

Destination: Allegheny Valley

Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan



Springdale Township, Springdale Borough, Harmar Township, and Cheswick Borough

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Executive Summary

Comprehensive planning is a term used to describe a process that determines community goals and aspirations in terms of community development. The outcome of comprehensive planning is the Comprehensive Plan which guides public policy in terms of transportation, utilities, land use, recreation, and housing.

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC), Act of 1968, P.L. 805, No. 247 as reenacted and amended, provides for the preparation of a comprehensive plan in Article III, Section 301.

Planning is a continuous process. As conditions change and new information becomes available, objectives may change and goals and policies may be modified. This plan must be responsive to change, forward-looking and publicly supported. It should be regularly reviewed and revised, if necessary, to reflect the community's changing attitudes and desires.

Comprehensive Planning for a 10-year horizon is an involved process, which reflects the needs and desires of the community it is to benefit. A plan should give the public, business and government agencies a clear understanding of the municipality's intentions and desires regarding its future development, which will lead to greater cooperation and minimization of potential conflicts. At its most basic, the planning process includes steps to organize, review, prepare and communicate.

Goals

- Describe an idea or sought after end
- Are non-specific/general statements
- Are the foundation to which policies should refer

Objectives

- Advance a goal's specific purpose, aim, ambition or element
- Describe actions necessary to achieve goals.
- Are generally non-quantifiable
- Suggest a course of action or "should, whereas, will"
- May indicate general criteria to be followed in developing policy

Actions

- Describe how an objective will be carried out
- Describe method or provide guidelines
- Are usually measurable and/or time sensitive
- May have a cost associated with it
- Identify responsible parties

The broad scope of a Comprehensive Plan is reflected in the wide variety of elements combined in one planning document. This Comprehensive Plan includes the elements required by the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code. However, the plan is not limited to these items. Overall, it is intended to facilitate the land use decision making process by covering the major categories of physical development in relation to the needs of the citizens.

As it is adopted by resolution, a comprehensive plan is not legally binding. A community's ordinances must be amended in order to legally implement the provisions required to execute the comprehensive plan.

Vision Statement: The Allegheny Valley communities seek to foster communication, cooperation and joint action on regional issues and problems. By working together as a group, the partners can build stronger relationships and pursue strategies that improve the efficiency and effectiveness of municipal services as well as quality of life in the region.

Land Use and Housing Goal:

Foster livability and success of neighborhoods, commercial districts and industrial areas.

Resources Goal:

Facilitate the protection, promotion and enhancement of natural, civic and recreation resources.

Economic Development Goal:

Promote economic opportunities and development while maintaining and valuing community character.

Transportation and Infrastructure and Facilities Goal:

Use a balanced approach in the management of transportation, infrastructure, energy systems and access to public transportation.

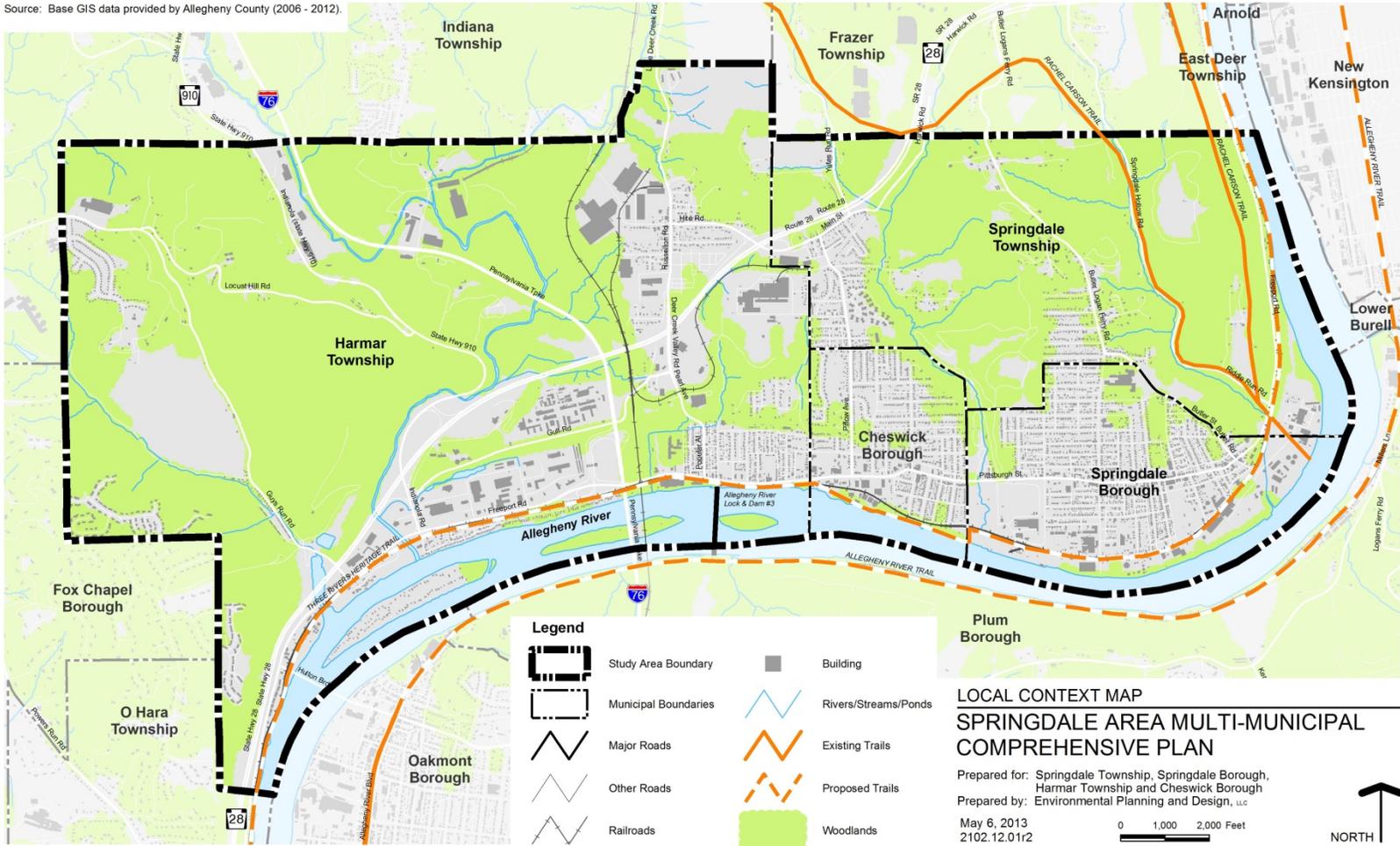
Outreach and Cooperation Goal:

Engage in outreach, education, communication and cooperation within the community.

Implementation Goal:

Reach out to the community, local organizations and regional stakeholders to support the partner communities and their partners in the implementation of plan strategies.

Source: Base GIS data provided by Allegheny County (2006 - 2012).



The Allegheny Valley communities of Springdale Township, Springdale Borough, Cheswick Borough and Harmar Township have the unique opportunity to embrace their communities, collectively, as a River Town/Trail Town destination and to attract investment and tourism by enhancing cultural, environmental, recreational, educational and historic resources.

The Allegheny Places' Future Land Use Plan forecasts that Allegheny County can expect to grow modestly through the year 2025, with a net gain of 32,000 housing units and 190,000 new jobs. The Allegheny Valley communities' partnership can strategize for this growth comprehensively to bring future residents and employers specifically to this region of the county.

Economic Development Opportunities

The Allegheny Valley communities have many key assets already in place, including their close proximity to the Allegheny River, Pennsylvania Turnpike, PA Route 28 and Freeport Road. The proximity and ease of access to these well-traveled transportation corridors is highly attractive for potential residents and new business opportunities alike. The promotion of this area as a River Town/Trail Town sets the stage for encouraging economic development of existing businesses and creating new opportunities for recreation-based and tourism-based business activity.

River Town Heritage

The communities' frontage along the Allegheny River is one their greatest resources and has opportunity to be celebrated as part of the Allegheny Valley region's identity. Every opportunity should be explored to provide public access to the river as a way to foster the River Town character of the communities. Public river access should include both physical access points as well as visual connections. Interpretive signage and amenities will provide educational opportunities for residents and visitors to better understand the background and significance of the local river heritage.

Historical Connections

The Allegheny Valley communities are rich in history and boast two (2) sites on the National Register of Historic Places, including the Rachel Carson Homestead and the Allegheny River Lock and Dam #3 (also known as

C.W. Bill Young Lock and Dam). The Rachel Carson Homestead, located in the Borough of Springdale, is the birthplace and childhood home of Rachel Carson, who as many know was a writer and ecologist whose 1962 book, *Silent Spring*, helped propel the environmental movement. There is strong sense of community pride for this historical figure, and her legacy can carry on through educational programming and community celebrations, as well as through the use of sustainable development measures for future improvements.

The Allegheny Lock and Dam #3 was built in 1932 and is located in Harmar Township and Plum Township. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on April 21, 2000

Recreation

Recreational opportunities for Allegheny Valley communities abound through existing amenities and planned trail alignments ultimately leading to the area as a potential Trail Town destination. The Rachel Carson Trail exists as an unimproved hiking trail located north and west of Pittsburgh, spanning approximately 35.7 miles from Harrison Hills County Park to North Park, with a spur leading down to the Rachel Carson Homestead in Springdale. Rachel Carson Riverfront Park is located in Cheswick Borough and has public parking as well as amenities including a pavilion, gazebo, walking track and fishing pier.

The communities are located along the proposed alignment of the Erie to Pittsburgh Greenway, which incorporates both planned and existing trail systems along the Allegheny River such as the Three Rivers Heritage Trail. The Pittsburgh to Harrisburg Main Line Canal Greenway is a 320 mile corridor that follows the historic path of the Main Line Canal System and includes an interconnected system of paths, trails, scenic roadways and corridors. The intersection of the Erie to Pittsburgh Greenway and the Pittsburgh to Harrisburg Main Line Canal Greenway is located adjacent to the Allegheny Valley communities, which creates an exciting opportunity to draw trail users and resources to local businesses.

Currently, the Three Rivers Heritage Trail is built and open from downtown Pittsburgh to Millvale. The future alignment of this trail through the communities of Harmar, Cheswick, Springdale Borough and Springdale Township can complement a series of local trails. Rachel Carson Riverfront Park could serve as a Three Rivers Heritage Trail trailhead.

Allegheny Islands State Park is in Allegheny County in Harmar Township, just southwest of the borough of Cheswick. Established in 1980, the park is composed of three alluvial islands in the middle of the Allegheny River northeast of Pittsburgh.

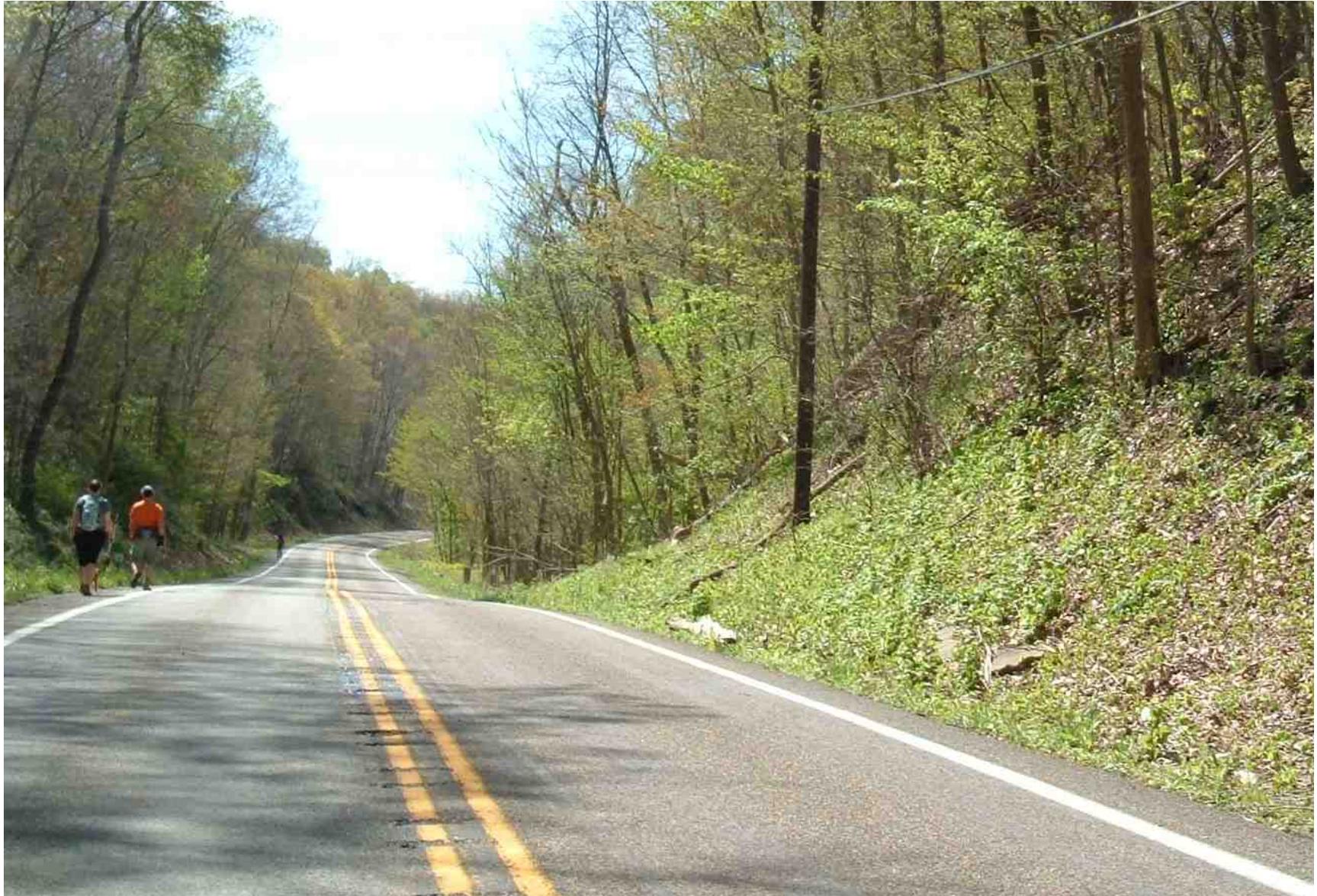
The islands have a total area of 43 acres (0.17 km²), with one island upstream of Lock and Dam No. 3, and the other two downstream. The park is undeveloped so there are no facilities available for the public. At this time there are no plans for future development.

