

West Conshohocken

Vision Plan



DRAFT



DRAFT - November 2019

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INTRODUCTION

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Study Purpose

The Borough of West Conshohocken completed this Vision Plan for West Conshohocken in order to re-imagine the future of the Borough. Presently, the Borough's human-scale architecture, proximity to mass transit, robust office and resident population, location on the Schuylkill River, and regional highway access are key assets for individuals, from millennials to baby boomers, who are looking for diverse housing opportunities, as well as for businesses that are exploring new locations.

While the Borough continues to show great potential for continued vitality, it needs to capitalize on regional opportunities to remain competitive and vibrant. This Vision Plan looks forward to the next ten to twenty years and how West Conshohocken can advantageously position itself to maintain success. Challenges include implementing transportation improvements that maximize existing infrastructure for a safer and better pedestrian and motorist experience; new amenities that provide needed recreational facilities for the community; and redevelopment opportunities that re-purpose existing sites to respond to market demands.

West Conshohocken is a place that has always been tied to its history of business and industry and possesses a strong sense of community that is shared by all of its residents. This Vision Plan's recommendations will help to position West Conshohocken to react to ever-evolving market forces for years to come, while ensuring the retention of its community character that make it a unique and desirable place to live and to work.



Vision Statement

The West Conshohocken Vision Plan Seeks to enhance the quality of life for Borough residents while it creates or maintains the amenities, services, and places of employment that together keep the community vibrant and strong.



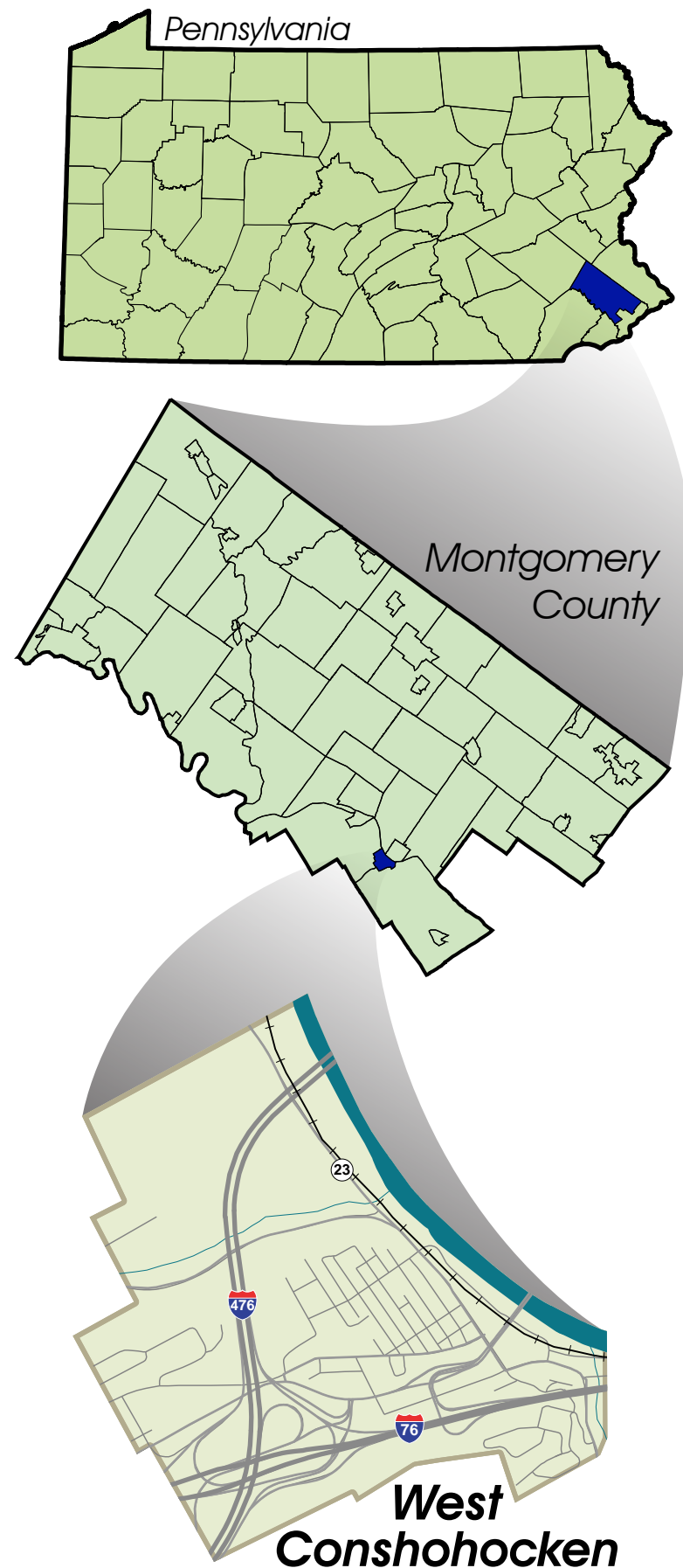
Area Background

Location

West Conshohocken Borough is situated in the southern half of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania and has an approximate size of 0.9 square miles. The Borough is located 14 miles from Center City Philadelphia, 37 miles from Trenton, New Jersey and 33 miles from Wilmington, Delaware. Norristown Borough, the Montgomery County seat, is located 5 miles from the Borough. West Conshohocken is bordered by Plymouth Township to the north, Conshohocken Borough to the east (both separated by the Schuylkill River), Lower Merion Township to the south and Upper Merion Township to the west.

Front Street (Route 23) is the main north-south vehicular thoroughfare while Balligomingo Road and Matsonford Road are the main east-west thoroughfares, with the latter providing access into Conshohocken via the Matsonford Road Bridge. The Blue Route (I-476) and Schuylkill Expressway (I-76) can be directly accessed in the southern half of the Borough where the two highways intersect and provide connections to various points within the tri-state area. There are two SEPTA bus routes which traverse the Borough - Route 95 which runs from Gulph Mills in Upper Merion to Willow Grove Park Mall in Abington Township and has stops in the Borough and Route 97 which runs from the Norristown Transportation Center in Norristown to Chestnut Hill in Northwest Philadelphia and does not stop in the Borough. The closest stop for the Route 97 is on Fayette Street in Conshohocken. The closest SEPTA Regional Rail station is also across the river in Conshohocken and is serviced by the Manayunk/Norristown line which runs from Norristown to University City, Philadelphia. SEPTA's Norristown High Speed Line can be accessed at either the Gulph Mills or Matsonford stations, which are located 2 miles and 1.5 miles from the Borough, respectively. This line runs from Norristown to 69th Street in West Philadelphia.

Due to its proximity to a major regional highway network and regional rail station, West Conshohocken is home to many corporate office buildings and office complexes. These buildings are home to several large employers such as Advantex Learning Solutions, BTG International, ASTM International and EnerTech Capital that help to drive the local economy.



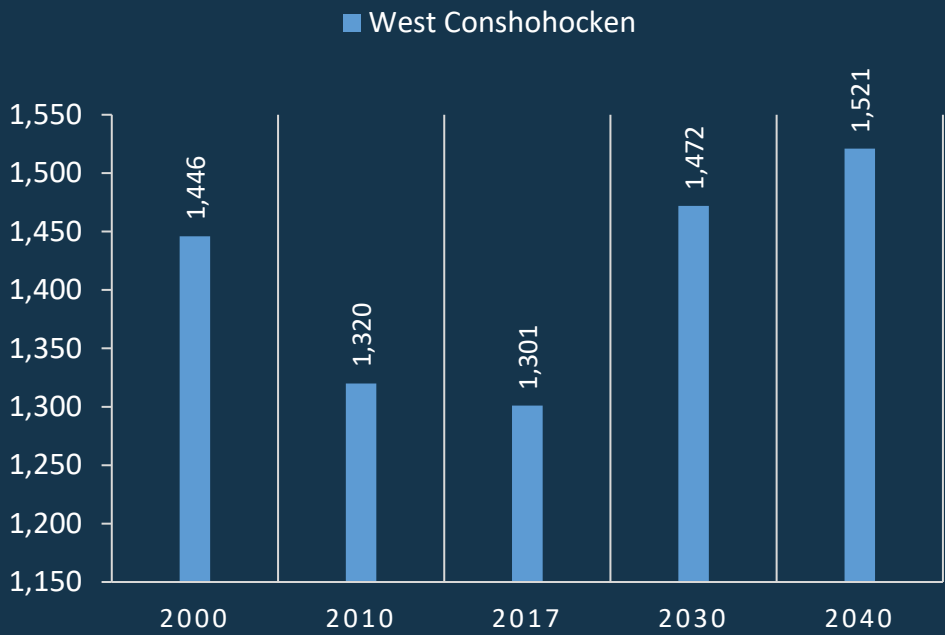
Demographics

Population & Trends

West Conshohocken had a total population of 1,320 in 2010 according to the US Census and 1,301 in 2017 according to the American Community Survey (ACS), an ongoing survey by the Census Bureau which gathers information to provide up-to-date demographic information. The chart at the top right shows population change since 2000 and projects estimated population figures for 2030 and 2040 (according to the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission).

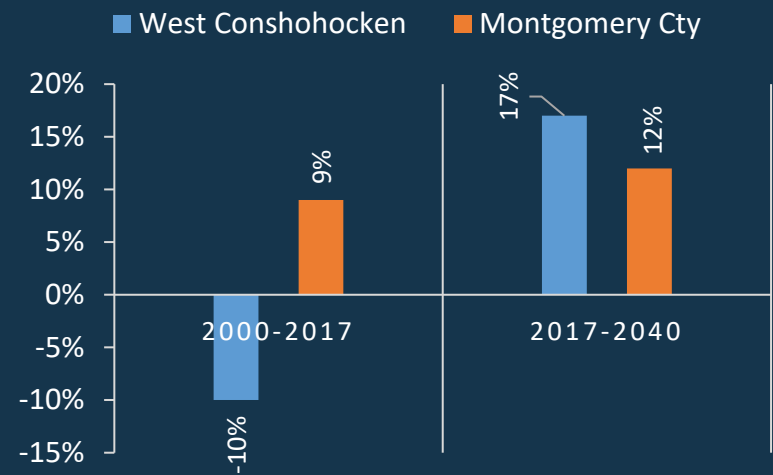
As shown in the chart to the bottom right, West Conshohocken decreased in population by 10% from 2000 to 2017 while Montgomery County's population grew by 9%. However, between 2017 and 2040, the Borough's population is projected to grow by 17%, higher than the County's projected growth of 12%. As the Borough grows, improved connections between neighborhoods and to businesses, schools and community facilities, as well as improved connections via automobile, will be paramount to ensure safer and more direct access to these places.

