

Comprehensive Plan Addendum

Marple Township – Delaware County, PA

6/1/2015

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Introduction: Why undertake a Comprehensive Plan Addendum?

The Comprehensive Plan is a policy tool intended to guide decision making and provide a vision for a community's future, particularly in regards to land use and development. Marple Township's current Comprehensive Plan dates to 2007. Whereas the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) requires review of the Comprehensive Plan every ten years, the pace of growth or an unforeseen turn of events may lead a community to reevaluate its policies at other intervals.

The Township's 2007 Comprehensive Plan assumed that the bustling community was effectively built out and that any remaining development would be small scale infill and redevelopment. However, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia's sale of more than 200 acres in the Lawrence Park area of the Township has turned this assumption on its head.

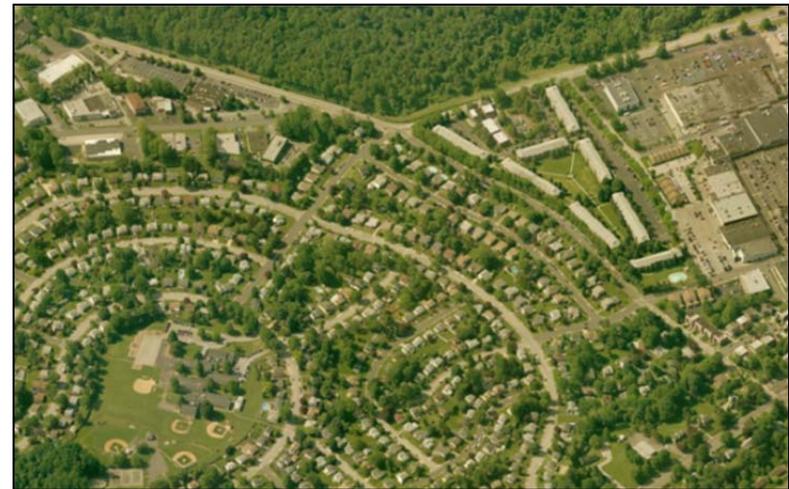
The purpose of this Addendum is to allow the Township to:

Review current land use policies. With particular focus on land use, natural resources, transportation, and open space and recreation, the Township uses the Comprehensive Plan Addendum as an opportunity to reinforce certain longstanding policies, while adapting other policies to current conditions;

Evaluate the challenges and opportunities presented by new development. This Addendum reviews the Township's current

strengths and weaknesses and presents recommendations for building on its strengths as well as how to mitigate weaknesses moving forward; and

Be Proactive. In undertaking this Addendum, it is assumed that some form of development will take place. This Addendum is the Township's opportunity to assert its vision for future development, including overall impact on Township infrastructure, services and natural resources, and design characteristics.



The intersection of the Lawrence Park neighborhood, shopping center, and the former Archdiocese property along Reed Road

Overview of the Comprehensive Plan Addendum

The Comprehensive Plan Addendum is organized into five sections:

1. Demographic Summary;
2. Goals and Objectives;
3. Mixed-Use Growth Areas;
4. Open Space and Recreation; and
5. Circulation.

The **Demographic Summary** briefly explores recent trends and the impact new development may have on population and employment. Like many Delaware County communities, the Township dipped dramatically between 1970 and 1980, but has been increasing ever since.

The **Goals Section** is a statement of overall policies for the Township's future. While reinforcing many of the existing Goals and Objectives from the 2007 Plan, revisions and additions are offered.

The **Mixed-Use Growth Areas** are the proposed areas for future growth, particularly for nonresidential development. Building on the existing "Commercial Cores" policy, with some expansion of the Lawrence Park Core, and more specific guidance on the type of development that is desirable.

The **Open Space and Recreation** chapter is geared towards the Township's network of active and passive Park opportunities, and how it relates to the Mixed-Use Growth Areas. This chapter is intended to satisfy the requirements for a stand-alone plan by providing recommendations for maintaining, expanding, and improving the system to better meet resident needs in the future.

Finally, the **Circulation Chapter** examines the Township's existing transportation network and the links between land use and transportation, in order to recommend policy improvements. Emphasis is placed on how the Mixed-Use Growth Areas will impact transportation and circulation in the Township; however an overall view of transportation trends in the Township is needed to set the stage.

Chapter Two: Demographic Summary

Marple Township Population & Housing

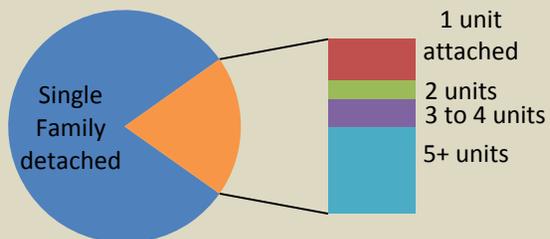
	Population	Housing Units
Actual¹		
1980	22,661	7,833
1990	23,123	8,433
2000	23,735	8,797
2010	23,428	8,940
Projected²		
2020	23,382	8,957
Revised Projected³		
2020	24,187	9,267

1. U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census
2. Per the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) Projections.
3. This revision is based upon the DVRPC projections plus the as-of-right development (309 dwelling units) permitted within the Mixed-Use Growth Areas under current Zoning.

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE IN MARPLE TOWNSHIP DECREASED FROM 2.73 PERSONS PER HOUSEHOLD IN 2000, TO 2.63 PERSONS PER HOUSEHOLD IN 2010.



Housing Types¹



Chapter Three: Goals & Objectives

The Goals of the 2007 Comprehensive Plan are as stated below. The Township continues to support and advocate these goals and their corresponding objectives (listed in the 2007 Plan).

1. To achieve an overall land use pattern that promotes the fully productive utilization of land, allowing for appropriate concentrations that are well designed and aesthetically pleasing.
2. Encourage adequate, safe and diverse housing over a range of affordability that is in harmony with existing development and the physical environment.
3. To improve the safety, appeal, and efficiency of all modes of transportation available to Marple residents, as well as the integration of these various modes into a more cohesive transportation network.
4. Enhance and protect natural and historic resources; and
5. Provide sufficient, efficient and dependable levels of service for the current and future requirements of the community.

In addition to these goals, the Township proposes the following additional goals and objectives.

GOAL: Preserve and enhance the natural, historic and cultural qualities that make Marple Township a distinct, cohesive community, while balancing the rights of property owners and the needs of existing and prospective residents.

OBJECTIVE: Direct new development and redevelopment to the Mixed-Use Growth Areas in order to maximize use of existing infrastructure, create walkable neighborhoods, provide housing for all ages, and maintain a diverse tax base.

OBJECTIVE: Create a tiered approach to resource protection, whereas the highest levels of protection are provided first to resources outside of the Mixed-use Growth Areas, and second to areas within the Growth Areas that contain multiple natural resources.

OBJECTIVE: Maintain and enhance a connected network of wooded riparian corridors that encourage ecological health, recreational use, and as a key contributor to the Township's beauty and aesthetics.

OBJECTIVE: Provide mitigation standards for natural resources that are encroached upon in the Growth Areas.

GOAL: To improve the safety, appeal, and efficiency of all modes of transportation available to Marple residents, as well as the integration of these various modes into a more cohesive transportation network.

OBJECTIVE: Encourage pedestrian access by providing a continuous sidewalk and crosswalk network, enhancing the pedestrian experience through streetscape improvements, and implementing comprehensive traffic calming.

OBJECTIVE: Promote SEPTA bus service.

OBJECTIVE: Increase the efficiency and Safety of Major Corridors.

GOAL: Ensure the adequacy of land and facilities for both passive and active recreational activities that appeal to all ages and abilities, including but not limited to parks, sports fields, natural areas with trails, and playgrounds.