Allegheny Islands is accessible by boat only. Group camping (such as with Scout Groups or church groups) is permitted on the islands with written permission from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Allegheny Islands State Park is administered from the Park Region 2 Office in Prospect, Pennsylvania

Water recreation - Private marina access points are located along the Allegheny riverfront, including the Cheswick and Springdale marinas.

Sustainability

As Rachel Carson's Silent Spring drove the modern environmental movement, the Allegheny Valley communities have an opportunity to use ecologically sustainable building and development practices to set the tone and inspire other local communities. Municipalities should promote the use of green building techniques and upgrades to existing building stock. The development of infill sites near existing business districts over brown fields should be encouraged and incentivized wherever possible. These green building practices will also produce long-term cost savings for residents and municipalities alike. By collaborating as a region, the Allegheny Valley communities can pool resources and pursue strategies that improve the efficiency and effectiveness of municipal services and improve the overall quality of life.



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The First Step

Creating a Comprehensive Plan is an important milestone in the process of working towards future success and cooperation in the Allegheny Valley communities. In order to implement many of the recommendations in this plan, the communities will have to work together in new and innovative ways. This Plan seeks to maintain consistency with Allegheny County's Allegheny Places. While cooperation between governments is of the utmost importance, a unifying organization should be established to undertake the implementation of the plan on a day-to-day and week-to-week basis. A Community Development Corporation (CDC) encompassing the Allegheny Valley Communities can serve to fill this organizational need.

A CDC is a non-profit community-based development organization engaged in the promotion, development and revitalization of its member communities. The CDC has representatives of its community on its Board of Directors and undertakes projects related to recreation, housing, economic and commercial development in coordination with the community and other organizations.

CDCs have the power to blend public and private resources to find unique, comprehensive solutions for their communities.

A CDC is legally the same as any other non-profit entity organized under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Local residents that are interested in forming a CDC should get together and develop a set of by-laws, file for incorporation with their state government and once that is completed apply to the federal Internal Revenue Service for designation as a tax exempt non-profit organization. The IRS designation is necessary in order for your organization to obtain grants and gifts from any government, corporate, foundation sources or from individuals. There is no national entity that certifies an organization as a CDC.

Getting Started

A CDC starts with a vision. In the case of the Allegheny Valley communities, this vision is laid out in the following pages of this Comprehensive Plan. Although a CDC is separate from local governments, the Allegheny Valley communities will be able to identify a group of 5 to 15 concerned, interested community members who can serve as the steering committee for the new CDC.

The steering committee may need assistance in creating articles of incorporation, filing with the state or forming a board of directors. The committee may be able to reach out to a local attorney or utilize the resources of local institutions like the Robert Morris University Bayer Center for Nonprofit Management.

- Once organized, this steering committee can utilize the Comprehensive Plan to undertake the process of forming the CDC itself. They will need to define goals and purposes of the organization, decide on a name and develop a mission statement.
- The steering committee should fill out Incorporation forms and file with the State of Pennsylvania Department of State. By-laws and an organizational constitution should be created next.
- The steering committee will next guide the formation of a board of directors (usually an odd number of people with at least half made up of community residents). From the board of directors, officers will be selected: chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary and treasurer.
- Because the CDC will want to seek funding from foundations, corporations and government institutions, it should file for tax-exempt status with the Internal Revenue Service. This is commonly referred to as 501(c)(3).

Moving Forward

The board of directors should set regular meeting times and places. In the early months and years, it may be useful to house the CDC in a local government office or set up a way to share resources with a local government (e.g. phone number, office space, paper, photocopying and faxing).

In the early months and years, it will be helpful to understand how successful CDCs in the region have overcome challenges and harnessed opportunities. Creating an inventory of successful CDCs as well as other organizations who could offer advice and expertise will help the new CDC to guide itself towards early success.

Fundraising

Financial resources can be scarce in the early stages of development of a CDC. Although it is, at its heart, a charitable activity, fundraising is a competitive process due to the lack of resources. Success builds on success. Early projects that are completed largely with sweat equity through the support of local business and government can help create a track record of success that will make grant applications stronger.

Staff

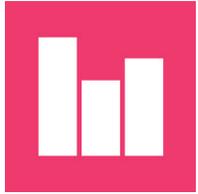
Initially full or part-time staff may be a possibility for the new CDC or support from member communities could make hiring a staff member possible at the outset. If it is not possible to have paid staff, it will be up to the board of directors and volunteers to implement projects. Building organizational capacity and funds to hire staff should be a priority.

The Pittsburgh region has an active nonprofit and foundation community in addition to strong local governments and a rich offering of higher education. The new CDC will be able to harness each of these sectors to help build organizational capacity and understand the challenges that lie ahead.

- Interns or entry-level staff can be found at a number of local schools
 - University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public and International Affairs
 - Robert Morris University Bayer Center for Nonprofit Management
- Local CDCs can offer advice and possibly mentorship
 - South Side Local Development Corporation
 - Bloomfield Garfield Corporation
- Nonprofit organizations operating locally can help guide and implement specific programs or projects
 - Pennsylvania Environmental Council
 - CONNECT
- Foundations can provide a source of funding for target projects
 - The Pittsburgh Foundation
 - The Heinz Endowments
- Assistance and grants from government organizations can provide funds in needed areas
 - Allegheny County Department of Economic and Community Development

Initial Project

Some of the Actions laid out in this Comprehensive Plan will be undertaken by the local governments of member communities or other partners. The remaining Actions will be priorities for the CDC. The board of directors should hold a retreat with potential partners, stakeholders and residents to establish priorities and identify a project that can be successfully completed with little or no support from outside of the community. This project may be an Action in itself or a step towards completing an Action. The benefit of involving potential partners and stakeholders is that they can contribute time, money and volunteer effort to make the project a success. Other activities can be undertaken concurrently if they will not overwhelm the existing organizational capacity of the CDC. As successes are realized, more projects can be undertaken and the Plan's Actions can be reevaluated and reprioritized.



Economic Development

Market Trends

Tourism

Tourism is the second largest industry in Pennsylvania and has continued to increase annually despite the economic recession. For example, in 2009 an estimated 2.6 million visitors stayed overnight in the Laurel Highlands and another 4.7 million visited for the day.

Research has determined that across the board outdoor recreational activities, both passive and active, are growing in large measure due to the baby boomer generation. Nearing retirement in better health and more active than previous generations, the 45-65 age group have made heritage and eco-tourism significant economic engines for many regions across the country; regions that had heretofore not focused on natural resources as economic assets. Outdoor Industry Foundation recently reported that outdoor recreation contributes \$730 billion each year to the US economy, supporting 6.5 million jobs.

Economic Development Goal:

Promote economic opportunities and development while maintaining and valuing community character.

Economic Development Objectives:

- Prioritize development and redevelopment in accordance with Allegheny County development policies and existing development patterns
- Support and recruit employers
- Attract investment and tourism by enhancing cultural, environmental, educational and historic resources
- Promote an efficient transit system to provide access to jobs

River Recreation

Kayaking is one of the top ten adventure activities for baby boomers, following fresh or saltwater fishing, biking, hiking and motorcycling. According to the Outdoor Industry Association 17.8 million Americans participated in kayaking, canoeing and rafting in 2008, with 7.8 million paddling kayaks alone. These paddlers made 174 million outings, averaging 10 days per participant. Approximately 47 percent of kayakers make it out on the water one to three times per year.

The Outdoor Industry Association names the number one reason for people not going kayaking more often is simply the lack of time, though the top reason for going is for relaxation. Outdoor and adventure retail is estimated to be a \$20 billion a year industry, with 149 million outdoor enthusiasts checking out all the best new gear and outdoor adventure technology progressive growth in the future will be outstanding. The Travel Industry Association of America claims 55.1 million Americans are “Geotourists”, interested in sustainable and eco-tourism, including adventure tourism activities like kayaking and canoeing. This trend is growing by approximately 10 per cent every year.

The number of Americans who participate in outdoor recreation activities:

Wildlife Viewing	66 million
Bicycling	60 million
Trails	56 million
Camping	45 million
Fishing	33 million
Paddling	24 million
Snow sports	16 million
Hunting	13 million

The economic impact of trail and river users is well researched and has repeatedly been objectively quantified. A chart from the national Rails-to Trails organization outlines some of the studies available on the economic impact of trails throughout the country, rural as well as urban areas, long distance and shorter distance trails.

Trail User Comparison Chart

Trail, state and date of survey report	Total respondents	Survey distribution method	Local/non-local	Majority reason for using the Trail	Age of majority of respondents	Average \$ amount spent on soft goods by trail user	% purchasing soft goods	Annual # of total user visits	Annual soft goods total	Resources
Ghost Town Trail, Pa., 2009	441	self-selecting, return mail	65% local 35% non-local	Health	46-65	\$13.62	72%	75,600	\$741,364	<i>Ghost Town Trail 2009 User Survey and Economic Analysis; Rails-to-Trails Conservancy.</i>
Pine Creek Rail Trail, Pa., 2006	1049	self-selecting, return mail	31% local 69% non-local	recreation	56-65	\$30.30	86%	138,227	\$3,601,919	<i>Pine Creek Rail Trail 2006 User Survey and Economic Analysis; Rails-to-Trails Conservancy.</i>
Perkiomen Trail, Pa., 2008	694	self-selecting, return mail	76% local 24% non-local	health	46-55	\$11.09	53%	397,814	\$2,338,231	<i>Perkiomen Trail 2008 User Survey and Economic Analysis; Rails to Trails Conservancy.</i>
Schuylkill River Trail, Pa., 2009	1223	self-selecting, return mail	80% local 20% non-local	health	46-55	\$9.07	50%	800,000	\$3,628,000	<i>Schuylkill River Trail 2009 User Survey and Economic Analysis; Rails to Trails Conservancy</i>
Heritage Rail Trail County Park, Pa., 2007	220	self-selecting, return mail & drop off	73% local 27% non-local	health	56-65	\$12.86	79%	394,823	\$4,011,165	<i>Heritage Rail Trail County Park 2007 User Survey and Economic Impact Analysis; Carl Knoch, York County Rail-Trail Authority.</i>
Oil Heritage Region Trail System, Pa., 2006	261	self-selecting	73% local 27% non-local	health	46-55	\$3.71 local / \$32.93 non-local (includes lodging/camping)	NA	160,792	\$4,308,229	<i>Trail Utilization Study: Analysis of the Trail Systems Within the Oil Heritage Region; Allegheny Valley Trails Association, 2006.</i>
Lower Trail, Pa., 2007	485	self-selecting	94% local 6% non-local	health	56-65	\$27.21 (included gasoline costs & trail donations)	NA	NA	NA	<i>Trail User Survey Report, The Lower Trail; Rails to Trails of Central Pennsylvania, 2008.</i>
Great Allegheny Passage, Pa./Md., 2009	1272	intercepts	69% local 31% non-local	health	45-54	\$13.00	67%	NA	NA	<i>2008 Trail Town Economic Impact Study (Phase II: Trail User Survey), Progress Fund and Laurel Highlands Visitor Bureau; 2009.</i>
Torrey C. Brown Trail, Md., (formerly the NCR Trail), 2005	767	self-selecting	96% local 4% non-local	health	46-55	\$9.14	72%	800,000	\$5,264,640	<i>NCR Trail 2004 User Survey and Economic Impact Analysis; Trail Facts, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, 2004.</i>
Virginia Creeper Trail, Va., 2004	1036	intercept	47% local 53% non-local	health	46-55	\$19.20 (based on total \$ amount); \$2.00 (based only on local users)	NA	130,172	\$2,500,000	<i>The Virginia Creeper Trail: An Assessment of User Demographics, Preferences, and Economics; Virginia Dept. of Conservation, 2004.</i>
Washington & Old Dominion Railroad Regional Park, Va., 2004	1426	intercept	95% local 5% non-local	health	46-55	\$4.11	NA	1,707,353	\$7,000,000	<i>The Washington & Old Dominion Trail: An Assessment of User Demographics, Preferences, and Economics; Virginia Dept. of Conservation, 2004.</i>
Genesee Valley Trail, N.Y., 2009	233	self-selecting, return mail	92% local 8% non-local	health	46-55	\$10.83	31%	NA	NA	<i>Preliminary Results for the 2008 Trail User Survey, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, February 2009.</i>
North & South County Trail, N.Y., 2009	257	self-selecting, return mail	95% local 5% non-local	health	46-55	\$10.31	25%	NA	NA	<i>Preliminary Results for the 2008 Trail User Survey, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, February 2009.</i>
East Bay Bicycle Path, R.I., 2002	244	intercept & mail	NA	health	46-55	NA	80%	NA	NA	<i>2002 Bicycle Transportation User Survey; Developing Inter-modal Connections for The 21st Century. U. of R.I. and R.I. DOT for U. of R.I. Transportation Center, 2004.</i>
William C. O'Neil Bike Path, R.I. (formerly South County Trail), 2002	141	intercept & mail	NA	health	46-55	NA	84%	NA	NA	<i>2002 Bicycle Transportation User Survey; Developing Inter-modal Connections for The 21st Century. U. of R.I. and R.I. DOT for U. of R.I. Transportation Center, 2004.</i>

According to a 2006 Outdoor Industry Foundation Study:

- More Americans camp than play basketball.
- The number of Americans who bicycle is double the population of Canada.
- More Americans paddle (kayak, canoe, raft) than play soccer.
- Active outdoor recreation employs five times more Americans than Wal-Mart.