POPULATION 2000-2040



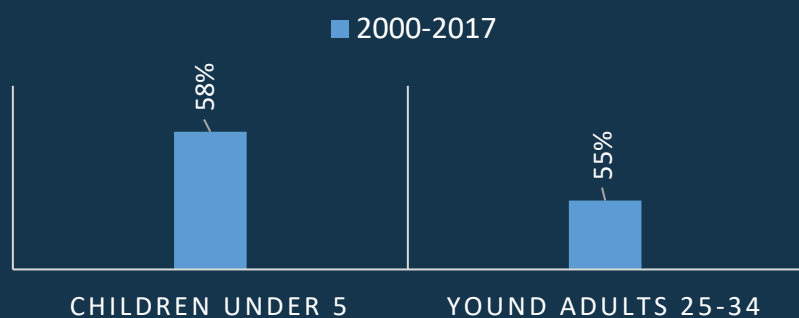
Source: US Census, DVRPC

POPULATION CHANGE 2000-2040



Source: US Census

CHANGE IN CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULT POPULATIONS IN WEST CONSHOHOCKEN



Source: US Census

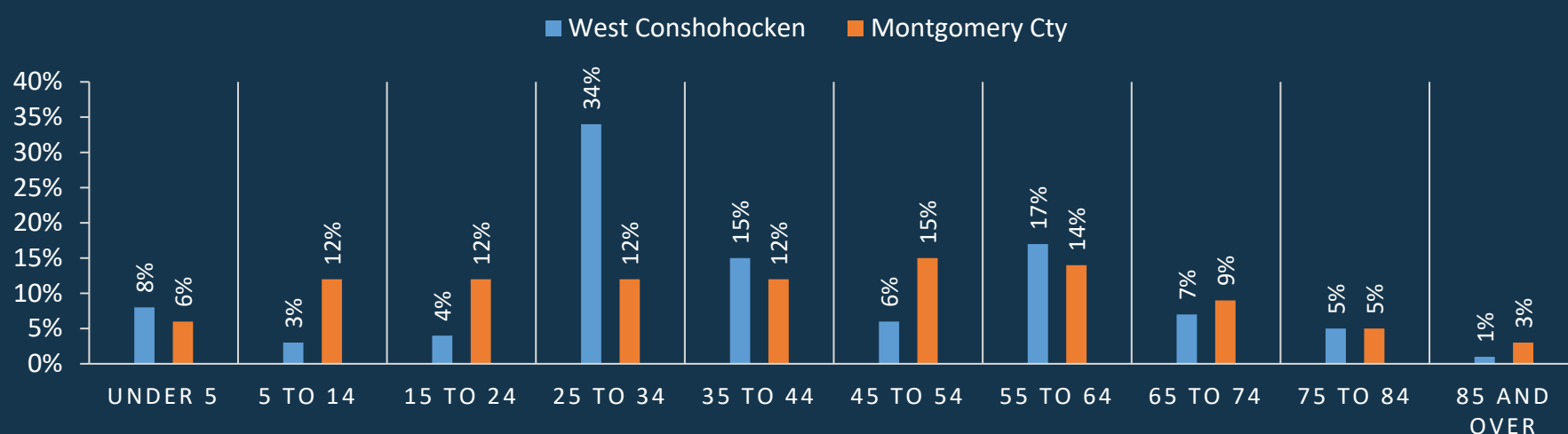
Future development and growth patterns must accommodate the growing number of young adults who may prefer living in denser areas in apartments close to work transit and shops, as well as young families with small children who value safe, pleasant and accessible communities as places to raise a family.

Age

The chart at left shows that the population of children under age 5 in West Conshohocken grew by 58% and the population of young adults aged 25-34 grew by 55% between 2000 and 2017.

The chart at the bottom shows the age distribution of residents in the Borough. In 2017, median age in the Borough was 35.4 years and the largest age group in the Borough are residents aged 25 to 34 years, consisting of 34% of the population. This is in contrast with the County, where this group only consists of 12% of the population. This group is followed by residents aged 55 to 64 years, who make up 17% of the population, and residents aged 34 to 44 years, who make up 15% of the population.

AGE

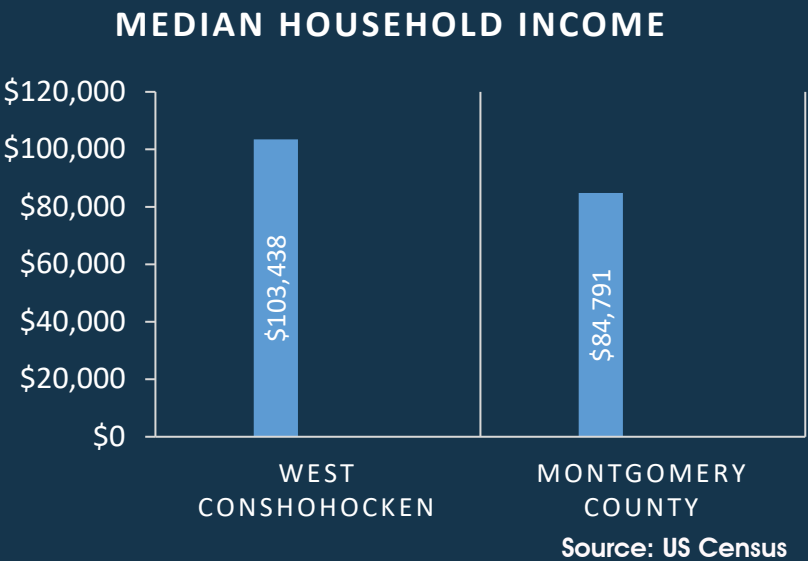


Source: US Census

Education & Income

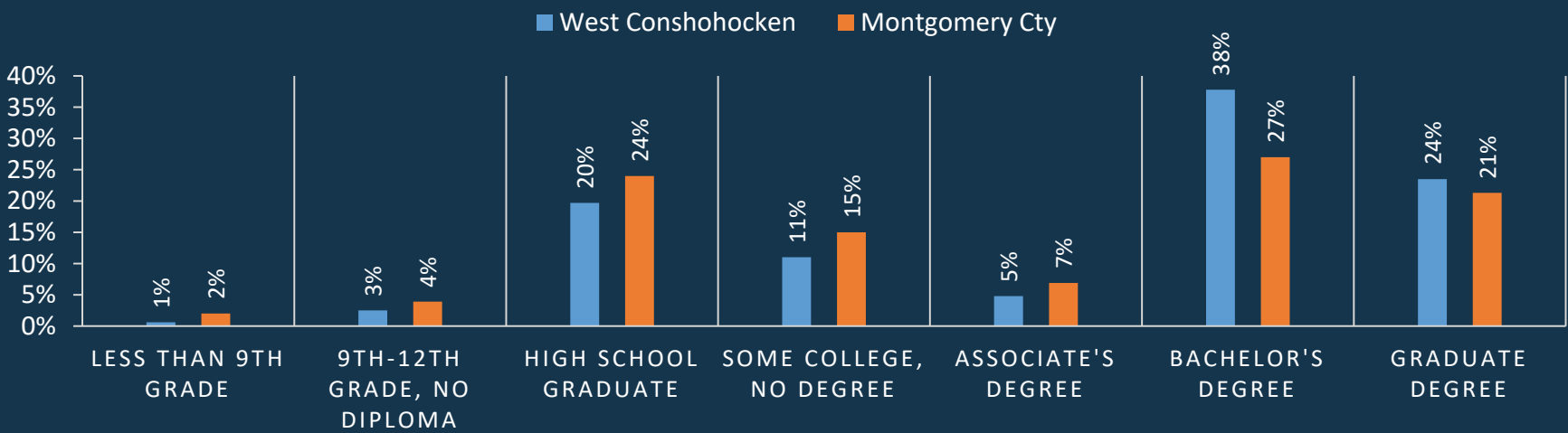
The chart on the right shows that the Borough's median household income of \$103,438 is higher than Montgomery County's median household income of \$84,791.

The educational attainment of West Conshohocken is that of a highly-educated residential base as 38% of residents have a Bachelor's degree, compared to 27% of County residents as a whole, while 24% of Borough residents have a Graduate degree compared to 21% of County residents.



Borough residents have a higher percentage of college and graduate degrees than Montgomery County residents as a whole, helping to contribute to higher median household incomes and standards of living.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT



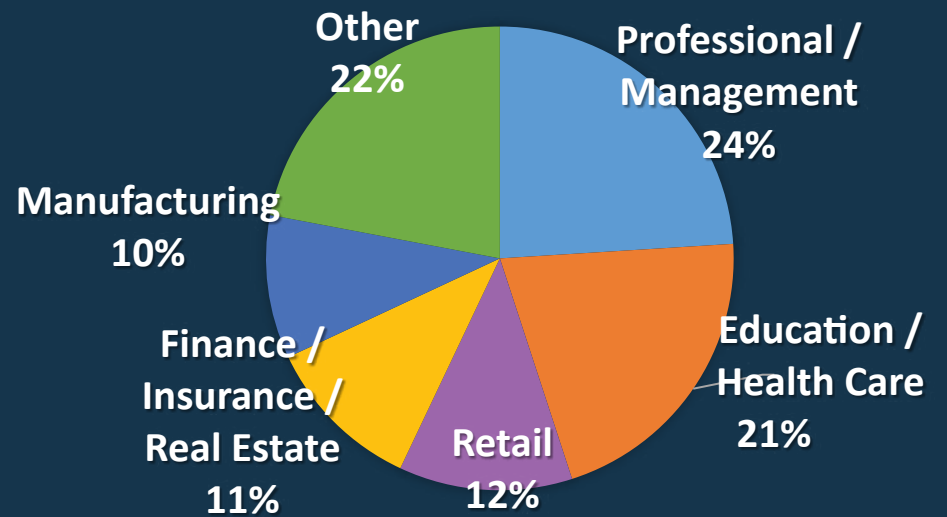
Source: US Census

Industries & Occupations

The chart at the top right shows the top industries that residents in the Borough are employed in. Professional & Management is the top industry with 24% of residents employed in these sectors, followed by Education & Health Care with 21% of residents employed. Retail, Finance/ Insurance & Real Estate and Manufacturing follow with 12%, 11% and 10% of residents employed in these sectors, respectively.

The chart at the bottom right shows the top five occupations that residents of the Borough are employed in. The top occupation for residents is in Business, Science & Arts positions, followed by Sales & Office positions, Service positions, Production & Transportation positions and Natural Resources & Construction positions.