OBJECTIVE: Provide park, open space and/or recreational opportunities within the Mixed-use Growth Areas that will ensure

adequacy of recreational opportunities to existing and future residents and employees and adjoining neighborhoods.

OBJECTIVE: Plan for an on and off-road trail system that will connect users to community institutions, facilities and destinations, as well as the planned Delaware County Greenway and its connection to regional recreational assets and destinations.

Chapter Four: Mixed-Use Growth Areas

For nearly twenty-five years, the Township has advocated a pattern of residential and commercial development that reinforces the way residents see their Township: a series of well-established neighborhoods, such as Lawrence Park, the historic West Chester Pike commercial corridor, the Lawrence Park Shopping Center and Industrial Park, strong institutions, and an array of public and private open spaces in the form of parks, nature preserves, and community services.

This land use pattern has been reinforced through current Township land use policy which focuses intensive, nonresidential development and redevelopment into five (5) core areas: three (3) Commercial Cores and two (2) Interchange Cores.

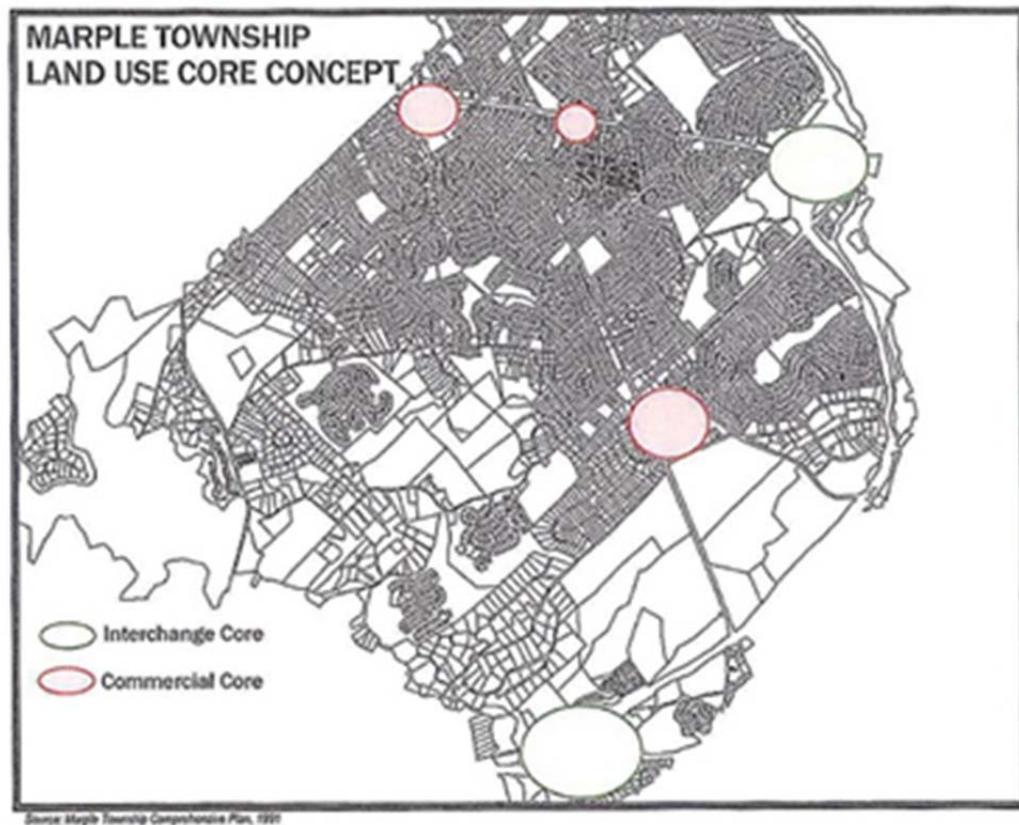
These areas include:

- the historic center of Broomall along Route 3 at Sproul Road;
- the intersection of Route 3 and Springfield Road;
- the Lawrence Park Shopping Center area (Lawrence Park Core);

- the Interchange between I-476 and Route 1 at Marple Crossroads area (Marple Crossroads Core); and

the land surrounding the interchange of Route 3 and I-476 (Langford Run Road Core).

Land Use Core Concept Map from 1991 Comprehensive Plan



As it has for nearly three decades, the Township continues to view these Core Areas as suitable locations for appropriate growth and development. However, whereas conventional, single-use development was once the preferred land use type for these areas, the many negative consequences associated with this type of development are now better understood.

As an alternative, the benefits of Mixed-use development are many. By putting residential, commercial and recreational uses in close proximity to one another, alternatives to driving, such as walking or biking, become viable. It attracts pedestrians and helps support community life by making streets, public spaces and pedestrian-oriented retail become places where people gather. By increasing the number and activity of people on the street, mixed use can increase the vitality and perceived security of an area.

The Future Land Use Map, shown on page, depicts the Core Areas as **Mixed-Use Growth Areas** to demonstrate the

Township’s desire for a better outcome to the conventional single-use development.

The extension of the Lawrence Park Core to encompass the newly sold Archdiocese property will provide better flexibility in the uses permitted on the site, and promote the Township’s vision for appropriate mixed-use development.

Characteristics of a Mixed-Use Growth Area

The three Mixed-Use Growth Areas should embody the following Planning Principles:

1. Provide a Mix of Uses.
2. Balance development with Natural Resource Protection.
3. Create Adequate and Efficient Transportation Options.
4. Respect and enhance adjoining Neighborhoods.
5. Enhance the Township Open Space network.
6. Exemplify Good Design.
7. Provide a positive Fiscal Impact.

Each of these principles is explained further below.

Provide a Mix of Uses: ‘Mixed-use’ refers to locating a variety of uses, such as residential, office, retail, restaurant, and recreational uses within walking distance. Providing this opportunity to “live, work, shop, and play” decreases reliance on vehicles to complete everyday tasks and has been shown to more efficiently use infrastructure.

Seek Balance: Development in the Growth Areas is intended to be balanced with the protection of critical natural resources and address mitigation of unavoidable negative impacts. The Township values its woodland and water resources. To the greatest degree feasible, new development should provide for tree protection and replacement, protection of wooded riparian buffers, surface waters, and steep slopes from the earliest design stages.

Create Adequate and Efficient Transportation Options: Discussed in more depth in Chapter 6, new development and redevelopment in the Growth Areas shall maximize walkability and public transit options and amenities, while mitigating negative impacts to the existing road network.

Respect and enhance adjoining neighborhoods: The Growth Areas serve as central gathering areas for adjacent neighborhoods and can enhance them through the addition of pedestrian connections (sidewalks and crosswalks, crossing signals) and destinations, including access to public gathering areas, open space, and recreation. Design elements related to this include providing transition zones so that the height and massing of buildings along boundaries with existing neighborhoods is complimentary and providing adequate landscape screening between nonresidential uses and existing neighborhoods.

Enhance the Township Open Space network: Connect Open space within the

development to the existing network of open space and recreational opportunities. Where areas of the Township are underserved in terms of recreational opportunities, alleviation of this need should be considered as part of the development application.

Exemplify Good Design: “Good design” is an essential component in creating the attractive, yet functional community that the Township desires. Design elements to be considered include: streetscape elements (sidewalks, street trees, lighting, banners, etc.); pedestrian amenities; on-street parking, parking lot landscaping, public space amenities (plazas and greens); and building design and location.

Provide a positive Fiscal Impact: New development and redevelopment should provide a positive fiscal impact to the Township by efficiently using existing infrastructure and providing a mix of uses.

