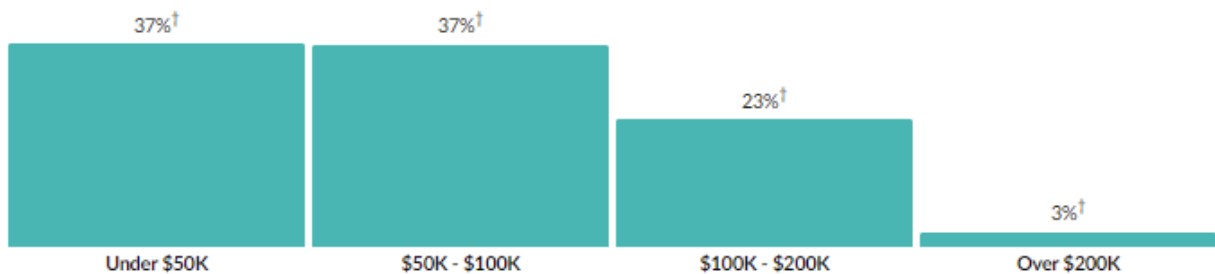
- Elizabeth Township residents are on average slightly older compared with Allegheny County and Pennsylvania (both with a median age of 40.8).
- The majority of residents are over the age of forty (40) years old.
- Median household income is slightly higher than both the County and State.

Note: All demographic data is sourced from the U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS) 2018 5-year estimates, the most recent data at the time of the analysis. As results of the 2020 Census are released, local demographic data will continue to inform future decision-making for the Township.

Population by Age Range



Household Income



Race

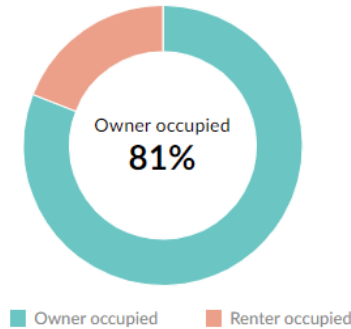


* Hispanic includes respondents of any race. Other categories are non-Hispanic.

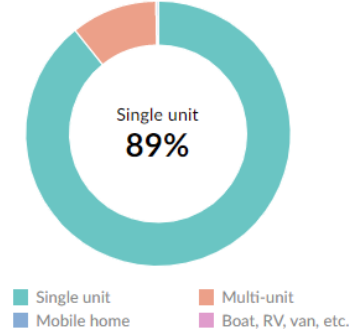
Housing

- The housing vacancy rate is lower than most surrounding communities.
- The proportion of single-family units is typical for a semi-rural/suburban Township.
- The median value of housing units is higher than the average of surrounding municipalities, \$90,000.

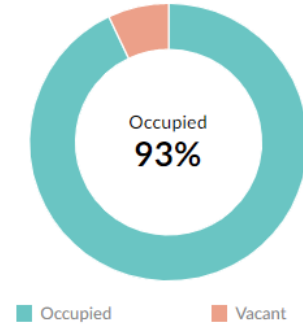
Ownership of occupied units



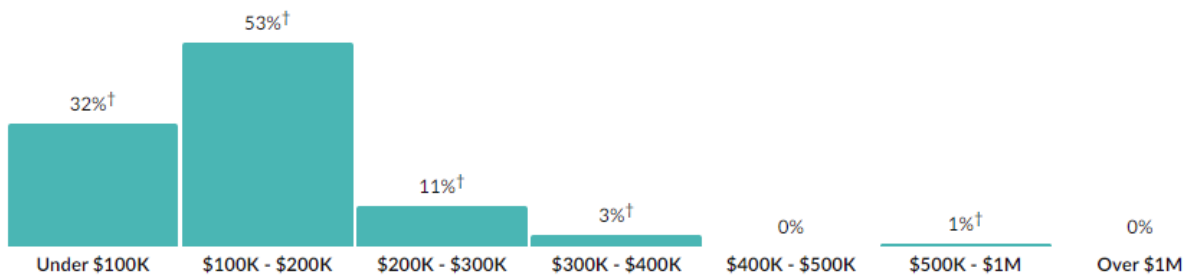
Types of structure



Occupied vs. Vacant



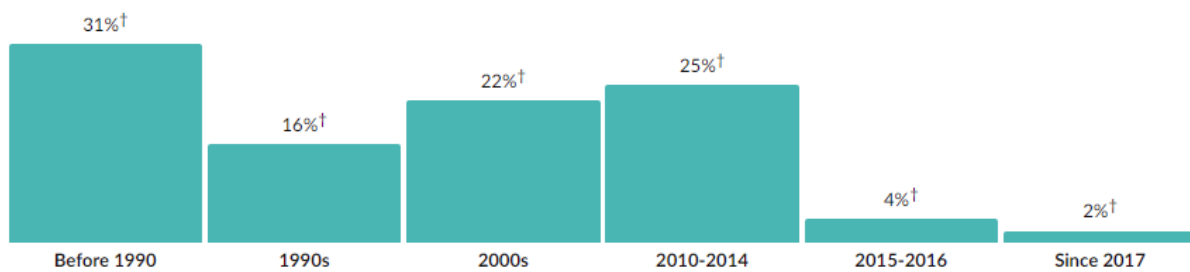
Value of owner-occupied housing units



Housing Trends

- The majority of residents have lived within the Township for over a decade.
- About three (3) new homes are constructed each year
- At this rate (0.05% annual growth), thirty (30) new homes are projected to be constructed in the next ten (10) years

Year moved in, by percentage of population



Businesses

- Over 150 businesses are located within Elizabeth Township providing a variety of retail, grocery, dining, and personal/professional services. A complete list of local businesses is found within the 2020 Business Directory.

Public Input

Based on conversations with the public and responses to online questionnaires, the following general comments were gathered.

What community members appreciate related to land use...

- The presence of natural lands (woodlands, farmlands, parks, etc.) and low-intensity dispersed development.
- Quality housing, as one of the Township's greatest assets due to generally affordable prices and stable values.
- Residential neighborhoods that are friendly, safe, quiet, and attractive.
- In addition, residents also identified low-traffic roads, commercial businesses, and local landmarks as important to the built character of the Township.

What community members hope to see in the future related to land use...

- A balance between new growth & development and preservation of natural lands.
- A plan related to the location of new construction homes in conjunction with public infrastructure/utility expansion.
- More housing supply in particular larger homes to attract young growing families.
- Sustainable and design-conscious construction practices should be encouraged.
- More commercial development to meet residents needs and increase the tax base.
- Gateways (or entryways) to the Township could be enhanced to be more welcoming and attractive to visitors.

Key Analysis

- **Conserved Lands:** Elizabeth Township is uniquely privileged to offer both an abundance of natural lands and convenient proximity to the surrounding region. This is largely the result of conservation efforts, such as County parkland, land trusts, conservation easements, and Clean & Green tax incentives. In addition, the hilly topography greatly reduces the amount of buildable land.
- **Housing Demand:** Within the region, there appears to be high demand for homes priced within the \$100,000 to \$200,000 range, a price range that is common throughout the Township. This trend is largely driven by millennials entering the housing market as first-time home buyers. Such demand for housing reveals an opportunity to increase the supply of housing through new construction.
- **Housing for Older Adults:** With an aging population, the demand for specialized housing accommodations will likely increase as older adult residents plan for retirement. Older adult residents may seek to downsize to smaller units, desire mobility-conscious housing, or consider life care facilities (i.e. independent living, assisted living, nursing home, etc.).
- **Commercial Development:** The small proportion of businesses and industry within the Township limits the potential for greater tax revenue, which could be allocated towards expanded municipal services.

Open Space: Parks, recreation, and natural resources

Open space is generally thought of as any undeveloped natural lands. These spaces often include parks and recreation areas but may also include farmland, conserved lands, and nature/hunting preserves both public and private. Elizabeth Township is uniquely privileged to house an abundance of open space, which provides a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities. This section explores the social, environmental, and economic benefits of these lands for the community.



Data & Observations

Open Space by the numbers:

- 1,670 Acres of Public Access Open Space (includes parkland, public hunting grounds, cemeteries, and conserved land)
- 1,333 Acres of Total Parkland
- 97 Acres per 1,000 Population of Total Parkland
- 62 Acres of Township-Maintained Parkland
- 12 Miles of Cycling/Walking Trails – including The Great Allegheny Passage (GAP) Trail
- 7 Access Points to the GAP Trail

Natural Resources

- Common throughout Western Pennsylvania, the extraction of natural resources has played a key role in the Township's historical development as a major coal producer powering the region's bustling steel industry.
- Over half of the Township's land area has been mined for coal.
- Dozens of natural gas wells have been installed over the years, some located near housing and commercial development.
- Recently, unconventional extraction techniques have presented economic opportunities, including new extraction-related employment, royalty payments to landowners, and various impact and permitting fees directed to the Township government.
- Environmental impacts resulting from resource extraction and past land uses include:
 - Acid mine drainage, mine blow-outs, land subsidence, and waste deposits.
 - The Township continues to coordinate with the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and other applicable agencies to pursue environmental impact studies and remediation efforts related to these issues.

Public Input

Based on conversations with the public and responses to online questionnaires, the following general comments were gathered.

What community members appreciate related to open space...

- In general, open space and athletics were recognized as excellent assets of the Township
- Specifically, parks, woodlands, and creeks/rivers were highlighted.
- In addition, farms were noted as a valued asset that is often hidden from public view.

What community members hope to see in the future related to open space...

- An indoor community space oriented around recreation and social activities for all ages, aimed at enhancing a sense of community.
- Further investment/development related to the GAP trail and Youghiogheny River recreation activities.
- Open space assets should be celebrated and promoted to both inform current residents, attract visitors, and welcome new residents.

Key Analysis

- **Abundant Open Space:** Elizabeth Township has the advantage of housing an abundance of open space assets. The amount of public access parkland in Elizabeth Township (97 Acres per 1,000 residents) is significantly higher than peer municipalities within the region (average of 25 Acres per 1,000 residents).
- **Regional Destinations:** The Great Allegheny Passage and Round Hill Park are major destinations for outdoor recreation that attract many visitors from across the broader region. There are opportunities to enhance the awareness and access to the amenities of these open spaces. The potential for a pedestrian/bicycle connection between the GAP trail and Round Hill Park is a unique opportunity.
- **Environmental Challenges:** Due to the many steep hillsides and waterways throughout the Township, stormwater run-off is a major issue causing flooding and erosion, which impacts local roadways during heavy storm events. Also, the legacies of resource extraction and industrial waste have resulted in a variety of environmental impacts within some of the Township's open space. Some of these impacts are highly visible to the public (i.e. acid mine drainage in Douglas Run), while others may be unseen or not fully known to the broader community.

Municipal Services: Public infrastructure, transportation, and government operations



Data & Observations

Transportation

- 10 points of roadway access in and out of the Township
- 3 state routes (51, 48 & 136) maintained by PennDot
- 63 Miles of local roads maintained by the Township
- Resident Commute
 - 31.7 minutes – mean travel time to work
 - 88% of residents drive to work alone

Services by the numbers:

- Public Safety (Police / Fire / EMS)
 - 29% of 2021 General Fund
 - 0.8 - Number of Police per 1,000 Population
 - 10 - Number of Police Cruisers
 - 0.7 - Number of Violent Crimes per 1,000 Population
 - 5 Certified Volunteer Fire Companies - supported financially by the Township
 - 24-7 Staffed EMS Base – Faster than 8.5-minute average response time

Public Works (Road Maintenance & Repair, Traffic Control, Snow Removal, Street Cleaning)

- 36% of 2021 General Fund
- 63 Miles Maintained by Municipality
- \$214 - Total Spending per Capita
- \$44,452 - Total Spending per Mile
- 24 - Number of Vehicles in Public Works Fleet
- 11 - Number of Public Works Employees

Public Input

Based on conversations with the public and responses to online questionnaires, the following general comments were gathered.

What community members appreciate related to municipal services...

- The Township is very safe, and families feel comfortable letting their kids play outside and walk around their neighborhood.

What community members hope to see in the future related to municipal services...

- Greater communication and transparency regarding municipal decisions/actions.
- Better promotion of the Township's valuable assets and attractions.

Key Analysis

- **Safety:** Elizabeth Township boasts very low crime rates. In addition, the portion of the budget allocated to public safety is lower than other municipalities throughout the region. This indicates an area of excellent value for the community.
- **Roads:** Many roads within the Township are at risk of flooding and erosion. This is due to the hilly topography of the area, which worsens the impact of stormwater run-off. The Township seeks to enhance coordination efforts among transportation agencies (i.e. PennDOT, Allegheny County), regarding County and State owned roadway/bridge projects located along steep sloped lands to more proactively protect against erosion and flooding.
- **Communications:** As the Township focuses on key planning efforts, there is great opportunity to better engage and communicate with community members. While the Township has been recognized as a Banner Community in Allegheny County for years, there is still opportunity to better brand and promote itself to attract greater regional attention.

PART 2:

WHERE WE'RE GOING – The Action Plan

Based on the background analysis and input from community members, the following three (3) overarching goals were developed. Each responds to the key planning lenses of Open Space, Land Use, and Municipal Services.

Goals

- *Embrace and promote the community's abundant open spaces by protecting significant natural features and by connecting and enhancing parks & recreational amenities.*
- *Accommodate a balance of targeted development and conservation of natural resources.*
- *Respond to evolving land use patterns and environmental legacies with coordinated redevelopment and conservation strategies aimed at leading the local economy forward.*
- *Celebrate and preserve Elizabeth Township's unique identity as a historic community with a complimentary mix of small-town, rural, and suburban character.*

Actions

Drawing from these overarching goals as guiding principles, the following six (6) key actions, broken down into twenty-four (24) detailed steps, are crafted to ensure the plan's successful implementation. Please note that each of the actions is equal in its importance and the action steps are not required to occur in strict chronological order. In fact, many of the actions naturally overlap, which works together to form a unified path forward.

A. Protect and Connect Open Space

B. Look to The River

C. Enhance Civic Amenities

D. Broaden Housing Choices

E. Activate Redevelopment Opportunity

F. Spread the Word

Please note that the entire action plan is not meant to be completed within just a few months. While some action steps requiring limited time/resources are designed to be completed in the short term, others may evolve to take more than 10 to 15 years. Keep in mind that the progress and ultimate success of the more involved action steps are in part dependent upon the support and direction of key external partners. While the benefit of partnerships help the Township accomplish work beyond its own capacity, there is a limitation to the amount of say and control wielded by the Township in certain arenas. To better understand these dynamics, the action plan outlines general estimates related to the timeframe, cost/resources, and list of key partners for each step.

A PROTECT AND CONNECT OPEN SPACE

Elizabeth Township is proud to be a community full of nature. Its abundant open space, another name for natural or undeveloped land, consists of the many parks, farms, woodlands, and waterways that create the rural character so cherished by its residents. It is important to keep these valuable assets strong and healthy through both clean-up efforts as well as opportunities to protect open space from incompatible development. In addition, the Township seeks to better connect residents and visitors to these open spaces so everyone can get out and enjoy all that Elizabeth Township has to offer.

Objectives:

- Support and retain active farmland, preserve sensitive or unique natural features, and conserve open space for recreational purposes.
- Leverage opportunities to establish trail connections and open space corridors in conjunction with regional recreational assets and active mobility enhancements.
- Formulate policies or strategies to improve conditions arising from post-industrial impacts.



A-1. Delineate Rural Resource Areas to conserve land beyond the extent of existing and planned public infrastructure services in which the conservation of natural resources is prioritized.

What are Rural Resource Areas?

Enabled by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), municipalities may designate certain land as Rural Resource Areas. Within these areas, uses such as agriculture, forestry, and recreation are encouraged, while the development of housing or commercial/industrial uses is directed away from these areas. For land within Rural Resource Areas, public infrastructure is not required to be expanded to support new development. With the cost burden of infrastructure shifted to the land developer, new development is incentivized to other areas, namely Designated Growth Areas (see A-2), where public infrastructure is accommodated by the municipality.

Why relevant to Elizabeth Township?

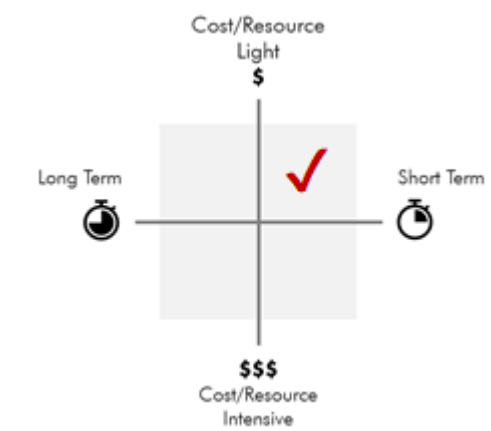
Much of the Township is made up of open space containing rural resources valuable to community character. While certain protections for these lands do exist, there is no comprehensive designation aimed at ensuring these rural resources continue to thrive in the long term. Refer to a conceptual map illustrating the potential locations of Rural Resource Areas at the end of the listed actions.

Recommended Actions to Consider:

- Expand upon background research and future land use discussions from the Comprehensive Plan process.
- Consider the following factors when drafting the boundaries of Rural Resource Areas: the locations of sensitive and/or unique natural features, future population growth, buildable terrain, and transportation routes/capacity both existing and planned.
- Aim to create large and contiguous areas when feasible.
- Incorporated the final Rural Resource Areas within the Township's Official map and adopt an amended Township Official Map.

External Partnerships:

Not Required



A-2. Delineate Designated Growth Areas to target development where public infrastructure exists or is planned.

What are Designated Growth Areas?

Enabled by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), municipalities may establish Designated Growth Areas as locations where development is directed and accommodated. Within the boundaries of such growth areas, public infrastructure is planned and provided by the municipality. By targeting growth to Designated Growth Areas, development and networks of transportation and public infrastructure become more efficient and cost-effective.

Why relevant to Elizabeth Township?

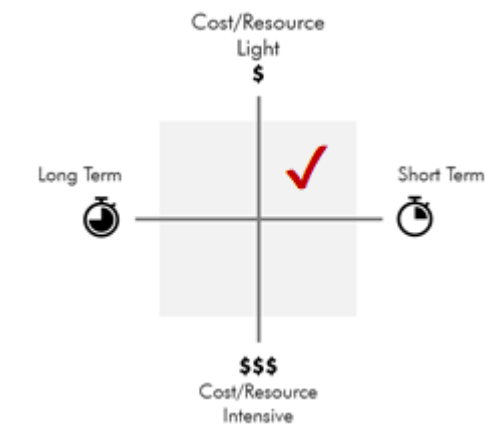
The Designated Growth Areas work in compliment with the Rural Resources Areas by accommodating growth so that Rural Resource Areas can remain as conserved open space or lightly developed. Also, the Township contains historically developed areas that have space for infill development, a practice encouraged within Designated Growth Areas. Refer to a conceptual map illustrating the potential locations of Designated Growth Areas at the end of the listed actions.

Recommended Actions to Consider:

- Expand upon background research and future land use discussions from the Comprehensive Plan process.
- Consider the following factors when drafting the boundaries of Designated Growth Areas: existing locations of development, the extent of public water/sewer systems, future population growth, buildable terrain, and transportation routes/capacity both existing and planned.
- Aim to create large and contiguous areas when feasible.
- Incorporate the final Designated Growth Areas within the Township's Official map and adopt an amended Township Official Map.

External Partnerships:

Not Required



A-3. Evaluate and assess changes to the Zoning Ordinance; namely land uses, lot dimensions, and densities, to align with the locations and purposes of the Rural Resource Areas and Designated Growth Areas and amend the Zoning Ordinance accordingly.

Why important?

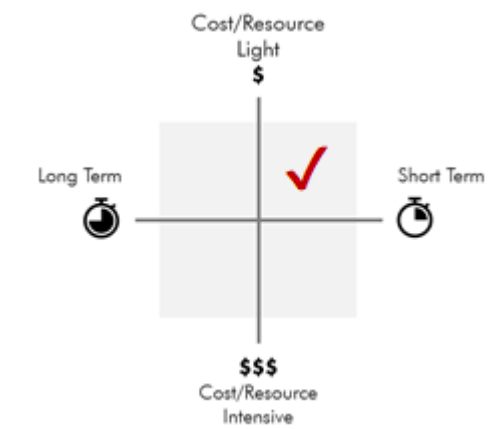
The effectiveness of Rural Resource Areas and Designated Growth Areas is dependent upon Zoning Ordinance provisions which support the purposes of these geographical designations. In general, land within the Designated Growth Areas should be assigned zoning provisions that allow for slightly higher densities, smaller lot dimensions, and a wider variety of permitted uses. Limited development may still be permitted within Rural Resource Areas; however, zoning provisions should limit densities and maintain larger lot sizes. Together, these actions will help direct and incentivize development to the appropriate areas.

Recommended Actions to Consider:

- Expand upon background research and future land use discussions from the Comprehensive Plan process.
- Ensure that changes to the Zoning Ordinance are consistent with the locations and purposes of the Rural Resource Areas and Designated Growth Areas.
- Consider changes to the locations and boundaries of Zoning Districts, as appropriate, to align with the geographical boundaries of the Rural Resource Areas and Designated Growth Areas.
- Amend the Zoning Ordinance accordingly.

External Partnerships:

Not Required



A-4. Form partnerships with key stakeholders to implement regional open space and trail planning efforts, in particular enhancements and connections among park & recreation assets.

What are examples of such projects?

One example is a potential trail connection for pedestrians and bicyclists between Round Hill County Park and the Great Allegheny Passage. Both are significant recreational assets with regional impact and such a connection may encourage greater use of these spaces. There is also potential in connecting the GAP trail to Township owned-property at Chapel Dr, which may be the site of a future recreation center. Another example is supporting land trusts in their efforts to conserve land that may contain valuable natural features and/or potential for public recreation. The Township's support and coordination efforts will help to ensure that trail and open space projects fit within the local context and are well used and enjoyed by local residents.