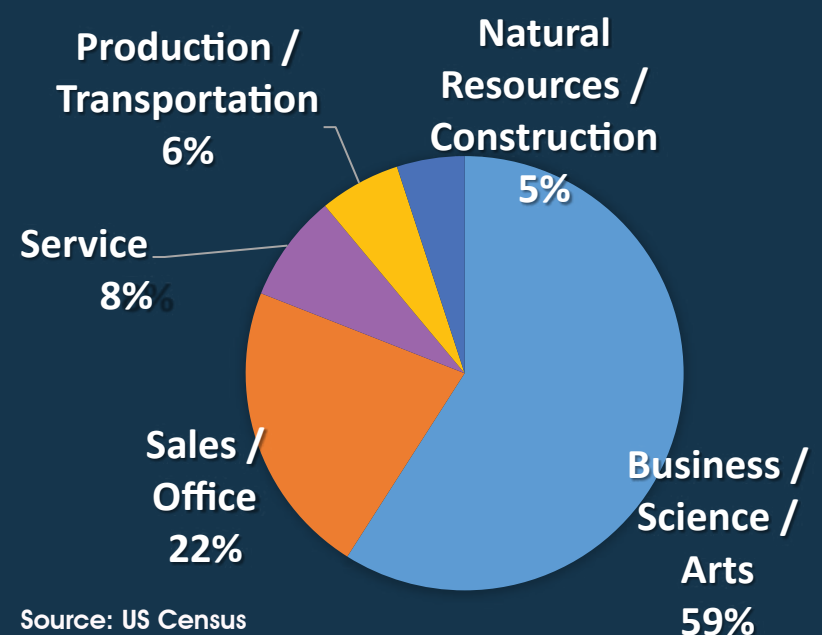
TOP INDUSTRIES



Source: US Census

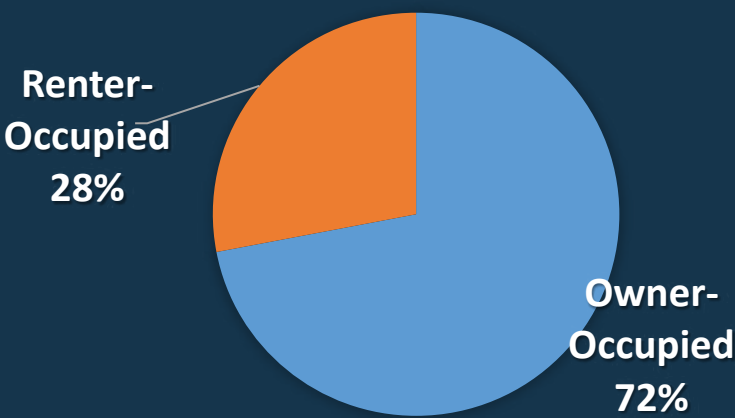
A direct effect of higher levels of educational attainment is employment in industries that require additional or specialized skills, such as professional / management industries as well as the education and health care sectors.

TOP OCCUPATIONS

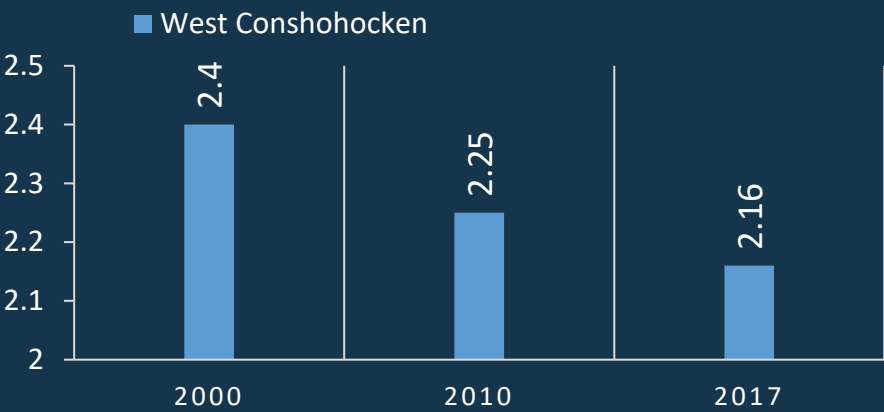


Source: US Census

HOUSEHOLD TYPE – WEST CONSHOHOCKEN



AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE



Source: US Census

Even though young adults make up the largest age cohort in West Conshohocken, the Borough exhibits the typical mix of owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing, which is also similar for the County as a whole.

Households

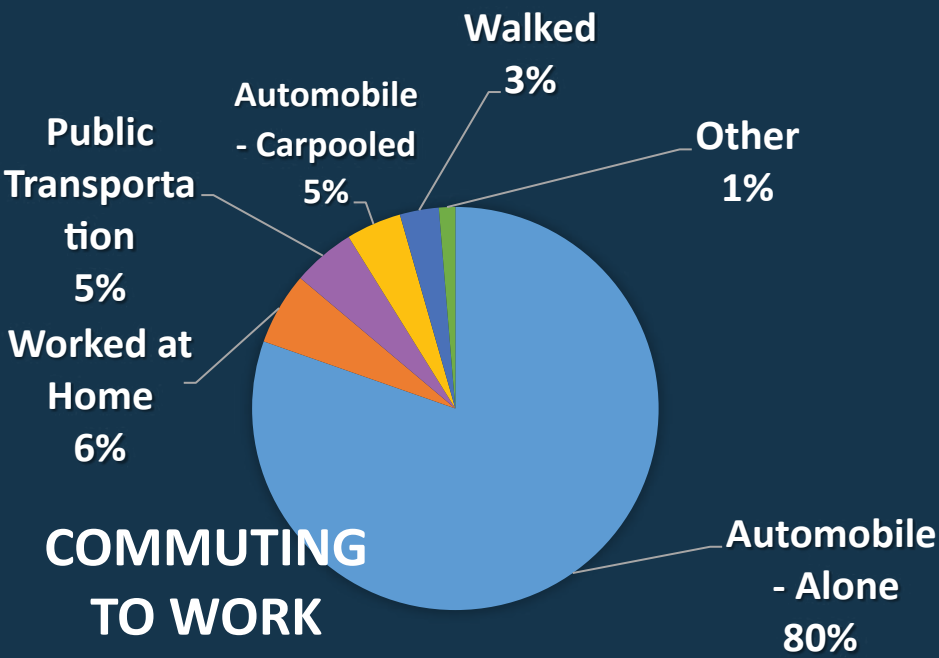
The chart on the top left shows the distribution of households by type in the Borough, with 72% of residents owning their homes as opposed to 28% renting.

The chart on the bottom left shows how average household size has changed since 2000, with household sizes decreasing from 2.4 in 2000 to 2.25 in 2010 to 2.16 in 2017, most likely due to the increase in the number of young adults living in the Borough.

Commuting Patterns

The chart to the right shows the commuting habits of Borough residents. Typical of home-to-work commuting patterns, most residents drive by themselves to work, while only 5% use public transportation. One reason more commuters don't use public transportation, and specifically the regional rail line across the river in Conshohocken, is probably due to the presence of the I-76/I-476 exchange within the Borough which provides access to various points in the Philadelphia metropolitan region. Additionally, the walking route from West Conshohocken must traverse the Front Street / Matsonford Road Bridge intersection which can be intimidating. Also, on all but the nicest days, the walk over the Matsonford Road Bridge can be unpleasant as pedestrians are totally exposed to high winds and precipitation.

The map at the bottom utilizes the Census 'On the Map' tool and shows the inflow/outflow pattern of individuals who work in and outside the Borough. The map shows that 4,793 people live outside but work in the Borough, 31 people live and work in the Borough and 845 people live in but work outside the Borough. The majority of the inflow workers most likely work in the corporate office buildings in the commercial core of the Borough.



Source: US Census

Infrastructure and transportation play key roles in the Borough. Most residents drive alone to work, utilizing the extensive local highway and road system, while most of the Borough's workers reside outside the area and may use SEPTA (bus, regional rail, high-speed line) to get to work. Safer connections and infrastructure improvements for both residents and workers can help ensure smoother travel throughout the transportation network.



Worker Inflow / Outflow from West Conshohocken

H+T Affordability Index

The Housing and Transportation (H+T) Index Affordability Index, developed by the Center for Neighborhood Technology, is a measure that provides an understanding of the affordability of a place by showing how much of a burden both housing and transportation costs place on a household.

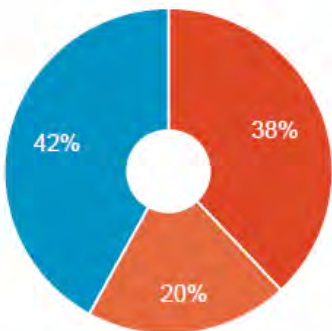
Housing costs (mortgage, taxes, utilities, insurance, fees) are deemed affordable at 30% of a household's income while transportation costs (auto ownership, auto usage, public transit usage) are affordable at 15% of a household's income. The H+T Index sets the benchmark for housing and transportation costs at no more than 45% of household income.

As shown below, average housing and transportation costs for the Borough are slightly higher than the Index averages. Costs could potentially be lowered through a mix of new housing types, circulation improvements and safer access to public transportation.

Average Housing + Transportation Costs % Income

Factoring in both housing and transportation costs provides a more comprehensive way of thinking about the cost of housing and true affordability.

- Housing
- Transportation
- Remaining Income



Transportation Costs

In dispersed areas, people need to own more vehicles and rely upon driving them farther distances which also drives up the cost of living.



\$12,750

Annual Transportation Costs



1.70

Autos Per Household



19,503

Average Household VMT



Conformity With Existing Plans

West Conshohocken Borough Comprehensive Plan, 2009

The West Conshohocken Comprehensive Plan outlines the ways the Borough can preserve its best qualities, build on those qualities and make the Borough a better place to live, work and play. The goals and objectives of the Plan as they relate to the Vision Plan are:

Create a Town Center with Parking.

- Objective: Create a well-defined and vital town center with a strong sense of place.
- Objective: Connect the town center to the entire Borough via good local roads and a safe, convenient and complete pedestrian network.

Revitalize the Riverfront.

- Objective: Explore the potential for expanding public access along the riverfront.
- Objective: Create strong and convenient access between the riverfront and residential neighborhoods, town center and municipal parks.

Improve Housing.

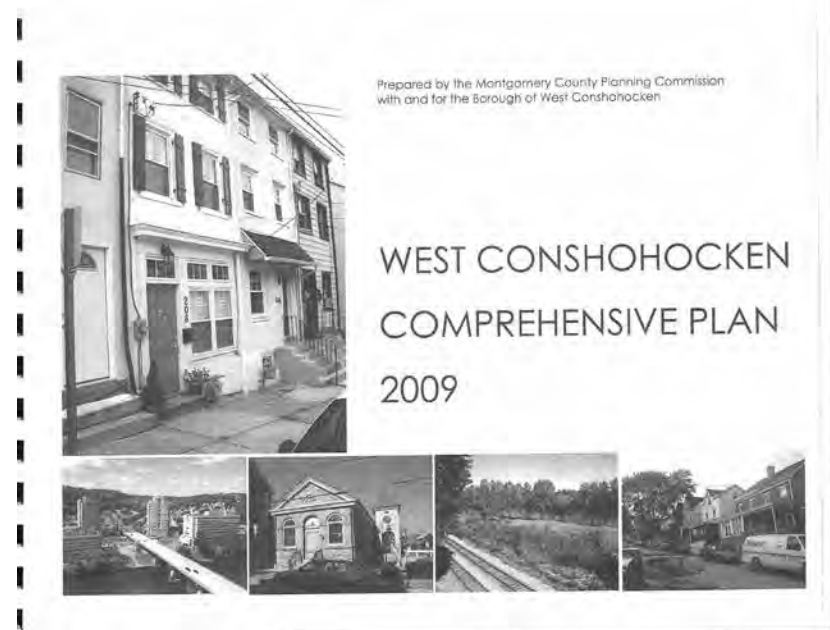
- Objective: Encourage a mix of residential types, sizes and costs.