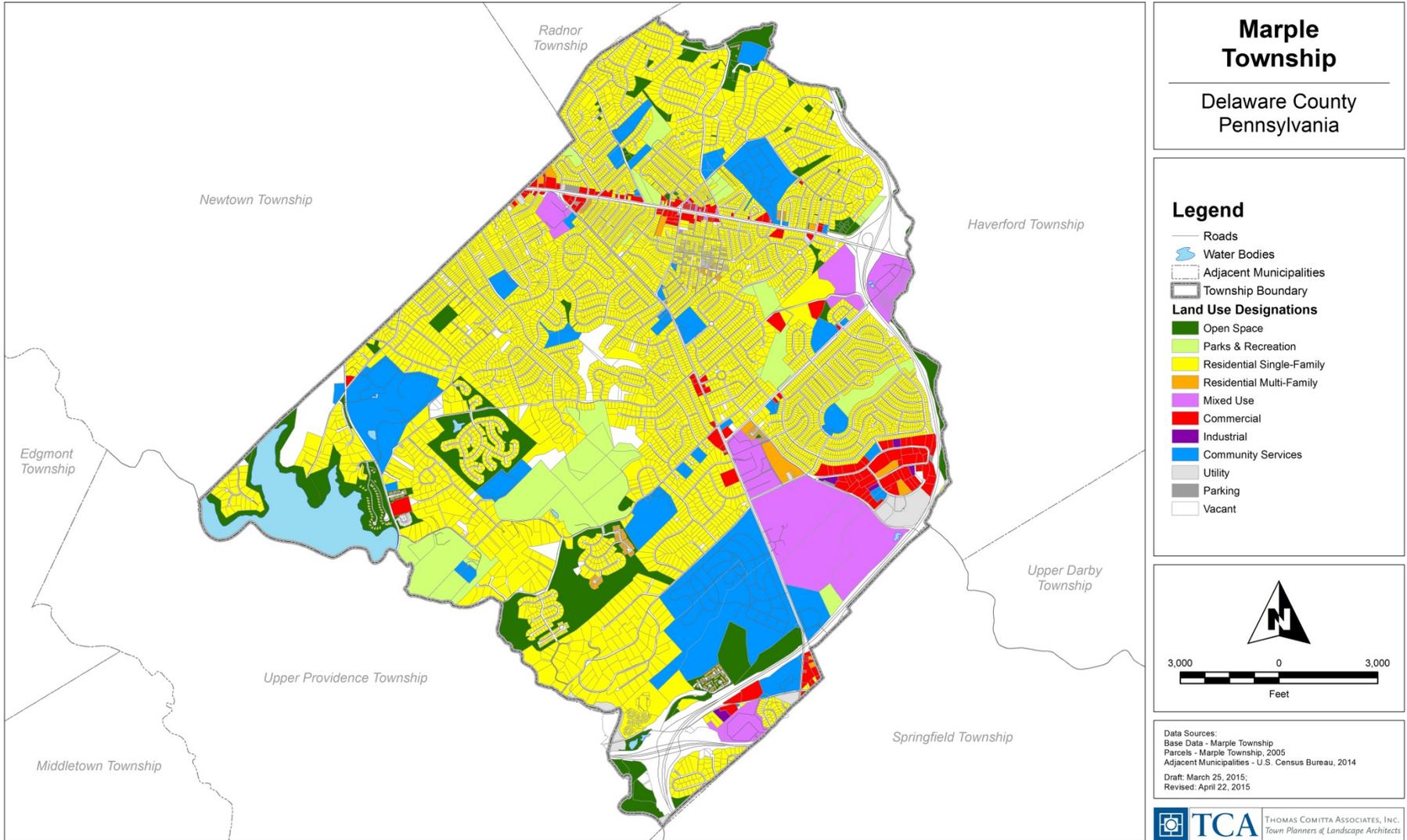


Well-designed pedestrian path with lighting and landscaping



Inviting central green with pedestrian amenities

PROPOSED FUTURE LAND USE MAP



Other Considerations for the Mixed-Use Growth Areas

Natural Resources

The varied natural resources within Marple Township contribute not only to the ecological health of the region, but also to the scenic beauty and character of the Township. These resources include:

- Topography and steep slopes;
- Woodlands,
- Riparian buffers,
- Surface Waters and watersheds;
- Floodplains; and
- Wetlands.

Protection and preservation of these resources has been a Township priority for many years and will continue to be so. Development within the Mixed-use growth areas should protect critical resources by giving highest priority to:

- Locations characterized by multiple resources;
- Resources that will form and maintain a continuous network of open space, both on and off site, for wildlife habitat and movement, primarily along stream corridors; and
- maintain and enhance wooded riparian buffers.

Additional strategies and best practices recommended as policy for the Township include:

- encourage the use of native species for the majority of landscaping needs;
- revising tree replacement standards to address new development and redevelopment;
- promote green building techniques and site design; and
- provide innovative strategies for developing on steep slopes.

Wildlife Management

Deer populations are a statewide concern. The lack of predators leads to an overabundance of deer that threaten the health of our woodlands and the habitat of many other animals. Deer feed heavily on the young growth of native plants, giving invasive, nonnative species an advantage. They also prove challenging to humans in terms of property damage, auto accidents, and the spread of disease. The wooded areas within the Mixed-Use Growth Areas are home to a sizeable deer population. Management of this population should be proactively addressed as development occurs in order to avoid increased conflicts and raise the overall health of remaining woodlands.

Greenways

Greenways are landscape corridors that follow the patterns of existing natural resources across a region. Following up on its 1985 plan, Delaware County has recently published a draft Open Space, Recreation and Greenways Plan, March 2015. Included in this plan

are the County’s proposed Primary Trails, including the Blue Route Bikeway and Darby Creek Trail which traverse the southern borders of Marple Township along Springfield and Haverford Townships. Development within the Growth Areas should proactively plan for trail connections to this broader regional network.

Sanitary Sewer System

The availability of central sewer service is essential for sustainable development within the Mixed-use growth areas. With the exception of low density, large lot developments utilizing on-site sewage disposal systems, approximately 97% of the Township properties are served by the municipal sewer system. The existing sewer infrastructure for Marple Township includes:

1. Collection system - the Marple Township Department of Public Works operates and maintains approximately 100 miles of sanitary sewer collection lines and one pump station servicing Township properties.
2. Conveyance system - the Township maintains service agreements with surrounding municipalities and authorities to provide sewer conveyance. The eastern portion of the Township (4.5 square miles) discharges to the Radnor-Haverford-Marple (RHM) Interceptor, and the western portion of the Township (6.0 square miles) discharges to the Central Delaware County Authority (CDCA) Interceptor.

3. Treatment system - in 2013, the Township adopted the Delaware County Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan Update – Eastern Plan of Study, which sustains sewer treatment services in part by the Delaware County Regional Authority (DELORA) Western Regional Control Plant and the Philadelphia Water Department’s Southwest Water Pollution Control Plant (SWWPCP).

The collection system provides adequate capacity for peak sewage flows from the current urbanized area; however improvements may be necessary to support the demand from the anticipated development within the Mixed-use growth areas. The Township and/or prospective developers should assess the collection system hydraulic conditions and implement a strategy for system modifications to accommodate the projected increase in peak sewage flows.

The CDCA conveyance system was upgraded in 2013 to expand the service area to additional municipalities within Delaware County. The capacity of the CDCA conveyance system was increased in connection with the project; however development within the Mixed-use growth areas will require confirmation of adequate sewer capacity from CDCA. In 200X, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) instituted a Corrective Action Plan, managing new connections to the RHM conveyance system. In addition to the removal of infiltration and inflow (I/I), capacity improvements to the RHM system will be necessary to provide service for new connections associated with development within the Mixed-use growth areas.