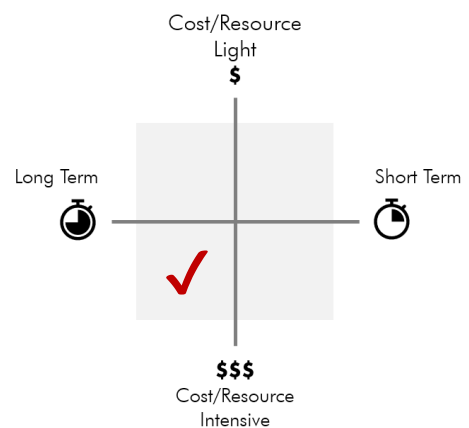
Recommended Actions to Consider:

- Build upon relationships with key partners developed during the Comprehensive Plan process.
- Remain informed and up to date on regional open space planning efforts.
- Support partners through various tasks, such as supplying local property information, seeking project funding from outside sources, and engaging local constituents regarding specific projects.

External Partnerships:

Required.

Potential partners may include Allegheny County Parks, Great Allegheny Passage Conservancy, Mon Yough Trail Council, Pennsylvania Environmental Council, Allegheny Land Trust, Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission.



A-5. Promote trail/pathway connections that link open spaces to residential neighborhoods, commercial development, and/or civic amenities by considering provisions within the Subdivision & Land Development and Zoning Ordinances that allow or require such connections.

Why relevant?

Residents love to walk around their specific neighborhood or subdivision plan, but most do not feel comfortable traveling by foot to a nearby park or business. At certain points, residential streets run close to nearby open spaces yet there is no safe route or pathway to connect them. Development code provisions that allow or require such connections would ensure that future developments (residential and commercial) are designed to contain connections to open spaces.

What is an example?

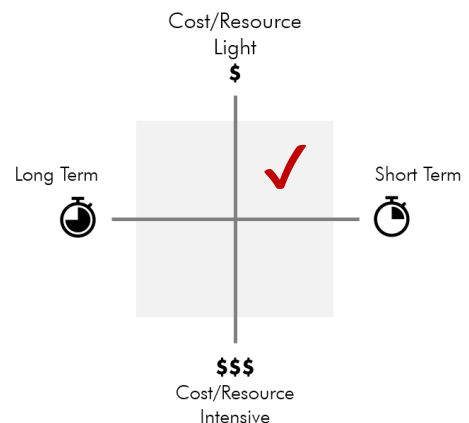
The Chapel Dr municipal property borders many residential streets and cul-de-sacs, which could benefit from pedestrian pathway connections.

Recommended Actions to Consider:

- Investigate policy practices of other municipalities that have successfully implemented trail/pathway connections.
- Determine the specific code provisions that make sense for the Township.

External Partnerships:

Not Required



A-6. Partner with key stakeholders to promote the clean-up and natural restoration of land impacted by industrial and/or environmental legacies, such as acid mine drainage, mine blow-outs, land subsistence, erosion, and other industrial or natural processes.

Why relevant?

Former industrial uses have led to a variety of environmental impacts that both negatively affect the health of natural ecosystems as well as the visual appeal of certain areas. It is clear from the public engagement process that people desire to see these sites cleaned up and restored to their natural state. By partnering with key stakeholders, the Township will be better positioned to acquire the funding and support needed to clean up such sites and realize new opportunities for the land.

What is an example?

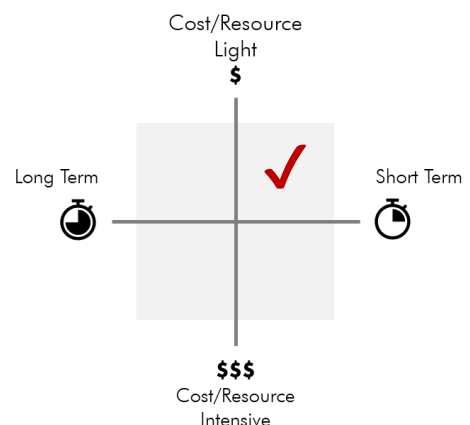
Land along Douglass Run in the Southeastern portion of the Township contains impacts from mining practices, which have led to acid mine drainage and run-off from waste deposits. In addition to clean-up efforts, this land has the potential to be conserved for public recreational purposes, as it lies directly between Round Hill Park and the GAP trail.

Recommended Actions to Consider:

- Build upon discussions and relationships sparked during the Comprehensive Plan process by continuing to network with various partners.
- Support partners through various tasks, such as supplying local property information, seeking project funding from outside sources, and informing and gathering feedback from local constituents regarding specific projects.
- Evaluate the feasibility of implementing *transfer of development rights* and/or community benefits payment strategies to incentivize the clean-up and restoration of land impacted by environmental/ industrial legacies.

External Partnerships:

Required – Allegheny County Parks, Allegheny Land Trust, PA DEP, Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC), EPA



B LOOK TO THE RIVER

The Youghiogheny River and Great Allegheny Passage trail wind along 12 miles of Elizabeth Township's eastern border. Whether walking, biking, or kayaking, each year thousands of locals and visitors enjoy the water together. The Township seeks to celebrate, promote, and support these valued assets by encouraging investment and development naturally stemming from the trail and river.

Objective:

- Encourage recreational or tourism-related development/redevelopment opportunities in areas adjacent to the Great Allegheny Passage trail and Youghiogheny River.



B-1. Identify strategic areas to implement connectivity projects that focus on pedestrian/bicycle safety at trailheads and crossing, as well as wayfinding signage that promotes connections among the river, trail, and adjacent neighborhoods.

Why relevant?

The river corridor houses an active mix of pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles. At certain points, trail crossings are poorly visible or unmarked and may cause safety issues. In addition, there are few pedestrian sidewalks or pathways that connect from the trail to other points of interest, such as nearby businesses, open spaces, or river access. These connections could be further highlighted through wayfinding signage to encourage trail users to explore more of the Township. Balancing the needs of all travel modes is key for making the river corridor a safe and enjoyable place for everyone.

What are some examples of project locations?

- **Sutersville Bridge** - Trail crossing at the Sutersville Bridge and pedestrian/bike connections to nearby businesses
- **Boston Trail Access** - Pedestrian/bike connections from trail to riverfront and nearby businesses.

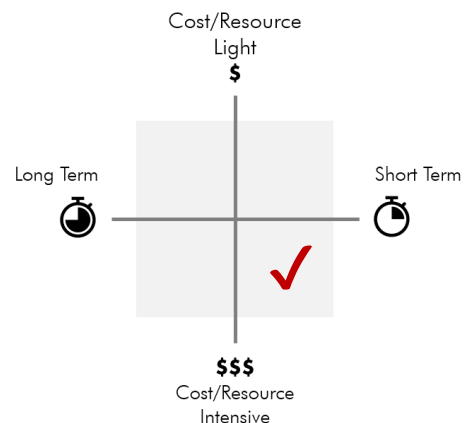
Recommended Actions to Consider:

- Identify key areas in need of improvements in conjunction with key partners and engagement of the public.
- Seek grant funding in conjunction with key partners.
- Implement projects in collaboration with partners.

External Partnerships:

Recommended

Potential partners may include Great Allegheny Passage Conservancy, Mon Yough Trail Council, PennDOT, Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission.



B-2. Establish a Mixed-Use Zoning District tailored for land located along the Youghiogheny River corridor and amend the Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map accordingly.

Why Relevant?

The Yough River and GAP trail's recreational attractions make this area unique from other parts of the Township. As a result, market demand for greater housing and commercial development opportunities have arisen within the area. In certain areas, land uses do not align with zoning, creating a prevalence of non-conforming uses (i.e. housing within commercial districts and businesses within residential districts). This is largely the result of historical land use patterns that display a mix of both residential and commercial/industrial uses in close proximity. These historic patterns along with the highly active and public nature of the trail and river make a case for mixed-use zoning in certain locations where appropriate.

What is it?

Two potential options include a new distinct Zoning District with its own permitted land uses and lot dimensions or an Overlay zone that offers expanded land uses and modified lot dimensions to the base Zoning Districts, which remain geographically unchanged.

Where is it?

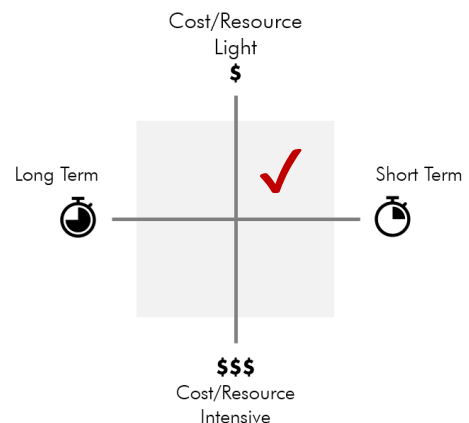
A new distinct Zoning District would likely be located at a few key hubs along the corridor, such as where trail access points and an existing mix of land uses already exists. An overlay would likely cover all land located along the riverfront corridor.

Recommended Actions to Consider:

- Build upon the background research conducted during the Comprehensive Plan process by completing an audit of the existing Zoning Districts along the river.
- Determine the best zoning mechanism (distinct district vs. overlay) by engaging local residents, businesses, and property owners.
- Delineate boundaries for new zoning based on a variety of factors, such as topography, roadway access, public infrastructure capacity, and existing land use patterns.
- Amend the Zoning Ordinance text and map in conjunction with the provisions developed by B-3.

External Partnerships:

Not required.



B-3. Evaluate and assess an expanded set of permissible land uses within the Mixed-Use Zoning District established by B-2 to provide opportunity for infill housing and neighborhood-scale commercial tailored towards recreation or tourism-related businesses; amend the Zoning Ordinance accordingly.

Why relevant?

Once the boundaries of Mixed-Use Zoning District/Overlay are established, this action step focuses on determining which land uses and dimensional standards are appropriate.

What are examples of expanded uses?

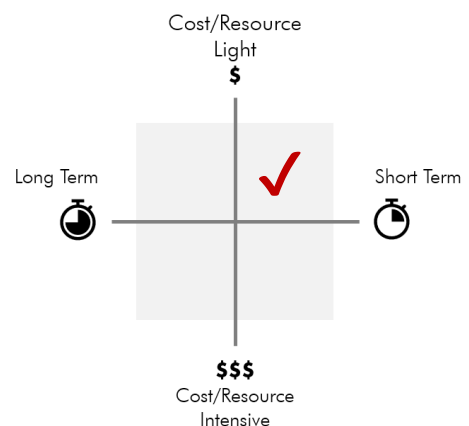
The Township will evaluate and assess uses appropriate for the context of the river corridor. These may include but are not limited to the following: bed & breakfast, eating & drinking establishment, small-scale retail, tourism-related uses, artisanal workshops/storefronts, live-work, housing (duplex, triplex, quadplex, townhome).

Recommended Actions to Consider:

- Engage the public and key stakeholders to determine the appropriate list of expanded land uses and adjustments to lot dimensions in alignment with the goals and objectives of this plan.
- Craft clear and consistent land use definitions and provisions, with assistance from the Township solicitor, to ensure desired outcomes and avoid legal challenges.
- Amend the Zoning Ordinance in conjunction with B-2.

External Partnerships:

Not required.



B-4. Explore the opportunity of conducting a “Blueways” Plan aimed at establishing a comprehensive vision for the entire river-trail corridor.

What are Blueways?

Blueways typically refer to a system of water bodies (such as rivers/creeks/lakes) with a particular focus on enhancing recreational opportunities and public water access. Blueways plans explore possibilities for how waterways and adjacent land can be better used and capitalized for a variety of public activities.

Why relevant?

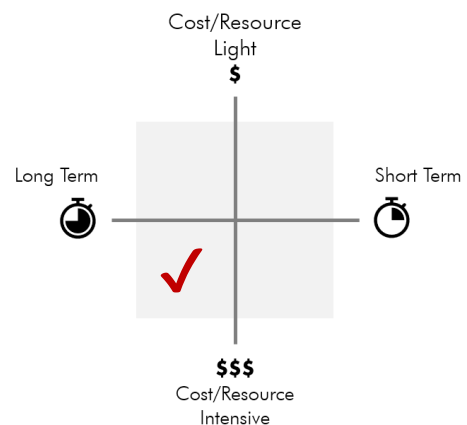
The Youghiogheny River and GAP trail are prized Township assets that offer excellent recreational and leisure opportunities for residents and visitors. A system-wide plan for this corridor would help to build upon the existing assets by uncovering additional opportunities, related to recreation, tourism, and economic development. One key topic of the plan would likely be increased public access to the river. Despite containing 12 miles of Riverfront, there are only 2 formal boat launches and limited areas for the public to enjoy the waterfront. A Blueways plan will help lay the groundwork for future investment and development opportunities throughout the corridor.

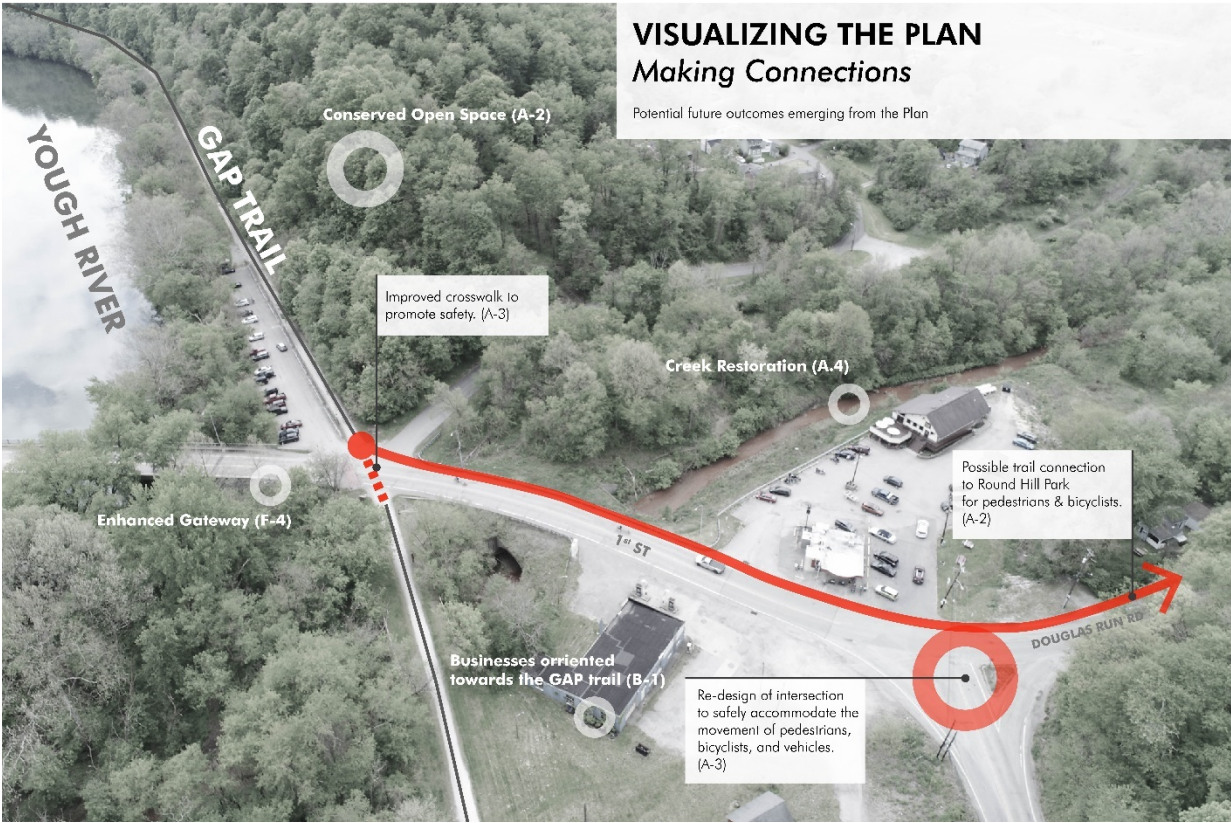
Recommended Actions to Consider:

- Pursue and obtain grant funding to support the planning process. PA DCNR may be a potential funding source through their Rivers Conservation program.
- Conduct a study with the assistance of a planning consultant.
- Work toward project implementation based on the key action steps recommended by the plan.

External Partnerships:

Required. PA DCNR, PEC, planning consultant





C **ENHANCE CIVIC AMENITIES**

The heart of Elizabeth Township is its warm and friendly people. For Boston to Buena Vista, Mt Vernon to Blaine Hill, and everywhere in between, each residential neighborhood boasts a tightly knit community of 'neighborly' neighbors. It's also the great schools, faith communities, and athletic programs that provide even more connection among residents. As the Township continues to attract new young families and accommodate older adult residents, there is always more opportunity for community gathering spaces where everyone feels welcome.

Objective:

- Enhance the Township's sense of community by broadening social activities and developing spaces and venues that accommodate community gatherings.



C-1. Complete a Comprehensive Recreation, Parks, and Open Space Master Plan aimed at enhancing and/or establishing facilities, programming, and fiscal/administrative capacity.

What is it?

A Comprehensive Recreation, Parks, and Open Space Master Plan looks at the current conditions of all municipal parks Township-wide and forms a unified vision and action plan for implementing improvements and new amenities based on the needs and desires of the public. This is the chance for the community to identify and prioritize key improvements to park facilities as well as the addition of new amenities. The plan also outlines the methods, resources, organizational capacity, capital investments, and potential revenue channels needed to ensure successful implementation.

Why relevant to Elizabeth Township?

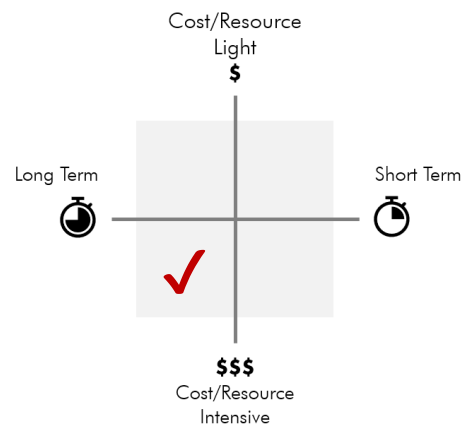
It has been a long time since the Township has looked at parks & recreation from an overall viewpoint. The needs, desires, and preferences of local residents have likely changed significantly since the establishment of current park facilities. This is a great opportunity for the community to ensure that Township parks are adequately serving the public. A comprehensive parks master plan will help attract funding from external sources by clearly communicating how individual projects fit within a unified community-wide strategy.

Recommended Actions to Consider:

- Seek grant funding for the planning process from the PA DCNR.
- Expand upon the background research conducted through the Comprehensive Plan process by completing a system-wide inventory of parks and recreation facilities.
- Assess and evaluate existing athletic fields/facilities by considering the size/scale of facilities for various age groups and programming types.
- Engage the public to determine needs and desires for improvements and new facilities.
- Craft an overall vision and goals based on discussions with locals.
- Develop a detailed action plan addressing the methods, resources, organizational capacity, capital investments, and potential revenue channels needed to ensure successful implementation.

External Partnerships:

Recommended – PA DCNR; Planning Consultant



C-2. Prepare a feasibility study for a central community space that evaluates the possibilities of renovating the existing community center and/or developing a new indoor and/or outdoor facility oriented around recreation and social activities.

Why relevant?

Through discussions with community members, it is clear that residents are looking for spaces to gather as a community, with a focus on recreational and/or social activities that attract and engage people of all ages and interests. While the existing community center serves an important purpose and is well used, mostly for hosting private gatherings, there is a desire for additional uses, amenities, and programming from the public.

What could this space contain?

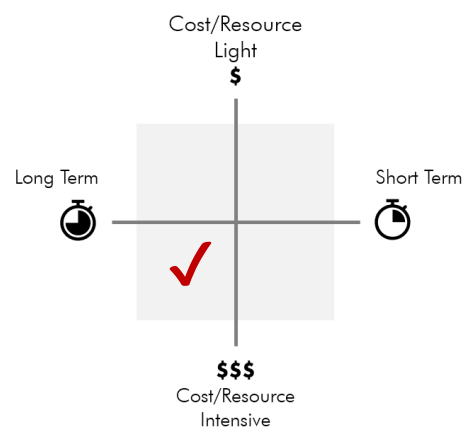
Potential options may include an indoor fitness center, indoor swimming pool, fitness programming, community events, and meeting spaces.

Recommended Actions to Consider:

- Gather input to determine the needs and desires of the public.
- Identify a set of potential options based on public input.
- Evaluate and assess each option in terms of costs, site selection, and impact of services.
- Explore financing options as well as revenue models.

External Partnerships:

Recommended – Planning Consultant



D BROADEN HOUSING CHOICES

It's the mix of young and old, family and extended family that draws people to call Elizabeth Township home for years and even decades. To attract and maintain both new and existing residents, it is important to ensure that housing meets the needs of everyone. This may mean downsizing for some and expanding for others. Either way, the key is providing a variety of housing options.

Objective:

- Foster the provision of diverse housing opportunities that complement and/or enhance existing neighborhood character as well as attract new residents and accommodate existing residents of all ages.



D-1. Expand housing options within Designated Growth Areas by amending the Zoning Ordinance.*Why relevant?*

Public engagement conversations have revealed a desire for greater housing options beyond single-family homes. Land zoned to accommodate housing options, other than single-family, is very limited, consisting of just 0.5 percent of the Township's land area. In addition, lot dimensions may need to be adjusted to accommodate smaller lot sizes, which may be more appealing to older residents due to less maintenance.

What type of housing?

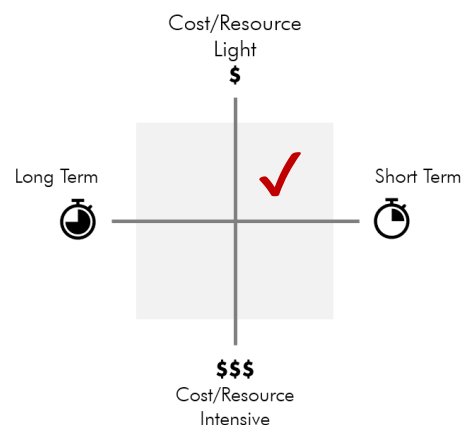
The Township will evaluate and assess uses appropriate for the context of Zoning Districts. Uses may include but are not limited to the following: patio homes, carriage houses, duplex, triplex, quadplex, townhomes, and accessory dwelling units.