Many of the communities along the GAP have realized new investment from the trail but this is not the only asset available. The Youghiogheny River and newly improved Yough Park offer additional attractions for visitors.

Economic Effects of River Recreation

The Northern Forest Canoe Trail Association has worked with communities along a water trail traversing New York, Vermont, Quebec, New Hampshire and Maine to develop amenities and to



recognize the trail as an economic driver. Results of a survey indicate that approximately 90,000 visitors paddled the waterways in the six study regions. Their spending in local communities created \$12 million in total economic impacts, supporting about 280 jobs. The median paddler group spent about \$215 per trip, primarily at lodging establishments, restaurants, grocery stores, and service stations. Non-locals spent an average of \$414-498 per trip, or \$46 per person per day.

Communities with developed tourism infrastructure situated close to well-traveled waterways appear most successful at capturing visitor dollars. Although land and water trails are most used in warmer weather months, the opportunities for tourism attraction to the Allegheny Valley Communities are year-round.



Prospective Market Opportunities

Specific business opportunities have been identified appealing to the outdoor recreational market in particular but clearly of interest to other markets as well through previous planning efforts and community assessments and dialogue indicate these gaps in existing services:

Lodging

The potential demand for a boutique style hotel or bed and breakfast should be investigated. This hotel style is generally considered to be fewer than 100 rooms and not associated with a national chain. These types of hotels, along with bed and breakfasts have a proven appeal for the market demographic associated with trail and river recreational users.

Attractive, well-run bed and breakfasts in the area should be strongly encouraged and an aggressive campaign to attract a boutique hotel operator could be a high priority for the community.

Food and Drink

There are several bars and restaurants in Allegheny Valley, Fine dining, white-table dining establishments, deli shop, specialty coffee shop, wineries and micro-brewery establishments have been shown to have great appeal for trail users. Trail users also have shown preference for local and organically grown foods.

Local foods have been shown to make up five out of the 20 top food trends in a National Restaurant Association survey of chefs. More people than from any other time in recent history are now thinking about where their food comes from. Successful, growing restaurants understand this phenomenon and are reacting accordingly. Opportunities are here for producers- local farmers; farm to table marketing.

Trail User Services

Lodging and food and drink are the most frequently needed trail services but research has also demonstrated that significant amounts of visitor spending occurs in local arts and crafts shops, gift shops and galleries and

antique stores. This data fits quite nicely with retail studies that show similar demographics for those services and shops with that of outdoor recreational users. Those retailers though must be prepared for this market and recognize that shipping services is a necessity should they wish to capitalize on the potential.

Recreational Tourism

With the recognition of the growing recreational market, and given its location and vehicular access, the Allegheny Valley communities can easily focus on growing this market and build on the increase in visitation to local attractions. Keep in mind that visitors represent potential investors and Cumberland Maryland and Confluence Pennsylvania can quantifiably demonstrate that point.

Consider packaging with other trail town businesses and other nearby attractions. Convene a meeting of marketing expertise representing these potential partners and specifically inquire how the communities and their assets can contribute to itineraries, existing visitor packages, cooperative advertising, marketing initiatives related to outdoor events and bike and river activities. Aggressively solicit input from outfitters and tour operators. Encourage bed and breakfast and camping development (factor in Marcellus Shale driller needs as well). Examine zoning and other restrictions that might make this type of development difficult and address alternatives. The creation of a Bike Loop developed and marketed through the CDC could be a great connecting piece to encourage trail users to travel through town; encourage its wide distribution.

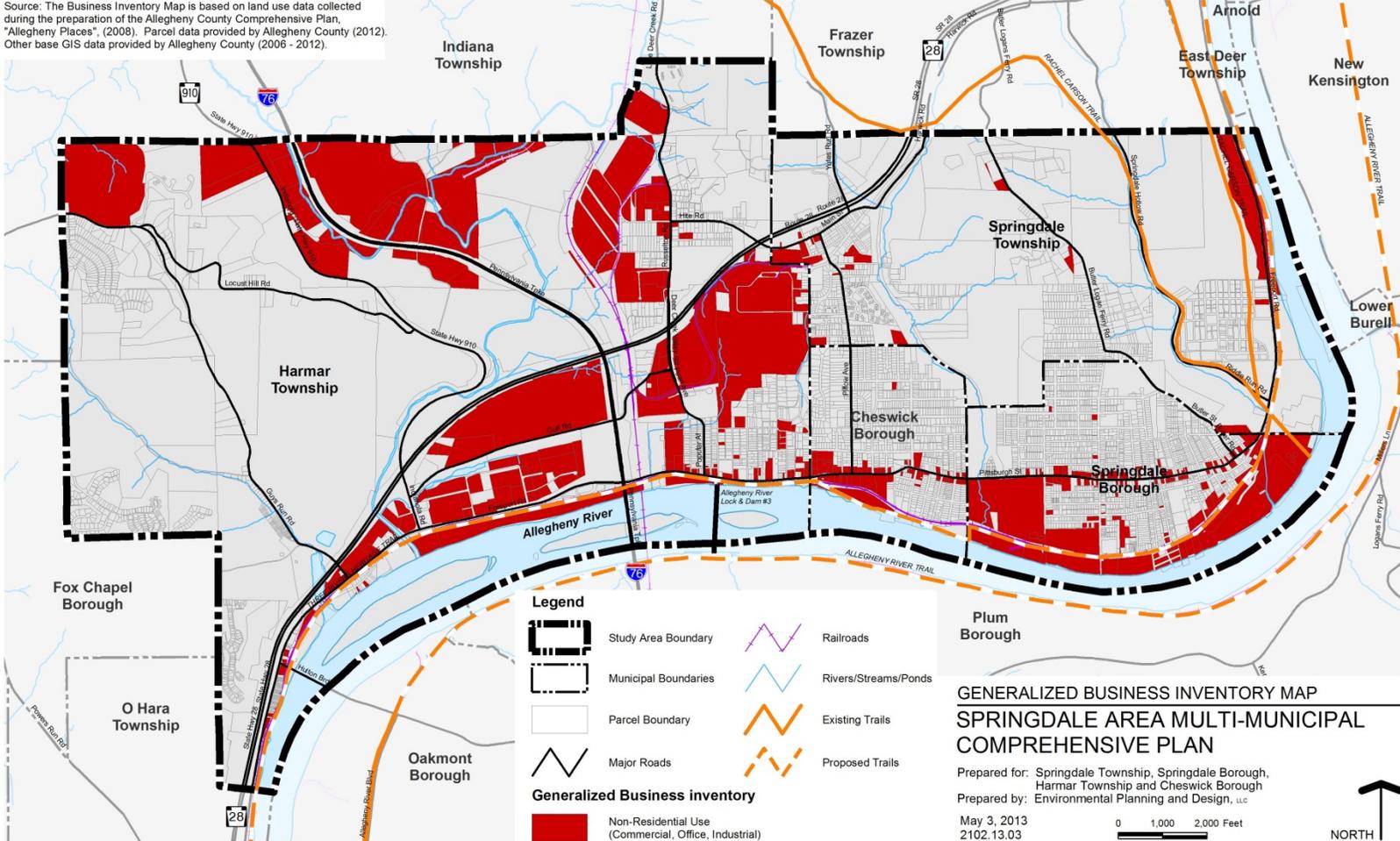
Heritage Tourism/Arts and Culture

Heritage tourists appreciate culture, art and historic buildings. A community with a story to tell and one that can tell it with art and culture is much sought after. Heritage signs and self-guided walking tour could be developed by the CDC and would be excellent attractions. Murals, public art on and near the local trails add to the “story.” Capitalize on the burgeoning cultural and arts initiatives. Explore the motorcoach market. Consider possible retail sites for antique shops. Coffee shops, micro-breweries in historic buildings, wineries and restaurants and taverns with outdoor dining, will appeal to both eco-tourists as well as those visitors interested in arts, culture and heritage and the demographics are often the same.

Buy Local

Travel across the country to smaller rural communities is expected to reach record levels in the next few years. Visitors to small towns want to do more than watch an event; they want to be part of it and they want their spending to be part of something larger. The Buy Local; Shop Local credo is becoming a way of life for people and shows every sign of growing. The communities should participate in Buy Local initiatives and should market those initiatives aggressively. Encourage restaurants to feature locally grown produce and meats and retail to feature local products.

Source: The Business Inventory Map is based on land use data collected during the preparation of the Allegheny County Comprehensive Plan, "Allegheny Places", (2008). Parcel data provided by Allegheny County (2012). Other base GIS data provided by Allegheny County (2006 - 2012).





Resources

Natural resources include sensitive environmental features, natural recreational resources, and cultural resources. The Future Land Use Plan targets development to take advantage of these places, with the intent of limiting development in designated areas. Future development in many sensitive areas must be consistent with the goal of conserving environmentally sensitive features. Except for agricultural, recreational and resource-based enterprises, there should be no new commercial or industrial uses in these areas.

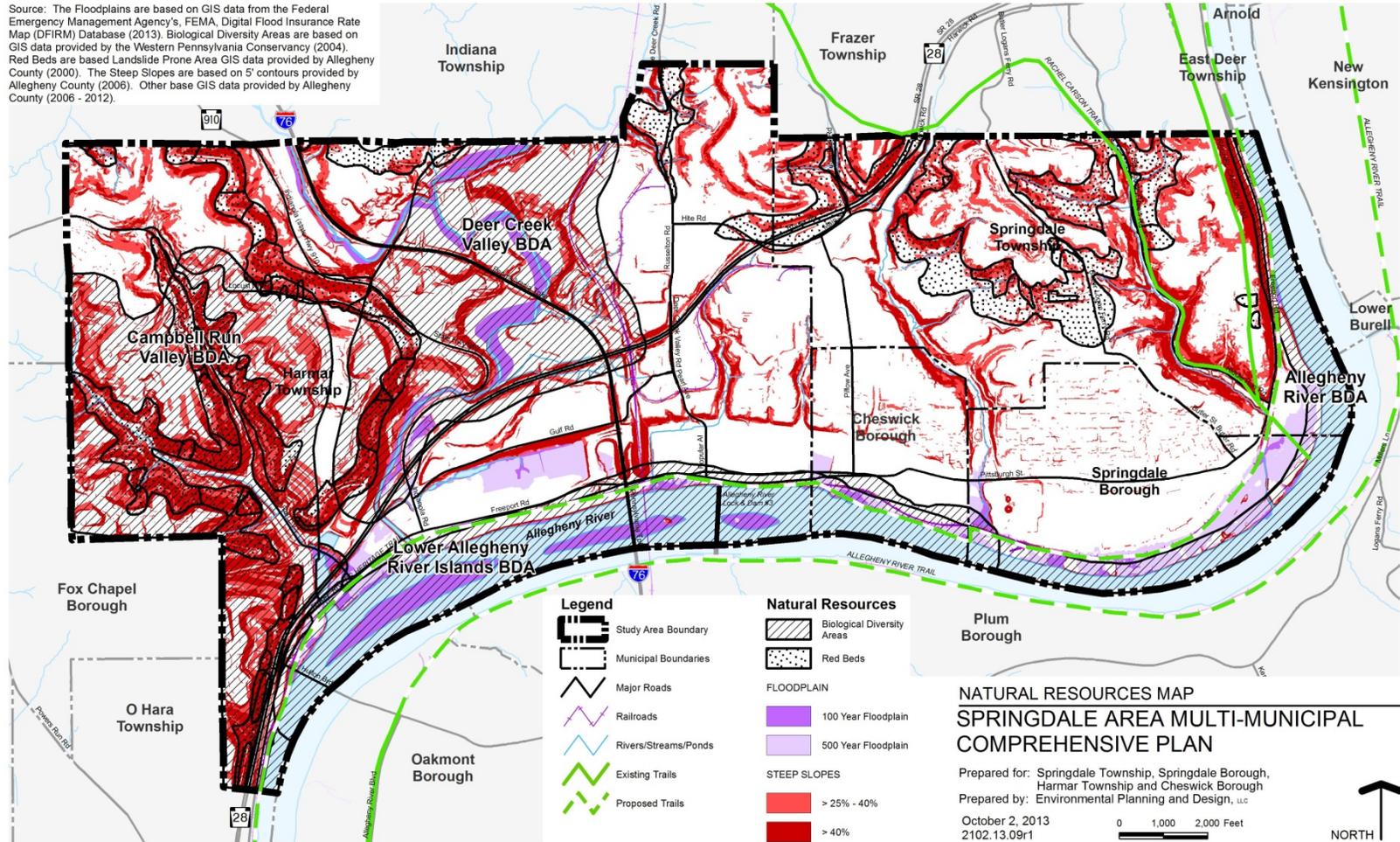
Resources Goal:

Facilitate the protection, promotion and enhancement of natural, civic and recreation resources.