On April 1, 2013, DELCORA entered into a 15-year agreement with the Philadelphia Water Department for the continued treatment of wastewater at the SWWPCP. Although the treatment capacity is available for the Mixed-use growth areas, continued efforts to reduce I/I are necessary to limit costly exceedances to the permit limits set by the DELCORA agreement with the Philadelphia Water Department. The Township should develop an I/I reduction strategy to minimize sewage flows to DELCORA.

In accordance with DEP requirements, the Township should continue to maintain the existing collection system in good working order; remove I/I from the sewer mains and laterals; disconnect prohibited discharges to the sanitary sewer system; and, develop a long term plan to provide adequate capacity for future peak sewage flows.

Chapter Five: Open Space, Parks, and Recreation

The Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) requires that a Plan for Community Facilities include open space and recreation. Established communities typically have limited opportunities to add and enhance to their open space network.

As municipalities grow, natural resources are invariably threatened or compromised, while demand for recreational opportunities rises. An open space and recreation element is a blueprint for balancing the benefits of development with valued environmental assets and a community's basic need for recreation and leisure opportunities.

This chapter provides an overview of the existing Marple Township Open Space and Recreational facilities by providing an inventory of facilities and amenities. These facilities are classified according to a framework developed by the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA). Additional NRPA standards are used to evaluate the Township Park System in terms of:

- Parkland provided by type (Neighborhood Park, Community Park, etc);
- Adequate Parkland provided per 1,000 persons of population; and
- Distribution of parkland geographically.

The Chapter concludes with a Summary of Key Findings and Recommendations.

NRPA Guidelines and Existing Township Facilities

The NRPA recommends standards and a classifications system for local governments to use in planning and evaluating their open space and recreation networks and services. This classification includes the following categories of parks and open space: Mini-Park, Neighborhood Park, Community Park, Special Use Park, Greenways/trails, and Natural Resource Area/Preserve. The typical attributes of these park classifications, in terms of intent, size and service area, and appropriate amenities are described in Table 5-1.

Marple Township currently owns and operates 12 parks, totaling 183.5 acres, (excluding the Paxon Hollow Golf Club). Additionally, the Hildacy Farm Preserve adds another 66 acres of permanently preserved land that is open to the public. These are inventoried in Table 5-2 and shown on the Open Space, Parks and Recreation Map on page 17. To categorize Township park facilities by NRPA categories, each park was evaluated in terms of its overall characteristics and amenities, and not solely on acreage. This is especially true as many parks contain substantial amounts of natural resource areas. Such areas add value to the Township in terms of its beauty and character, as well as playing critical roles in water and air quality, biodiversity, etc. However, in terms of recreational pursuits, these areas may not be suitable unless trails are provided. On Table 5-2 provides total acreage and "useable acreage" for each park as a way of gaining some perspective on the amount of open area.

Table 5-1. NRPA Parks Classification

Park Type and Intent	Size/Service Area	Amenities
Mini-Park: Addresses targeted or isolated recreational needs close to home	< 1 acre Serves a small (1/4 mile or less), secluded area or neighborhood	Playground equipment, benches
Neighborhood Park: Provides a variety of “close to home” recreational activities; typically serving the need of a single neighborhood; contributes to neighborhood identity and sense of community	5 to 15 acres in size Serves up to a ½ mile radius	Play areas Sports fields/courts Picnic areas Community Gardens Walking trails/pathways
Community/Regional Park: Provides a variety of passive and active activities for multiple neighborhoods; accommodates large groups; easily accessible	20 to 50 acres in size Serves a 1 to 2 mile radius	Same as Neighborhood Park + Organized sports facilities Pavilions Permanent restrooms Lighting Parking Amphitheater
School Park: Expands the recreational opportunities for an area within the community	Variable	Play areas Youth oriented sports fields/courts Seating Track Lighting/Parking
Special Use Park: Facility for a single purpose	Variable	Variable
Greenways and Trails: Connects open spaces, parks, and other community destinations into a single network	Variable	Multi-purpose pathways Trailheads Signage
Nature Preserves: Preserved areas for the protection and management of natural resources	Variable	Trails Signage

Table 5-2 Marple Township Parks and Recreation Inventory

Park	Total Acreage/Active Recreation Land	Park Type	Amenities	Notes/Condition
Municipal Parkland				
Green Bank Farm	32.94/32.94	Nature Preserve	Natural Areas, Trails; Horse Stables	Location of Delaware County Historical Society Office; Contiguous to Hildacy Farm Preserve
Highland Ave Park	5.33/5.33	Neighborhood	Basketball court Roller hockey rink Tennis backboard	Adjacent to Worrall Elementary School
Kent Park	27.43/15.94	Neighborhood with Natural Resource Area	Children’s Play Area Dog- Friendly Picnic Area with grills Gazebo Walking Path Tennis Courts	Newly renovated stream crossing; Trail is in fair condition
Malin Road Tot Lot	1.49/1.49	Mini-Park	Children’s Play Area Picnic Area Open Space Play Area	
Marple Gardens Park	4.91/4.91	Neighborhood	Children’s Play Area Picnic Area Basketball court Baseball fields	
New Ardmore Ave Park	14.98/4.71	Neighborhood with Natural Resource Area	Children’s Play Area Picnic Area Basketball court Open Space Play Area	
Old Marple School Park	9.55/7.74	Neighborhood with Natural Resource Area	Children’s Play Area Picnic area Walking Trail Sledding Hill	
Paxon Hollow Golf Club		Special Use	18-hole Golf Course Clubhouse	
South Marple Little League	34.48/8.74	Neighborhood	Baseball fields Basketball Court	

			Tennis Court Snack bar	
Thomas Ball Fields	17.98/7.01	Neighborhood	Youth Baseball fields Children's Play Area Snack bar	
Veterans Park	25.03/7.21	Community Park/Natural Resource Area	Children's Play Area Walking circuit Gazebo Bocce Court (new)	Planned Master Plan Update in 2015; Location of Community-wide events
Total				
School Facilities	Total Acreage/Active Recreation Land	Park Type	Amenities	Notes/Condition
Cardinal O'Hara High School	103.36	School	Tennis Courts Multi-purpose fields Ball fields Track	
DE County Community College	122.14	School	Ballfield Basketball Court Multipurpose Field Tennis Courts	
Loomis Elementary	12.33	School	Play Equipment Ball Fields	Contiguous with South Marple Little League
Paxon Hollow Middle School	37.37	School	Multi-purpose Fields Tennis Courts	
Russell Elementary	13.52	School	Play Equipment Ball Fields	
Worrall Elementary	5.00	School/Neighborhood	Play Equipment	See Highland Ave. Park
Other Public Recreation Areas				
Broomall Fields	9.34/4.88	Special Use	Baseball Fields Snack Bar	Owned by the adjacent sites, but maintained by the Township under a long term agreement
Hildacy Farm Preserve	65.58	Nature Preserve		

Marple Township’s parkland primarily falls into the Neighborhood and School categories, providing a wide variety of facilities and playgrounds at the local level. While several Township parks meet the overall size guideline for a community park, the areas constrained by natural resources or inaccessible are taken into account. With this in mind, Veterans Park is the primary facility which could meet the combination of usable open space and accessibility necessary to serve several neighborhoods. Veterans Park is also the location of Township-wide events and celebrations, including the Easter Egg Hunt, Special Olympics, and Santa’s Arrival.