Recommended Actions to Consider:

- Engage local residents and key stakeholders to determine the appropriate list of expanded land uses and adjustments to lot dimensions in alignment with the existing character of neighborhoods.
- For new uses, craft clear and consistent land use definitions and provisions, with assistance from the Township solicitor, to avoid legal disputes and ensure that the resulting development fits well with community character.
- Ensure that changes only apply within Designated Growth Areas.
- Amend the Zoning Ordinance as appropriate.

External Partnerships:

Not required.



D-2. Assess the feasibility and effectiveness of development incentives targeted to owner-occupied housing units (single-family, duplex, triplex, and/or quadplex) through practices such as tax abatements and the re-structuring of development fees and procedures; apply such incentives exclusively within Designated Growth Areas.

Why relevant?

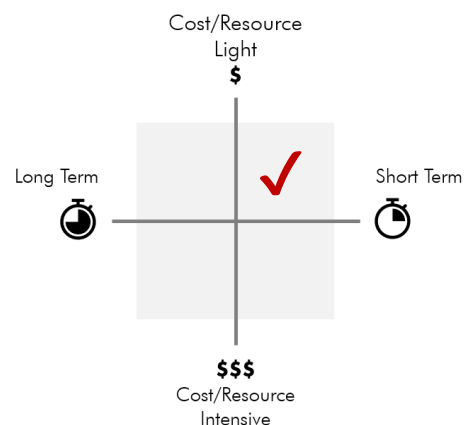
For over a decade, the Township has experienced limited growth in housing development. This may be due to many factors, including low market demand, limited infrastructure/roadway access, and limited buildable land due to hilly topography. Currently, market demand is high across the region, and the Township has addressed issues related to sewer tap capacity. Therefore, development incentives may be the key piece to close the margins and get new housing units built.

Recommended Actions to Consider:

- Build upon discussions related to tax abatements through further research and investigation.
- Determine the specifics of a tax abatement program, such as the timeframe and rate of abatement.
- Re-structure development fees and procedures and include within the Land Development User Guide (Action Step F.1) to ensure a smooth and efficient process.

External Partnerships:

Not required.



D-3. Conduct a regional housing market analysis based on the latest demographic data/trends in partnership with local real estate experts and housing developers to help identify key demographic groups and housing types that best fit with the community's goals and character.

Why relevant?

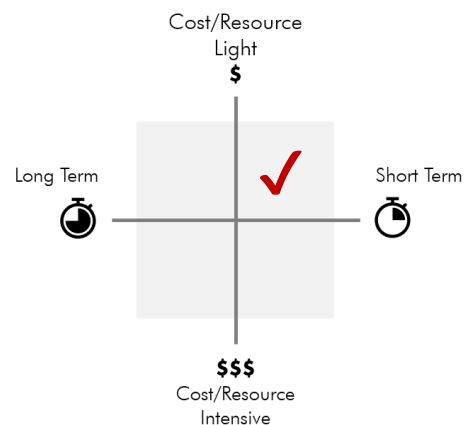
As the Township seeks to bring in new residents and appropriate housing development, it is important to ensure that housing types and price points align with the desires and needs of prospective homeowners. A key piece of the puzzle is understanding the regional housing market in conjunction with the economic, lifestyle, and demographic trends that influence new homebuyers. By conducting such an analysis, the Township can identify certain housing types/sizes/price points that meet market needs by fulfilling a niche within the region. The results and conclusions of this study may inform actions of the Township and developers regarding new residential growth.

Recommended Actions to Consider:

- Build upon discussions and background analysis completed through the Comprehensive Plan and coordinate tasks needed to complete a regional housing market analysis.
- Continue and expand engagement with real estate agents/experts and housing developers to gather insights related to the housing market and construction patterns.
- Utilize the results of the study to identify target housing types that the Township seeks to promote and share findings with local housing developers.

External Partnerships:

Recommended/required – Real estate agents/experts, housing developers, research consultant



E ACTIVATE REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY

With over two centuries of historical growth under its belt, it's no surprise that land development patterns within Elizabeth Township have shifted with the economic and lifestyle trends of the times. In some cases, areas best suited for certain land uses in the past are now best utilized for other uses today. As a result, unique redevelopment opportunities exist here and there throughout the Township, each requiring smart thinking and tailored tools designed to spark revitalization. The Township seeks to encourage "right-size" commercial, infill housing, and some light industrial uses that fit with the Township's existing rural and small-town character. The aim of commercial redevelopment/development is to enhance convenience for residents while continuing to limit out-of-scale "big-box" development.

Objectives:

- Pursue a comprehensive and coordinated approach to redevelopment by addressing industrial legacy sites, bolstering blight remediation efforts, and activating infill.
- Accommodate commercial, infill housing, and/or light industrial redevelopment/development targeted to land within the Designated Growth Area and/or identified brownfield sites.
- Encourage entrepreneurship and innovation by adapting to leading economic/employment trends.



E-1. Pursue opportunities for commercial infill or redevelopment within previously developed areas with the aid of IRR analysis.

What is IRR?

IRR stands for Infill (building on vacant land in between other active uses), Replacement (reusing a previously developed lot), and Redevelopment (rehabilitating a blighted area), each of which are tactics to rejuvenate and enhance existing commercial districts. An IRR Self Audit (developed by the Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors - PSATS) provides a framework for municipalities to investigate their zoning codes to determine if provisions are working to accommodate and promote IRR.

Why relevant?

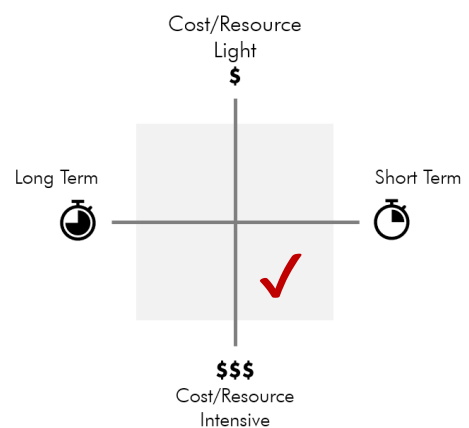
Promoting IRR represents a cost-efficient strategy by taking advantage of existing road networks and public utilities and, in turn, avoiding the development of open space (Action Step A). Such an analysis will also help to attract greater redevelopment and reinvestment opportunities within existing commercial areas.

Recommended Actions to Consider:

- Build upon background analysis completed through the Comprehensive Plan process by identifying key areas in which opportunity for IRR exists.
- Learn more about the IRR analysis process through resources from the PSATS, including the IRR Self Audit process.
- Amend the Zoning Ordinance as appropriate with provisions that accommodate and encourage IRR.

External Partnerships:

Recommended - Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors - PSATS



E-2. Investigate undeveloped lands zoned commercial and/or industrial to determine key barriers to development, such as location/visibility, limited roadway access, or inadequate public infrastructure services, and revise the boundaries of commercial and/or industrial districts on the Zoning Map as appropriate.

Why relevant to the community?

The Township contains areas zoned for commercial that have remained undeveloped for over a decade. While this may be largely due to a lack of market demand, issues related to connections to transportation, visibility, and public infrastructure services may also play a significant role.

Understanding these factors is important because residents have expressed the desire to see expanded commercial services within the Township.

What are some examples?

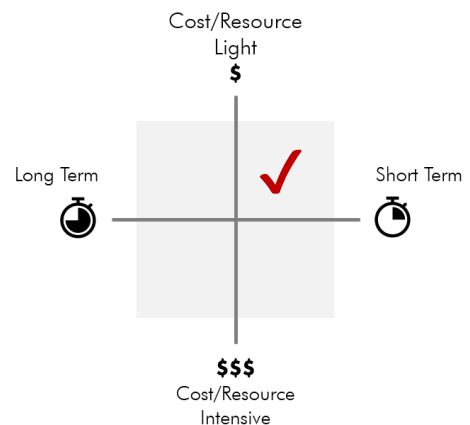
Examples include commercially zoned land along Lovedale Rd near the intersection of Broadlawn Dr as well as land along the Route 51 corridor near the PA Route 136 exit.

Recommended Actions to Consider:

- Build upon discussions related to commercial zoning through the Comprehensive Plan process by continuing to gather background information of key areas.
- Identify factors limiting development, such as issues regarding the access/capacity of roads, water/sewer, power, broadband, etc.
- Adjust zoning, as appropriate, in cases where commercial development is deemed unfeasible or inconsistent with the community's goals as expressed within the Comprehensive Plan.

External Partnerships:

Recommended – PennDOT; Utility companies



E-3. Inventory and assess industrial legacy sites to determine the extent of clean-up and restoration required to prepare the land for new development.

Why Relevant?

The Township contains many industrial legacy sites with limited information regarding the types, origins, extent, and potential hazards of specific environmental impairments.

What are examples of such sites?

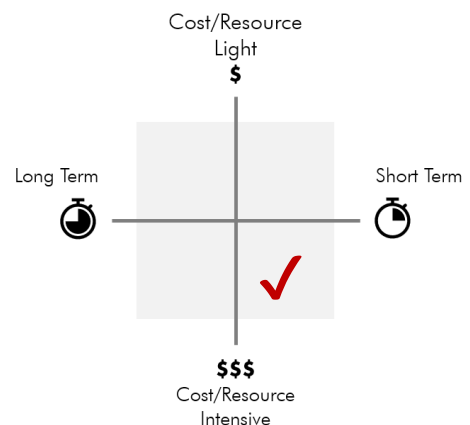
- Land to the east of Henderson Rd - hazardous waste from MIDC/Fiore Landfill
- Land near Douglass Run - acid mine drainage and waste deposits
- Land south of Smithdale along Margaret St - contaminated junkyard

Recommended Actions to Consider:

- Expand upon the research completed through the Comprehensive Plan process by continuing to identify all legacy sites.
- Gather and assess information regarding the history of the site's uses, specific types of impairments, environmental impacts, and any previous clean-up efforts.
- Formalize information into a concise and easily referenced report, which can be shared with key partners to support Action Step A-6, as well as the general public.

External Partnerships:

Recommended – PA DEP, PA DCNR, Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC), EPA,



E-4. Prioritize a set of industrial legacy sites with high market potential as a pilot project for redevelopment in conjunction with clean-up and nature conservation.

Why Relevant?

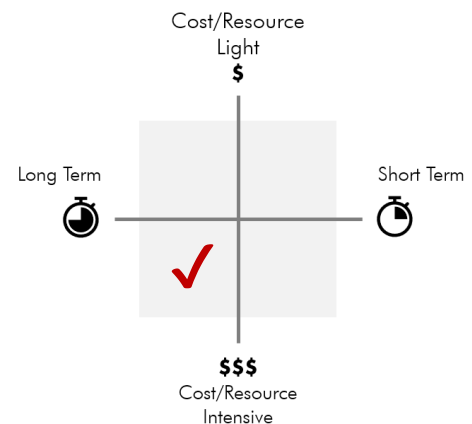
Due to the large number of legacy sites found throughout the Township, it is important to begin by focusing efforts on one or two sites. Legacy sites often remain compromised because without the threat of government-enforced clean-up, there is no economic incentive for the landowner to improve the land. A tailored project-specific redevelopment strategy is needed to identify the future economic opportunities that could exist on the land. Visioning the future economic value of a redevelopment project is likely the best catalyst for the restoration process. In alignment with Action A - Protect and Connect Open Space, any proposed redevelopment shall incorporate conservation of open space, the protection of natural features and allowances for public access and connectivity.

Recommended Actions to Consider:

- Build upon the work completed in E-3 by identifying select legacy sites prime for redevelopment and conservation. (Start with one.)
- Identify potential future land uses, whether built, natural, or recreational, based on site-specific characteristics and assets, as well as the context of surrounding land uses and transportation networks.
- Complete a market feasibility study for a number of potential land uses and select the highest and best use based on the results of the study.
- Investigate ownership transfers methods, zoning amendments, conservation strategies, required for implementation.
- Engage key partners and stakeholders to secure funding and facilitate project implementation.

External Partnerships:

Required. Land Developer/Land Trust



E-5. Explore the applicability of enhancing broadband infrastructure to support new economies such as remote business.

Why relevant?

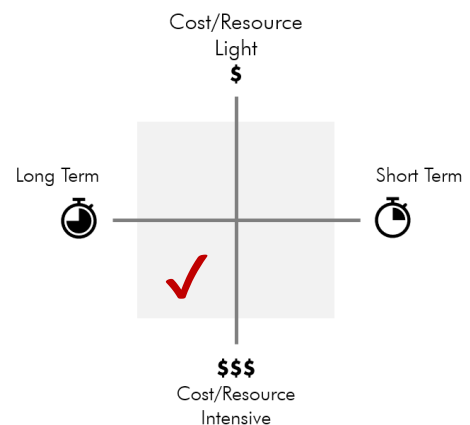
Recent trends reveal the rise of remote business. Many rural communities across the country are becoming hot spots for people embracing a work-from-home lifestyle, due to the availability of affordable housing and proximity to nature. Beyond remote employees, businesses across industries are demanding high-capacity broadband for their physical workspaces. If Elizabeth Township aims to join this trend, a key first step is to assess the condition and capacity of existing broadband infrastructure networks across the Township.

Recommended Actions to Consider:

- Inventory and evaluate the existing broadband network.
- Assess the capacity and coverage of the network.
- Identify keys areas for potential enhancements where certain land uses demand greater broadband capacity.
- Balance the positive impacts of enhancements with potential drawbacks resulting from the physical construction of infrastructure, such as roadway and property disruptions.

External Partnerships:

Required. Broadband utility companies.



E-6. Pursue a coordinated blight remediation strategy through bolstered enforcement efforts and the establishment of a redevelopment authority aimed at enhancing the Township's image and activating infill opportunity.

Why relevant?

As land development has evolved over the years, certain areas generally associated with older sections of the Township have experienced some level of property blight. Blight occurs when a property experiences significant deterioration in appearance and/or function. While the issue is spotty and not generally widespread, blight may impact the overall image of the Township and present a barrier to new development/redevelopment. The Township has already completed a blight study, which has identified roughly 150 as presenting a blight issue. This action aims to build upon this work.

What is a redevelopment authority, and what does it do?

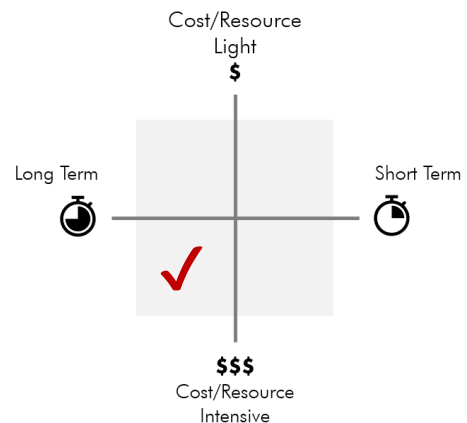
A redevelopment authority is a government entity independent of the municipality focused on preparing blighted properties for redevelopment. The authority may acquire, buy, sell, rehabilitate, and/or rent properties to assist in the process. A key portion of the authority's work is to complete background studies and assessments to determine the steps needed to improve the property, and potential future uses that best fit the neighborhood's needs/desires.

Recommended Actions to Consider:

- Identify targeted locations for redevelopment within the Township, such as gateways and other highly visible areas.
- Investigate redevelopment incentives and resources to assist property owners with compliance.
- Consider adding infill standards to the Zoning Ordinance to both promote development and ensure that infill compliments the existing character of the neighborhood.
- Consider the expansion of blight enforcement techniques and capacity.
- Explore, determine, and take action for the establishment of a redevelopment authority.

External Partnerships:

- Not Required.



VISUALIZING THE PLAN

Building Upon Assets

Potential future outcomes emerging from the Plan



F SPREAD THE WORD

With all the great things happening in Elizabeth Township, now's the time to let everyone know about it! This means better communication with residents as well as promotion to attract visitors and opportunity. Effective communication is the key to making all of the community's goals and dreams reality.

Objective:

- Foster coordinated improvements to the delivery of government services and communications with residents, stakeholders, and visitors.



F-1. Hone and streamline select municipal operations to increase efficiency and enhance the experience of constituents.

Why relevant?

It is always in the best interest of the Township to continue to better serve its constituents. Through public outreach discussions, it was revealed that the development process for new housing may be limited in terms of process and organization. As the Township aims to activate commercial opportunity (Action Step E) and broaden housing choices (Action Step D), it is important to implement more efficient and accessible practices to promote a seamless development process.

What specific areas?

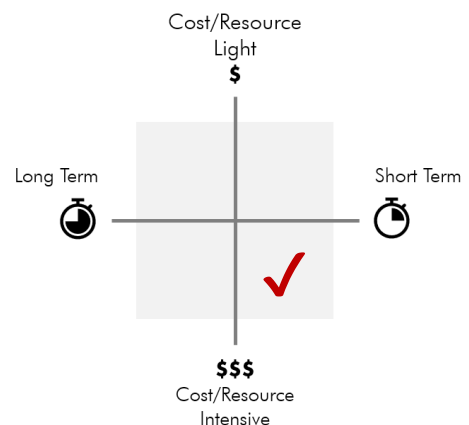
Land Development; Parks & Recreation; Public Works

Recommended Actions to Consider:

- Craft a Land Development User Guide for landowners and developers that includes clear and digestible checklists, timelines, and directions; make this guide easily accessible on the Township website.
- Explore the possibility of establishing an online service request form for reporting Public Works maintenance requests.
- Re-organize the Township's website to enhance user navigation so that information can be accessed with greater convenience.

External Partnerships:

Recommended. Website developer; communications expert



F-2. Develop consistent mechanisms for public outreach and communication that expand transparency and enhance engagement with residents, businesses, and other stakeholders.

Why relevant?

As technology evolves, individuals and households are changing the way in which they communicate and engage with their social circles and the local community. It is important for Township operations to be in tune with these evolving communication habits and preferences to best engage with its constituents.

What are tangible examples?

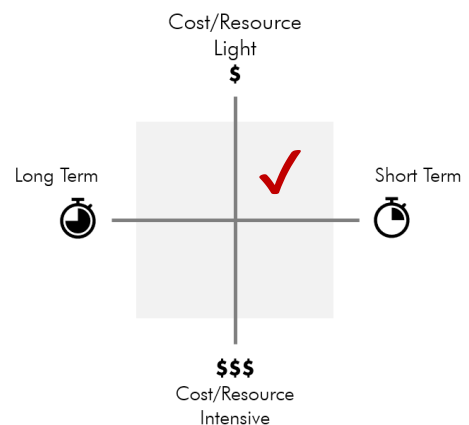
Expanded social media presence; expanded resident contact list; expanded publications regarding Township plans/decisions; greater opportunities for public input and feedback.

Recommended Actions for Consideration:

- Expand upon communication mechanisms developed and used through the Comprehensive Plan process.
- Engage the public to discover preferred methods of communication.
- Plan and craft a regular schedule for the release of news and information.
- Develop a community calendar posting information for local events.
- Expand opportunities for public comments/feedback regarding municipal operations.

External Partnerships:

Not required.



F-3. Communicate the Township's story by building a brand that celebrates the unique identity of the Township, promotes the community's assets, and showcases the Township's historically established 'small-town villages.'

Why relevant?

While Elizabeth Township boasts many great qualities (i.e. abundant open space/recreation, quality schools, affordable and safe neighborhoods, etc.), many on the outside do not have a clear image of what Elizabeth Township is all about. A clear and memorable brand has the potential to better promote the Township to the outside world in hopes of retaining and attracting residents, businesses/employers, and funding opportunities.

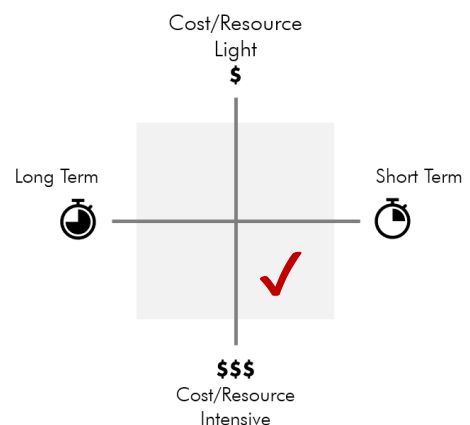
Recommended Actions for Consideration:

- Based on the themes arisen from public engagement discussions, develop a clear and memorable brand that best represents the identity and characteristics of the community.
- Pursue a public-relations campaign highlighting this newly established brand directed to both internal residents as well as regional stakeholders.
- Develop branding and signage that showcase the Township's historically established villages by informing residents and visitors of their history and current assets.

External Partnerships:

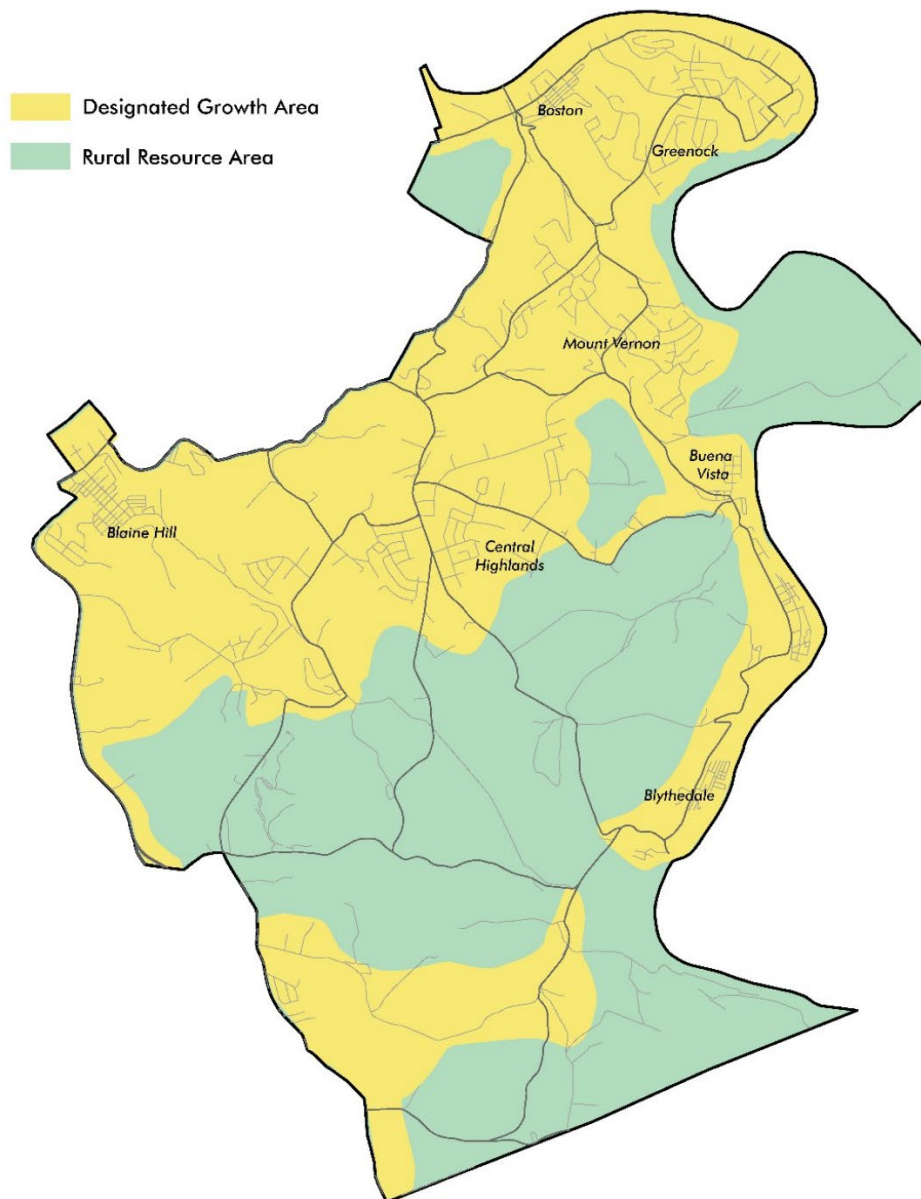
Recommended.