Resources Objectives:

- Promote and protect the County's historic and cultural resources
- Utilize cultural resources as a tool to stimulate economic development
- Implement a strategy to establish greenways to provide connections and encourage protection of natural resources
- Expand and protect the parks and trails system to serve current and future populations
- Protect ecologically sensitive areas such as wooded steep slopes, stream headwaters, woodlands and wildlife corridors
- Encourage development that is compatible with existing development patterns to minimize impacts to green fields.

Source: The Floodplains are based on GIS data from the Federal Emergency Management Agency's, FEMA, Digital Flood Insurance Rate Map (DFIRM) Database (2013). Biological Diversity Areas are based on GIS data provided by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (2004). Red Beds are based Landslide Prone Area GIS data provided by Allegheny County (2000). The Steep Slopes are based on 5' contours provided by Allegheny County (2006). Other base GIS data provided by Allegheny County (2006 - 2012).



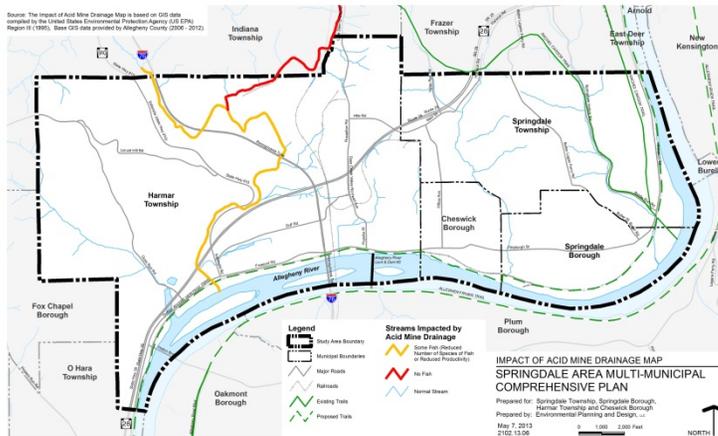
Biological Diversity Areas

The Allegheny County Natural Heritage Inventory identifies and maps important biotic and ecological resources that make up the natural heritage of Allegheny County. These areas, which include Biological Diversity Areas (BDA), provide habitat for a great diversity of plants and animals, including rare, threatened and endangered species. Natural heritage areas also provide scenic and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. In addition to this classification system, each area has been assigned one of three County significance ranks of either 'Exceptional', 'High' or 'Notable'. The significance rankings have been used to set priorities for protection.

BDAs are:

- Natural or human influenced habitat that harbor one or more occurrences of plants or animals recognized as state or national species of special concern,
- Areas that possess a high diversity of native species of plants and animals, or
- Areas that support a rare or exemplary natural community, including the highest quality and least disturbed examples of relatively common community types.

#	SITE NAME	Description	Significance
1	Deer Creek Valley BDA	High community and species diversity with Robust Emergent Marsh, Mesic Central Forest, Floodplain Forest, and a Dry-Mesic Acidic Central Forest community	exceptional
2	Lower Allegheny River Islands BDA	Section of Allegheny R. that represents pre-lock and dam conditions of the river, islands represent most natural of such features in county and contain a recovering Floodplain Forest community	high
3	Campbell Run Valley BDA	Relatively large, forested stream valley exhibiting a recovering Mesic Central Forest Community	high
4	Allegheny River BDA	Recovering river system that provides habitat for a number of animal species of special concern. River continues to be altered by effluent discharges, point source discharges, navigational locks and dams, and dredging of river bed	high



Abandoned Mines and Affected Streams

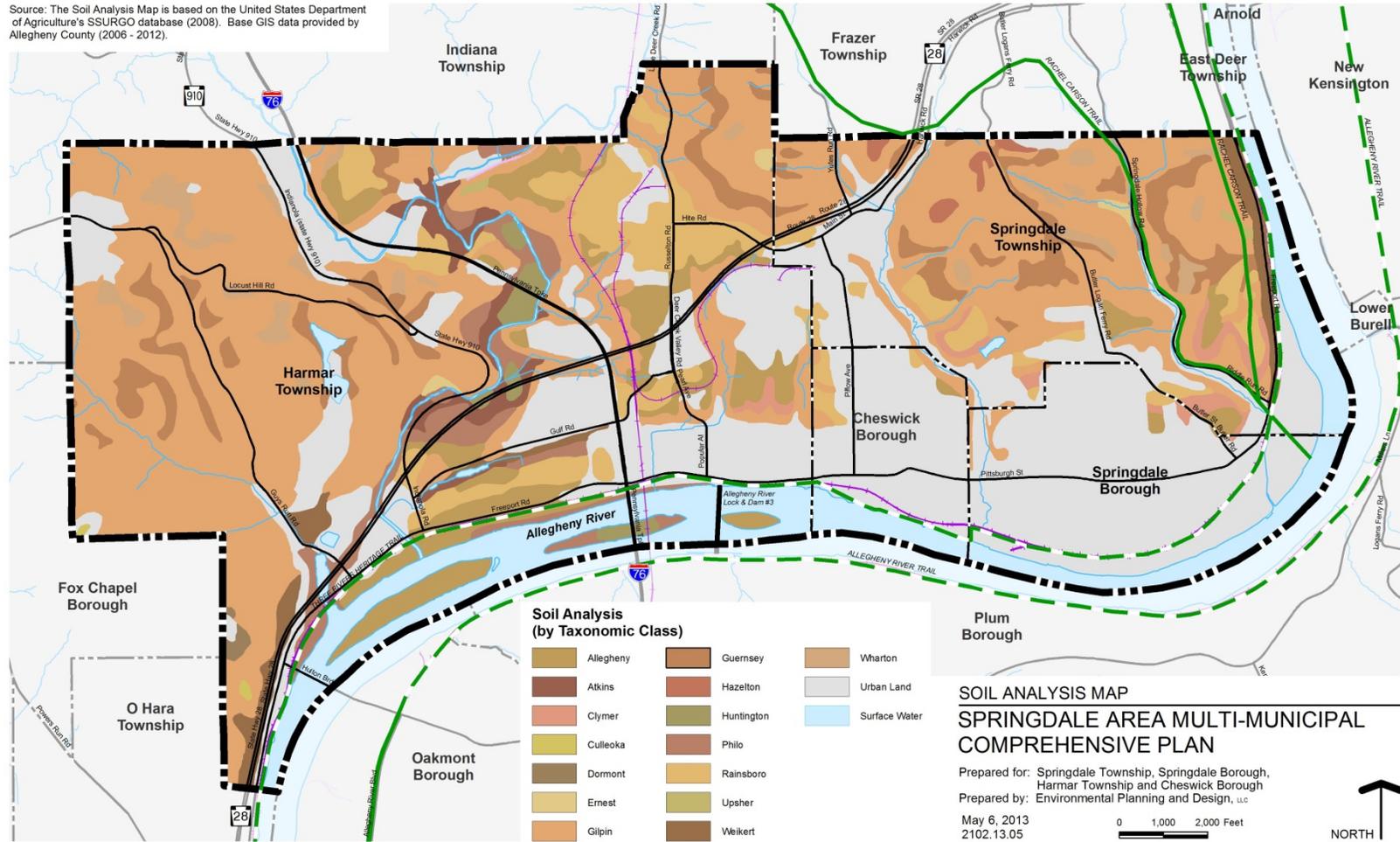
The majority of the surface operations and all deep mine operations in Allegheny County have been abandoned. Abandoned mines in the County have contributed to the pollution of area streams.

Abandoned mine drainage (AMD) is a serious problem, as evidenced by the large number of orange-colored streams. AMD occurs when water from abandoned coal mines seeps into streams, disrupting the ecology and water quality of the stream. AMD poisons aquatic life and renders the stream lifeless.

AMD results from the oxidation of metal sulfides (often pyrite) within rock and overburden after it is exposed to air and water. It is most often due to mining operations, both deep and surface. However, AMD can also occur where sulfide-bearing rock outcrops are naturally exposed or where sulfide-bearing rock is exposed in roadway cuts and excavations

Mine drainage from past mining operations is a serious and persistent problem, degrading both water quality and stream ecology. Properties on abandoned AMD streams have reduced potential for economic development and reduced property values.

Source: The Soil Analysis Map is based on the United States Department of Agriculture's SSURGO database (2008). Base GIS data provided by Allegheny County (2006 - 2012).



Much of the steeply sloped land is highly susceptible to landslides and rock falls. The red bed (claystones) is especially prone to slope failure. Very steep slopes in particular can be difficult and dangerous to develop. There are a number of potentially significant environmental impacts associated with disturbance of steep slopes, including:

- Difficulty of re-establishing vegetation
- Decreased stormwater run-off absorption rates
- Increased volume and velocity of stormwater runoff
- Increased potential for accelerated erosion
- Potential for landslides and rock falls
- Ugly scarification and other visual impacts

Special Use Parks

Special Use Parks are considered to be destination parks because they have a unique feature or attraction. Special Use Parks can be owned by municipalities, the County, or the State. Allegheny Islands State Park is in the Allegheny River, offshore of Harmar Township in northeastern Pittsburgh. It consists of three islands totaling 43 acres. The park is undeveloped and there are no public facilities. Group camping is permitted.

Trails

The Erie to Pittsburgh Greenway incorporates trail systems both built and planned along the Allegheny River, and overlaps the Pittsburgh to Harrisburg Mainline Canal Greenway™ within Allegheny County's borders. Trail organizations from Pittsburgh to Erie are working to connect a number of land trails to it. The concept for the Erie to Pittsburgh Greenway emerged from local communities and trail organizations. The success of other community and regional trails built in the western part of the Commonwealth over the years provided good models for the Erie to Pittsburgh Greenway. The Erie to Pittsburgh Greenway can unify the Western Pennsylvania Trail Network. This potential mega greenway will enhance the existing trail system, give it a regional identity, make additional connections, raise the visibility of individual trail projects in the region and elevate the value of recreational resources in local communities. Once the Erie to Pittsburgh regional trail system is completed, it can then connect to The Great Allegheny Passage, linking Erie to Washington, DC.

DCNR's second priority for greenways funding in western Pennsylvania is the Erie to Pittsburgh Greenway, a recently designated greenway in the PA Greenways Program.

Other County Trails

Other notable recreation trails in Allegheny County in various stages of development include the Rachel Carson Trail – a 35.7-mile long hiking trail that extends from Harrison Hills County Park to North Park. Although the physical trail exists, it is not protected by public easements or rights-of-way.

Water Trails

Water trails are another mode of travel and recreation in our region. Water trails are designed to provide safe non-motorized boat launches and easy shore access, maintain and respect the environment's natural character, and promote responsible use of our rivers. Water trails also:

- Improve docking facilities for both motorized and non-motorized boaters
- Provide opportunities for short-term access to communities and neighborhoods
- Connect communities
- Allow boaters a brief or long respite
- Water trails encourage low-impact use of the region's waterways and foster a strong sense of stewardship of the riverine environment.

The Three Rivers Water Trail is being coordinated by Friends of the Riverfront in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, which has the authority to designate Official Pennsylvania Water Trails. The Allegheny River has an official water trail designation. A challenge to small watercraft travel on these two rivers is the amount of barge traffic.

Riverfront Access

Allegheny County has an abundance of river frontage. Because of the region's steel industry heritage, over 45% of all river frontage is currently zoned for industrial use. In addition, Allegheny County has the second largest inland port in the country and relies heavily on river barge transportation. Planning for the redevelopment and development of the riverfront for greenways, trails, parks and other recreation and conservation uses must take into consideration other active uses of the rivers.

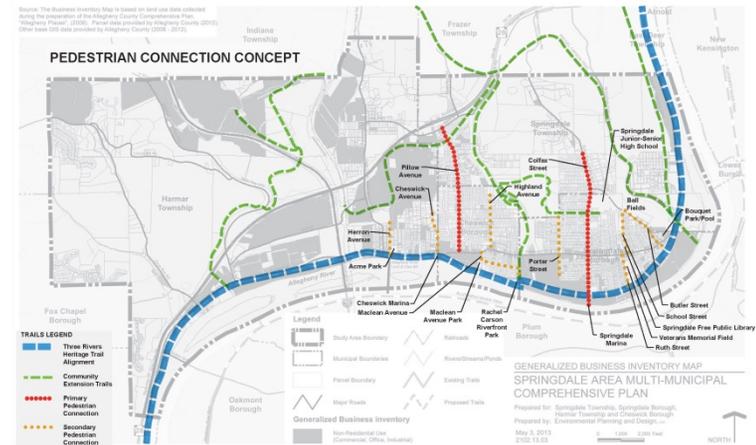
Outdoor Recreation

Recent studies across the country have shown that connecting communities to natural resources can provide opportunities for economic growth, increase the quality of life for local residents, raise property values and attract new business investment.