South Marple Little League, which shares space with Loomis Elementary in the geographic center of the Lawrence Park neighborhood meets the overall size of a Community Park, but functions more as a Neighborhood Park. The diverse array of facilities, share very limited parking with the adjoining Loomis Elementary school. The remainder of the park acreage is steeply sloped and heavily wooded along a small tributary. Additionally it is landlocked by adjoining residences, giving it a very intimate, neighborly feel. Kent Park also contains a significant acreage that could be considered Community Park, but is limited in parking and amenities.

Marple Township is fortunate in its cooperative partnership with the Marple Newtown School District. While school facilities are an asset to the community, they are not typically available when school is in session and receive heavy usage for school events. Also, these facilities should not be relied upon as permanent links in the open space network, since particularly for private schools and facilities, conditions and needs may change over time.

Parkland Service Areas

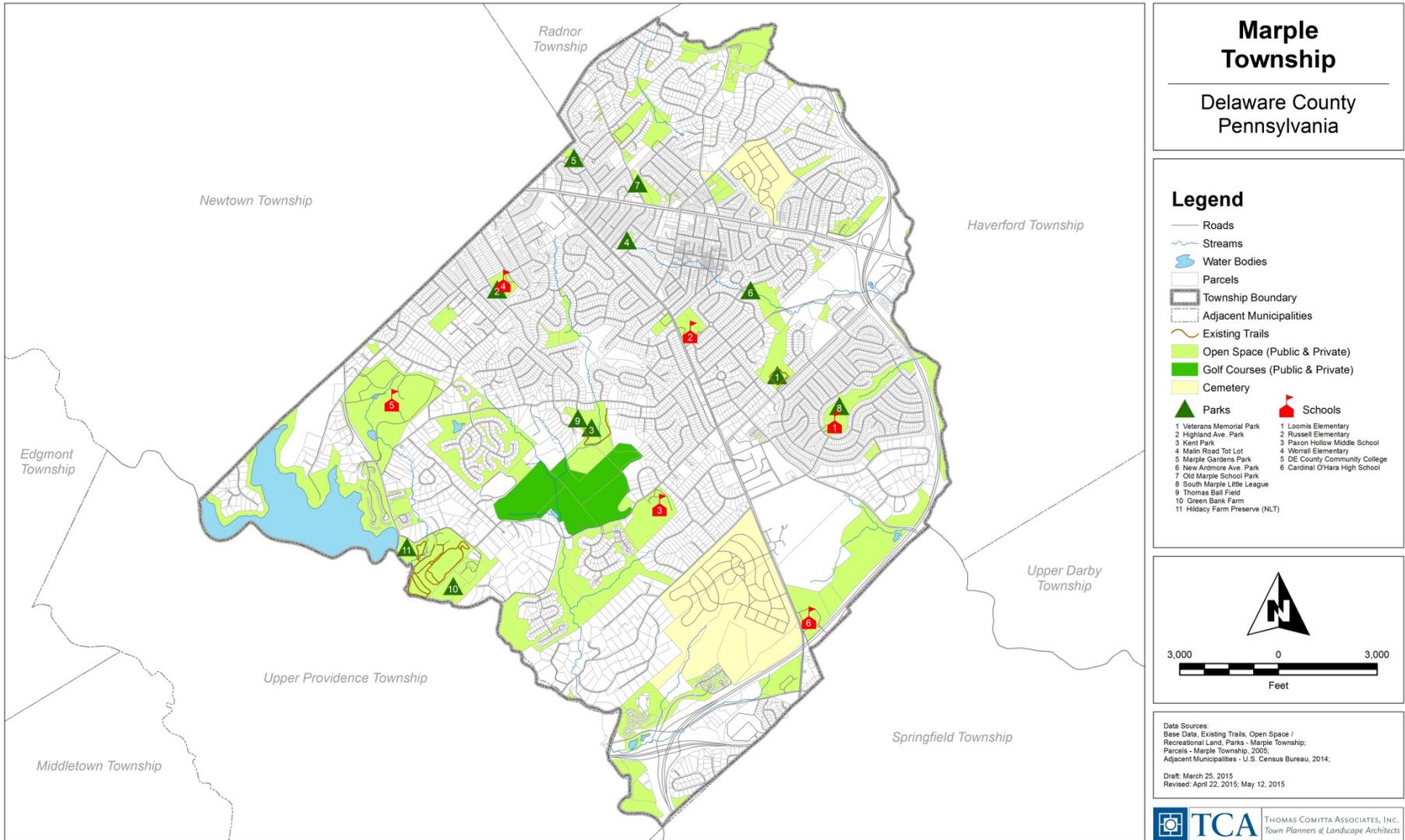
The Parkland Service Area Map on page 18 depicts the service areas of each of the Township parks. This type of analysis helps highlight areas that may be underserved, especially at the neighborhood level. This map shows that there are areas of the Township that do not have sufficient access to local recreational opportunities. These are located:

- Along the Northern border with Haverford Township;
- To the north of DE Community College; and
- Most visibly in the southern portion of the Township, to the north and west of the Saint Peter and Paul cemetery.