Public Relations/Communications/Marketing expert



Conceptual Framework for Land Use Planning

The map below illustrates the proposed general locations of Designated Growth Areas and Rural Resource Areas, as described by Actions A-1 & A-2. Overall, the designated growth areas generally align with the existing extent of public utility infrastructure, and the rural resource areas contain primarily natural and open space. The exact boundaries shall be further specified in more detail as planning efforts continue. **Note:** These designations are separate from Zoning and do not replace standards found within the base Zoning Districts.



Building upon findings and feedback throughout the comprehensive planning process, the Township has the opportunity to further explore the extents of various rural resource and designated growth areas as well as to determine potential gradation within each designation related to factors of land use, densities, infrastructure capacity, and natural resource management.

Implementation

To kickstart work on the action plan, a dynamic combination of both people-power and monetary resources is required. Human resources will take the form of time and energy regarding decision making, internal coordination of tasks, as well as the formation of key external partnerships. All of these efforts are fueled by focused and diligent leadership from both municipal officials and key community stakeholders and advocates.

Monetary resources will come from a combination of both internal revenue (i.e. taxes) as well as external funding (i.e. government and non-profit grants/loans). In most cases, action steps will likely require a mix of funding sources. To best compete for and acquire external funding, the Township seeks to expand its capacities and pursuits from a holistic perspective. This may include contracting grant writing and other similar services.

As for internal tax revenues, Township leadership plans to explore the possibilities of incrementally expanding revenue capacity as appropriate. To help conceptualize what this might look like for individual households, please consider the following scenario.

For example, if households on average offered just \$6 a week to support community efforts, over \$3 Million could be raised in just 2 years. This is more than half the cost to build a community recreation center, which could cost roughly \$5 million (estimated from peer municipality examples).



APPENDIX - FALL 2021

Appendix

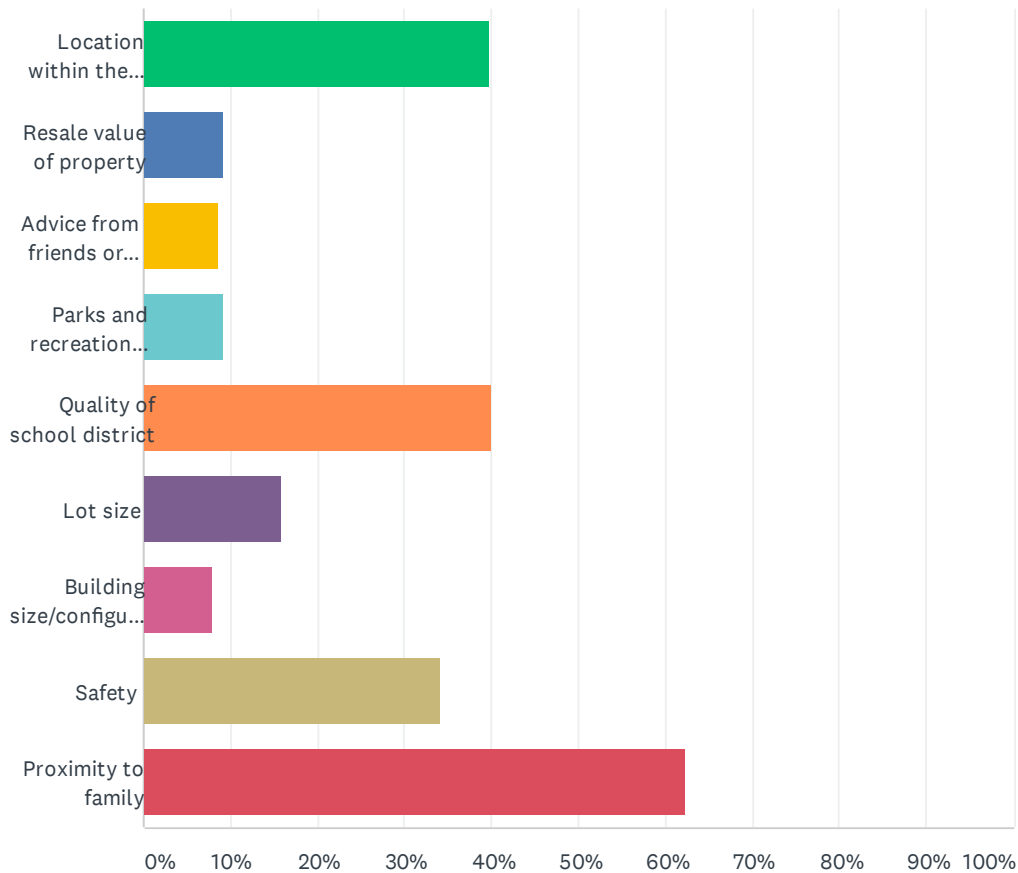
A. Public Outreach Questionnaire Results (Rounds 1 & 2) - pg. 1

B. Background Information/Analysis from 2020 and 2021 project
planning discussions - pg. 20

Note: The appendix contains several items that served as initial talking points early in the planning process as part of steering committee discussions. The contents of the appendix should not be construed as take-aways or recommendations of the main plan document.

Q1 Why did you choose Elizabeth Township as your place of residence or business? Select up to 3 of your most important reasons.

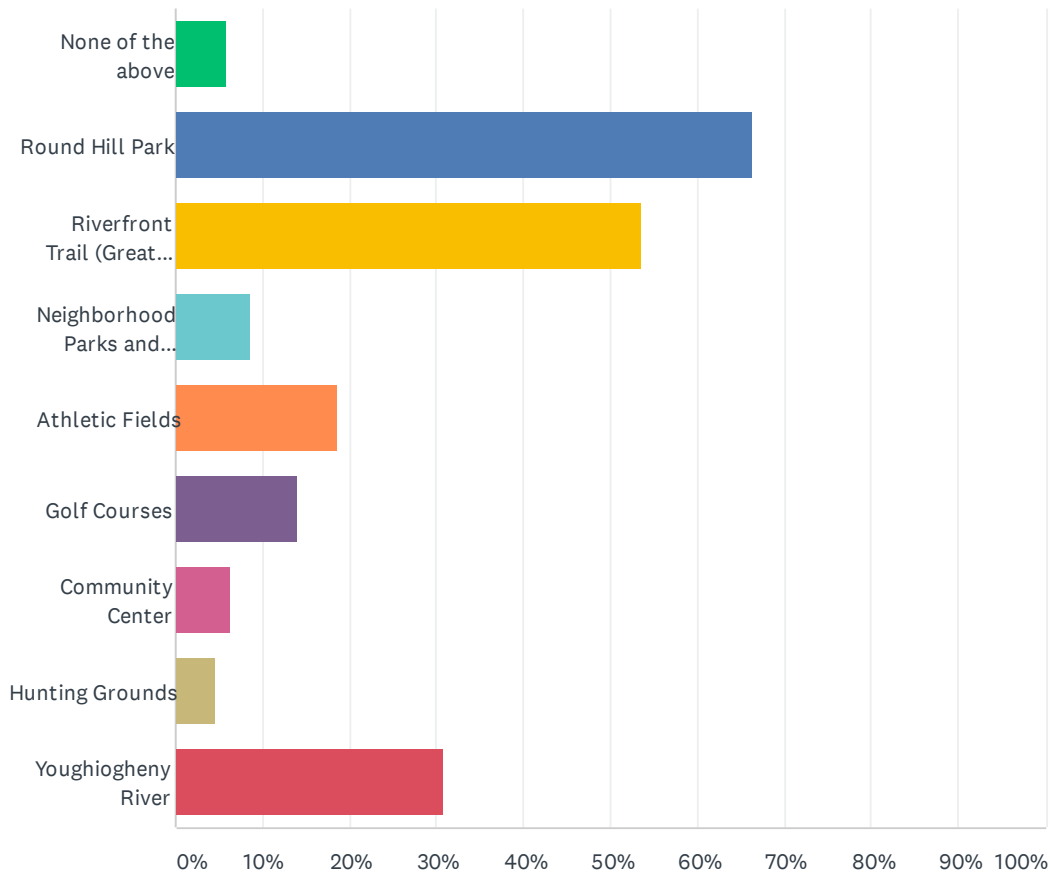
Answered: 392 Skipped: 20



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Location within the region (i.e. proximity to employment)	39.80%	156
Resale value of property	9.18%	36
Advice from friends or family	8.67%	34
Parks and recreation amenities	9.18%	36
Quality of school district	40.05%	157
Lot size	15.82%	62
Building size/configuration/style	7.91%	31
Safety	34.18%	134
Proximity to family	62.24%	244
Total Respondents: 392		

Q2 Of the Township's parks and recreation amenities, which do you visit most frequently? Select up to 3.

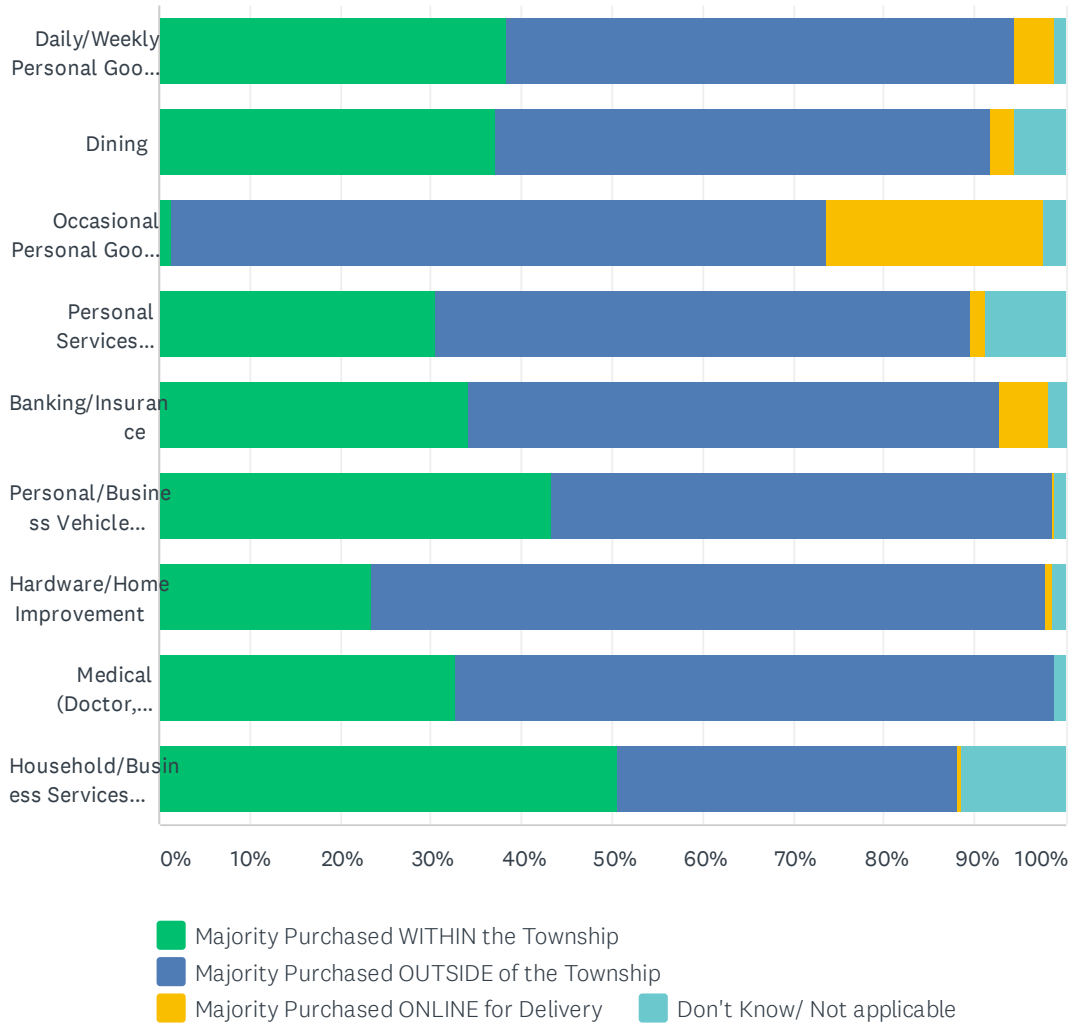
Answered: 412 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None of the above	5.83%	24
Round Hill Park	66.26%	273
Riverfront Trail (Great Allegheny Passage)	53.64%	221
Neighborhood Parks and Playgrounds	8.50%	35
Athletic Fields	18.69%	77
Golf Courses	14.08%	58
Community Center	6.31%	26
Hunting Grounds	4.61%	19
Youghiogheny River	30.83%	127
Total Respondents: 412		

Q3 Elizabeth Township offers the following commercial services. Where do you purchases your basic goods and services?

Answered: 412 Skipped: 0

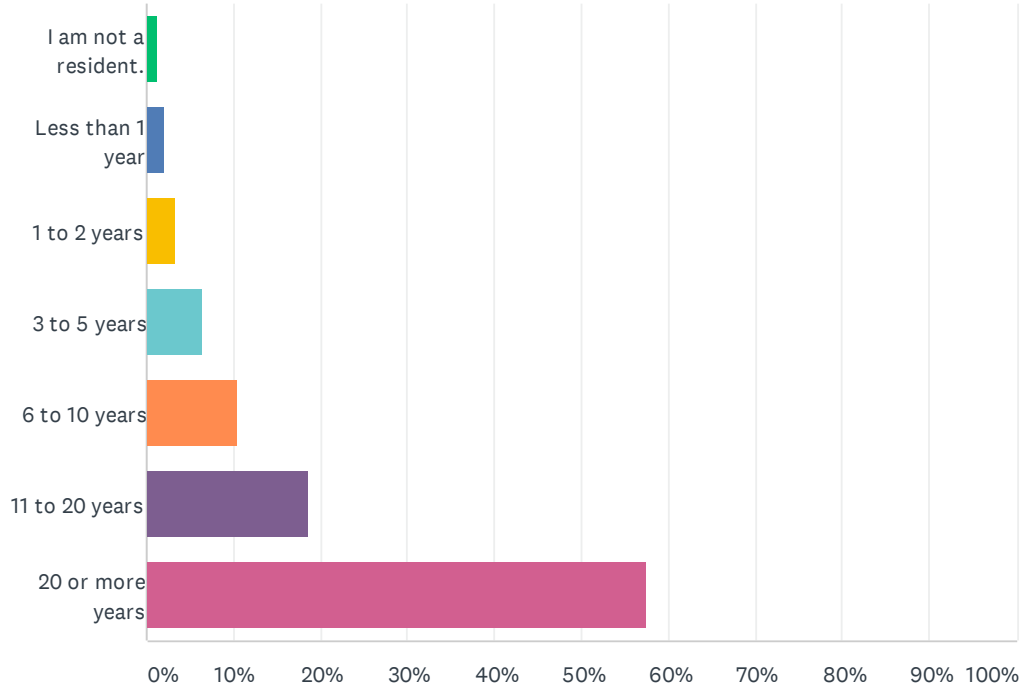


Initial Questionnaire (Round 1)

	MAJORITY PURCHASED WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP	MAJORITY PURCHASED OUTSIDE OF THE TOWNSHIP	MAJORITY PURCHASED ONLINE FOR DELIVERY	DON'T KNOW/ NOT APPLICABLE	TOTAL
Daily/Weekly Personal Goods (Groceries, Pharmacy, etc.)	38.44% 158	55.96% 230	4.38% 18	1.22% 5	411
Dining	37.14% 143	54.55% 210	2.60% 10	5.71% 22	385
Occasional Personal Goods (Clothing, Shoes, Jewelry, etc.)	1.46% 6	72.20% 296	23.90% 98	2.44% 10	410
Personal Services (Haircare, Beauty, Massage, Gym/Fitness, etc.)	30.49% 125	59.02% 242	1.71% 7	8.78% 36	410
Banking/Insurance	34.17% 136	58.54% 233	5.53% 22	1.76% 7	398
Personal/Business Vehicle Services (Auto Parts, Repair, Service, Gas, etc.)	43.41% 178	55.12% 226	0.24% 1	1.22% 5	410
Hardware/Home Improvement	23.47% 96	74.33% 304	0.73% 3	1.47% 6	409
Medical (Doctor, Dentist, etc.)	32.68% 134	66.10% 271	0.00% 0	1.22% 5	410
Household/Business Services (Plumbing, Heating & Cooling, Electric, Contracting, etc.)	50.61% 208	37.47% 154	0.49% 2	11.44% 47	411

Q4 How many years have you lived in Elizabeth Township?

Answered: 412 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I am not a resident.	1.21%	5
Less than 1 year	2.18%	9
1 to 2 years	3.40%	14
3 to 5 years	6.55%	27
6 to 10 years	10.44%	43
11 to 20 years	18.69%	77
20 or more years	57.52%	237
TOTAL		412

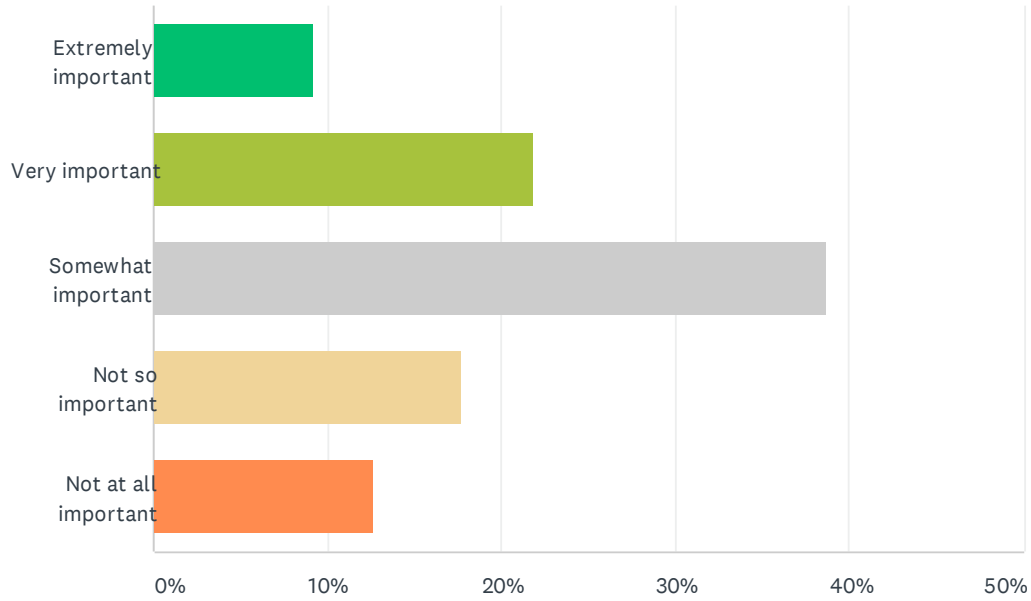
Q5 (Optional) Feel free to provide your email to be informed of future questionnaires, as well as opportunities to share your thoughts at a public meeting. Your email address will NOT be shared and you will not receive any promotional emails outside of updates specific to the Comprehensive Plan.