- Outdoor recreation contributes \$821 billion each year to the US economy, supporting 6.5 million jobs
- The yearly sale of gear and trips for outdoor recreation is greater than annual returns for other industries, like pharmaceutical and medicine manufacturing, legal services and power generation and supply
- In 2008, nearly 33% of US adults went boating at least once

By working together, the communities can implement collaborative solutions to work towards:

- Economic growth based on outdoor recreational services and businesses
- Community engagement that connects residents with healthy leisure activities through outdoor recreation
- Increased connectivity to the Allegheny River and local trails



River Recreation

Outdoor recreation is a booming segment of the US economy, particularly in waterfront destinations. The Allegheny River is an asset around which potential community and economic development can occur, and a resource worthy of protection and enhancement.

Trail Recreation

The majority of trail users are 35 and older, with a significant percentage age 45-54 and older. The household income levels of overnight trail users are significantly higher than average with nearly 35% earning over \$100,000 per year. The average daily expenditure of an overnight trail user is \$98; day trippers spend an average of \$13 per day.

Potential Actions

In conjunction with the newly formed CDC, the Allegheny Valley communities should facilitate collective action to support, enhance and expand outdoor recreation opportunities

- Create an atmosphere that supports river and outdoor recreation
 - Improve gateway signage and wayfinding
 - Create and install a series of banners highlighting the communities and their branding efforts, outdoor events and points of interest
 - Improve streetscapes in business districts that serve the riverfront
 - Produce and use window clings or other items to improve street level appearance of vacant or underutilized buildings
- Provide pedestrian and bike linkages to riverfront trails
 - Identify connectivity areas that can be created with volunteer labor. Leverage these efforts to support the implementation of additional linkages with grant, foundation and government funds
- Build a niche economic development strategy related to the Allegheny River
 - Hold educational workshops on topics such as effective marketing for leasing or selling a building,

- websites and social media for small businesses, and financing opportunities for new or expanding businesses
- Work with local organizations like the Duquesne University Small Business Development Center to promote and support small businesses—especially those associated with outdoor recreation
- Brand and promote the recreation experience
 - Design and implement the use of a logo
 - Create, maintain and promote a website dedicated to outdoor recreation opportunities
 - Consider the benefits of hiring and intern or part time employee to be shared by the communities who can organize events, update the website and social media sites and implement other marketing and branding strategies
- Encourage community involvement
 - Expand public events and offerings like a summer concert series or public art events
 - Encourage volunteerism in the communities' outdoor recreation spaces via civic organizations, school events and other programs

Historic Resources

Historic resources connect us, physically and emotionally, to the past and attract and educate residents and visitors alike. Historic and cultural resources give us our identity and give our communities their authenticity. Due to a rich history, this region has many historic and cultural resources that are recognized nationally.

Heritage Tourism

Pennsylvania has a Heritage Areas Program, administered by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), to keep the Commonwealth's historical legacy alive and thriving. The program is guided by five interrelated goals: Economic development, Recreation and open space, Partnerships, Education and interpretation, Cultural conservation.

The Allegheny River Lock and Dam No. 3 (also known as C.W. Bill Young Lock and Dam) in Harmar Township is a lock that was built in 1932. The lock and dam were built by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as a part of an extensive system of locks and dams to improve navigation along the Allegheny River. It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on April 21, 2000.

Rachel Carson Homestead, also known as Rachel Carson House, is a National Register of Historic Places site in Springdale. It is a five-room farmhouse which was the birthplace and childhood home of Rachel Carson, whose 1962 book *Silent Spring* launched the modern environmentalism movement. She wrote her influential book *Silent Spring* at her later life home in Maryland.

The homestead is managed by the Rachel Carson Homestead Association, a nonprofit organization established in 1975. The organization has established an ongoing Rachel Carson Legacy Challenge: challenging individuals, government, industry and institutions to lessen their ecological footprint through the Rachel Carson Legacy Challenge which uses Carson's environmental ethic as the benchmark for permanent and measurable change: - to live in harmony with nature - to preserve and learn from natural places - to minimize the impact of man-made chemicals on natural systems of the world - to consider the implications of human actions on the global web of life.

Other activities include annual events - Rachel's Sustainable Feast - a street fair with regional chefs showcasing local, sustainable foods, farmer's markets, environmental and conservation groups and eco-friendly vendors, and the Rachel Carson Legacy Conference which tackles today's issues of environment and health. The Rachel Carson Challenge, a 35 mile wilderness hike on the Saturday closest to the summer solstice, is in honor of Rachel Carson's contribution to the environment and passes through the Homestead. The Rachel Carson Trail is managed by the Rachel Carson Trails Conservancy.



Connectivity, Infrastructure and Facilities

The purpose of the Connectivity Plan is to maximize utilization of the existing transportation network, target new investment in the system for maximum return and provide all people equal access to growth opportunities

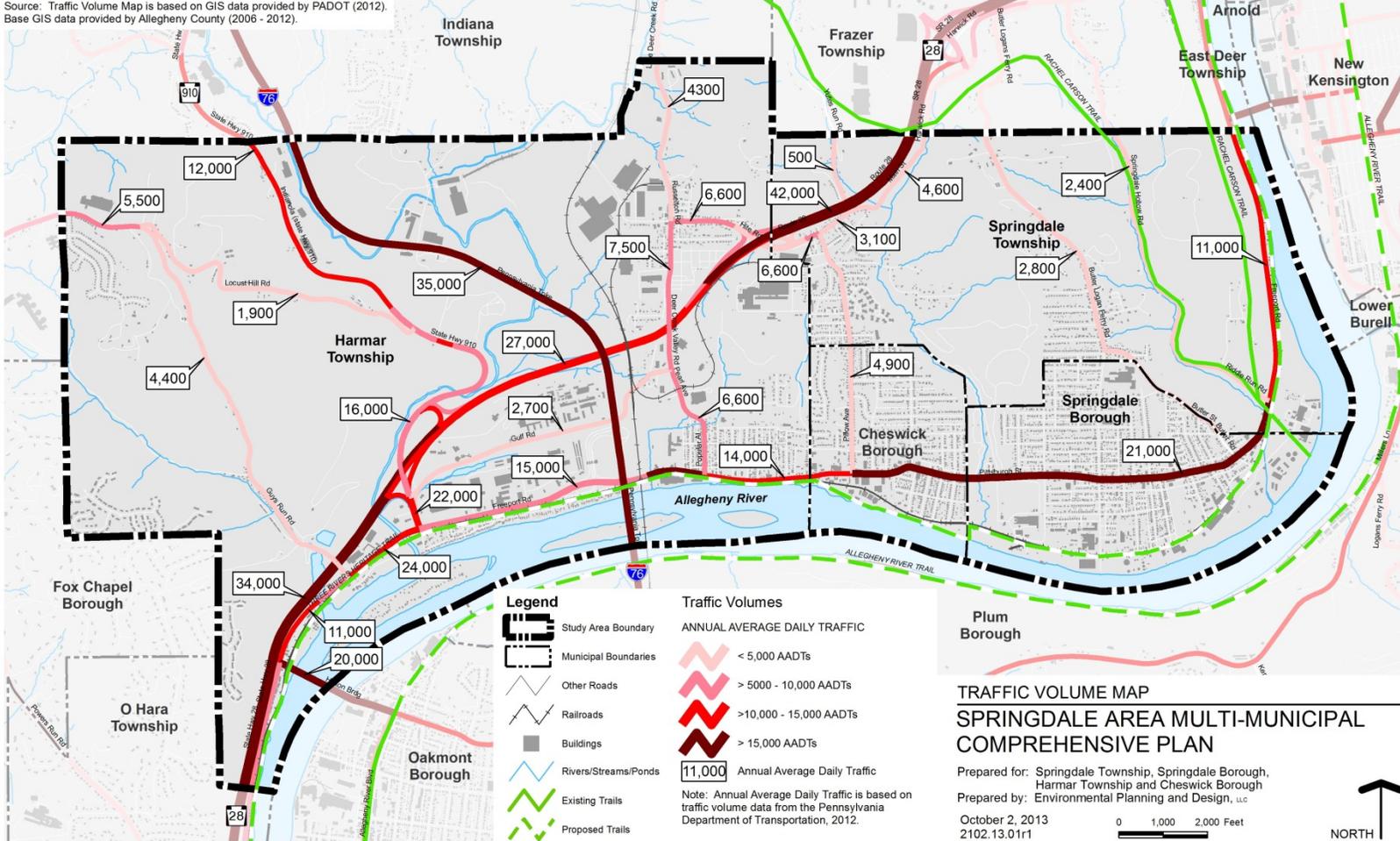
Connectivity, Infrastructure and Facilities Goal:

Use a balanced approach in the management of transportation, infrastructure, energy systems and access to public transportation.

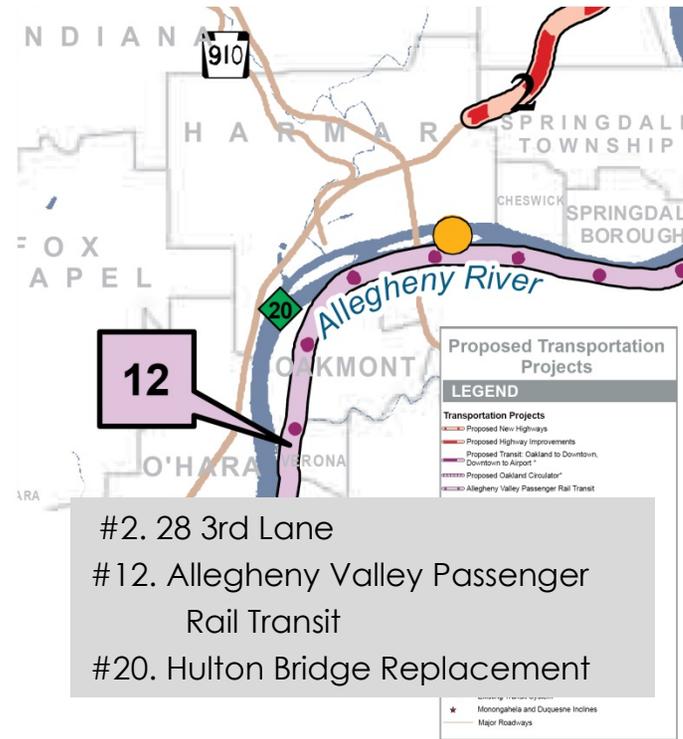
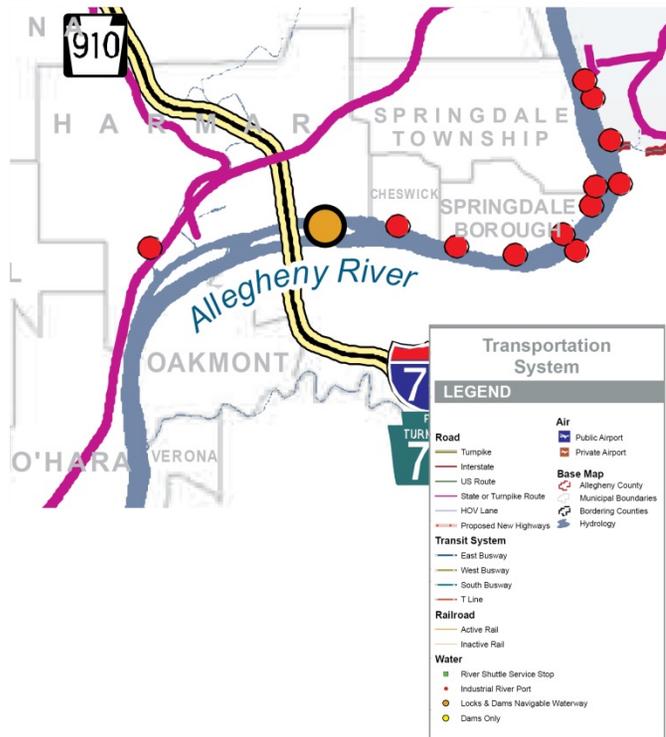
Connectivity, Infrastructure and Facilities Objectives:

- Evaluate the possibilities for multi-municipal cooperation in the provision of municipal services
- Provide efficient emergency-response services
- Support community access to public libraries
- Target transportation investments to support job and housing growth
- Use efficient and creating funding strategies such as public/private partnerships, privatization and leveraging current and future assets to complete strategic transportation upgrades
- Promote the use of public transit and facilitate the coordination of various transportation systems
- Prioritize the maintenance of existing transportation infrastructure within and across all modes of transportation
- Target transportation investments to support job and housing growth
- Provide access to the rivers for commercial and recreation uses
- Protect and enhance the quality and quantity of water resources
- Support planning and funding for utility extensions and improvements that are consistent with development patterns
- Assess the benefits of regionalization and shared utility assets
- Provide access to jobs

Source: Traffic Volume Map is based on GIS data provided by PADOT (2012).
 Base GIS data provided by Allegheny County (2006 - 2012).