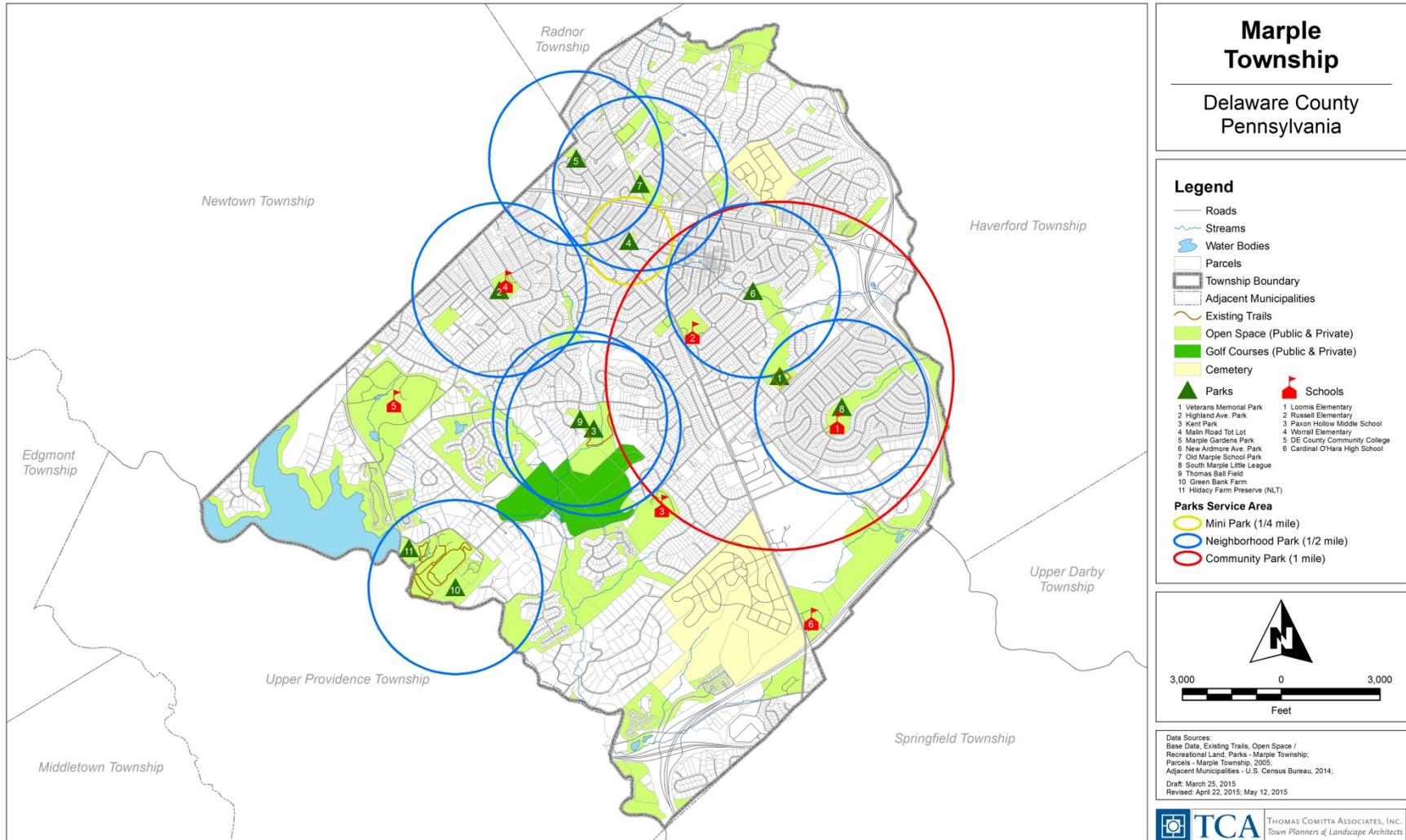
Parkland and the Mixed-Use Growth Areas

The three Mixed-use Growth Areas advocated as part of this Comprehensive Plan Addendum provide opportunities to enhance the Township’s network of Open Space and Recreational Opportunities. The Langford Run Road Core area is currently served by both the New Ardmore Avenue Neighborhood Park and by Veterans Park. However, development of the Lawrence Park Core extension as well as any redevelopment of the Marple Crossroads Core should be strongly encouraged to include park resources in order to better serve adjoining areas with recreational opportunities that are available to the public in perpetuity. Facilities and programs provided within these areas should reflect neighborhood needs and desires.

OPEN SPACE, PARKS, AND RECREATION MAP



PARK SERVICE AREA MAP



Recreation Fee-in-lieu

The Township currently has a Recreation Fee-in-lieu Ordinance as enabled under the Municipalities Planning Code, Section 503(11). This ordinance allows the Township to assess a fee on developers who are not able to provide appropriate open space as part of the land development process. This fee is escrowed into a specific account designated for capital improvements to existing Township parks and acquisition of additional parkland, but not for operating costs. As this chapter has explored, there is a need for both of renovation to existing parkland and acquisition of parkland to better serve underserved areas.

The fee is based upon an estimated cost for recreational needs, now and in the future, proportionately divided into expected residential and nonresidential populations. A table showing this calculations and a proposed recreation fee-in-lieu can be found in Appendix 1. This fee should be evaluated on an annual or biannual basis and increased with inflation.

Key Findings and Recommendations

- Marple Township’s existing open space resources generally meet the needs of the recreational needs of the population, falling into the categories of neighborhood park or school park. However, a large proportion of Township parkland is constrained, natural resource land that does not contribute to

active recreation. In addition, many of the parks and facilities are in need of wholesale renovation and equipment upgrades.

- The NRPA guidelines would indicate a need for additional active recreational lands and trails, especially as the Township population grows, ages, and becomes more ethnically diverse.
- There are several areas of the Township that appear to have insufficient access to local recreational opportunities. These areas include the southernmost portion of the Township, along the Haverford Township border to the north, and small areas along the Newtown Township border.
- Development and redevelopment within the Mixed-Use Growth Areas should serve as opportunities to enhance the existing open space network, provide better opportunities in the underserved areas of the Township, and provide pedestrian and natural resource links to adjoining neighborhoods and their recreational resources, including any planned regional trails.
- The Township should update its recreation fee-in-lieu ordinance to address both residential and nonresidential development and raise the fee to match the current conditions and needs of the municipal parkland explained in this Chapter.

Chapter Six: Circulation

The intent of the Comprehensive Plan's Circulation Element is to provide a description of the existing transportation network and examine current links between land use and transportation. Understanding this relationship identifies the needs of future development and redevelopment initiatives and guarantees more effective future transportation investments through the application of access management principles to provide a more efficient and balanced transportation network.

Marple Township's transportation and circulation plan focuses on the current road systems, daily traffic volumes and the related impacts associated with local land uses, mass transit, pedestrians and bicycles. Most of the roadways within the Township function as a cohesive traffic network serving the personal automobile, the primary transportation mode in the Township. Thus, issues addressed in the Township's transportation plan are improved coordination and maintenance of traffic signals to facilitate both safety and efficiency concerns, and the necessities of bicycle routes, pedestrian paths, and public transit (bus). While transportation alternatives to the personal automobile may only nominally relieve congestion and reduce vehicular emissions, providing transportation options for the Township's residents is important to shorten trips within the Township and to encourage and provide for shared parking when and where possible.

Existing Circulation Characteristics

Access and mobility are the focal point of a useful circulation study. Investigating the accessibility of Marple Township's businesses and the mobility of Marple Township's residents across all modes of transportation provides a holistic approach to transportation planning as well as a framework for coordinating land use and future redevelopment opportunities. Increased mobility and maximized access can only be attained through an overall understanding of the existing circulation characteristics.

Roadway Inventory & Assessment

Marple Township is an intensely developed community that reflects land use patterns which parallel the older townships and boroughs located east of I-476 (The Blue Route). These communities are characterized by small lot residential development and traditional commercial structures along the region's historic arteries. One such artery, Route 3 (West Chester Pike), cuts across the northern portion of the Township and follows the historic trolley route which linked Philadelphia to West Chester and served as Marple Township's catalyst for creation and growth. The epicenter of this creation and growth was the intersection of West Chester Pike and Sproul Road up until the completion of the Blue Route. New developments flocked to the newly constructed I-476 corridor shifting growth patterns in the southeastern and southwestern quadrants of the Township.

Table 6-1 indicates the classification of Marple’s roadways in descending levels of intensity.

Table 6-1: Classification of Marple Township Roadways

EXPRESSWAYS	
Interstate 476 (Blue Route)	
ARTERIALS	
Church Lane	Lawrence Road
Media Bypass	Media Line Road
Newton Street Road	Reed Road
Route 3 (West Chester Pike)	Springfield Road
Sproul Road	
COLLECTORS	
Cedar Grove Road	Crum Creek Road
Eagle Road	Gradyville Road
Malin Road	Marple Road
New Ardmore Avenue	Old Marple Road
Old State Road	Palmers Mill Road
Paxon Hollow Road	
LOCAL STREETS	
All other roadways	

Township-Wide Circulation Findings & Projections

Marple Township’s zoning districts and roadway classifications are wholly compatible; where intensive commercial and industrial districts – O-1, B-1 and I- abut arterial roadways or expressways and collector roadways provide greater access throughout the Township. The oldest of these commercial districts lies along West Chester Pike, parking for which is provided by diagonal parking spaces within the right-of-way that forces drivers to back up onto the arterial. A solution must be sought which provides greater access to these businesses and creates a safer more pleasant experience for residents as one step in an overall revitalization strategy for the area. New public lots that extend across the rear of the commercial lots could divert drivers away from the main thoroughfare and alleviate the pinch points caused by the angled parking within the right-of-way.

With the major exception of the Mixed-use Growth Areas, future development will depend mostly upon the infill of scattered parcels and redevelopment activities. Typically, development of this type does not cause the same impact on the existing transportation network that a major multi-acre development would, however any impact should still be addressed during the plan review process. Mixed-use Developments, when the required combination of uses is properly balanced, can have a reduced impact on the transportation network than comparable size developments that are single-use sites (i.e, completely residential, office, or retail) due to the balance of directionally oriented traffic entering and exiting the development, and the ability to complete multiple trips without leaving the site. New developments should be designed to minimize residential cut-through and utilize traffic calming measures where possible. The use of roundabouts and adaptive traffic signal corridor upgrades should be considered to aid in easing congested roadways. The proposed roundabout on State Route 320 at Swarthmore College should be studied as a possible example for future intersection upgrades.