Enhance Transportation.

- Objective: Continue to work for improved vehicular and pedestrian circulation, separating regional from local traffic where possible.
- Objective: Decrease traffic congestion.
- Objective: Improve pedestrian safety and enjoyment throughout the Borough with improved pedestrian facilities.
- Objective: Improve transit service, facilities and connections within the Borough and to neighboring communities.

Upgrade Neighborhood Infrastructure.

- Objective: Improve community infrastructure in residential areas.



Enhance Recreational Facilities and Opportunities.

- Objective: Protect existing elements of the community that enhance its visual quality.
- Objective: Establish full-time public access to the Schuylkill River waterfront.

Focus on the Environment.

- Objective: Strictly regulate floodplains and steep slopes so that development will be consistent with good stormwater and soil management.

Improve Community Facilities.

- Objective: Provide appropriate facilities for a variety of cultural programs and activities (ex. community center).

Redevelop Light Industrial Areas.

- Objective: Prepare existing light industrial areas for redevelopment as existing structures and infrastructure become obsolete or run down.
- Objective: Redevelop obsolete light industrial areas with new private and public structures and infrastructure.

Promote Historic Preservation.

- Objective: Facilitate the retention and restoration of the Borough's many locally historic buildings (ex. adaptive reuse of Borough Hall).



West Conshohocken Borough Open Space Plan, 2006

The West Conshohocken Open Space Plan is as an update to previous plans to preserve open space, protect environmental features and provide for recreational opportunities. The goals and objectives of the Plan as they relate to the Vision Plan are to:

Establish the Schuylkill Waterfront as a publicly accessible destination and connecting point to a new regional trail along the river.

- Objective: Work with private land owners to ensure fulltime public access to the waterfront and create new park facilities along a waterfront trail.
- Objective: Work with Conshohocken Borough to improve pedestrian and bicycle access across Matsonford Road Bridge.
- Objective: Improve pedestrian access across Front Street at Ford Street and throughout the central business district / town center.

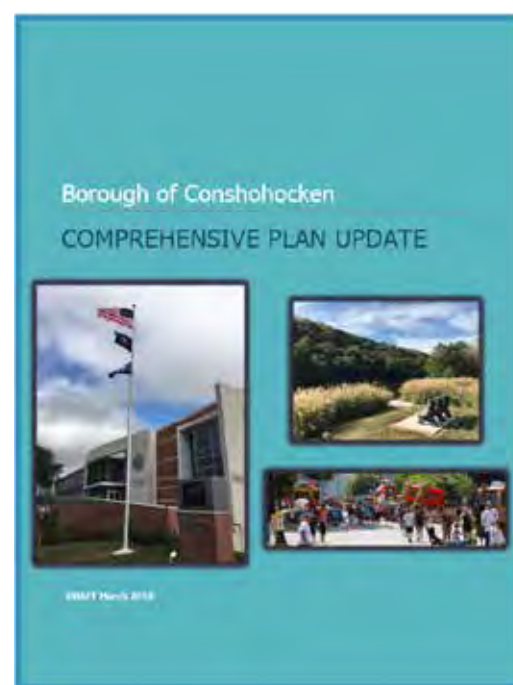
Meet active and passive recreational needs of residents and workers.

- Objective: Create a more central park / plaza as a public gathering place.

Protect elements of the community that enhance its visual quality.

- Objective: Beautify the streetscape of major roads in conjunction with future roadway projects.

The Plan can be accessed online at <https://www.montcopa.org/DocumentCenter/View/2131/West-Conshohocken-Open-Space-Plan?bidId=>.



Borough of Conshohocken Comprehensive Plan, 2018

The Conshohocken Comprehensive Plan serves as a guide for Borough leaders, residents and stakeholders to create a common community vision for the future of the Borough. The Transportation goal and objectives of the Plan as they relate to the Vision Plan are to:

Provide a safe transportation system, which optimizes mobility and access, sustains quality of life, strengthens the economy, and protects the environment.

- Objective: Enhance the safety of the transportation system for all users—motorized and non-motorized.
- Objective: Encourage the use of alternative non-motorized modes of transportation such as: walking, hiking and biking.
- Objective: Support access to, and expansion of the regional public transportation system.

The Plan can be accessed online at http://www.conshohockenpa.gov/media/35146/Adopted-Comp-Plan_062018.pdf.

The Riverfront Plan: Township of Whitemarsh and Borough of Conshohocken, 2016

The Riverfront Plan was prepared to assess Whitemarsh Township and Conshohocken Borough's riverfront access, usage and development opportunities with recommendations geared toward improving existing land use regulations, acquiring key parcels of real estate and creating collaborative enterprise districts. The goals and objectives of the Plan as they relate to the Vision Plan are to:

Improve access to our riverfront / Make our riverfront a destination.

- Objective: Create the Two Boroughs Bridge as a suspended bridge under the Fayette Street (Mastsonford Road) Bridge linking Conshohocken and West Conshohocken.

The Plan can be accessed online at <http://www.whitemarshwp.org/459/2016-Riverfront-Plan>.



Montco 2040: A Shared Vision – The Comprehensive Plan for Montgomery County, 2015

Montco 2040 is Montgomery County's updated comprehensive plan, providing an overview of the County's vision and objectives and provides goals and implementation steps for managing the County's built environment structured around three themes: Connection Communities, Sustainable Places and Vibrant Economy. The Connected Communities goal as it relates to the Vision Plan are to:

Improve transportation quality and expand options for County residents and workers.

- Objective: Work with PennDOT and local municipalities to improve road connectivity, expand Intelligent Transportation Systems, and eliminate road bottlenecks.
- Objective: Advocate for more sidewalks and pedestrian-oriented design of developments.

The Sustainable Places goals as they relate to the Vision Plan are to:

Support a modern, resilient, green and energy-efficient infrastructure network.

- Objective: Advocate with PennDOT and local municipalities to right-size roads, install traffic calming, build green streets, install sidewalks, and use other safety and environmental improvements for streets.

Support housing choices and opportunities to meet the needs of all people.

- Objective: Advocate and partner with local municipalities, developers, and community groups to provide workforce housing, additional walkable new housing, accessory apartments, and accessible special needs housing that will reflect the needs of the county's diverse population.

Enhance community character and protect neighborhoods.

- Objective: Advocate with local municipalities and developers for appropriate land uses, infill development, maintenance, and public improvements.

The Vibrant Economy goals as they relate to the Vision Plan are to:

Improve transportation access to businesses.

- Objective: Work with PennDOT, the Turnpike Commission, businesses, and local municipalities to provide better access to employment centers with new and improved interchanges, slip ramps, widened and realigned roads, and new road connections.
- Objective: Work collaboratively with local municipalities, developers, the state Department of Environmental Protection, and the state Department of Community and Economic Development to encourage redevelopment of underutilized and vacant industrial land.

Flexibly adapt to changing market conditions and demographics.

- Objective: Encourage communities, businesses, arts organizations, and developers to create walkable, mixed use, transit-friendly, and entertainment-supportive employment centers, towns, and destinations to attract young workers and other key demographic groups.
- Objective: Advocate with local municipalities, health care providers, and developers to create an environment that meets the needs of an aging population.

The Plan can be accessed online at https://www.montcopa.org/DocumentCenter/View/7719/Adopted-Montco-2040-Shared-Vision_01_16_2015?bidId=.



EXISTING CONDITIONS & ANALYSIS

2



Public Participation

Public Participation Summary

The Borough engaged in a nine-month planning process to complete this Vision Plan. The planning consulting team of Simone Collins Landscape Architecture (land planning and landscape architecture) and 4Ward Planning (economic and real estate analysis) was retained in May 2019 and the planning process lasted from May 2019 until completion in January 2020.

Meetings with the public and stakeholders were held throughout the planning process to obtain input on existing conditions and what individuals and groups would like to see emerge from the plan. These meetings were also used to obtain feedback on initial ideas and recommendations and also to keep the community up-to-date and aware of the process as a whole. Attendance lists and meeting minutes can be found in the Appendix of this report.

Additional public participation and engagement included an online public opinion survey and meetings with transportation professionals and corporate office representatives/property managers and are discussed later in this chapter.

Committee Meetings

The project was guided by a Vision Plan Study Committee that included representatives from across the Borough. The Committee provided valuable insight and advice to the consultant for development of the Vision Plan. Four committee meetings were held during the planning process. Committee members included:

- Dick Maccarone, Borough Council
- Tara Gorney, Borough Council
- Doug Borgerson, Borough Council
- Matt Kuttler, Planning Commission
- John Fink, George Clay Fire Company
- Pat Zapien, Recreational Council
- Pat Kelly, Recreational Council
- Guy Davis, Resident
- Stephan Blumenthal, Resident
- Mike English, Borough Manager
- Khal Hassan, Borough Engineer

Public Meetings

Four public meetings were held during the planning process. Summaries of the meeting are below.

Public Meeting #1 – June 5, 2019

A presentation was held where the project team reviewed the scope and schedule. Possible building blocks and themes to advance a vision for the Borough, such as potential redevelopment sites and improved neighborhood connections, were also presented. After the presentation, the public was invited to provide their thoughts on the goals, facts and concepts that should shape the Plan and its recommendations.

Public Meeting #2 – September 24, 2019

The initial ideas generated during the first Committee and public meetings, along with initial online public opinion survey results, were presented. After a discussion of Borough demographics, general attributes and existing conditions of the Borough, such as existing land use, zoning, transportation networks and natural features. The preliminary results of 4Ward Planning's market study were also reviewed. This was followed by a review and discussion of preliminary improvements related to transportation, new amenities and redevelopment opportunities proposed for the Borough.