Vehicular and River Transportation



The Allegheny Valley communities are strategically located in the region. It is critical to promote a safe and dependable transportation infrastructure with maximized inter-connectivity for people as well as all types of freight movements. We want the best functioning system we can achieve, which requires careful, thoughtful planning and investment. Planned transportation improvements include Route 28 third lane widening north of Harmarville- widening PennDOT; Harmarville to East Deer.

Transit-oriented development (TOD) is an important national land development trend that promotes:

- Compact, relatively dense development within walking distance of a transit station
- A '24/7' mix of uses – transit origins (housing) and destinations (jobs, retail, schools, medical, civic)
- A safe, interconnected and inviting pedestrian environment – sidewalks, plazas, lighting, signage, and building transparency at the street level
- A new approach to parking – less of it, shared wherever possible, and (except for curbside spaces) out of view
- TODs can reduce traffic congestion by providing expanded transportation options, and significantly increase ridership for the Port Authority.

A new state program, Transit Revitalization Investment District (TRID), has been established to help implement TODs. TRID is designed to:

- Integrate transit planning with other infrastructure, public facilities and private development
- Encourage intergovernmental collaboration
- Add legal powers and flexibility to create the best development on public land near the stations
- Provide opportunities for Tax Increment Financing and state funding and financial assistance

Allegheny County is one of the first areas in Pennsylvania to take advantage of the program. The County has developed recommendations for three TRID strategic areas: leave-alone territory, infill and investment zones, and strategic opportunity sites. The TRID program will be pursued for future TOD opportunities as well. The County will continue to work closely with the Port Authority to develop TOD Places, and target funding where it will have the greatest benefit.

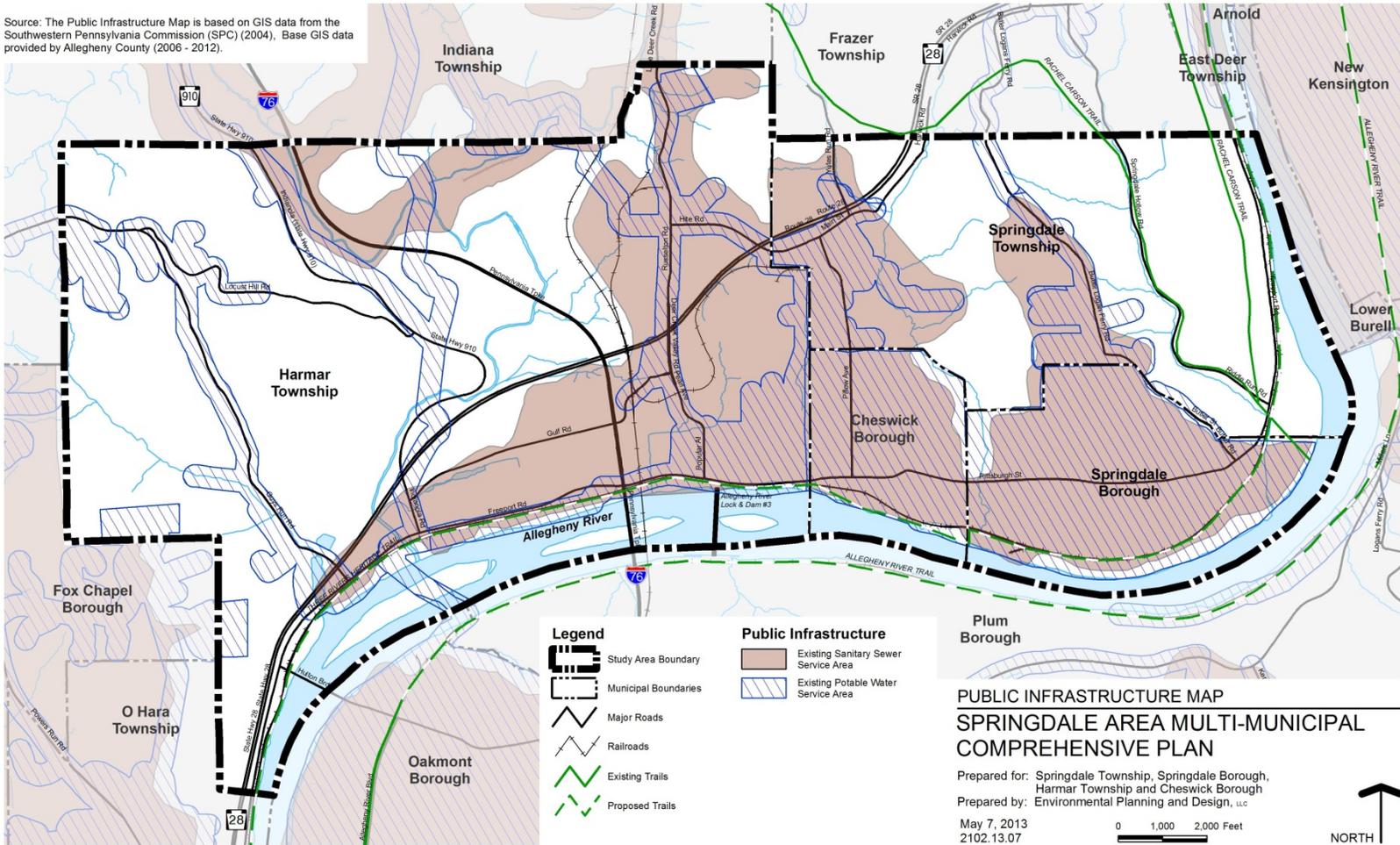
Springdale Township Park and Ride Lot

851 Parkway Drive off Pillow Avenue

Served by the P10 Allegheny Valley Flyer

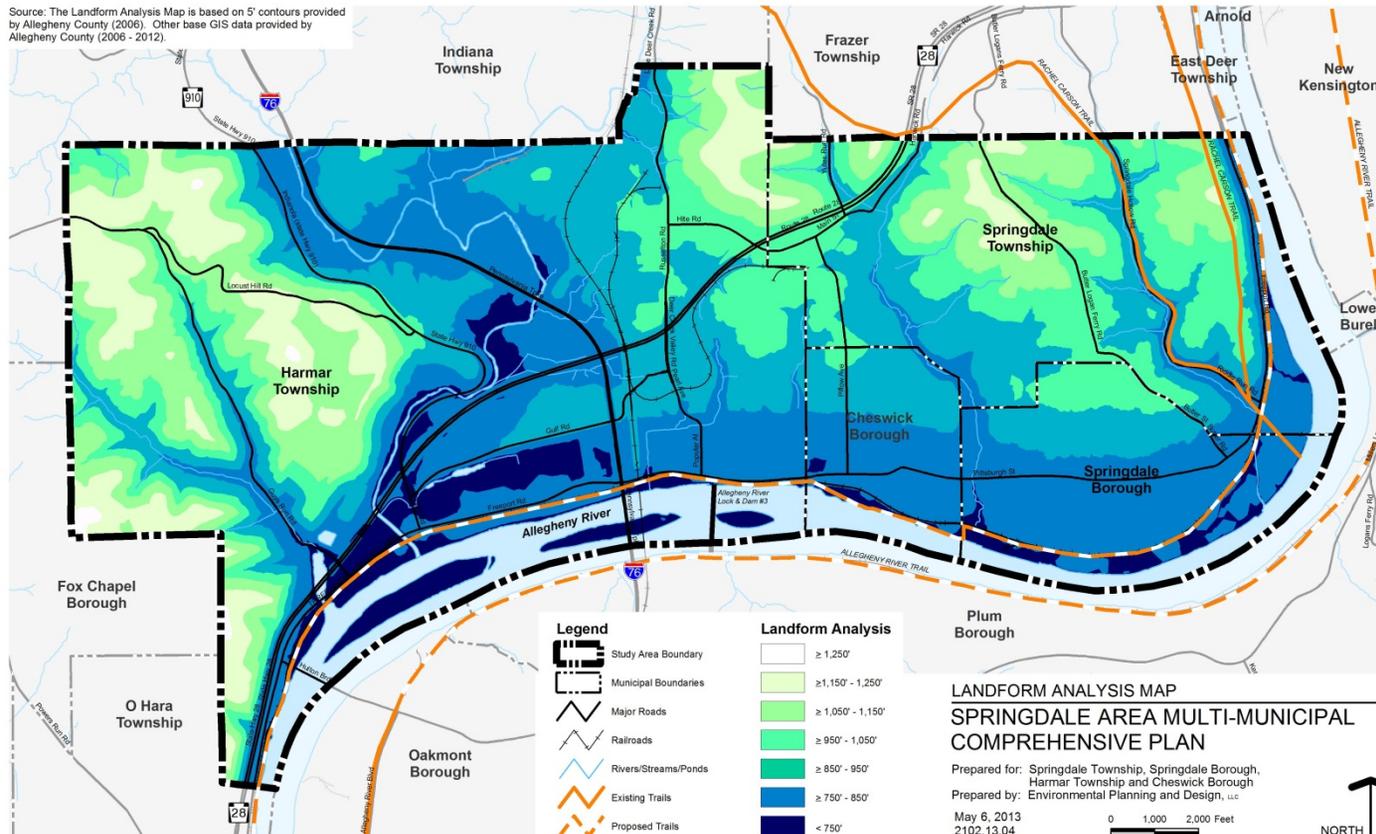
- Approximately 16 miles from Downtown Pittsburgh
- Service every 20 minutes during peak hours
- Weekday parking only
- 100 spaces available
- Fare to Downtown is \$3.75 (Zone 2)
- No parking fee

Source: The Public Infrastructure Map is based on GIS data from the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC) (2004). Base GIS data provided by Allegheny County (2006 - 2012).



Public Infrastructure

Areas not currently served by public water and sewer service are closely associated with steep slopes and more extreme landforms. Future development should be carefully considered and aligned with the expansion of public water and sewer service.



Pedestrian and Trail Connectivity

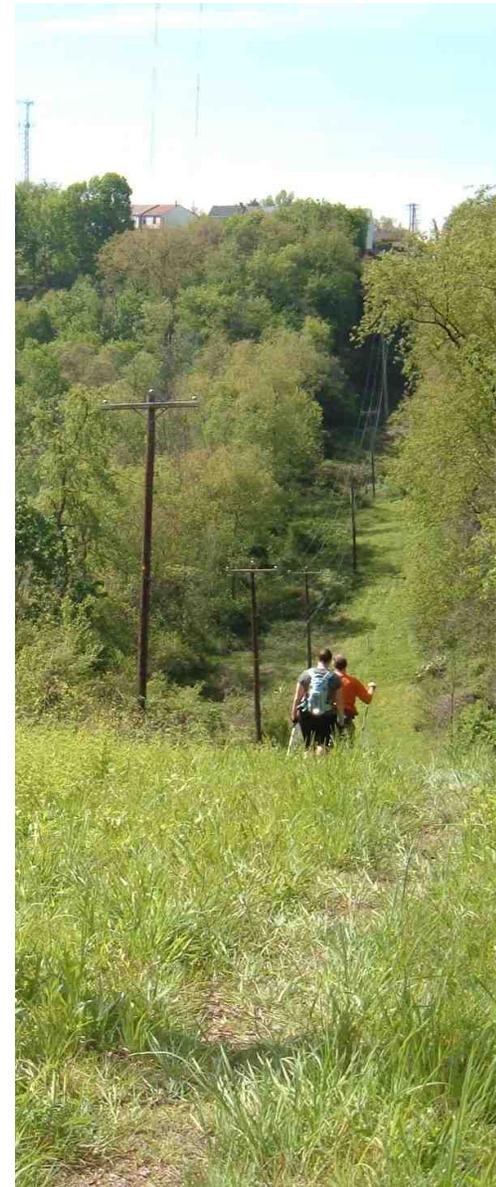
The Allegheny Valley communities have an abundance of natural and recreational resources. Pedestrian trail connections will be the key to realizing economic benefit from the trails. It is also the key to utilizing the trails for the benefit of residents.