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission's population and employment projections for the next 25 years predict minimal population and employment change in Marple Township but a rise in population in municipalities to the west, translating to additional pressure on the existing transportation system as a result of increased regional commuting. These projections, most likely did not account for newly realized potential development in the Mixed-Use growth Areas of Marple Township. Mixed-use development, which typically consists of residential uses in close proximity to employment centers, has the potential to relieve pressure on the transportation system, if alternative modes of transportation (discussed below) are available, safe, and convenient.

Support of regional initiatives such as improvements to Route 1 (State Road) will promote partnerships with neighboring communities as well as increase the continuity of safety and beautification of major arterials. Incorporation of landscaping upgrades along major roadways will brighten up the area and promote aesthetic improvements throughout the Township. The Circulation Element articulates strategies and policies designed to enhance use of the Township's mass transit bus lines to relieve some of the projected pressure on the transportation system.

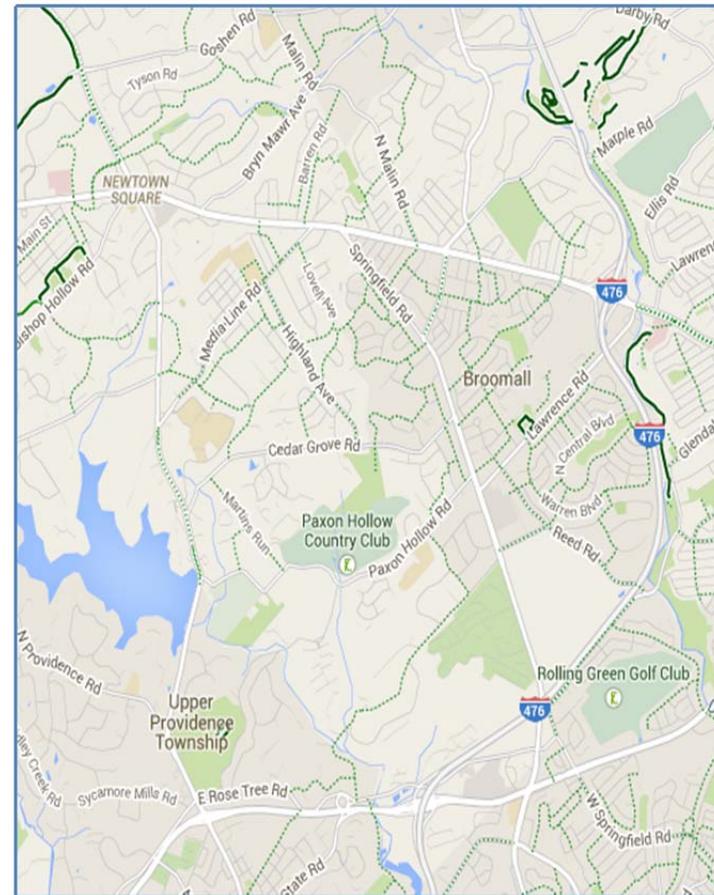
Description of Alternate Modes

Public transit options in Marple Township are limited to 5 bus routes operated by the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA): Routes 104, 110, 112, 118 & 120. Two of these routes, 104 and 120, run along West Chester Pike. Route 104 offers service from West Chester to 69th Street Terminal which allows access to Center City via the Market-Frankfort Line. Route 120 is an express route between Cheyney University and the 69th Street Terminal with limited stops within Marple Township. The longest bus route in Marple, Route 112, serves Delaware County Community College, Lawrence Park Industrial Park, Lawrence Park Shopping Center and continues on to the 69th Street Terminal. Routes 110 and 118 only skirt the edges of the Township providing limited benefit for Marple residents. Route 110 serves Penn State University's Delaware County campus from the 69th Street Terminal, only entering Marple Township to serve the Marple-Springfield Shopping Center. Route 118 primarily serves as a link between Media and Newtown making a stop in the Township at Delaware County Community College.

Sidewalks are present throughout most of the older sections of Marple Township, yet due to the long distances separating structures and uses, their lack of buffers (shields for pedestrians from high-speed vehicular traffic on major thoroughfares) and a lack of substantial shade, Marple Township should pursue efforts to enhance the pedestrian experience. New development and redevelopment should also be required to connect to the existing sidewalk network.

Currently Marple Township does not have any proposed links to the Philadelphia Area Bike network, but does have the potential to tie into this network in the future (<http://connectthecircuit.org/>).

Figure 6-2. Marple Township Bicycle Friendly Roads (Courtesy of Google Earth Images)



Discussion of Objectives

OBJECTIVE: Increase the Efficiency and Safety of Major Corridors

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

The major corridors in Marple Township, such as West Chester Pike and Sproul Road, are lined by heavily concentrated commercial districts, with more such development under consideration. Parking is limited for many of these businesses and occasionally spaces are located directly in the right-of-way. One such location on West Chester Pike is located between Sproul Road and Church Lane and causes drivers to back up right onto the heavily traveled artery. As mentioned earlier, providing public parking in the rear of businesses frees up the flow of traffic on the arterials while eliminating the potential for serious accidents.

Like many similar communities, peak hour traffic congestion occurs on many of the Township's roadways and intersections. While there exists the ability to improve this condition in several areas, most of the intersections and roadways within the Township have limitations to potential capacity increases through conventional methods, such as widening and the addition of auxiliary lanes.

Implementation Strategies

In order to continue to provide a safe and efficient roadway network within the Township, a continuously updated Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) should be considered to identify areas in need of improvement, as well as recommendations regarding potential enhancement projects, including both conventional infrastructure projects and other potential operational improvements.

West Chester Pike and Sproul Road are candidate corridors for upgraded signal interconnection and coordination. Upgrading existing traffic signals would increase the effectiveness of green light time through the use of vehicle detection and coordination with consecutive signals along the corridor. Intelligent traffic corridors promote an increased flow of traffic even when existing conditions limit the ability to add lanes and increase capacity.

Other types of roadway network improvements that could be considered include:

- Supplemental interchanges and ramp facilities to the area's Interstate Highway System;
- The construction and/or upgrade of left-turn lanes on several sections of major corridors, including Route 320;
- The implementation of upgraded interconnection and coordination of signal systems within the Township;
- The consideration of adaptive traffic signal control at intersections where determined to be beneficial;
- The consideration of modern roundabouts in place of traffic signals at appropriate intersections;

In addition, safe and efficient arterials can be maintained by implementing any or all of the following zoning techniques:

- Regulate driveway spacing and curb cuts;
- Encourage joint access and rear lot public parking;
- Minimize commercial strip zoning and promote mixed use and flexible zoning; and
- Develop a unified circulation and parking plan for major arterials like West Chester Pike and Sproul Road.