Answered: 194 Skipped: 218

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Name	0.00%	0
Company	0.00%	0
Address	0.00%	0
Address 2	0.00%	0
City/Town	0.00%	0
State/Province	0.00%	0
ZIP/Postal Code	0.00%	0
Country	0.00%	0
Email Address	100.00%	194
Phone Number	0.00%	0

Q1 Encourage and accommodate new construction of housing units

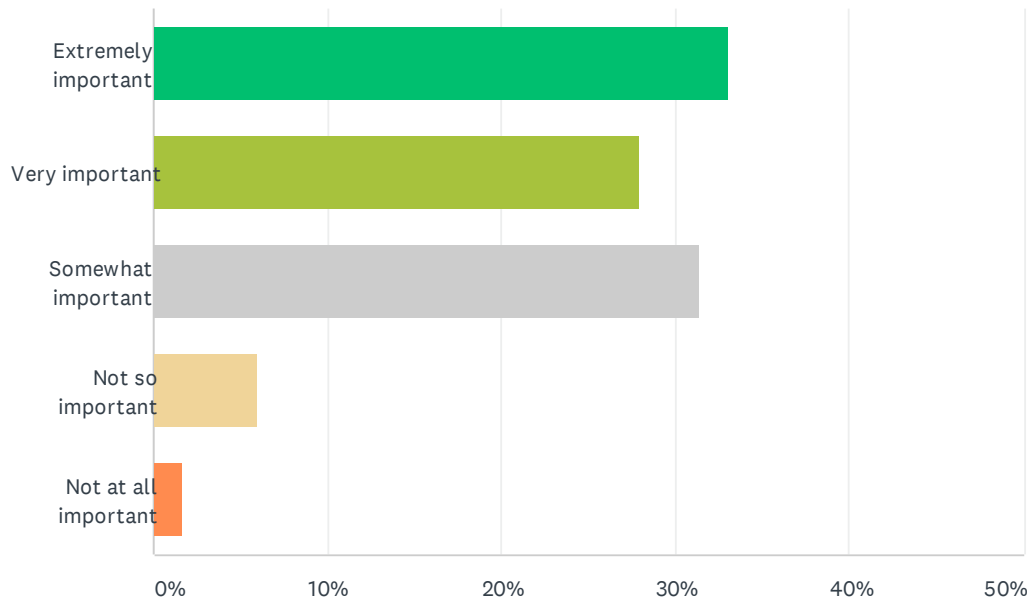
Answered: 119 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely important	9.24%	11
Very important	21.85%	26
Somewhat important	38.66%	46
Not so important	17.65%	21
Not at all important	12.61%	15
TOTAL		119

Q2 Pursue the development of an indoor and/or outdoor community space oriented around recreation and social activities

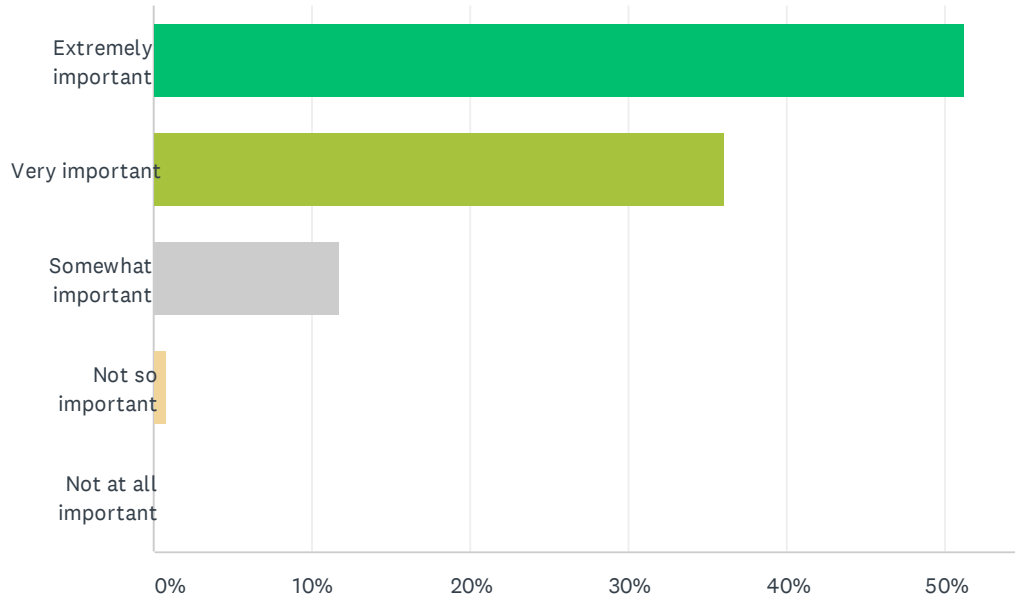
Answered: 118 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely important	33.05%	39
Very important	27.97%	33
Somewhat important	31.36%	37
Not so important	5.93%	7
Not at all important	1.69%	2
TOTAL		118

Q3 Focus and organize efforts to repair and maintain local roads and bridges

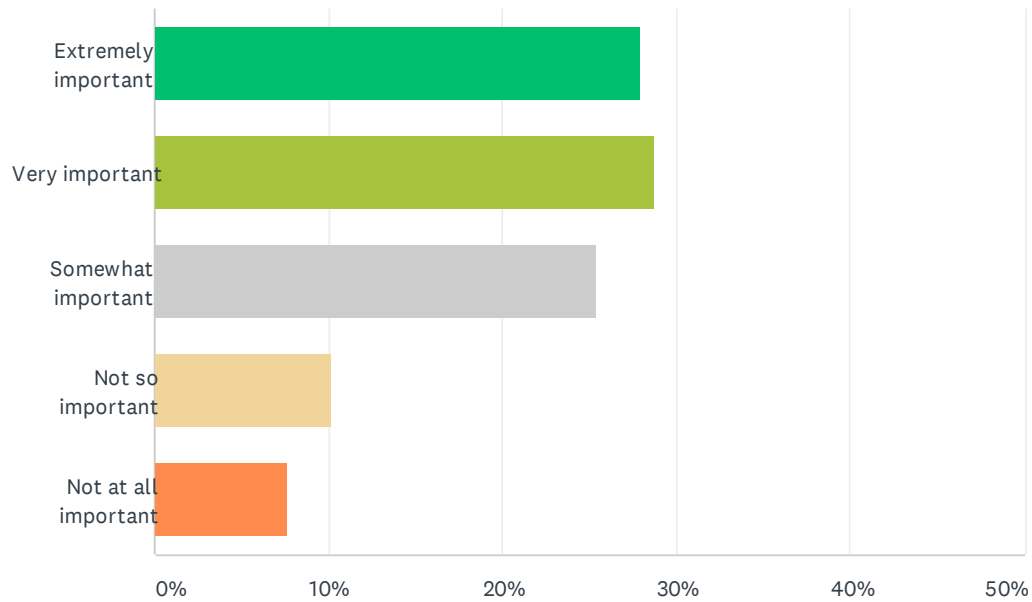
Answered: 119 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely important	51.26%	61
Very important	36.13%	43
Somewhat important	11.76%	14
Not so important	0.84%	1
Not at all important	0.00%	0
TOTAL		119

Q4 Encourage and accommodate additional commercial development/redevelopment

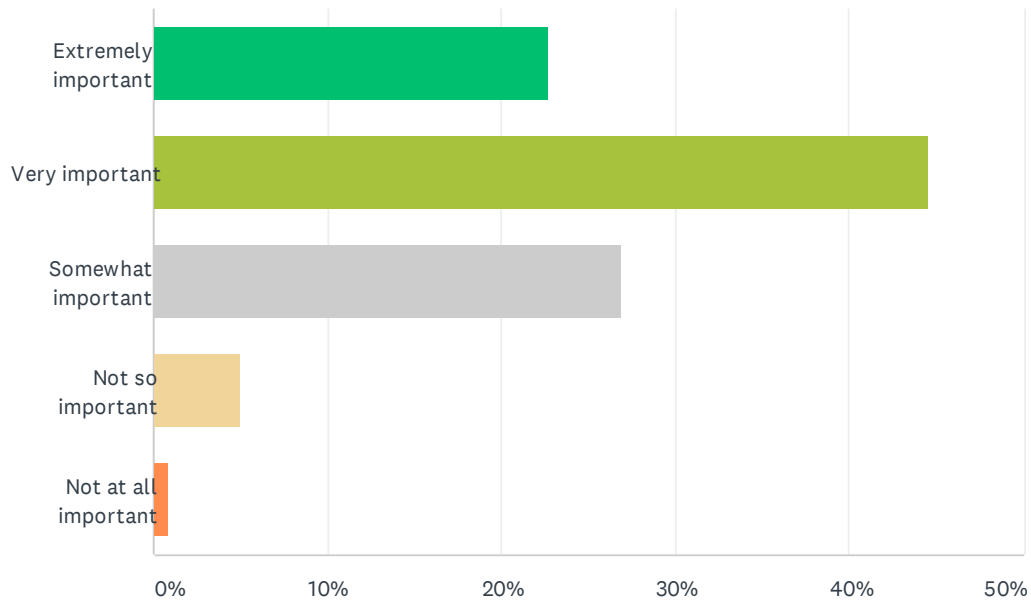
Answered: 118 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely important	27.97%	33
Very important	28.81%	34
Somewhat important	25.42%	30
Not so important	10.17%	12
Not at all important	7.63%	9
TOTAL		118

Q5 Attract investment and development related to the GAP trail and Youghiogheny River recreation activities

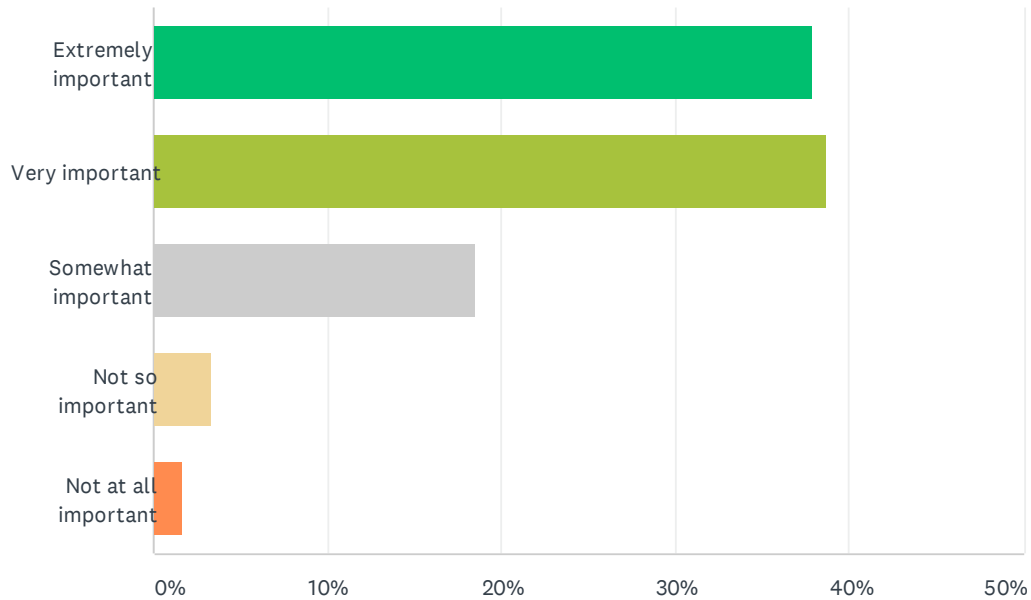
Answered: 119 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely important	22.69%	27
Very important	44.54%	53
Somewhat important	26.89%	32
Not so important	5.04%	6
Not at all important	0.84%	1
TOTAL		119

Q6 Promote community assets, including quality schools, safety, open space, and quality housing, aimed at attracting younger families and investment

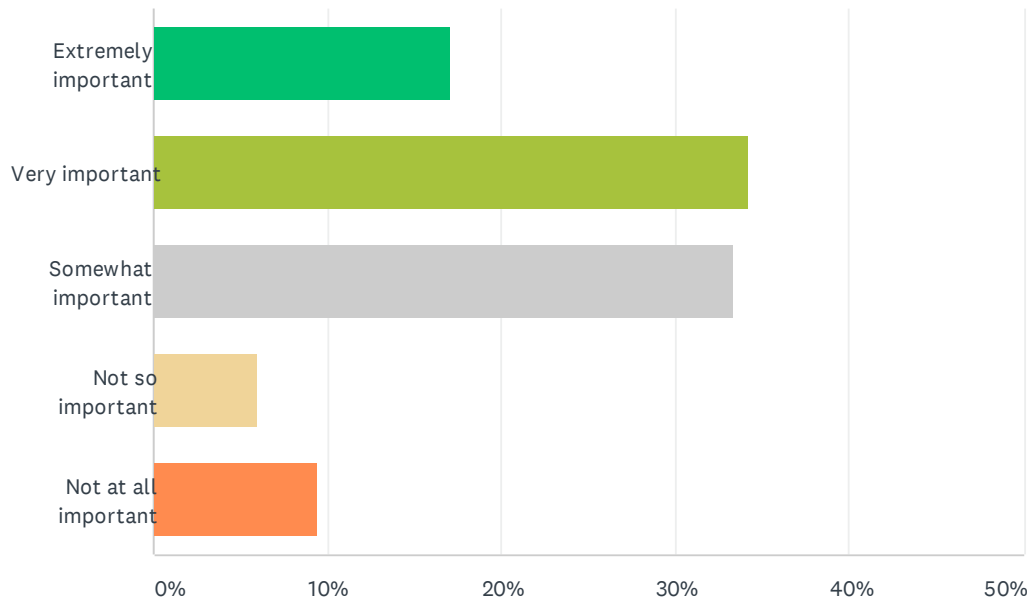
Answered: 119 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely important	37.82%	45
Very important	38.66%	46
Somewhat important	18.49%	22
Not so important	3.36%	4
Not at all important	1.68%	2
TOTAL		119

Q7 Partner with stakeholders to support the improvement and/or redevelopment of former industrial sites and abandoned minded lands

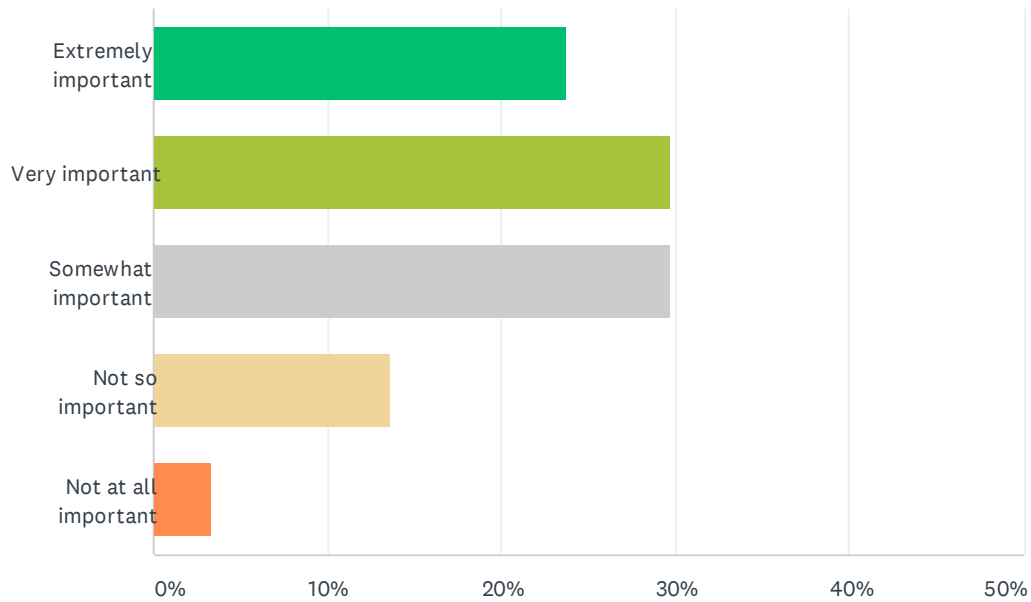
Answered: 117 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely important	17.09%	20
Very important	34.19%	40
Somewhat important	33.33%	39
Not so important	5.98%	7
Not at all important	9.40%	11
TOTAL		117

Q8 Encourage sustainable/environmentally conscious practices related to construction and buildings

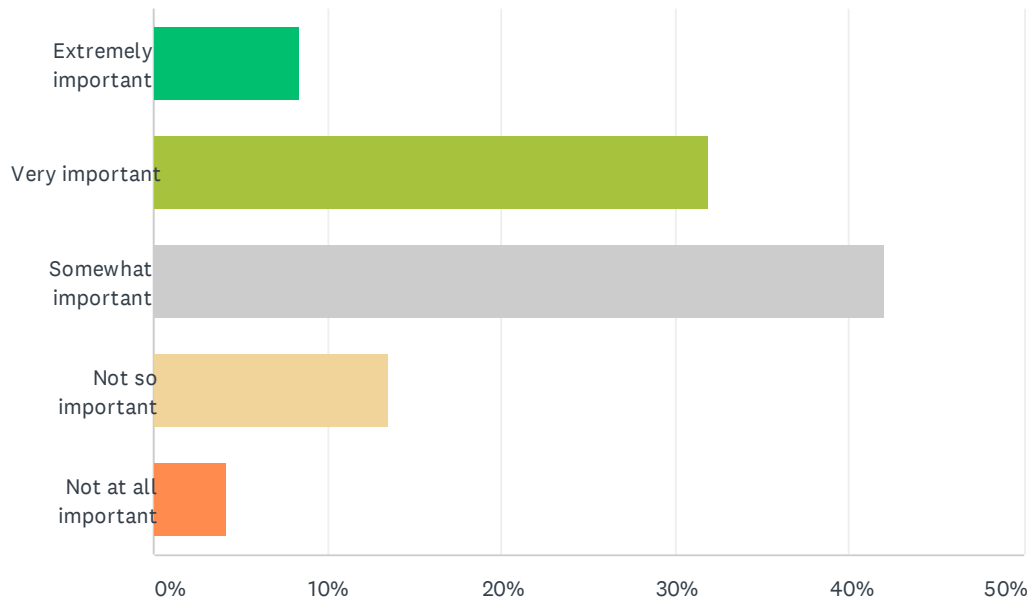
Answered: 118 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely important	23.73%	28
Very important	29.66%	35
Somewhat important	29.66%	35
Not so important	13.56%	16
Not at all important	3.39%	4
TOTAL		118

Q9 Encourage housing options tailored for older adults (i.e. single level, small unit size, etc.)

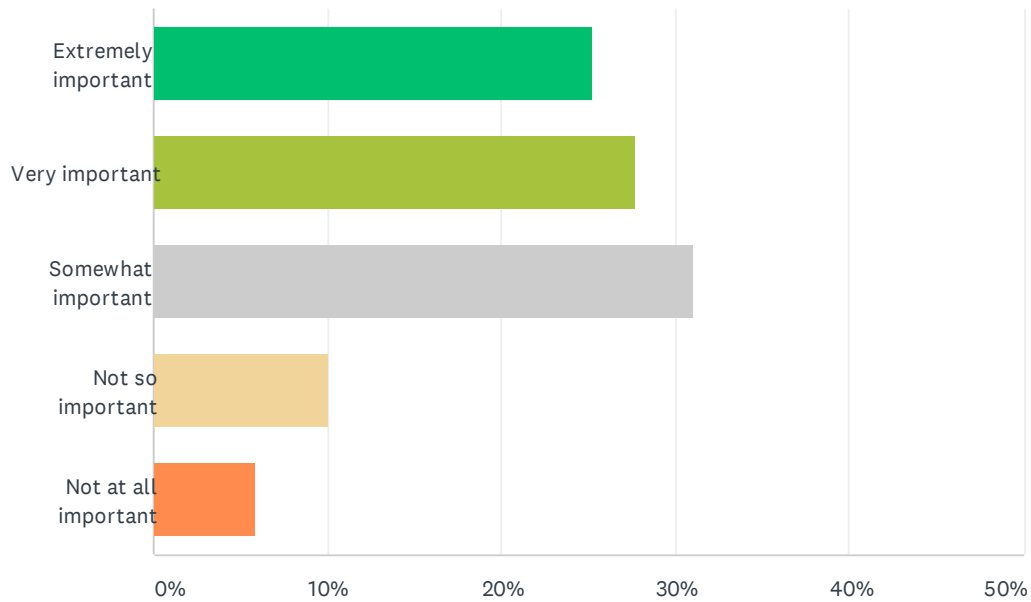
Answered: 119 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely important	8.40%	10
Very important	31.93%	38
Somewhat important	42.02%	50
Not so important	13.45%	16
Not at all important	4.20%	5
TOTAL		119

Q10 Partner to support the expansion of pedestrian and bike trails connecting parks, open space, recreation facilities and neighborhoods

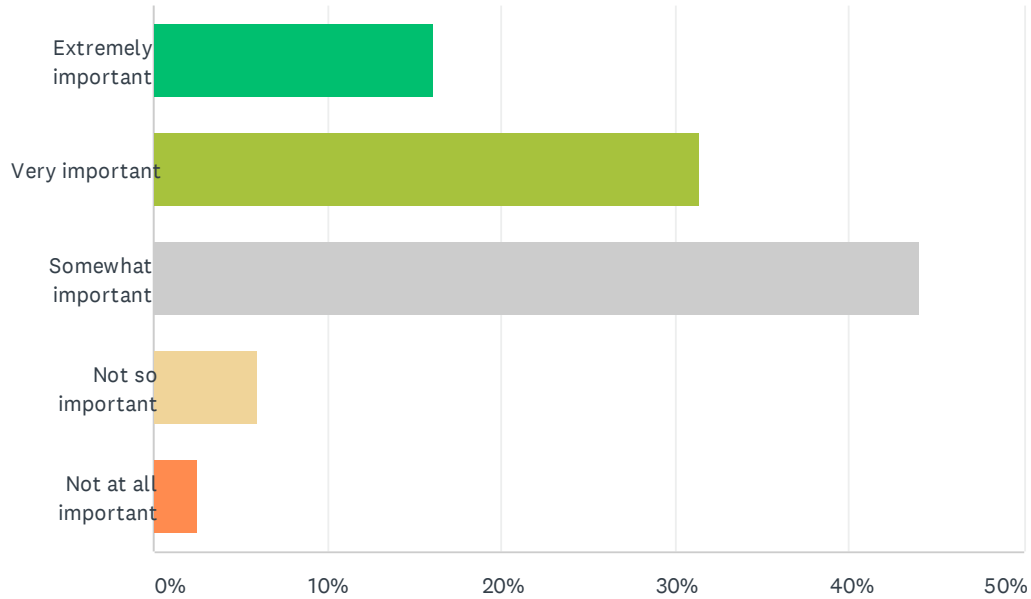
Answered: 119 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely important	25.21%	30
Very important	27.73%	33
Somewhat important	31.09%	37
Not so important	10.08%	12
Not at all important	5.88%	7
TOTAL		119

Q11 Foster additional convenience and efficiency of municipal operations related to resident and/or business interaction

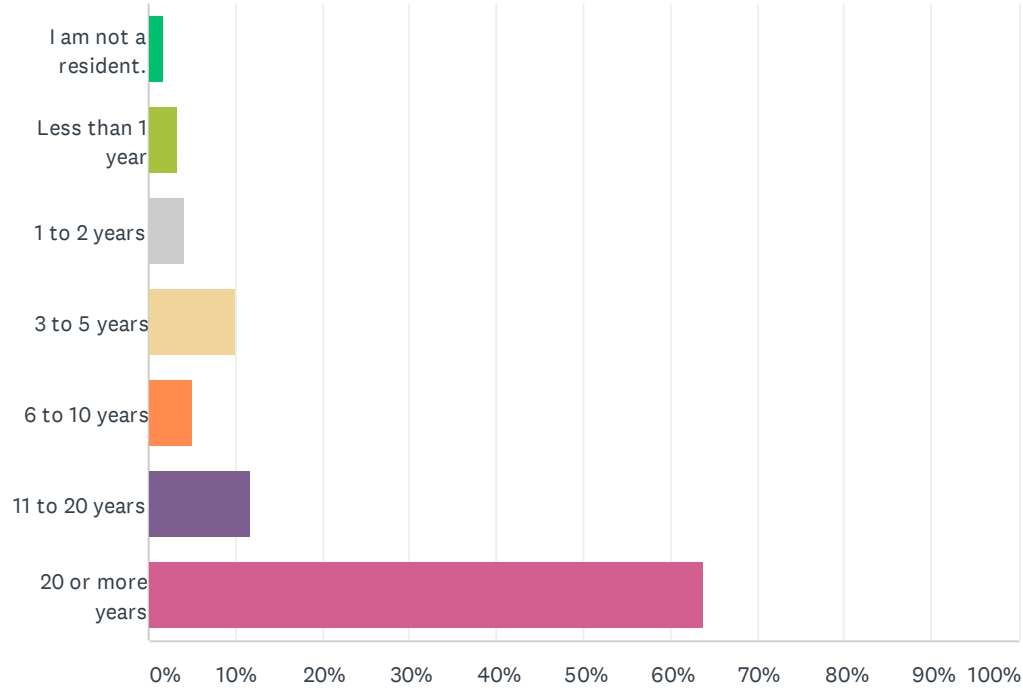
Answered: 118 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely important	16.10%	19
Very important	31.36%	37
Somewhat important	44.07%	52
Not so important	5.93%	7
Not at all important	2.54%	3
TOTAL		118

Q12 How many years have you lived in Elizabeth Township?