Trail Users

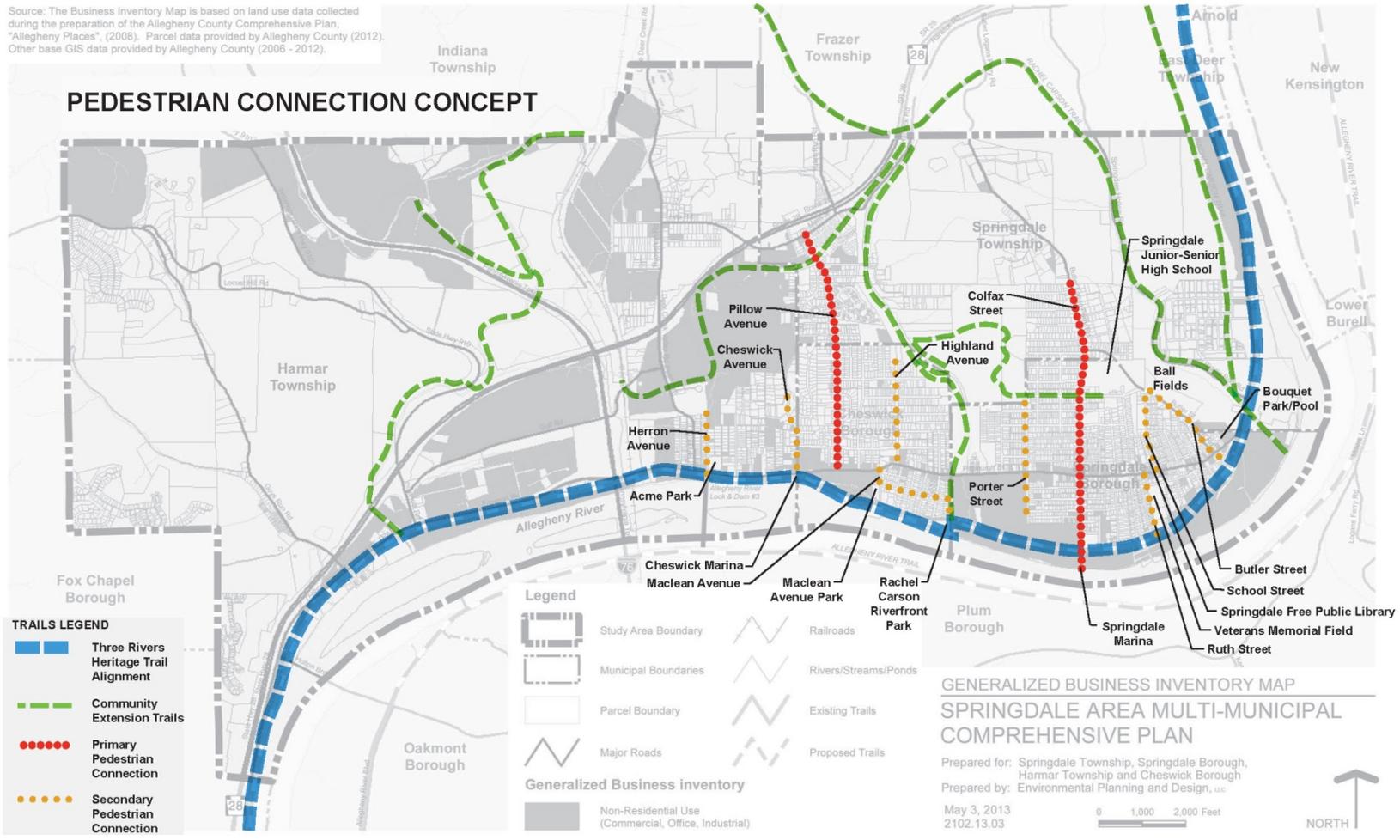
Trail users are more likely to leave the trail to discover local communities if there is a clear path into “town.” Clear signage, streetscape enhancements and desirable destinations will bring trail users to a community to eat at restaurants, shop in local stores and discover amenities that will bring them back again and again.

Residents

Pedestrian linkages will encourage local residents to utilize the trail resources at their doorsteps. From promoting health and wellbeing to recruiting employers and new residents, trails can be an important component for a community that is competing regionally for grant money, residents and businesses.



Source: The Business Inventory Map is based on land use data collected during the preparation of the Allegheny County Comprehensive Plan, "Allegheny Places", (2008). Parcel data provided by Allegheny County (2012). Other base GIS data provided by Allegheny County (2008 - 2012).







Future Land Use and Housing

The future land use scenario is an informed assumption as to what a community could be like in the future assuming a continuation of recent land development trends. Where suitable, the municipalities could update zoning designations associated with desired future land uses consistent with this Plan.

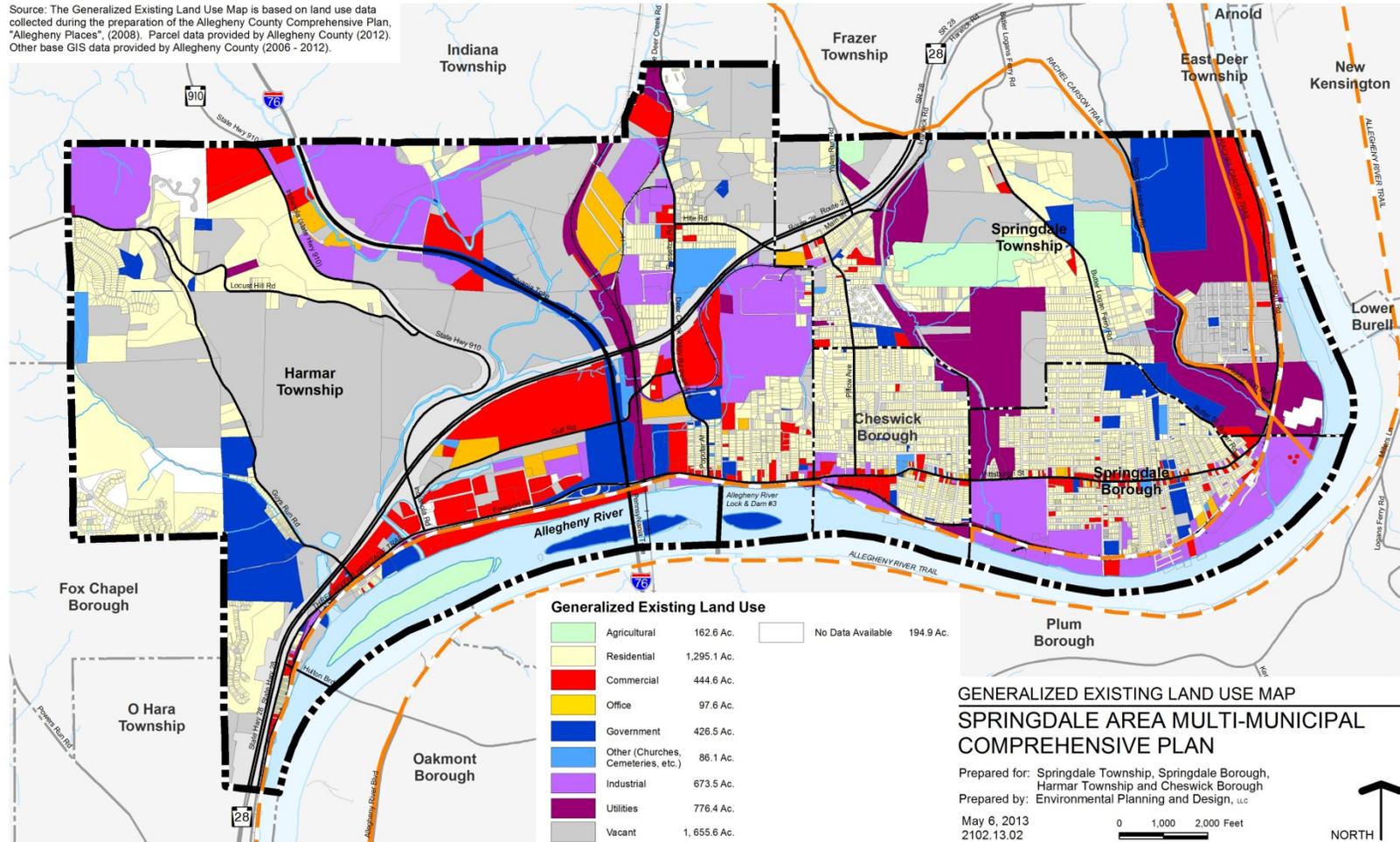
Land Use and Housing Goal:

Foster livability and success of neighborhoods, commercial districts and industrial areas.

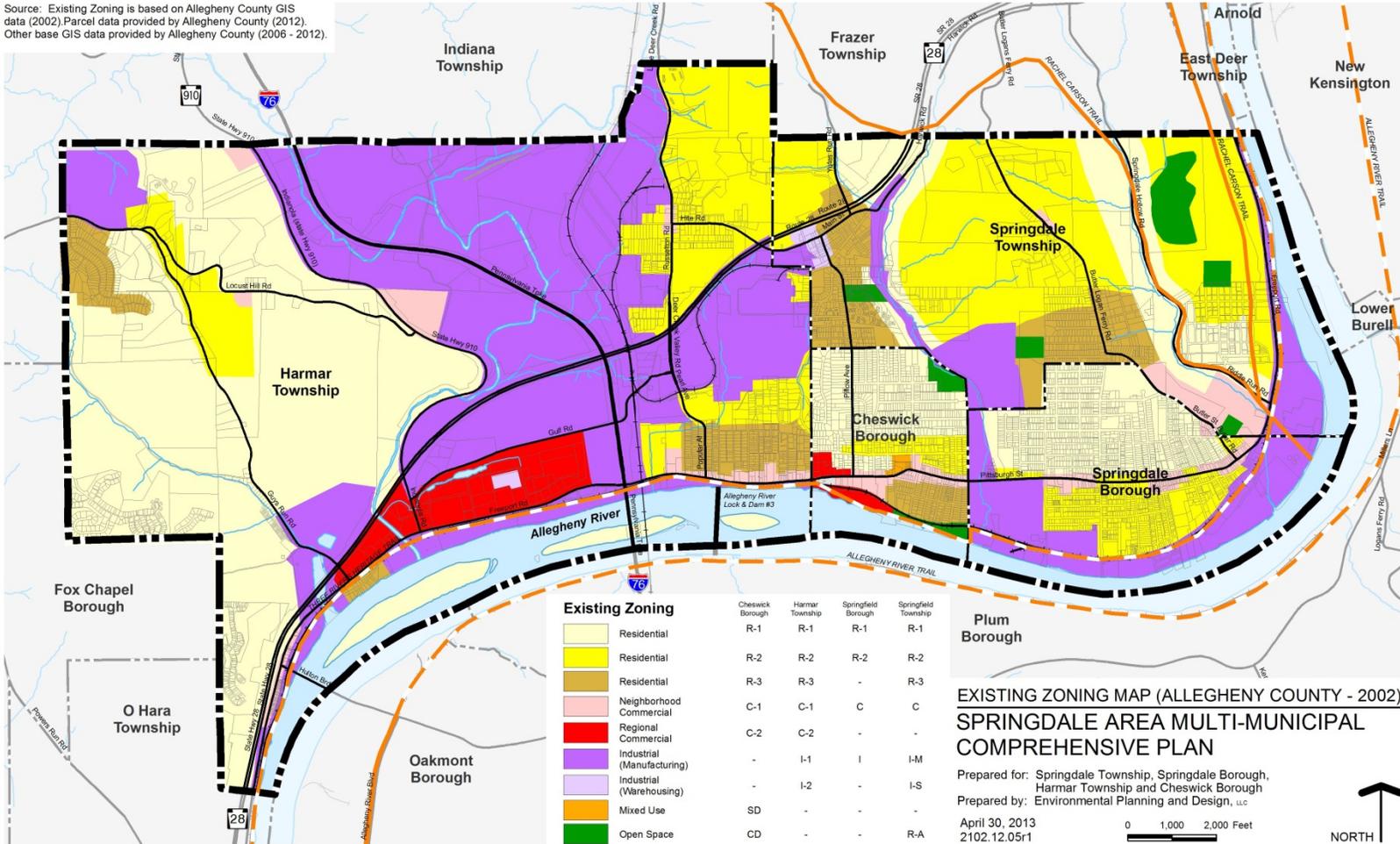
Land Use and Housing Objectives:

- Create places that emphasize community
- Ensure that new development occurring outside of established areas is beneficial and necessary
- Encourage transit-oriented development
- Provide a variety of housing
- Target infill housing where needed
- -Promote the use of green building techniques and upgrades

Source: The Generalized Existing Land Use Map is based on land use data collected during the preparation of the Allegheny County Comprehensive Plan, "Allegheny Places", (2008). Parcel data provided by Allegheny County (2012). Other base GIS data provided by Allegheny County (2006 - 2012).



Source: Existing Zoning is based on Allegheny County GIS data (2002). Parcel data provided by Allegheny County (2012). Other base GIS data provided by Allegheny County (2006 - 2012).



Large portions of the Allegheny Valley communities are developed with commercial, industrial and residential uses. Many of the areas that are currently undeveloped have difficult terrain, soils or other natural features that make them difficult to develop. Consequently, much of the development that will occur in the communities will be infill development. Infill areas provide opportunities for new development and redevelopment on properties that are vacant, abandoned, or under-used. Infill can occur on a single lot or on groups of lots.

The legal grounds for the Comprehensive Plan are based on the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.

- Section 603. (a), states that **zoning ordinances should reflect** a municipalities community development objectives and give consideration to the **character of the community**, the needs of the citizens, and the suitability and **special nature of particular parts of the municipality**;
- Section 604. (1) also requires that zoning ordinances protect the public health, safety and general welfare vis-à-vis population density; transportation; land use as well as **preservation of scenic and historic values**
- Section 605. **permits zoning ordinances to classify** and to define specific provisions for different situations, uses and structures including [Section 605. (2)(vi)] **places having unique historical, architectural or patriotic interest or value**; as well as [Section 605. (2)(vii)] other **places having a special character or use affecting and affected by their surroundings**.

There are many values and benefits to considering infill replacement and redevelopment.