Public Meeting #3 – November 13, 2019

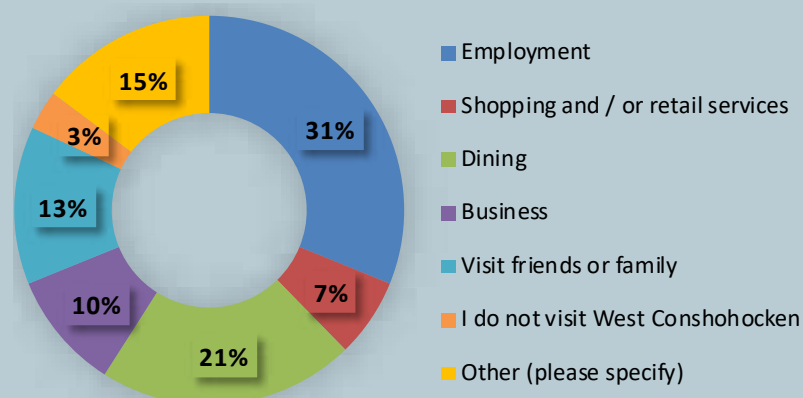
The draft plan and project priorities were presented and discussed. A 60-day public review and comment period was initiated after which, received comments would be reviewed by the project team and Study Committee to help edit and prepare the final plan.

Public Meeting #4 – January 28, 2020

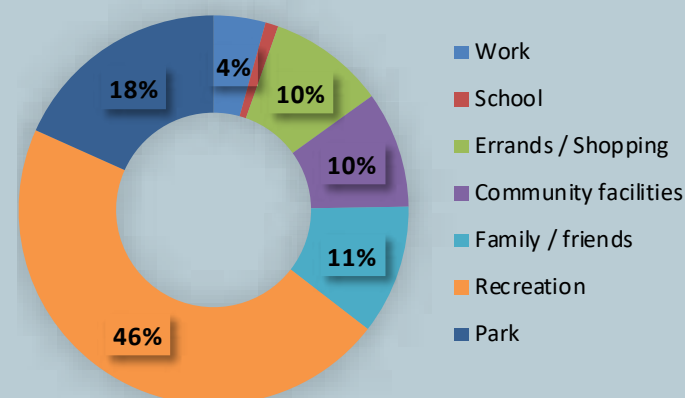
To be written for final report.



If you are not a resident, what are the primary reasons you visit West Conshohocken?



Where do you go when you walk or bike?



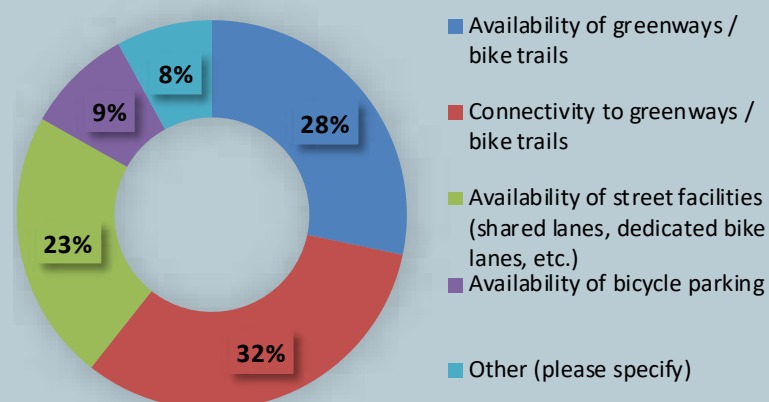
Online Survey

An online survey was conducted to help inform the development of the Vision Plan. Some questions were to obtain general information, including where the respondent resided, age and whether they worked in the Borough. The remaining questions focused on Borough life including its appearance, safety and mobility, transportation habits, trail use habits, walking and biking habits and quality of life issues. The following are key results and general findings of the survey, which closed in November 2019. The full results are included in the report Appendix.

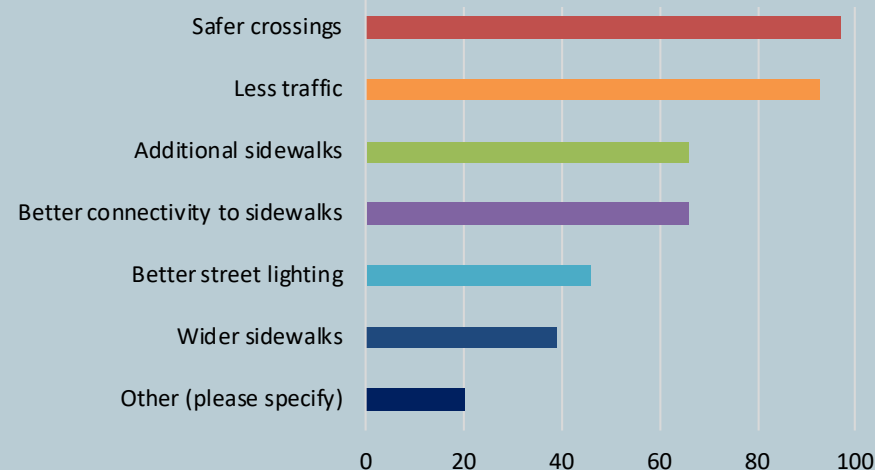
- 188 Responses
- 85% live in West Conshohocken
- 49% have lived in the Borough for 0-5 years

- For nonresidents, 50% visit the Borough for work; 34% for dining
- 36% are between the ages of 25-35
- 39% rate the outdoor appearance as “neither attractive or unattractive”; 31% rate it as ‘attractive’
- 73% note the most prominent feature as ‘proximity to regional highways’; followed by 68% noting ‘safe neighborhoods’; 60% noting “proximity to SEPTA regional rail”; and 51% noting ‘proximity to Schuylkill River’
- 72% would like to walk or bike to destinations in the Borough but can’t safely because of too much traffic; 66% can’t because of a lack of pedestrian facilities
- 49% use the Conshohocken regional rail several times a year
- 85% never use the High Speed Line

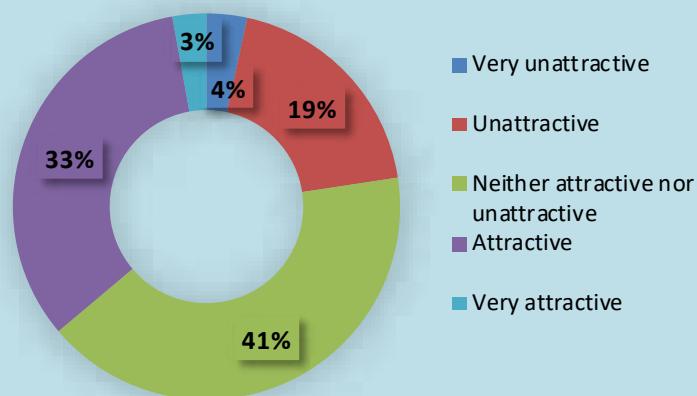
What would encourage you to bike more?



What would encourage you to walk more?



How would you rate the outdoor appearance of West Conshohocken?

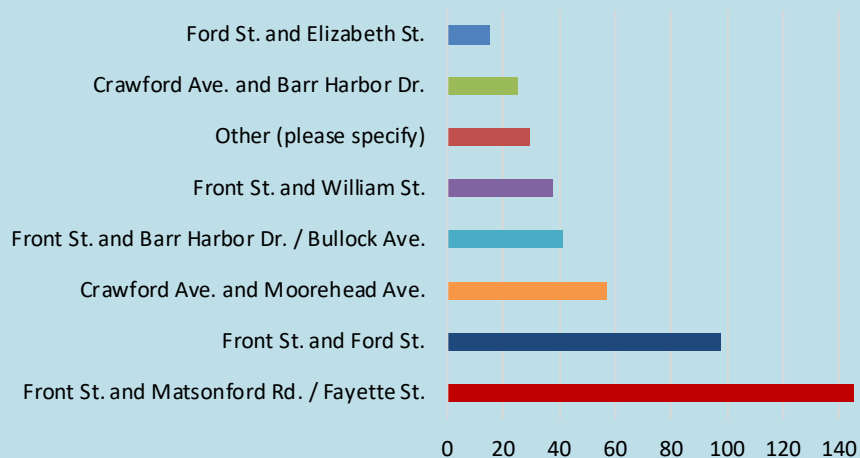


- 94% never use the Route 95 or 97 buses
- 37% use the Schuylkill River Trail monthly

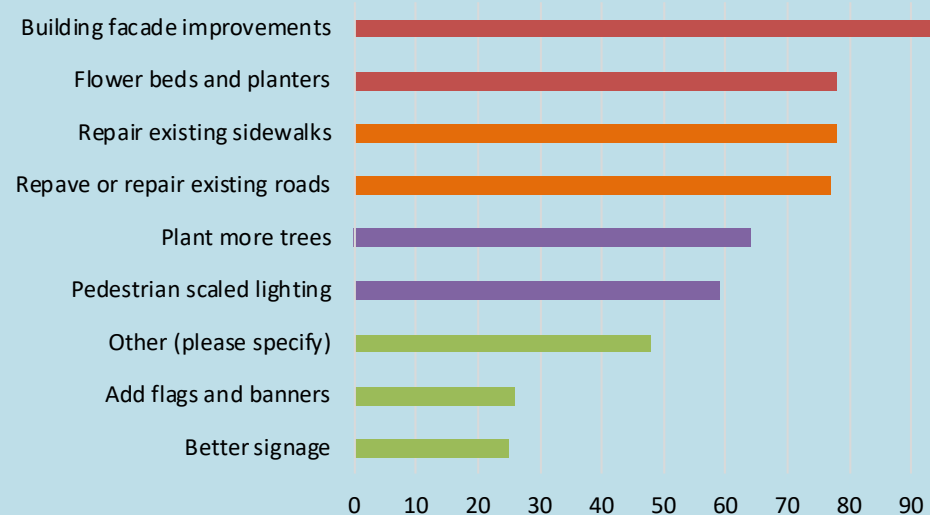
The survey found that what people believed to be the most important elements to make the Borough more attractive were primarily streetscape related and included building facade improvements (52%), flower beds and planters (44%), repairing existing sidewalks (44%), repaving or repairing existing roads (43%), planting more trees (36%) and pedestrian scaled lighting (33%).

In terms of the types of new businesses the Borough should seek to attract, respondents' first choice was restaurants (62%) followed by personal service establishments (42%), bars (40%) and small businesses and offices (31%). Many also noted wanting to see coffee shops and grocers opening in the Borough.

Which intersections are the most congested or problematic in West Conshohocken?

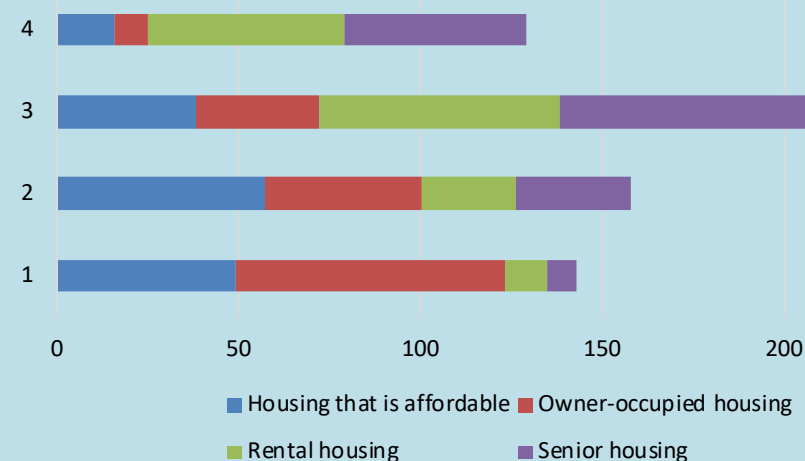


What are the 3 most important elements to make West Conshohocken more attractive?