Answered: 119 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I am not a resident.	1.68%	2
Less than 1 year	3.36%	4
1 to 2 years	4.20%	5
3 to 5 years	10.08%	12
6 to 10 years	5.04%	6
11 to 20 years	11.76%	14
20 or more years	63.87%	76
TOTAL		119

Q13 (Optional) If you have not already, feel free to provide your email to be informed of future questionnaires, as well as opportunities to share your thoughts at a public meeting. Your email address will NOT be shared and you will not receive any promotional emails outside of updates specific to the Comprehensive Plan.

Answered: 29 Skipped: 90

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Name	0.00%	0
Company	0.00%	0
Address	0.00%	0
Address 2	0.00%	0
City/Town	0.00%	0
State/Province	0.00%	0
ZIP/Postal Code	0.00%	0
Country	0.00%	0
Email Address	100.00%	29
Phone Number	0.00%	0

DEMOGRAPHICS | By Census Tract

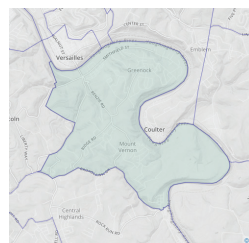
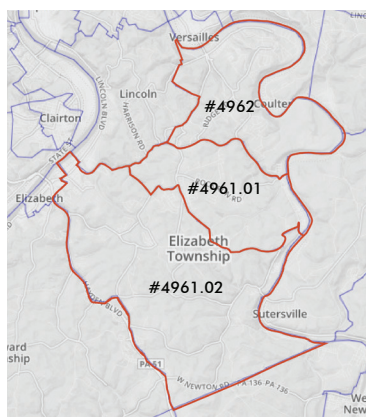
APPENDIX B



ELIZABETH TOWNSHIP

Total Population:
13,134

Median Household Income:
\$66,008



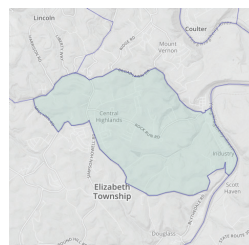
Population:

5,715

1,020.5 people
per square mile

Median Household Income:

\$57,771



Population:

3,121

680.4 people
per square mile

Median Household Income:

\$80,511

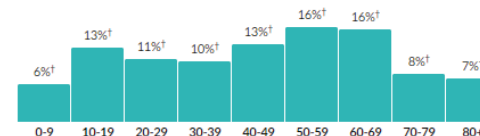
47.5

Median age

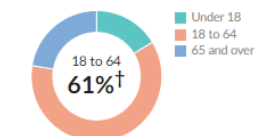
about 20 percent higher than the
figure in Allegheny County: 40.8

about 20 percent higher than the
figure in Pennsylvania: 40.7

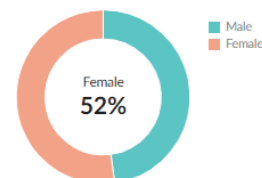
Population by age range



Population by age category



Sex



Race & Ethnicity



Tract #: 4962, Allegheny, PA

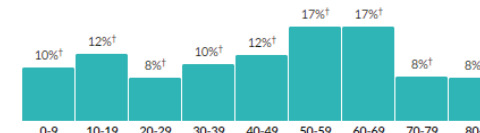
49.7

Median age

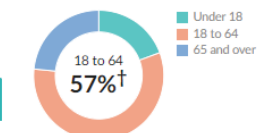
about 25 percent higher than the
figure in Allegheny County: 40.8

about 25 percent higher than the
figure in Pennsylvania: 40.7

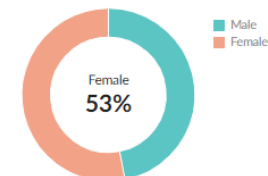
Population by age range



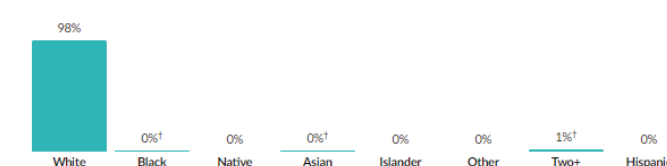
Population by age category



Sex



Race & Ethnicity



Tract #: 4961.01, Allegheny, PA

DEMOGRAPHICS | By Census Tract

APPENDIX B



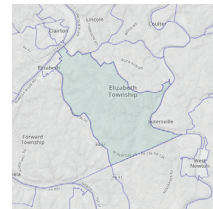
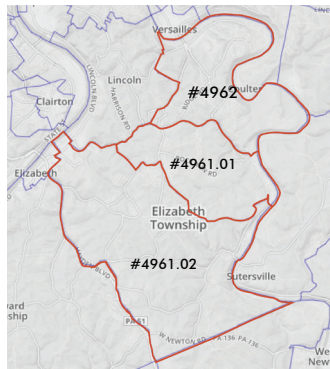
ELIZABETH TOWNSHIP

Total Population:

13,134

Median Household Income:

\$66,008



Population:

4,298

339.7 people
per square mile

Median Household Income:

\$59,742

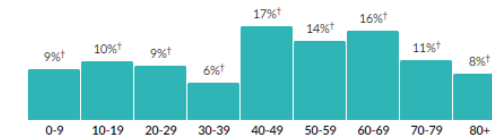
48.5 ± 1.8

Median age

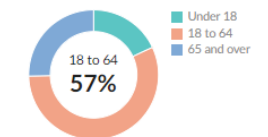
about 20 percent higher than the
figure in Allegheny County: 40.8 ± 0.1

about 20 percent higher than the
figure in Pennsylvania: 40.7 ± 0.1

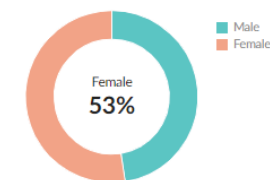
Population by age range



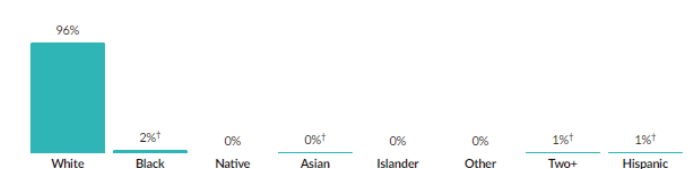
Population by age category



Sex



Race & Ethnicity



Tract #: 4961.02, Allegheny, PA

CURRENT LAND USE

Elizabeth Township is primarily rural & suburban in its make-up. When combining open space and agriculture with parks, golf courses, and cemeteries, these land uses cover 8,294 acres, which accounts for 59% of the Township's entire land area. Much of the developed land is purposed for housing, most of which consists of low-density single-family dwellings.

In fact, single family housing covers 3,742 acres, which makes up 42% of developed land (excluding public open space and vacant land) within the Township. Commercial and industrial uses make up a small proportion of overall land use, as combined they cover just 4% of developed land.

DETAILED BREAKDOWN OF LAND USE CATEGORIES

USE	AREA (Acres)	PERCENT of total land area		
GENERAL FARM	1,897.6			
LIVE STOCK FARM	237.0			
GREENHOUSES, VEG & FLORACULTURE	12.9			
LIVESTOCK O/T D & P-CAUV	10.3			
	2,157.8	15.5%	AGRICULTURAL	
PUBLIC PARK	1,271.2			
	1,271.2	9.1%	PARKS/OPEN SPACE	
GOLF COURSES (PUBLIC)	797.0			
COUNTRY CLUBS	217.5			
CEMETERY/MONUMENTS	90.7			
	1,105.2	7.9%	DEVELOPED OPEN SPACE	
CHURCHES, PUBLIC WORSHIP	129.7			
FIRE DEPARTMENT/EMS	15.7			
	145.4	1.0%	COMMUNITY CIVIC/ INSTITUTIONAL	

Data Source: Allegheny County Land Use Data

LAND USE | Existing Conditions

APPENDIX B



OWNED BY BOARD OF EDUCATION	137.7			
TOWNSHIP GOVERNMENT	136.1			
MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT	105.1			
MUNICIPAL IMPROVEMENT	13.6			
COUNTY GOVERNMENT	12.0			
		404.5	2.9%	GOVERNMENT
SINGLE FAMILY	3,439.1			
RES AUX BUILDING (NO HOUSE)	300.7			
DWG USED AS OFFICE	1.7			
DWG USED AS RETAIL	0.7			
		3,742.2	26.8%	SINGLE FAMILY
TWO FAMILY	36.4			
THREE FAMILY	28.7			
TOWNHOUSE	6.3			
FOUR FAMILY	1.4			
		72.9	0.5%	DUPLEX/TOWNHOME
APART:40+ UNITS	41.4			
APART: 5-19 UNITS	11.0			
NURSING HOME/PRIVATE HOS	5.6			
CHARITABLE EXEMPTION/HOS/HOMES	4.4			
CONDOMINIUM	0.6			
		63.1	0.5%	MULTIFAMILY

Data Source: Allegheny County Land Use Data

LAND USE | Existing Conditions

APPENDIX B



MOBILE HOMES/TRAILER PKS	591.0			
MOBILE HOME	35.6			
INDEPENDENT LIVING (SENIORS)	5.8			
MOBILE HOME (IN PARK)	0.9			
	633.4	4.5%	PLANNED RESIDENTIAL	
AUTO SALES & SERVICE	4.3			
AUTO SERV STATION	0.4			
BANK	1.1			
BARS	0.3			
BOWLING ALLEYS/REC FACILITY	1.9			
COMM AUX BUILDING	45.1			
COMMERCIAL GARAGE	50.4			
COMMERCIAL/UTILITY	20.4			
CONVENIENCE STORE/GAS	3.0			
DISCOUNT STORE	6.7			
FUNERAL HOMES	0.8			
LODGE HALL/AMUSEMENT PARK	28.0			
MEDICAL CLINICS/OFFICES	7.4			
MINI WAREHOUSE	6.7			
NEIGH SHOP CENTER	23.8			
OFFICE - 1-2 STORIES	6.2			
OFFICE/APARTMENTS OVER	0.6			
OFFICE/WAREHOUSE	2.1			
RESTAURANT, CAFET AND/OR BAR	19.2			
SMALL SHOP	2.9			
WAREHOUSE	25.8			
	257.2	1.8%	COMMERCIAL	

Data Source: Allegheny County Land Use Data

LAND USE | Existing Conditions

APPENDIX B

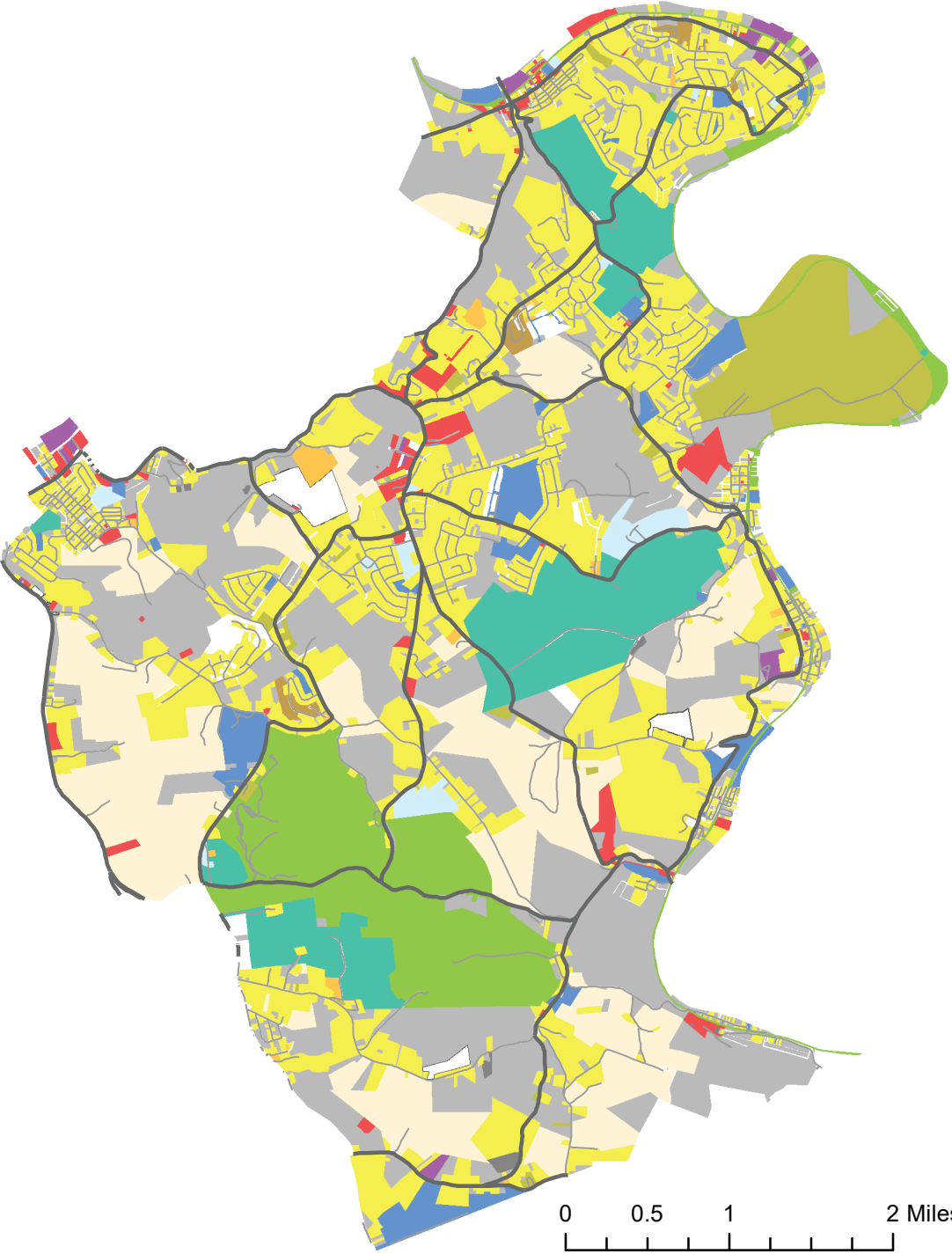
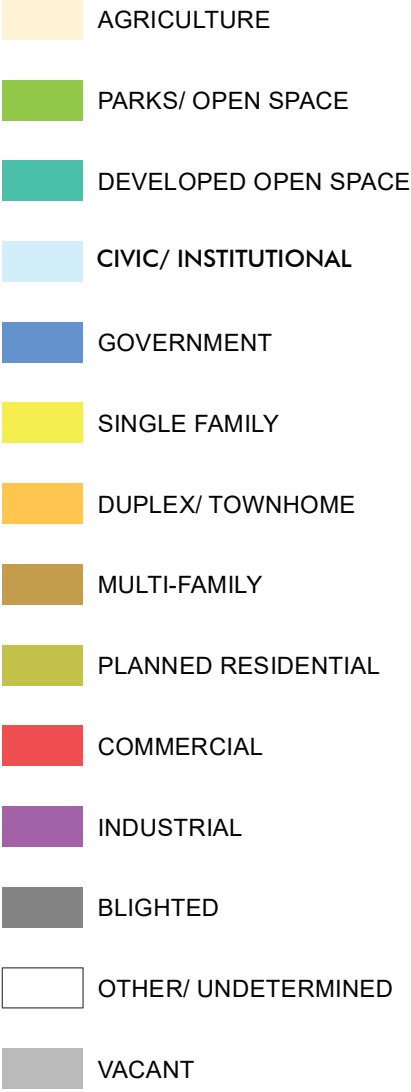


LIGHT MANUFACTURING	54.2			
MEDIUM MANUFACTURING	26.2			
HEAVY MANUFACTURING	2.4			
		82.8	0.6%	INDUSTRIAL
CONDEMNED/BOARDED-UP	20.9			
TOTAL/MAJOR FIRE DAMAGE	1.1			
		22.1	0.2%	BLIGHTED
BUILDERS LOT	72.3			
OTHER COMMERCIAL	68.7			
OTHER	35.2			
RETENTION POND - RESIDENTIAL	13.0			
RIGHT OF WAY - RESIDENTIAL	5.2			
OTHER RETAIL STRUCTURES	3.3			
R.R. - USED IN OPERATION	2.8			
		200.5	1.4%	OTHER
UNDETERMINED	133.4			
		133.4	1.0%	UNDETERMINED
> 10 ACRES VACANT	1,505.1			
VACANT LAND	1,450.3			
VACANT COMMERCIAL LAND	677.5			
VACANT INDUSTRIAL LAND	30.2			
		3,663.1	26.3%	VACANT

Data Source: Allegheny County Land Use Data

13,954.8 TOTAL ACRES

LAND USE | Existing Conditions



Data Source: Allegheny County Land Use Data

What if ALL buildable VACANT land was developed based on the Township's current zoning code?

While a complete “build-out” may be unlikely any time soon due to current demographic and market trends, it is important for municipalities to consider the extend of legally allowable development based on current zoning. The following are the results of a Build-out Analysis, which models future development based on the highest intensity allowed by current zoning.

To accurately estimate build-out development, first, buildable land area was calculated by subtracting “unbuildable land” (conservation areas, buffers surrounding hydrological features, and

steep hillsides prone to landslide) from total vacant land within the Township. Next, **densities and lot dimension standards were used directly from the current zoning code** to calculate the total number of **possible** new residential units and commercial/ industrial square footages. (Refer to the Appendix for a detailed explanation of unit calculations; broken-down by zoning district.) From the estimated number of units and square footages, number of residents, students, and employees were calculated with census data and other local sources. (Refer to the Appendix for data sources.)

Table A. How much land is available for future development?

	Existing Developed Land (Acres)	Buildable Land (Acres)	Existing Zoning Districts
Commercial/ Business	257	133	28 B-1 Local Business 105 B-2 Highway Business
Industrial	83	35	35 M-1 Light Industrial
Residential	4,507	2,672	1,041 R-1 Rural Residential 1,505 R-2 Suburban Residential 77 R-3 Medium Density Residential 48 R-4 Multi-family Residential
Total	4,847	2,839	

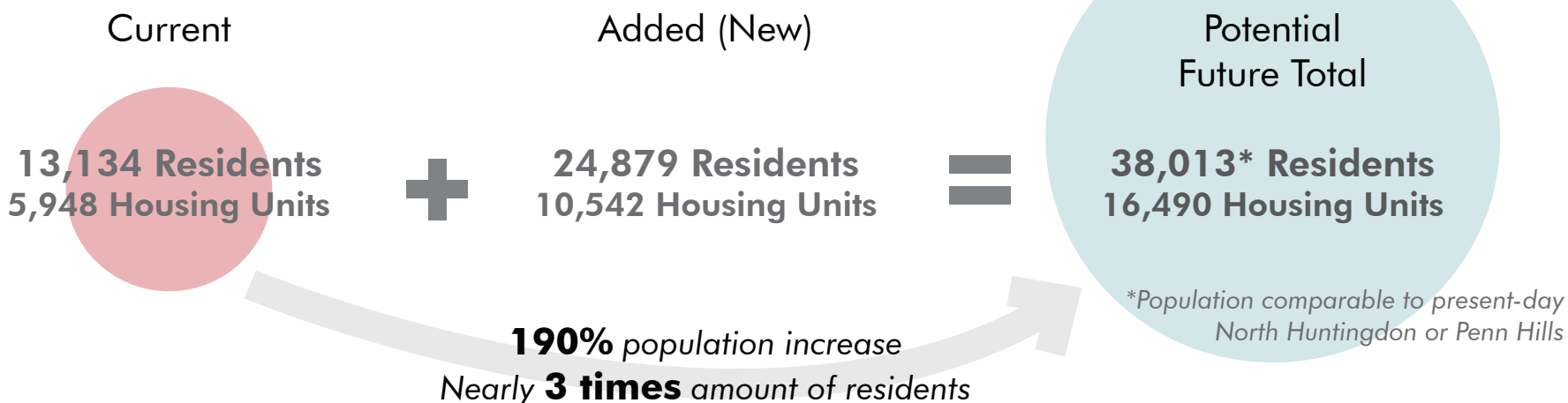
↑
Already Built
189.424% increase

↖
Vacant Land Available for Future Development
59% of existing developed land

Table B. POSSIBLE future development based on FULL build-out scenario.