- Promote economic development opportunities within communities
- Improve the municipal tax base by developing vacant or under-utilized parcels
- Expand development potential and optimize available resources to revitalize the business community
- Develop needed housing in close proximity to employment and rehabilitate older housing units
- Preserve and/or enhance community and neighborhood character
- Create transportation choices and improve connectivity
- Establish walkable neighborhoods and, where appropriate, transit-supportive development
- Decrease commuter traffic congestion
- Maximize existing investments in urban services and civic amenities (as an alternative to extending or constructing new facilities)
- Reduce public infrastructure costs (efficiency over sprawl development)
- Conserve energy through reduced automobile dependence
- Create community centers and strengthen downtowns
- Supports green building or sustainable development objectives

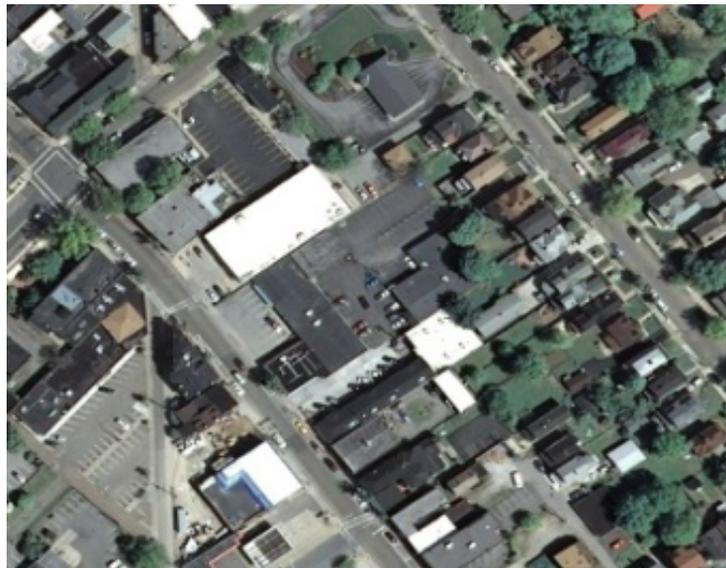
Common Infill Issues

- Typically infill, replacement and redevelopment is **not permitted “by right”**.
- **Strict separation of land uses** hampers the feasibility of many opportunities.
- Overly large-setbacks and low building coverage standards create **urban neighborhoods with a suburban character**.
- The administrative/**review process is often slow, lengthy and costly** for developers.
- **Shared parking is prohibited**; total requirements for mixed-use projects are commonly based on a cumulative calculation.
- Generous and **misdirected open space standards** decrease the availability of usable land.
- **Excessively low densities** and a focus on dwelling units per acre rather than floor area ratios (FAR) limit development potential.
- **Limits on overall building heights** or restrictions on the total number of stories can inhibit creative solutions.
- Flexibility for **non-conforming lots, uses and structures** is generally not permitted.
- Most zoning ordinances typically **acknowledge only off-street parking** – on-street spaces are not included in parking calculations.

Common Infill Challenges

- Infill, replacement and redevelopment projects (“greyfields”) typically cost more to build than “greenfields”
- Many infill or redevelopment projects require an assemblage of parcels
- Policymakers tend to overlook the public cost-savings of infill, replacement and redevelopment
- Largely due to past experience with poor examples, many residents actively oppose infill, replacement and redevelopment projects
- Developers often avoid infill, replacement and redevelopment projects in urban areas due to fear of reduced marketability
- Infill developers often see finance and capital markets as barriers to infill, replacement and redevelopment
- Most municipal zoning ordinances require the strict separation of land uses and discourage mixed-use opportunities
- There is a perception that the approval process is lengthy and difficult to navigate

in•fill \ 'in-fil\ n: development of vacant or remnant urban land passed over by previous development



re•pla•ce•ment \ri-pleys-muhnt\ *n*: the act of remodeling or reusing a previously developed or improved lot, building or structure



re•de•vel•op•ment \ri-d-i-'vel-epment\ *n*: the act or process of rehabilitating or rejuvenating a blighted area or accommodating new development within the context of existing streets and buildings



Infill provisions can address:

- #1 Blocks and Lots
- #2 Corner Lots
- #3 Side Yards
- #4 Front Yards
- #5 Lot Coverage
- #6 Lot Frontage Size
- #7 Building Height
- #8 Building Massing
- #9 Building Orientation
- #10 Accessory Buildings
- #11 Accessory Uses
- #12 Service and Loading
- #13 Parking Design
- #14 Parking Requirements
- #15 Landscaping and Screening
- #16 Adjacent Land Uses
- #17 Building Re-Use
- #18 Drive-Through
- #19 Historic Context
- #20 Pedestrian Connectivity

For Infill, Replacement and Redevelopment, Lot and block parameters should aim to:

1. Maintain an existing street grid pattern where available.
2. Use an interconnected street pattern that respects the “lay of the land” and natural features where no street grid currently exists.
3. Recognize contemporary land use and “footprint” needs.
4. Provide multiple intersections to enhance traffic flow and reduce congestion; permit alleys and lanes.
5. Utilize cul-de-sacs and dead-ends only when no other means of access are possible.

Corner lot parameters should aim to:

1. Create anchors and/or landmark buildings for a block.
2. Reinforce the street wall of both the primary and secondary streets by requiring build-to lines.
3. Capitalize on the opportunity to create wider lots that can be used to create additional architectural massing and building area.
4. Expand housing diversity within moderate to higher density residential districts by allowing duplexes/triplexes units on corner lots.

Side yard parameters should aim to:

1. Maintain a consistent rhythm of development along a street wall.
2. Evaluate the feasibility of allowing:
 - a. An average side yard setback calculation; and
 - b. An aggregate (a combined total dimension for a lot) side yard setback with established maximums and minimums.
3. Expand building area by considering a requirement of one (1) front yard and one (1) side yard on corner lots.

Front yard parameters should aim to:

1. Reinforce the street wall by maintaining consistent front yard setbacks; e.g. require both minimum and maximum front yard setbacks.
2. When front yard dimensions vary between neighboring lots, consider utilizing average setbacks or defining an acceptable "similar" setback standard.
3. Minimize impacts of parking within front yards by restricting the number of parking bays between the building's front facade and the front lot line.

Lot coverage parameters should aim to:

1. Set realistic lot coverage standards for more urbanized areas; a 40% to 60% maximum lot coverage standard precludes townhomes, duplexes, etc...
2. Consider utilizing impervious surface standards rather than lot coverage standards. Creative improvements such as green roofs, rooftop decks and terraces become more feasible.
3. Determine flexible lot coverage standards based on building type rather than zoning district and allow exemptions for porches, stoops, terraces, etc...

Lot frontage and size parameters should aim to:

1. Develop provisions which optimize the relationship between lot size, building size and lot frontage.
2. Provide flexibility in lot size requirements by permitting lot averaging when multiple lots are being created from irregularly shaped tracts of land.
3. Consider allowing the use of flag lots in order to maximize deep tracts of land with narrow frontage.
4. Establish maximum widths for street facing garages.

Building height parameters should aim to:

1. A maximum building height of 25' does not permit the construction of townhomes when situated on a narrow lot.
2. Establish height standards that address exterior grade variations and embrace distinct architectural elements (such as gables, eaves, etc.) of neighboring buildings.
3. Enable building height bonuses (for penthouses or dormers) by permitting a “stepped” height setback.
4. Adopt provisions for creating architectural transitions between multiple story and single-story buildings.

Building massing parameters should aim to:

1. Create incentives such as density bonuses in return for special architectural details or contextual building fenestration.
2. Establish minimum and maximum floor area ratios (FAR) to achieve higher densities.
3. Consider providing incentives for mixed-use development and structured parking by exempting those uses from floor area ratio calculations in commercial or downtown districts.

Building orientation parameters should aim to:

1. Respect the street by orienting the main building entries toward the front lot line or primary street.
2. Protect the existing street wall by avoiding building placements or juxtapositions that are non-contextual.
3. Require clear and legible building entries to maintain pedestrian-oriented development.
4. Permit creative building orientation solutions or treatments for corner lots situated within higher density residential districts and commercial core.

Accessory building parameters should aim to:

1. Permit accessory dwellings such as granny flats and alley houses as a use “by right” within low and moderate density residential districts.
2. Define minimum and maximum setbacks for accessory buildings based upon desired district characteristics and compatibility with adjoining properties.
3. Control the scale/transparency of accessory buildings in relationship to a lot’s principal buildings.
4. Define a maximum building area requirement to control size and scale.

Accessory use parameters should aim to:

1. Treat outdoor cafes as an accessory use.
2. Define design and development criteria for outdoor cafes (for instance, minimum clear/passage space in the sidewalk, etc.).
3. Consider relaxing zoning provisions to permit creative solutions.
4. Address improvements such as barriers as well as “permanency”.

Service and loading parameters should aim to:

1. Require that service and loading areas be located outside of the required setback areas.
2. Permit architectural design treatments for screening loading and service areas in lieu of landscape treatments.
3. Establish general vehicular access standards to control service and loading facilities.
4. Consider providing incentives such as lot coverage or impervious allowances for interior service and loading facilities.

Parking design parameters should aim to:

1. Define a minimum ratio of shade trees to parking spaces; require that the majority of shade trees be placed within the parking lot itself – not just within a perimeter landscape buffer.
2. Reinforce the street edge of parking lots situated on corner lots through the use of hedges, fencing or masonry walls.
3. Require interior landscape medians for parking lots with a lot frontage greater than 130'.

Parking requirements parameters should aim to:

1. Treat shared parking strategies as a use “by right” in order to optimize existing parking resources.
2. Consider, at a minimum, using a flat parking requirement reduction when in mixed use neighborhoods or downtowns.
3. Provide off-street parking credits when a publicly-accessible lot or transit facility is within a reasonable walking distance to the proposed building or lot.
4. Draft off-street parking requirements based on “use” rather than “zoning classification.”

Landscaping and screening parameters should aim to:

1. Require tree strips or landscape strips between a sidewalk and the adjacent curblin in all zoning districts except a downtown district.
2. Establish landscape buffer standards based on land use relationships rather than zoning designation.
3. Set practical width dimensions for landscape buffer standards.
4. Define a minimum plant size for new plantings within a landscape buffer – size does matter.

Adjacent land use parameters should aim to:

1. Loosen up the strict “single use” philosophy and allow “similar” uses within traditionally heterogeneous districts such low density single family.
2. Treat “similar” land uses as permitted uses; use a conditional use designation for “similar” uses that are contextual and generally compatible but possess some unique issues related to traffic, parking, etc...
3. Adopt general design standards that are triggered by the proximity of certain land use relationships.

Building re-use parameters should aim to:

1. Provide development incentives such as density bonuses, height credits or off-street parking reductions in return for building retention/rehabilitation.
2. Consider relaxing the non-conforming use provisions to allow a “similar use” as a use “by right.”
3. Develop a streamlined approval process that a community’s Planning Commission and Municipal Staff can provide an “over the counter” approval for general or basic design aspects.

Drive-thru parameters should aim to:

1. Treat drive-thru facilities as an accessory use and define specific standards for such uses.
2. Consider limiting the number of drive-thru facilities per lot as one of the specific standards.
3. Relate vehicular circulation and ingress/egress to the adjoining street grid and nearby intersections.
4. Create a requirement within downtown districts for drive-throughs to be architecturally integrated with the principal building; define a relief process for property owners who are unable to meet requirements.

Historic context parameters should aim to:

1. Utilize building height, setbacks, building massing and building fenestration standards to maintain consistency with neighboring architectural character.
2. Create specialized standards for loading and service, parking areas, etc... that are triggered by proximity to historic buildings, structures or neighborhoods.
3. Provide development incentives such as density bonuses or increased building height in return for incorporating contextual architectural features such as building materials, towers, turrets, gables and porches.

Pedestrian connectivity parameters should aim to:

1. Require sidewalks along all public streets; encourage sidewalks on both sides of the street where practical.
2. Develop small-scale development incentives such as relaxed landscape buffers and off-street parking reductions in order to encourage mid-block pedestrian connections between adjoining neighborhoods.
3. Tie the zoning ordinance's pedestrian connection requirements to the community's Official Map (Plan).
4. Grant impervious surface or lot coverage credits for publicly accessible courts or plazas.



Outreach and Cooperation

Throughout the planning process, Committee meetings were held as well as community meetings within each municipality. In moving forward, the communities have the opportunity to further collaborate in:

1. Priorities for Investing in the Public Realm

- Invest in improvements to public realm amenities to promote neighborhood and business connectivity and to encourage “complete streets” and “green streets.”
- Develop an integrated system of recreational opportunities such as river access points, trail connections and trail heads to foster recreation-based economy for the Allegheny Valley communities.
- Promote the Allegheny Valley River Town/Trail Town communities by highlighting the available and planned recreation infrastructure.

2. Cooperation Among Communities

- Evolve existing community organizations into a series of action teams that focus on economy, public realm and recreation.
- Establish measureable targets and avenues of accountability for Plan implementation.

3. Sustain/ Growth

- Encourage techniques of sustainability for new built environment, energy, water, air quality and transportation.
- Promote the communities' existing historical connections.
- Develop a growth area plan for Springdale Township's developable land and potential road and infrastructure expansion.

Outreach and Cooperation Goal:

Engage in outreach, education, communication and cooperation within the community.

Outreach and Cooperation Objectives:

- Strengthen the roles and outreach of STAR as a means of improving municipal coordination and reaction to issues that transcend political boundaries
- Create a multi-municipal group composed of elected officials, planning commission members and other representatives to oversee the implementation of this comprehensive plan
- Continue with public outreach efforts initiated during the comprehensive planning process to encourage citizen and business participation in plan implementation