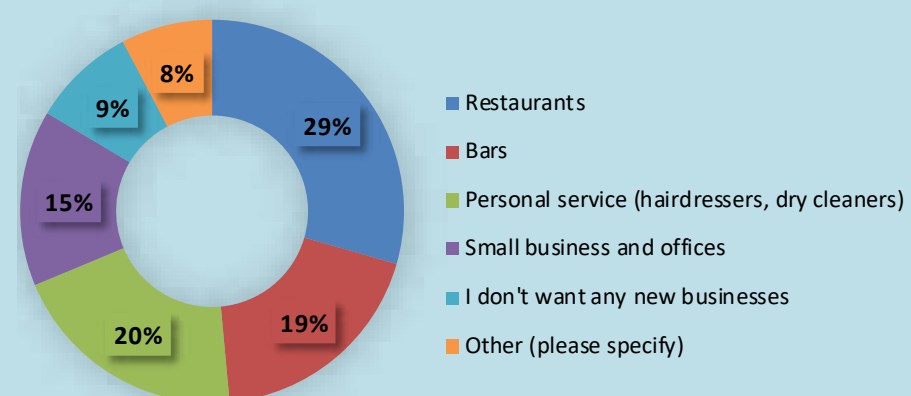


How important is it that the following types of housing are available in West Conshohocken?

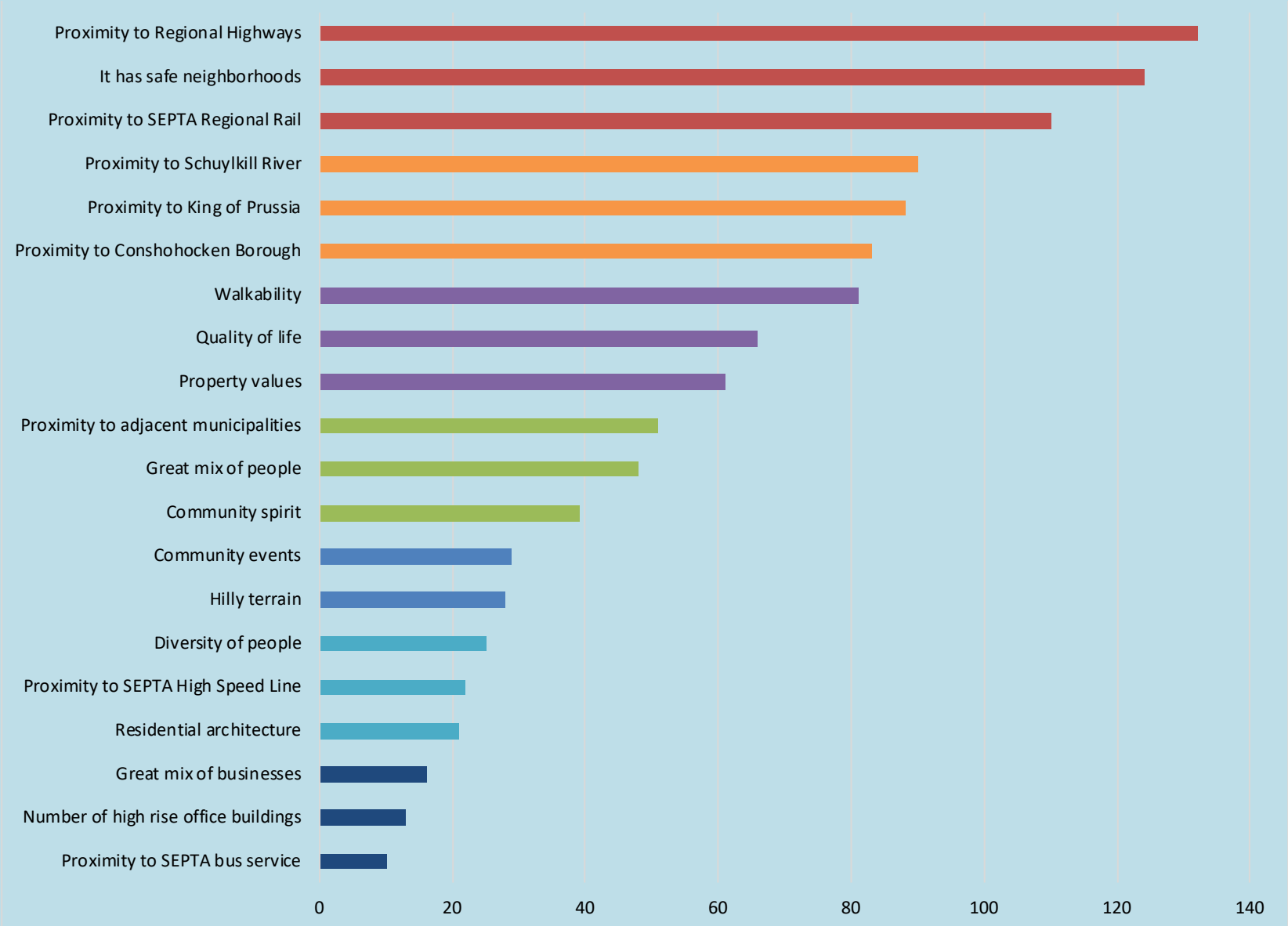
(1 = Very Important 2 = Important 3 = Neutral 4 = Not Important)



What types of new businesses should West Conshohocken seek to attract?



What are the most prominent features or characteristics of West Conshohocken that make is different and /or more attractive from the rest of the surrounding area?



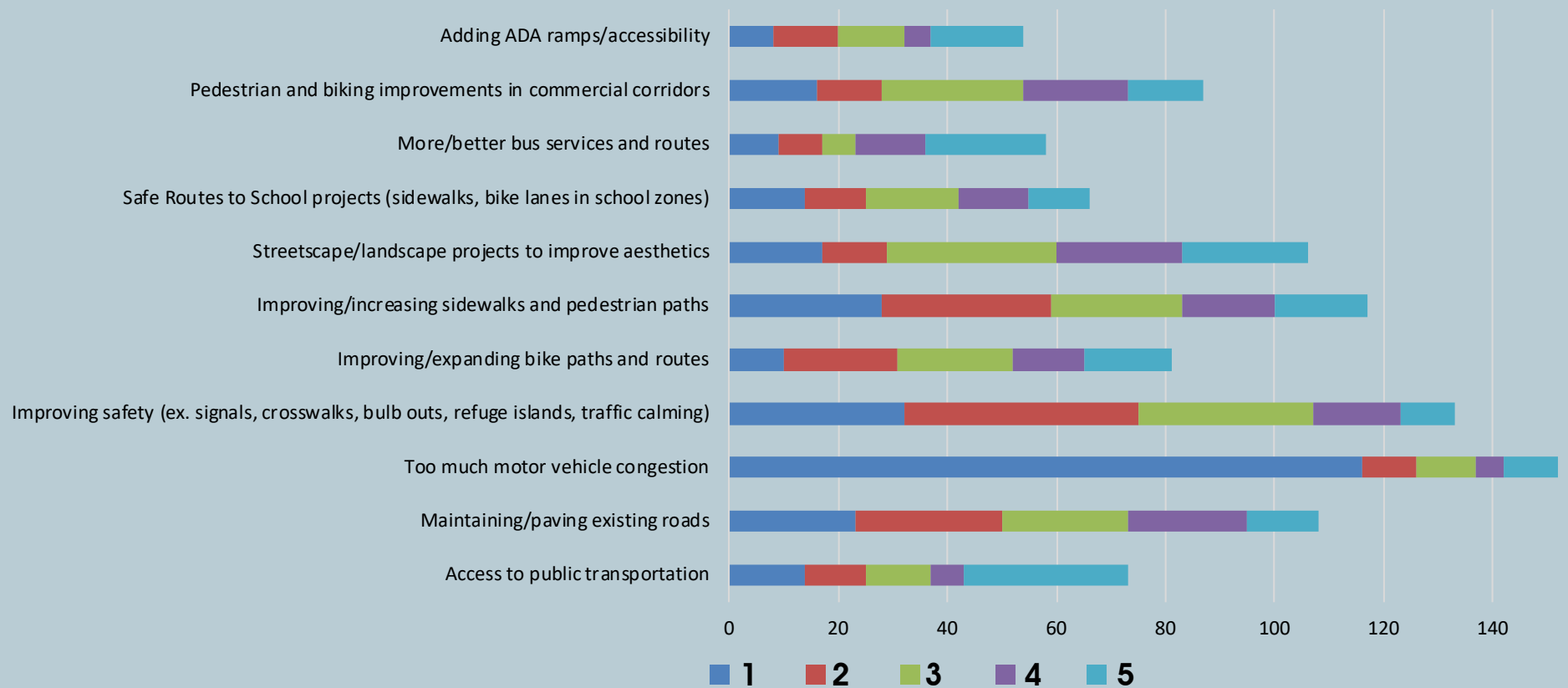
Respondents were also asked about a range of quality of life issues and potential change in the Borough:

- 76% strongly agree ‘West Conshohocken should proactively plan for the future of the Borough’
- 69% disagree and strongly disagree ‘traffic congestion is just a fact of life in the Borough and major changes to congestion are probably not possible’
- 66% agree and strongly agree that ‘we have enough offices in West Conshohocken’
- 81% disagree and strongly disagree that ‘we should keep West Conshohocken just as it is – Do not change a thing’