Zoning Districts	Buildable Land (acres)	Housing Units (New)	Development Sq. Ft. (New)	Residents (New)	Students (New)	Employees (New)
B-1	28		428,634			24
B-2	105		1,823,240			89
M-1	35		834,991			30
R-1	1,041	2,258		5,329	903	
R-2	1,505	6,278		14,816	2,511	
R-3	77	551		1,300	220	
R-4	48	1,455		3,433	291	
Total	2,839	10,542	3,086,865	24,879	3,926	143

Summary of Potential Growth



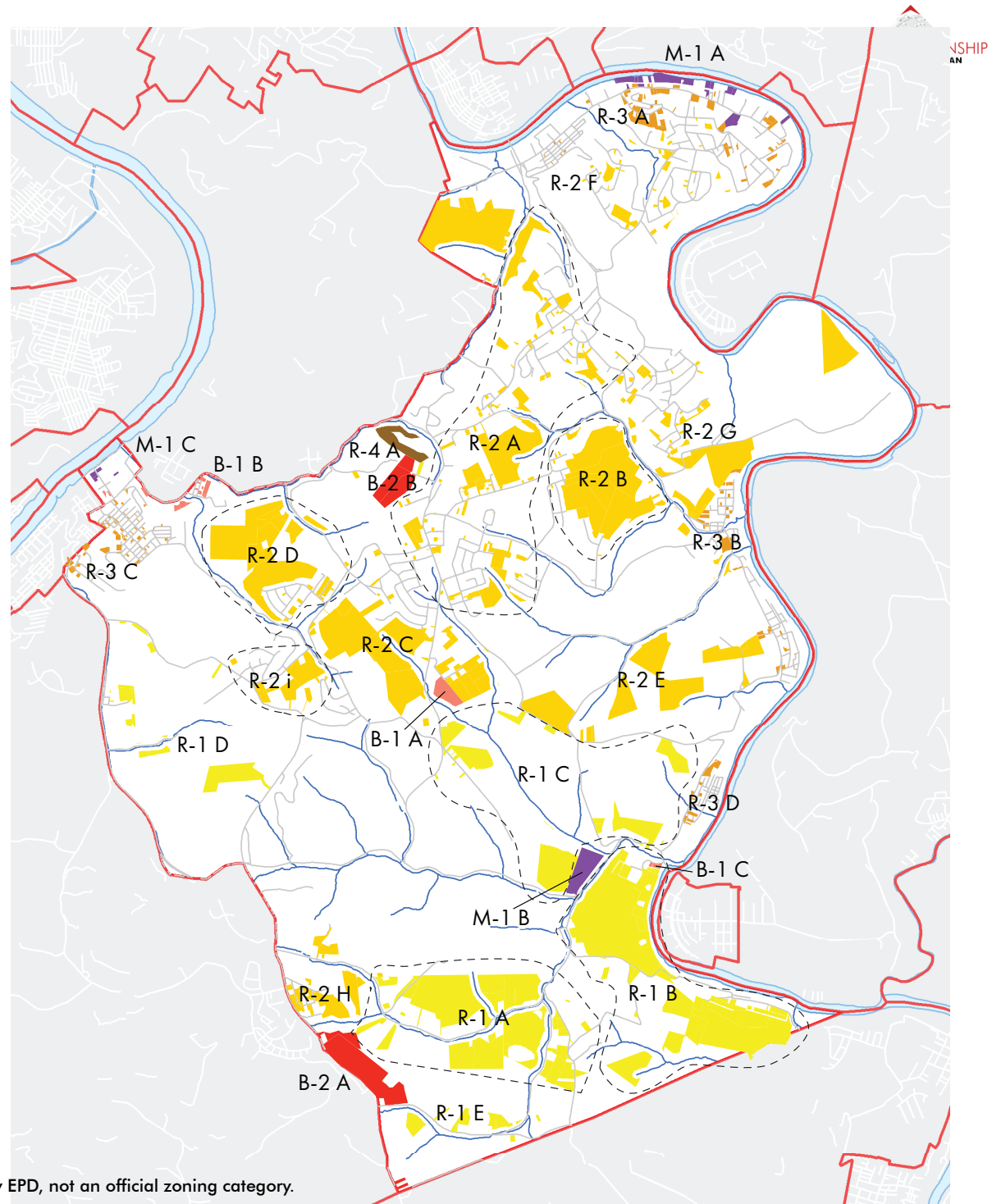
FUTURE LAND USE | Build-Out Analysis

Locations of potential FUTURE development

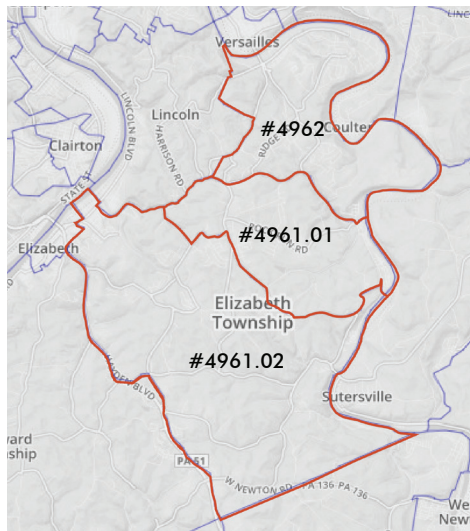
Zoning Districts	Area I.D.*	Buildable Land (Acres)	Housing Units
Rural Residential (R-1)	R-1 A	336	729
	R-1 B	396	859
	R-1 C	201	436
	R-1 D	73	159
	R-1 E	35	76
Suburban Residential (R-2)	R-2 A	322	1343
	R-2 B	236	983
	R-2 C	224	934
	R-2 D	171	715
	R-2 E	162	675
	R-2 F	151	628
	R-2 G	139	582
	R-2 H	60	249
	R-2 i	40	169
	R-3 A	40	286
Medium Residential (R-3)	R-3 B	16	115
	R-3 C	14	102
	R-3 D	7	48
	R-4 A	48	1746

	Buildable Land (Acres)	Development (Sq. Ft.)
(M-1) Light Industrial	M-1 A	649,942
	M-1 B	129,052
	M-1 C	55,997
(B-1) Local Business	B-1 A	214,909
	B-1 B	166,287
	B-1 C	45,738
Highway Business (B-2)	B-2 A	1,229,284
	B-2 B	593,956

*Lettered groups are arbitrary clusters assigned by EPD, not an official zoning category.



INITIAL HOUSING ANALYSIS | By Census Tract



ELIZABETH TOWNSHIP

Total Housing Units:

5,948

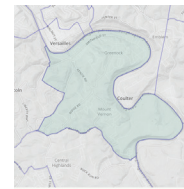
Total Value of All Housing

\$586,953,973

Average Value for Single Family Units

\$219,219 Built after 1990

\$97,781 Built before 1990



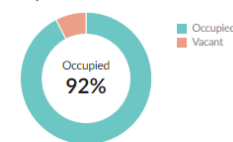
Total Units:

2,648

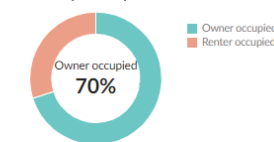
Median value of
Owner-occupied
Housing units
\$124,400

Single Family Detached	2,041
Low Density (Attached)	313
Medium Density (Attached)	264
High Density (Attached)	19
Mobile Homes	11

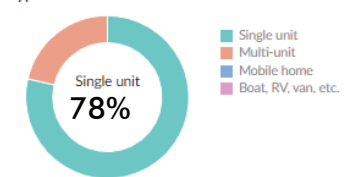
Occupied vs. Vacant



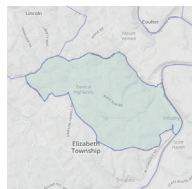
Ownership of occupied units



Types of structure



Tract #: 4962, Allegheny, PA



Total Units:

1,265

Median value of
Owner-occupied
Housing units
\$130,200

Single Family Detached	1,238
Low Density (Attached)	21
Medium Density (Attached)	0
High Density (Attached)	0
Mobile Homes	6



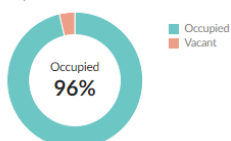
Total Units:

2,035

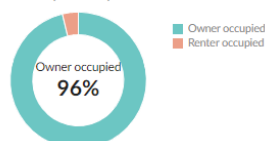
Median value of
Owner-occupied
Housing units
\$122,900

Single Family Detached	1,838
Low Density (Attached)	144
Medium Density (Attached)	0
High Density (Attached)	0
Mobile Homes	53

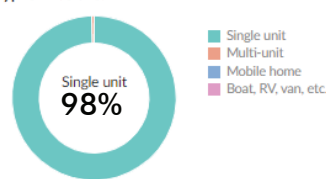
Occupied vs. Vacant



Ownership of occupied units

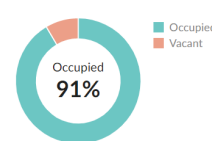


Types of structure

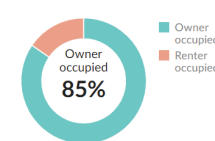


Tract #: 4961.01, Allegheny, PA

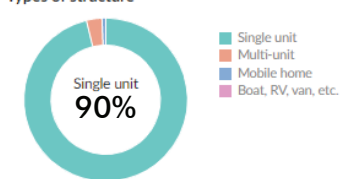
Occupied vs. Vacant



Ownership of occupied units



Types of structure



Tract #: 4961.02, Allegheny, PA

INITIAL HOUSING ANALYSIS | Surrounding Municipalities

APPENDIX B



Municipality	Development Character	Population	Total Housing Units	Median Housing Value ^D	% Owner Occupied	% Vacant
North Huntingdon Township	(Suburban)	30,502	13,218	\$165,700	88%	6%
City of McKeesport	(Urban)	19,365	11,362	\$46,500	51%	21%
Rostraver Township	(Rural)	11,127	5,031	\$174,100	86%	10%
White Oak Borough	(Suburban)	7,621	3,850	\$104,300	71%	6%
Sewickley Township	(Rural)	5,808	2,716	\$125,500	87%	13%
Forward Township	(Rural)	3,321	1,634	\$110,000	87%	10%
Versailles Borough	(Suburban – higher density)	1,631	886	\$66,500	51%	9%
Elizabeth Borough	(Suburban – higher density)	1,477	736	\$77,200	60%	12%
Lincoln Borough	(Panhandle of Liberty Borough)	1,057	485	\$91,900	92%	3%
Sutersville Borough	(Mix of Development Patterns)	471	290	\$78,300	76%	28%
South Versailles Township	(Suburban)	406	162	\$84,000	84%	2%
Regional Summary		82,786 ^A	40,370 ^A	\$91,900 ^B	74% ^C	12% ^C
Elizabeth Township		13,134	5,948	\$125,200	81%	7%

A. Sum of surrounding municipalities.

B. Regional average per unit.

C. Regional average.

D. Median value of owner-occupied housing units.

- About 3 new homes are constructed each year
- At this rate (0.05% annual growth), 30 new homes are projected to be constructed in the next 10 years
- Geographic Mobility: 95.0% of residents live in the same house as they did last year. (Or 5% turnover rate)

A value in the mid-90s is standard for most established townships in the region. Ex: Rostraver (93.2%), Jefferson Hills (95.6%), Peters (93.4%), North Huntingdon (93.9%)

Additions	New Home Construction	
10	2	2018
17	4	2019
7	2	2020
34	8	Total

- About 11 additions are constructed each year
- Additions account for 26% of construction permits

New Home Construction

These findings reveal that the Township is experiencing very slow growth in new home construction. Also, a low turnover rate of 5% indicates that residents tend to reside within the Township for at least a few years. Together, both findings work to limit the available supply of housing to new residents moving in from outside the Township. Therefore, with stagnant supply and rising housing demand, the observed “hot” housing market (i.e. homes being sold quickly and at times over the asking price) is substantiated.

Additions

A stable, less mobile population aligns well with the high amount of additions observed. Additions indicate that residents are looking to expand their homes to accommodate growing families or other lifestyle changes. Additions also tend to reveal that homeowners are invested for the long run.

TRAFFIC, MOBILITY, AND TRANSPORTATION DISCUSSION

APPENDIX B



Overview

In Elizabeth Township, the personal car is the primary means of transportation, for both local and regional trips. For local residents, most are dependent upon a personal vehicle to run daily errands. This is largely due to the spread-out development pattern of most of the Township. Commercial uses tend to be isolated away from housing. Many commercial services are located along high traffic roads, with no sidewalks, making walking to and from these destinations unpleasant and potentially unsafe. Furthermore, the

hilly topography of the landscape makes the street network less connected and therefore less walkable. Currently, there are no ordinances that require or encourage the construction of sidewalks in conjunction with new development.

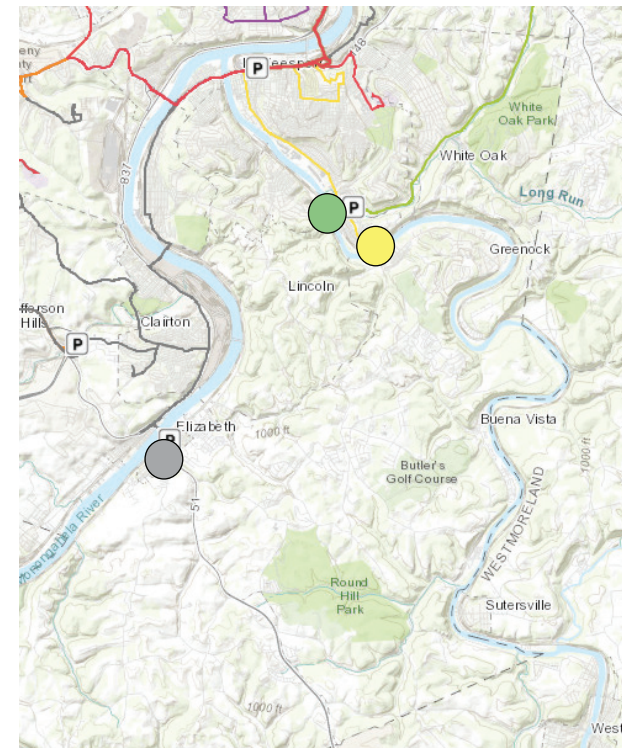
As for mass transit, no routes exist within Elizabeth Township. However, there are a few Port Authority lines, whose routes end very close to the Township border.

Transit Routes Nearby

Y46 Elizabeth Flyer
To Downtown Pittsburgh in 58 mins.

P76 Lincoln Hwy Flyer
To Downtown Pittsburgh in 54 mins.

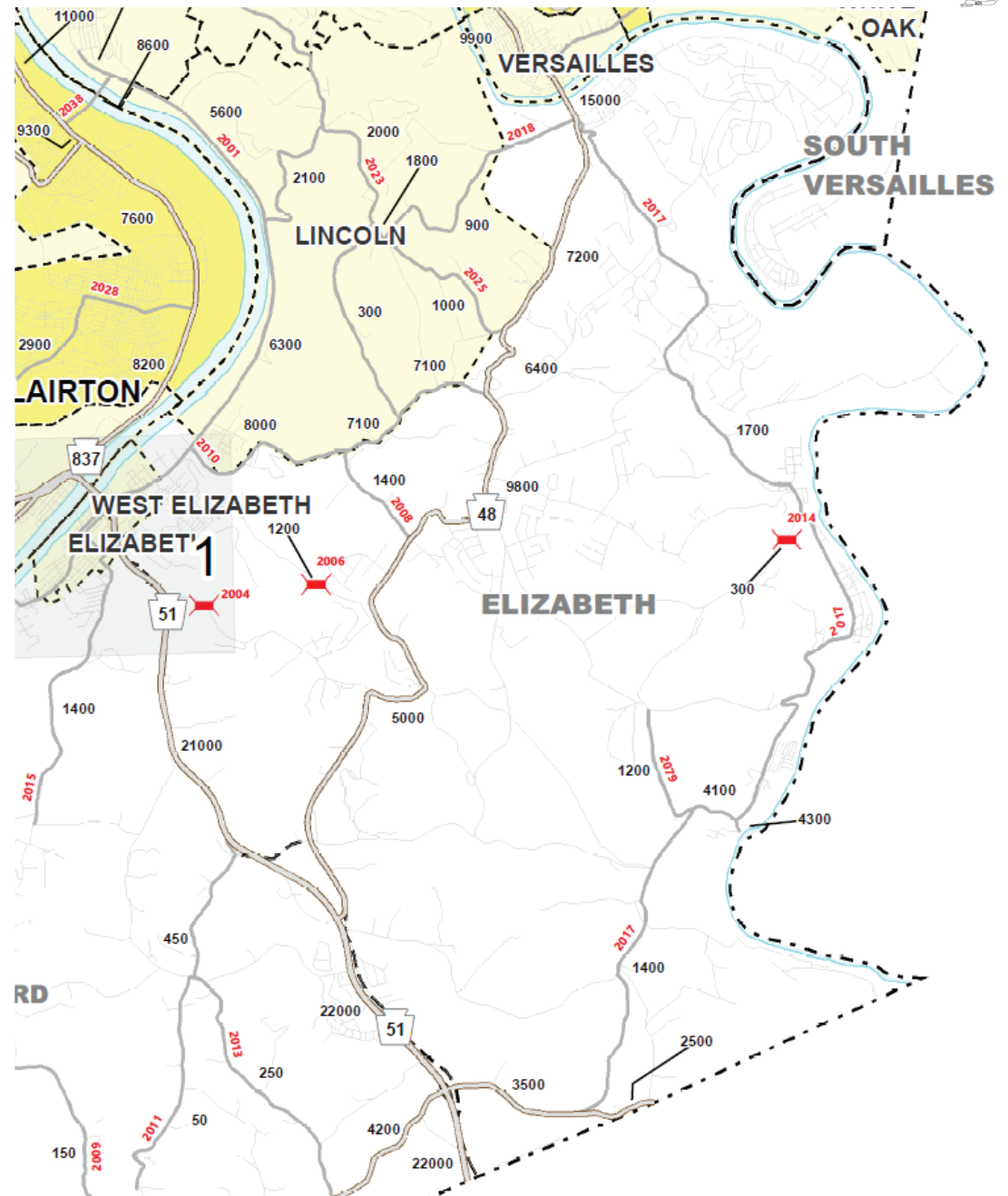
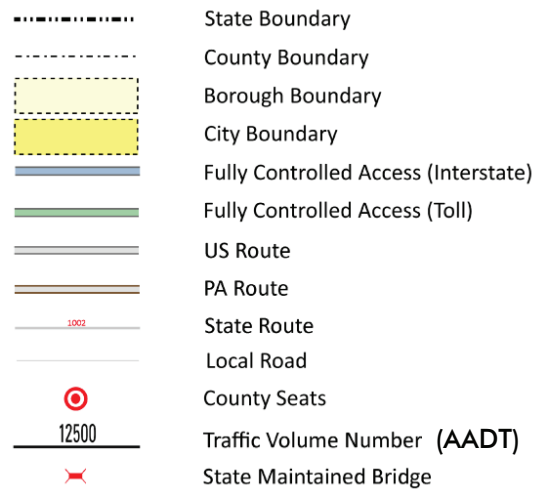
60 Walnut Crawford Village
To McKeesport in 13 mins.



TRAFFIC VOLUME MAP

AADT

(Annual Average Daily Traffic) typical daily traffic, measured by counting vehicles in both directions on a road segment for every day of the week, averaged over a one-year period.