OBJECTIVE: Encourage Pedestrian Access

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

The pedestrian experience in Marple Township is marked by a lack of buffers, an absence of shade and empty expanses along sidewalks. Under the Pennsylvania Vehicle Code (Title 75, Chapter 35, Section 3542[a]), vehicles are required to yield to pedestrians in crosswalks where no signalization is present. Accordingly, as part of a recommended program of crosswalk improvements, this plan encourages the installation of new signage within the cartway where crosswalks are to be provided mid-block – where pedestrian walkways meet the street – instructing traffic to yield to pedestrians. This type of signage may also be installed at signalized intersections where high levels of pedestrian traffic occur, and the potential for vehicle/pedestrian conflicts is greatest. If the funds exist, consider utilizing decorative pavers or other materials such as slate to better integrate these two modes as well as enhance the aesthetic nature of the crosswalks. To further enhance walkability throughout the Township, and particularly where residential areas are close to commercial, recreational and community uses, this plan recommends the provision of sidewalks along all right-of-ways. The vicinity of Marple-Springfield Shopping Center is one area in particular that would benefit from pedestrian-

friendly improvements. The Center is located directly across Route 1, a heavily traveled arterial, from a residential area. This plan recommends consideration of a pedestrian signal and/or a cross-walk to aid pedestrians seeking to cross Route 1 to the entrance of the shopping center. Additionally, the shopping center parking lot is unfriendly to walkers. Sidewalks within the parking lot would provide a pedestrian connection between the complex entrance and the stores of the shopping center.

Implementation Strategies

The Township should pursue multimodal grants such as those offered by the DCED like the Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program as may be available for the provision of crosswalks as many intersections as possible, with special emphasis on crossings where pedestrian traffic is already encouraged by streetscape improvements. These funding sources may also be used to help service the need for safe bike lanes and trails throughout the Township.

The installation of sidewalks along right-of-ways can be encouraged through the development review process, during which the Planning Board could require such improvements as a condition of approval. The township

should also consider amending its land development ordinance to require the provision of sidewalks or the repair of existing sidewalks.

Enforcement of posted speed limits and other traffic regulations along West Chester Pike and Sproul Road should be made a top priority as well as enhancing the pedestrian experience along these corridors through streetscape improvements. Traffic calming techniques should be implemented along collector streets throughout the Township, specifically Parkway South, Media Line Road and New Ardmore Avenue, making this class of streets safer for both pedestrians and cyclists. These techniques, including speed humps and bump outs, also ensure that the majority of through traffic remains on the arterial streets, preserving collectors for local traffic only.

Traffic calming principles can be implemented in areas experiencing problems with speeding or high cut-through traffic. The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's Center for Program Development developed a Traffic Calming Handbook (PennDOT Publication 383) that contains information on various traffic calming issues. The Traffic Calming Handbook provides a comprehensive description of traffic calming objectives.

Traffic calming measures are mainly used to address speeding and high cut-through traffic volumes on neighborhood streets. These issues can create an atmosphere in which non-motorists are intimidated, or even endangered, by motorized traffic. Additionally, high cut-through volumes become an increased concern when larger commercial vehicles are involved. Along with the additional amount of traffic generated within the neighborhood, cut-through motorists are often perceived as driving faster than local motorists. By addressing high speeds and cut-through volumes, traffic calming can increase both the real and perceived safety of residents, pedestrians and bicyclists, and improve/enhance the quality of life within the neighborhood.

The role of physical measures in traffic calming has been emphasized because they are “self-policing”. This means that traffic calming measures, such as speed humps and traffic circles, have the ability to slow motor vehicles in the absence of enforcement. On the other hand, traffic control devices, such as turn prohibition signs, weight limits, and one-way streets, depend upon the level of police enforcement and the willingness of motorists to comply with the posted restrictions to be effective. Therefore, the use of traffic calming measures can often lead to a more certain accomplishment of the neighborhood’s goals.

In order to initiate traffic calming projects, the Township should consider developing a traffic calming policy. The policy should include guidelines for implementing the “three E” stages of traffic calming: Education, Enforcement and Engineering. This policy can then be utilized if cut-through or speeding problems arise on one of the Township’s residential or local roadways.

OBJECTIVE: Promote SEPTA Bus Service

Existing Conditions and Recommendations

As noted previously, Marple Township is served by several Septa bus routes. The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission’s (DVRPC) West Chester Pike Land Use and Access Management Strategies Study found ridership on these routes to be relatively low; however there are still residents who rely solely on SEPTA for transportation to and from work. One recommendation to come out of the study suggested the acquisition of land near I-476 for use as a park and ride lot. This lot would help reduce traffic flow into the Township by offering commuters the option of transferring to SEPTA service rather than contributing to the congestion of local roadways. The recommendation becomes even more essential when considered in tandem with DVRPC’s projected 30% employment growth in Marple Township over the next two decades. It is projected that commuters will fill the majority of the new jobs, which will put an additional strain of the network and heavily increase congestion in the area. Promoting public transportation will take cars off the road and ease traffic

while transporting the same number of people efficiently throughout the Township.

Implementation Strategies

SEPTA ridership should be made more attractive and accessible to Marple residents. The Township should partner with the appropriate agencies and developers to add context sensitive, aesthetically pleasing bus shelters along major arterial such as West Chester Pike (Route 3) and Sproul Road to promote safety and comfort to transit riders.

The plan also reiterates its recommendation for implementing a fixed development/redevelopment fee that is based on construction or redevelopment costs or square footage. The funds produced could then be channeled towards the acquisition of transportation enhancements like park-n-ride facilities and updated bus stop shelters.

Coordination with SEPTA for the expansion and integration of services for development within the Mixed Use Growth Areas is recommended to provide adequate public transportation services and promote ridership.

In addition, as part of any traffic signal upgrade projects within the Township, low-priority Transit signal pre-emption could be considered. This practice has been recently supported by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, and is the subject of a Feasibility Study

conducted for West Chester Pike (Route 3) by the Delaware County Transportation Management Association (DCTMA) in 2011.

Appendix 1

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN ADDENDUM: RECREATION PLAN – FACT SHEET

Marple Township, Delaware County, PA

1. Population: Current and proposed

	2010	2020 ¹	2030 ¹	2030 (Revised) ²
Population	23,428	23,382	23,221	24,034

2. Household Size

- a. 2010: 2.61

3. Proposed Dwelling Units/Pop Not accounted for in current forecast:

- a. 2015 Proposed dwelling units (conservative): 309
b. Total estimated population in 2030: $(309 * 2.61) = 24,034$

4. Existing Park & Recreation Land:

- a. Public, protected, active: 174.16 ac, excluding Golf Course
b. Other public recreation land: 149 acres for PHGC

5. Park & Recreation Area Needs:

- a. NRPA Standards
i. Recommended: 10-12.5 acres of active recreation land/1,000 residents
ii. 2010 recommendation: 234- 293 acres
iii. 2030 recommendation: 240-300 acres
iv. Several underserved areas are recognized
b. Rehabilitation and renovation of Park and Recreation Facilities: \$70,000 per ac of active recreation; \$30,000 per ac of passive recreation
c. Rehabilitation and renovation of Other Public Recreation at \$50,000 per ac

6. Total Cost for Recreation Area Needs:

- a. Acquisition and improvement of 10 ac of new parkland: 10 acres at \$170,000 per acre = \$1,700,000
b. Rehabilitation and renovation (active): \$7,700,000
c. Rehab and renovation (PHGC): \$7,450,000
d. Rehab and Renovation (passive/natural): \$1,811,100
e. Total: \$18,661,100

7. Total Cost per Unit for Cash Contribution in Lieu of Recreation Area:

- a. 90%/10% breakdown residential/nonresidential per Future Land Use
b. Residential: $(\$18,661,100 \div 9,267) * .90 = \$1,812/\text{dwelling unit}$
c. Nonresidential (10%): \$1,100.00 per 2,500 Square Feet Gross Floor Area

Notes:

1. Per U.S. Census Bureau and Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission population forecasts
2. Revised to account for potential development, including the recent sale of the Archdiocese property.
3. The current recreation fee-in-lieu is set as \$1,500 per dwelling unit. There is currently no fee for nonresidential development.