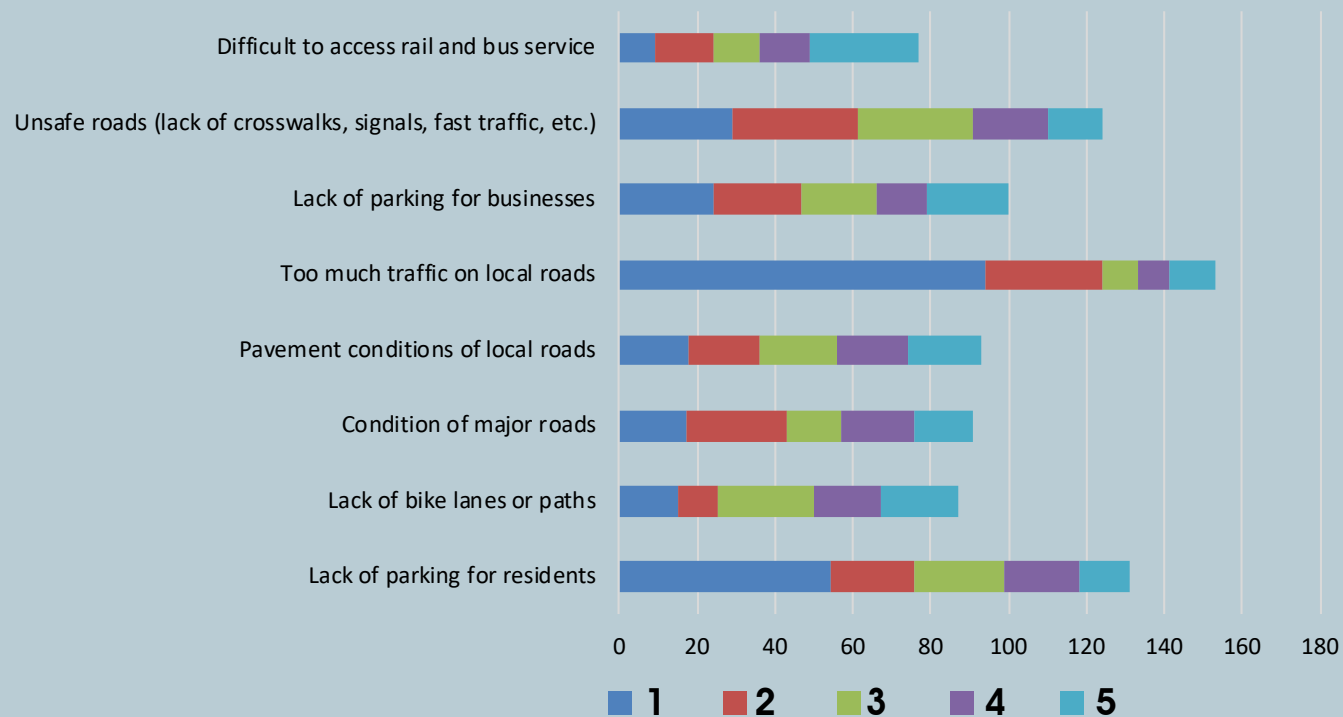
- 80% agree and strongly agree that ‘changes in the Borough are inevitable and if we don’t plan for change, someone else will’
- 56% disagree and strongly disagree that ‘West Conshohocken is losing a sense of community due to all the new residents’
- 60% disagree and strongly disagree that ‘we do not need any additional recreational facilities’
- 38% and 46% disagree that ‘we have enough restaurants, bars and places to eat,’ and that ‘we have enough personal service retail,’ respectively
- 59% agree and strongly agree that ‘the Borough should add a town plaza / town center feature’

Rank the 5 most important issues affecting transportation in West Conshohocken

1 = High Priority, 5 = Low Priority



Rank the top 5 concerns you have about transportation in West Conshohocken 1 = High Priority, 5 = Low Priority



Transportation Meeting

On October 31, 2019, the project team met with area transportation professionals and stakeholders with the goals to: examine concepts for transportation improvements; create a coalition for mitigating regional transportation issues; approach PennDOT as a unified coalition to obtain acknowledgment that these transportation issues are regional issues; and ultimately, fund, engineer and build improvements. All parties agreed that at the end of the Vision Plan process, West Conshohocken and Conshohocken Boroughs should try to advance a general memorandum of understanding (without funding commitments) to work together on these concepts and possibly engage the local business community toward being active partners. Meeting participants included representatives from:

- West Conshohocken Borough
- Conshohocken Borough
- Greater Valley Forge Transportation Management Association (GVF TMA)
- Pennoni Associates
- Montgomery County Planning Commission
- SEPTA

Focus Group Meeting

On November 7, 2019, the project team met with property managers of some of the corporate office buildings in the Borough to discuss transportation improvements, redevelopment opportunities and specific to the office buildings, strategies and solutions to address parking. As hundreds of unused spaces are available at night and on weekends when there are no employees in the buildings, participants discussed ways in which the offices and Borough can work on possible partnership programs to address parking demand. At the end of the meeting, participants were asked to discuss these options with the property owners. Meeting participants included representatives from:

- West Conshohocken Borough
- ASTM
- Brandywine Realty Trust (Four Tower Bridge)
- Hayden Management Company (300 Four Falls)
- Oliver Tyrone Pulver Corporation (One Tower Bridge)

Existing Conditions & Analysis Mapping

Data Collection & Methodology

Data found within this report was compiled from many different sources, including West Conshohocken Borough, Montgomery County, DVRPC, previous planning efforts to date and new field reconnaissance data obtained by the consultant.

Geographic Information System (GIS) base map information was used to prepare field maps and preliminary planning documents consisting of the base aerial photography, municipal boundaries, roadways, parcels and other identifying features.

The consultants performed initial field reconnaissance on July 12, 2019 and August 20, 2019 to inventory, analyze and document existing conditions. Field data was recorded by the consultant onto the field maps, and photographs were taken of existing site conditions for use in evaluating roadway features, pedestrian amenities and land usage.

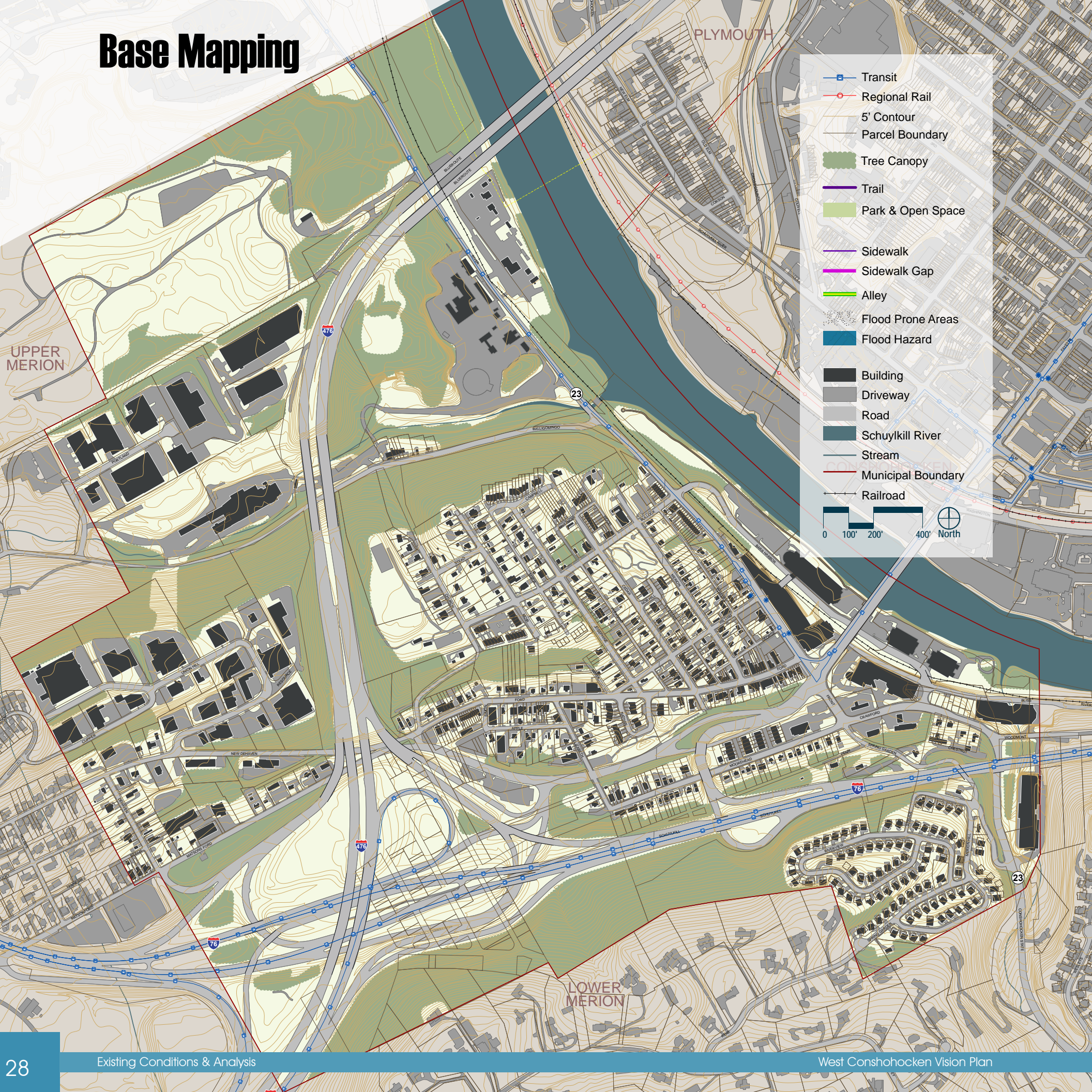
The maps on the following pages illustrate existing conditions within the Borough and include:

- Project Area
- Base Mapping
- Land Use
- Zoning
- Regional Transportation
- Alleys
- Parks
- Flood Prone Areas
- Strava Run & Bike Data