SWOT ANALYSIS

APPENDIX B



S

Strengths

Open space, parks, & recreation

- Great Allegheny Passage Trail - biking, hiking, etc.
- Round Hill Park (county park) – exhibit farm, spray park, hiking trails, etc.
- 3 Golf courses
- Youghiogheny River access – boating, fishing, etc.
- Community Center - provides indoor gathering space, lodging, and outdoor recreation
- Athletic fields - 11 baseball/softball and 3 soccer/football

Rural farmland character

Quality housing stock

- Affordable homes for families
- Stable/rising home values
- High demand for housing

High quality school district - Elizabeth Forward

- National Blue-Ribbon awarded to Central Elementary
- All students (3-12) have access to iPads since 2013

Safe community with very low crime

- 0.7 violent crimes per 1,000 residents on average each year



SWOT ANALYSIS

APPENDIX B



Limited municipal planning

- Zoning Map may not accurately reflect current interests of Township
- Limited communication and outreach with community
- Past efforts focused on multi-municipal planning, without in-depth internal focus

Limited promotion/advertising of Township assets and amenities

Limited diversity of housing types

- Housing tailored to seniors and young adults may be limited

Few recently added or updated public amenities

- The current Community Center is not centrally located and in need of renovation

Limited driving access/connections to region

- It is inconvenient for some residents to drive in and out of the Township

Stormwater management

- Stormwater run-off leads to issues with roadway flooding and contamination of streams





Recreational/rural tourism

- Attract people from the broader region to enjoy the GAP trail, Youghiogheny River, parks, and scenic farmland.
- Spark development (food & beverage, B&B, housing, etc.) along riverfront trail

Plan for future development

- Target new development along Route 51 for convenient car access
- Guide zoning code and map to reflect future land use plan

Attract industrial and commercial development to raise tax revenue

New community center focused on fitness and recreation

Public relations (PR) initiative

- To better inform current residents and attract prospective home-buyers
- Coordinate with School District to reach out to children and parents

Natural Resources

- Increase in jobs and economic activity



SWOT ANALYSIS

APPENDIX B

T Threats

Environmental

- Landslides to damage roads and bridges
- Flooding near riverfront
- Stormwater flooding and pollution
- Acid mine drainage

Aging population may not be adequately accommodated

- Due to limited specialty senior living and medical care

Loss of farmland and woodland to future development

Natural Resources

- **Noise and traffic nuisance, Air & Groundwater pollution,** Health risk to residents
(Depending on industry practices and **performance standards**)



Quick Facts

2,717 Total Number of Employees working within the Township*

245 Total Employer Firms within the Township*

10% Women owned

8% Minority owned

20% Veteran owned

Employment by Sector - Allegheny County

Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2019 Annual Averages									
NAICS	NAICS Description	Estab.	LQ	Employment		Employment %		Wages	
		County		County	PA	County	PA	County	PA
	Total, All Industries	35,539	1.00	703,109	5,925,582	100.0%	100.0%	\$62,665	\$57,497
11	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	32	0.07	222	25,013	0.0%	0.4%	\$32,454	\$36,714
21	Mining, Quarrying, and Oil & Gas	91	0.59	1,960	28,043	0.3%	0.5%	\$144,954	\$90,133
22	Utilities	98	1.02	4,171	34,608	0.6%	0.6%	\$88,275	\$99,248
23	Construction	2,679	0.96	30,781	269,127	4.4%	4.5%	\$69,805	\$68,113
31-33	Manufacturing	1,149	0.53	36,321	575,459	5.2%	9.7%	\$71,145	\$64,251
42	Wholesale Trade	1,734	0.74	19,003	217,417	2.7%	3.7%	\$77,568	\$82,077
44-45	Retail Trade	4,006	0.94	68,744	614,434	9.8%	10.4%	\$31,942	\$30,251
48-49	Transportation and Warehousing	751	0.71	26,378	315,199	3.8%	5.3%	\$58,396	\$50,189
51	Information	568	1.21	13,032	90,505	1.9%	1.5%	\$99,728	\$93,124
52	Finance and Insurance	2,094	1.52	48,271	267,300	6.9%	4.5%	\$91,455	\$97,378
53	Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1,361	1.20	9,353	65,421	1.3%	1.1%	\$61,104	\$62,576
54	Professional and Technical Services	4,386	1.41	61,601	367,729	8.8%	6.2%	\$96,356	\$98,975
55	Management of Companies and Enterprises	486	1.70	27,450	136,094	3.9%	2.3%	\$133,094	\$135,620
56	Administrative and Waste Services	1,746	0.90	34,419	322,045	4.9%	5.4%	\$40,052	\$38,452
61	Educational Services	850	1.04	59,972	484,699	8.5%	8.2%	\$61,937	\$58,763
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	5,379	1.09	141,291	1,090,104	20.1%	18.4%	\$57,782	\$52,330
71	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	628	1.20	14,698	103,178	2.1%	1.7%	\$55,080	\$34,327
72	Accommodation and Food Services	3,293	1.07	60,764	478,166	8.6%	8.1%	\$20,679	\$19,451
81	Other Services (Except Public Administration)	3,925	0.98	23,710	203,687	3.4%	3.4%	\$37,523	\$35,241
92	Public Administration	288	0.74	20,967	237,356	3.0%	4.0%	\$65,364	\$62,908
	Total, Suppressed Local Industries	0		0		0.0%			

*Data shows High standard errors and provides unreliable precision. Census: Annual Business Survey. 2017

Economic History

Coal Mining & Farming

“During the 1800’s (Elizabeth Township) developed into a thriving farm and coal mining area. Riverboats and dams on the Youghiogheny River produced the coal mining towns of Boston, Greenock, Buena Vista, Frank, Industry, Blythedale, and Smithdale. The central highland section boasted some of the largest and most prosperous farms in the area supplying the Pittsburgh market.”¹

Today, Mined Lands constitutes 7240.7 acres (exactly 50% of the Township’s total area)

Commute to Work

31.7 minutes ± 2.1

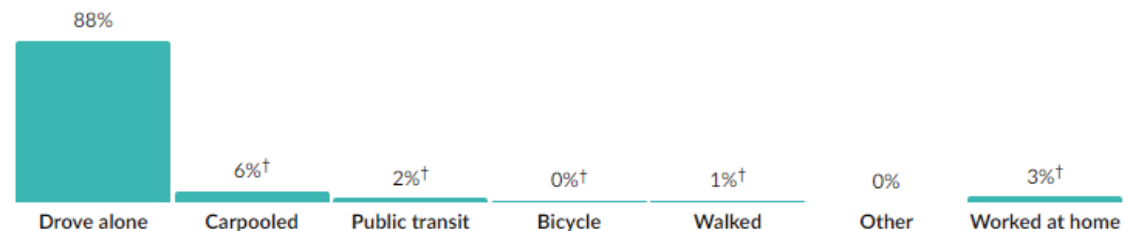
(199,985 $\pm 16,731$)

Mean travel time to work

about 20 percent higher than the figure in Allegheny County: 27 15,699,145 (± 0.2 / $\pm 144,912$)

about 20 percent higher than the figure in Pennsylvania: 26.9 154,924,705 (± 0.1 / $\pm 589,412$)

Means of transportation to work



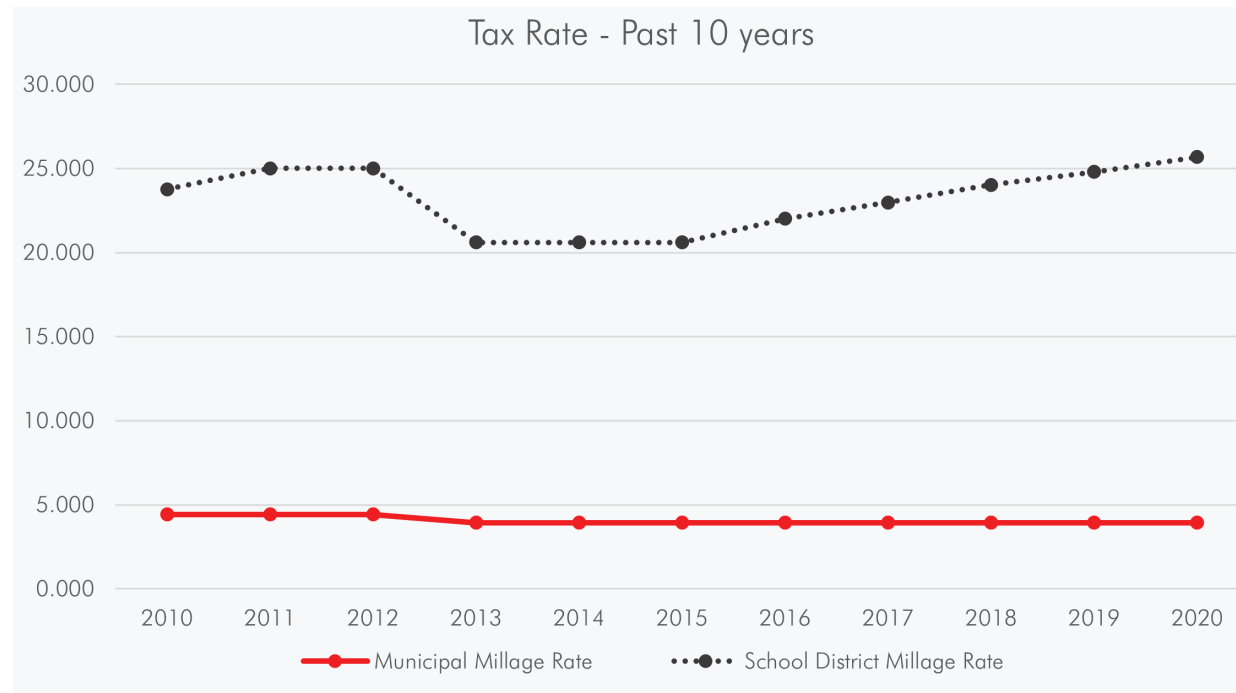
1. Joelle Whiteman - Mon Yough Area Chamber of Commerce

ECONOMIC ANALYSIS | Tax Millage Rates

APPENDIX B



- Current Municipal millage rate is 3.9260
- Current School District millage rate is 25.6823



Taxes for Median Property Value (\$86,400 County Assessed) - Comparable to Median Market Value of \$125,200

	2018	2019	2020
County:	\$408.67	\$408.67	\$408.67
Municipality:	339.21	339.21	339.21
School District:	2,075.44	2,141.85	2,218.95
TOTAL:	\$2,823.32	\$2,889.73	\$2,966.83

ECONOMIC ANALYSIS | Tax Millage Rates

APPENDIX B



Compared to Nearby Municipalities

Comparing tax rates among municipalities is complex because of vast differences in population and home values. For example, municipalities with high home values can have lower millage rates, yet still bring in significant tax revenue. Also, communities with large populations require more services than smaller localities and may have higher tax rates.

It's important to consider the "VALUE" residents enjoy (property taxes paid vs. services provided by Township).

\$339 - Municipal taxes paid by resident of Median-valued home

\$263 - Per capita Municipal Expenditures (\$6,455,833.13 Total)

Municipality	Median Home Value (Market)	Median Home Value (County Assessed)	Tax Millage Rate (Municipal)	Municipal Tax Bill (Estimated)
Jefferson Hills Borough	\$209,400	\$120,000	5.660	\$679
White Oak Borough	\$104,300	\$79,700	6.410	\$511
Lincoln Borough	\$91,900	\$54,950	9.000	\$495
Elizabeth Borough	\$77,200	\$52,650	8.500	\$448
Rostraver Township*	\$174,100	\$28,204	15.000	\$423
Versailles Borough	\$66,500	\$44,000	8.000	\$352
Elizabeth Township	\$125,200	\$86,400	3.926	\$339
North Huntingdon Township*	\$165,700	\$26,843	11.550	\$310
Sewickley Township*	\$125,500	\$20,331	14.250	\$290
City of McKeesport	\$46,500	\$21,600	20.500; 8.260**	\$245
City of Clairton	\$43,800	\$21,900	33.000; 3.500**	\$238
Sutersville Borough*	\$78,300	\$12,685	11.000	\$140
South Versailles Township	\$84,000	\$42,850	2.900	\$124
Forward Township	\$110,000	\$60,200	1.950	\$117

* Townships in Westmoreland County. The county uses a unique assessment system which assesses home at 16.2 percent of their market value. Since assessed value are much lower than Allegheny County, millage rates are much higher.

** (Building; Land). McKeesport and Clairton assess land and building separately. Tax bill estimate assumes 25% building and 75% land.

COMMUNITY & CULTURAL ASSETS

APPENDIX B



Parks and Recreation:

- Great Allegheny Passage Trail
- Golf courses
- Round Hill Park
- Youghiogheny River access for activities – boating, fishing, etc.
- Colonial Farms Hunting Preserve

Historic Sites:

- Van Kirk Farm (registered)
- Hutchinson farm (registered)
- Greenock Log House (unregistered) - hosts annual historic festival

Commercial:

- Mt. Vernon Dairy
- Rock Run Inn – Dining and B&B
- Carriage Inn – Restaurant and Catering

Public:

- Elizabeth Forward High School

What else would you add?



Van Kirk Farm - est. circa 1840s (60 Acres)



Hutchinson Farm - est. circa 1850s (51 Acres)



Greenock Log House est. circa 1790s

COMMUNITY & CULTURAL ASSETS

Conserved Land (Excluding Public)

Land Trust Owned



Conservation Easements



Land Trust Held

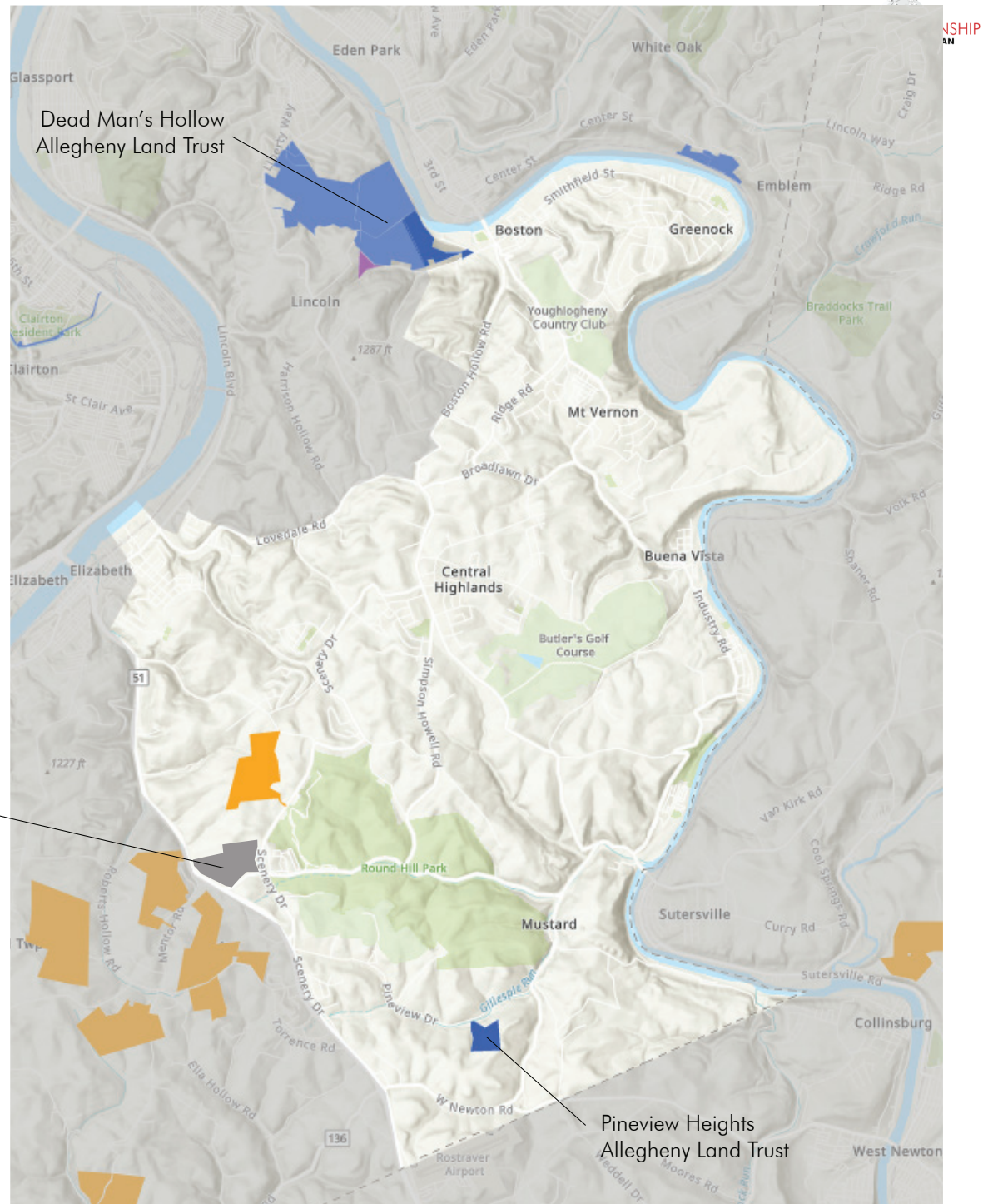
Farmland Preservation



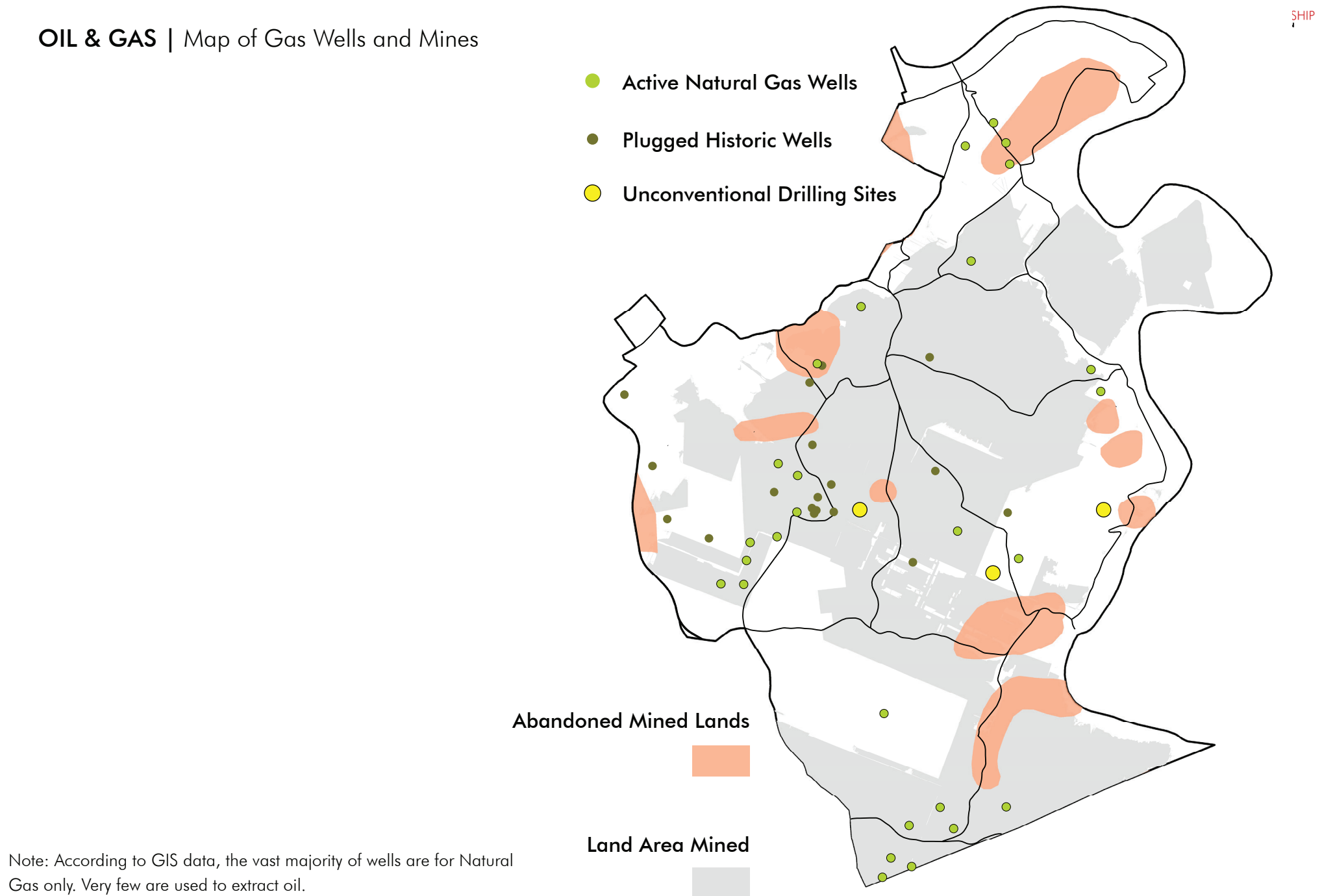
Van Kirk & Hutchinson Farms
Protected Historic Sites

240 acres of conserved private land

Source: Pennsylvania Land Trust Association



OIL & GAS | Map of Gas Wells and Mines



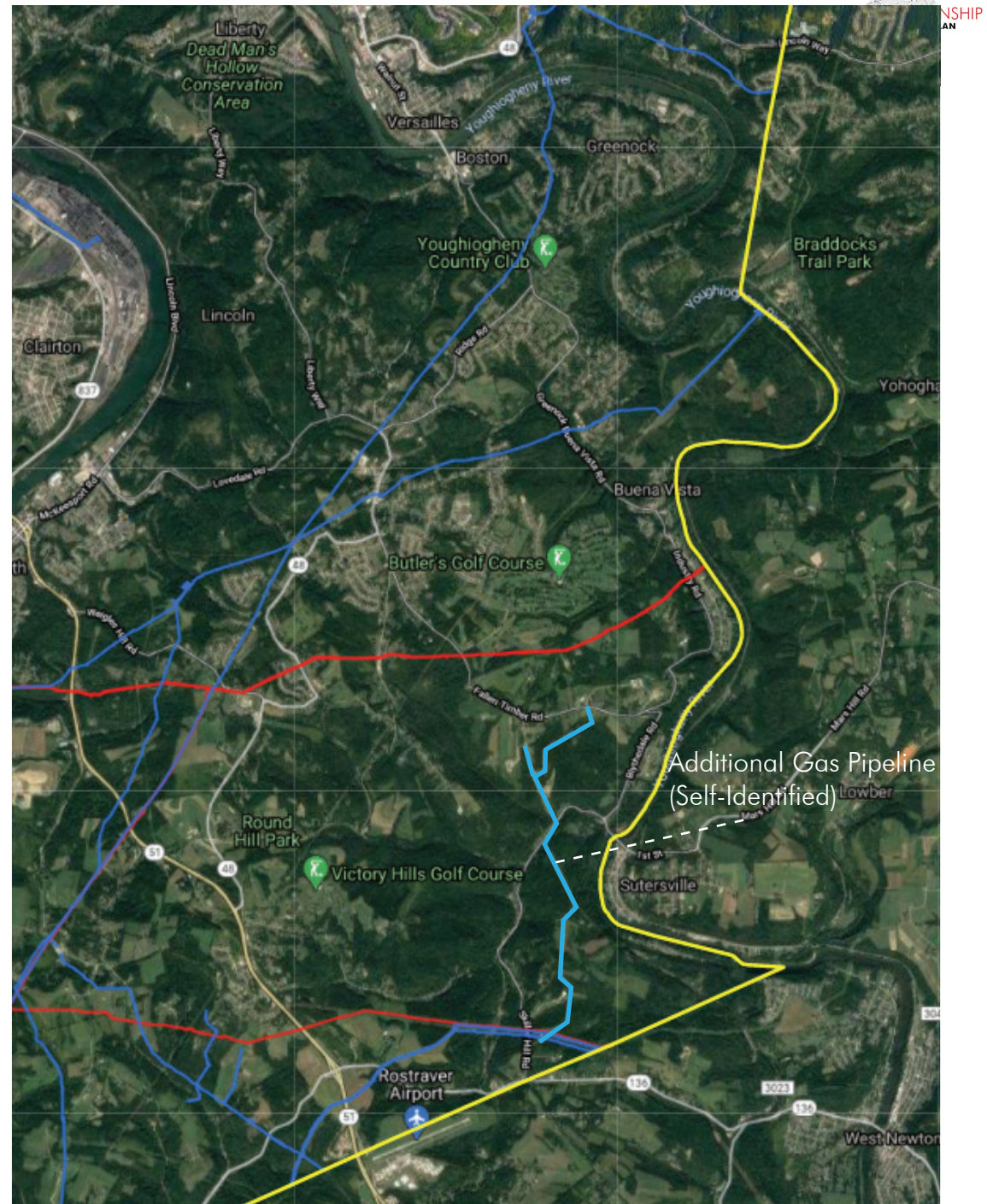
Note: According to GIS data, the vast majority of wells are for Natural Gas only. Very few are used to extract oil.

OIL & GAS | Pipelines

Gas Transmission Pipelines (Blue)

Hazardous Liquids Pipelines (Red)

Source: <https://pvnpm.phmsa.dot.gov/PublicViewer/>



Existing Zoning Map - Last Amended 2007 (Current at time of the 2021 Comprehensive Plan)