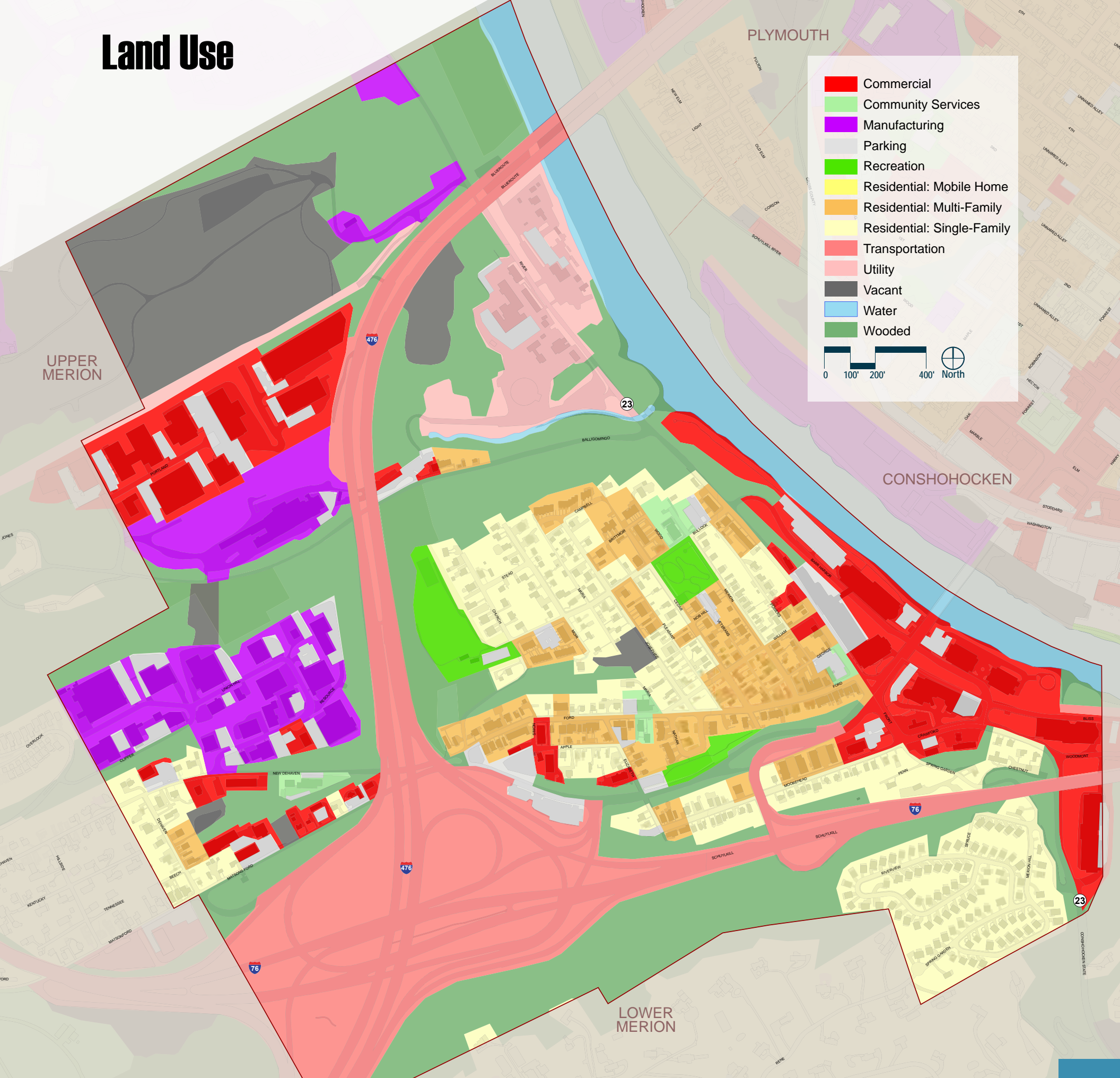
Project Area



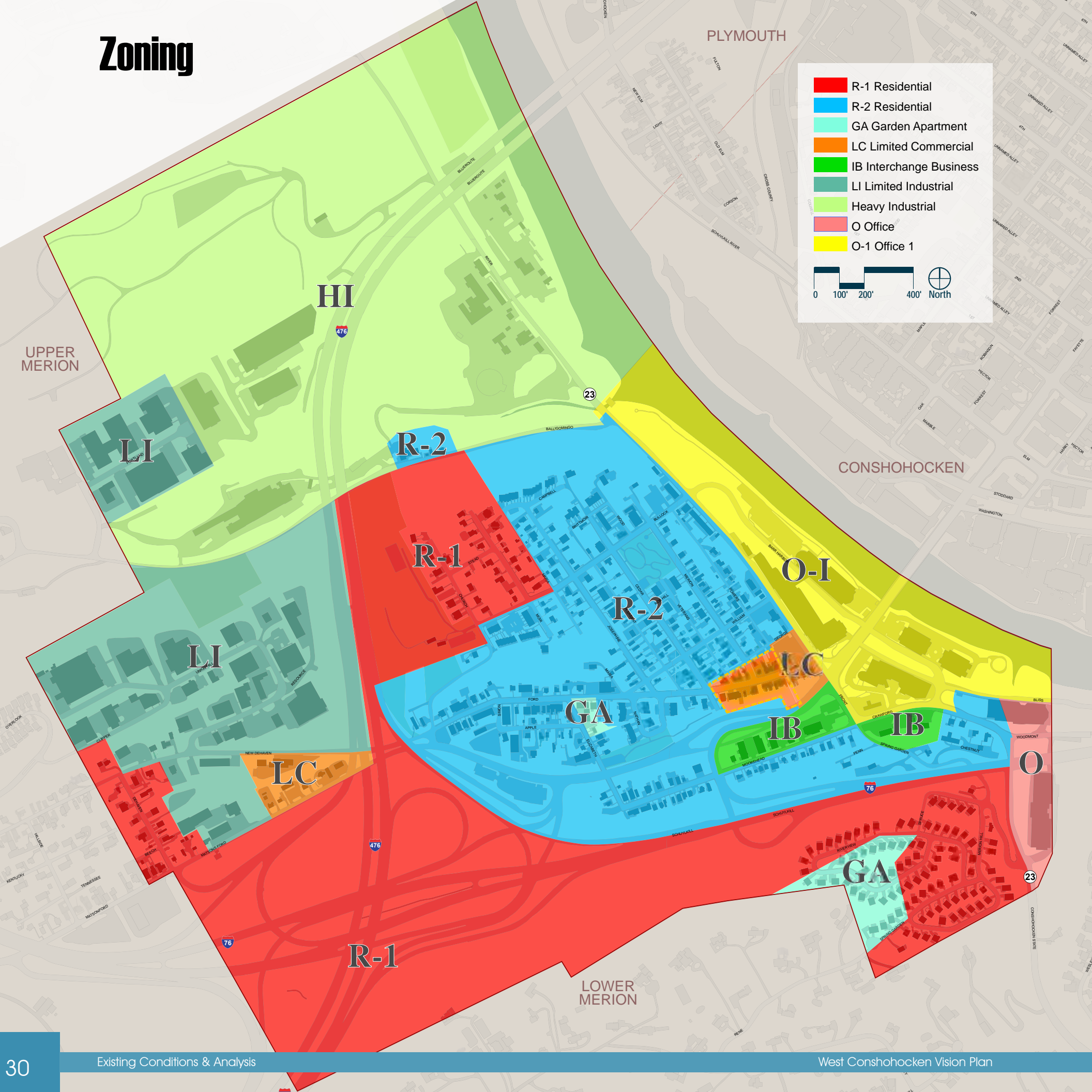
Base Mapping



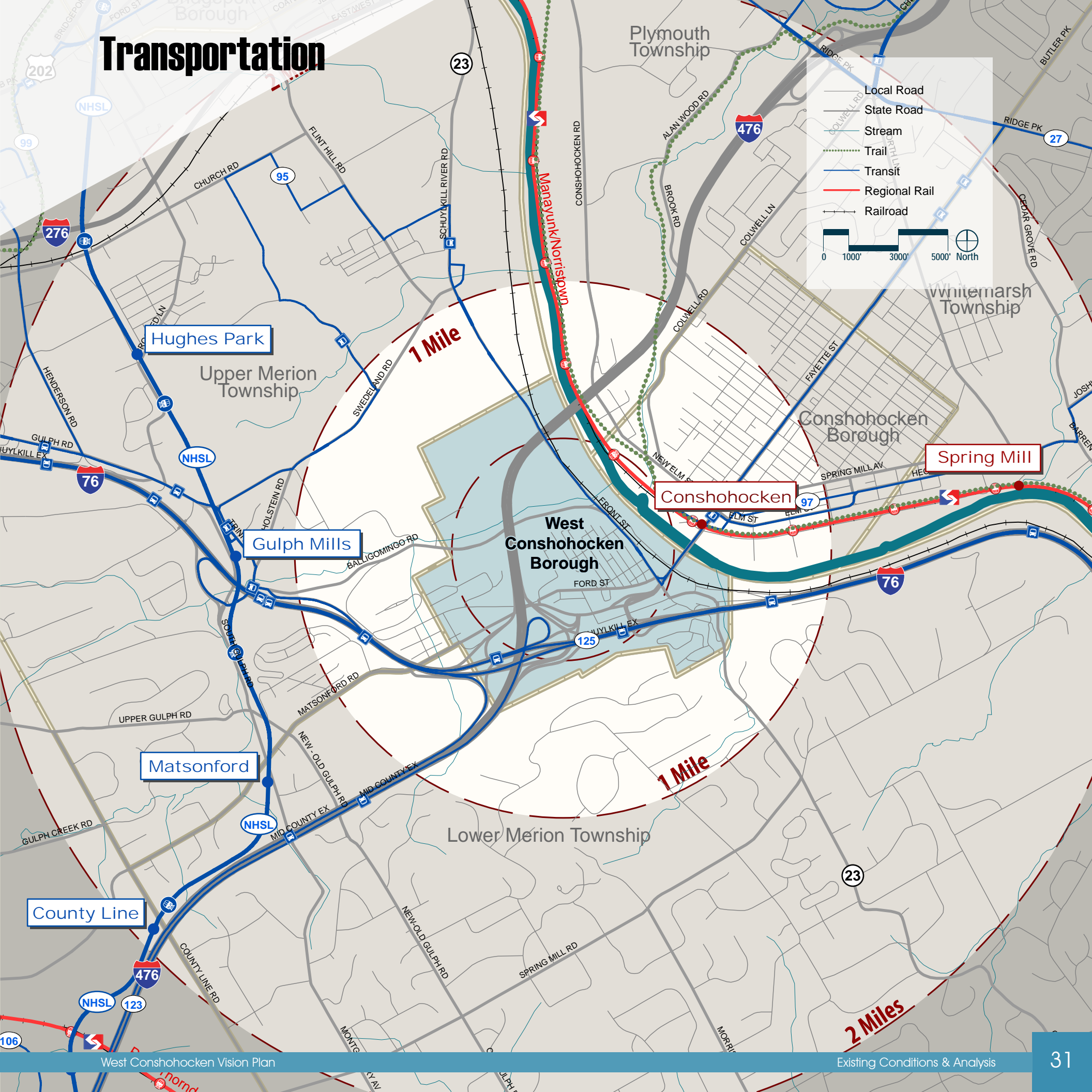
Land Use



Zoning



Transportation



Borough Alleys



Parks



Flood Prone Areas



Flood Prone Areas

- Flood Hazard
- Transit
- Regional Rail
- 5' Contour
- Parcel Boundary
- Building
- Driveway
- Road
- Schuylkill River
- Stream
- Municipal Boundary
- Railroad

0 100' 200' 400' North

STRAVA Run & Bike Data



Strava Run – Strava is an interactive fitness app for mobile devices that tracks a runner's or cyclist's performance and route. The "heat map" feature of Strava displays routes that get the most activity from the app's network of users. The above heat map shows the routes in and around the Borough which are most used by runners. The most heavily used route traverses Ford Street from Church Street, over the bridge into Conshohocken where runners can connect with the popular Schuylkill River Trail. Other routes with increased activity include Elizabeth Street, Moorehead Avenue, Front Street from Crawford Avenue to Bullock Avenue and the river trail off of Barr Harbor Drive.



Strava Bike – The Strava bike heat map shows similar routes to the run map as well as longer stretches of Front Street, Ford Street and Matsonford Road. These routes, which include a number of hills and curves and present varying degrees of difficulty, are popular with avid road cyclists.

Regional Case Studies

West Conshohocken faces challenges that are shared by many municipalities across the region as they witness evolving residential and commercial trends and traffic patterns that are affecting their communities. An analysis of how some of these municipalities have dealt with these and similar issues can provide insights and lessons learned that can be applied toward the Vision for West Conshohocken.



Ashley Vision 2020: A Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (Ashley Borough, Luzerne County)

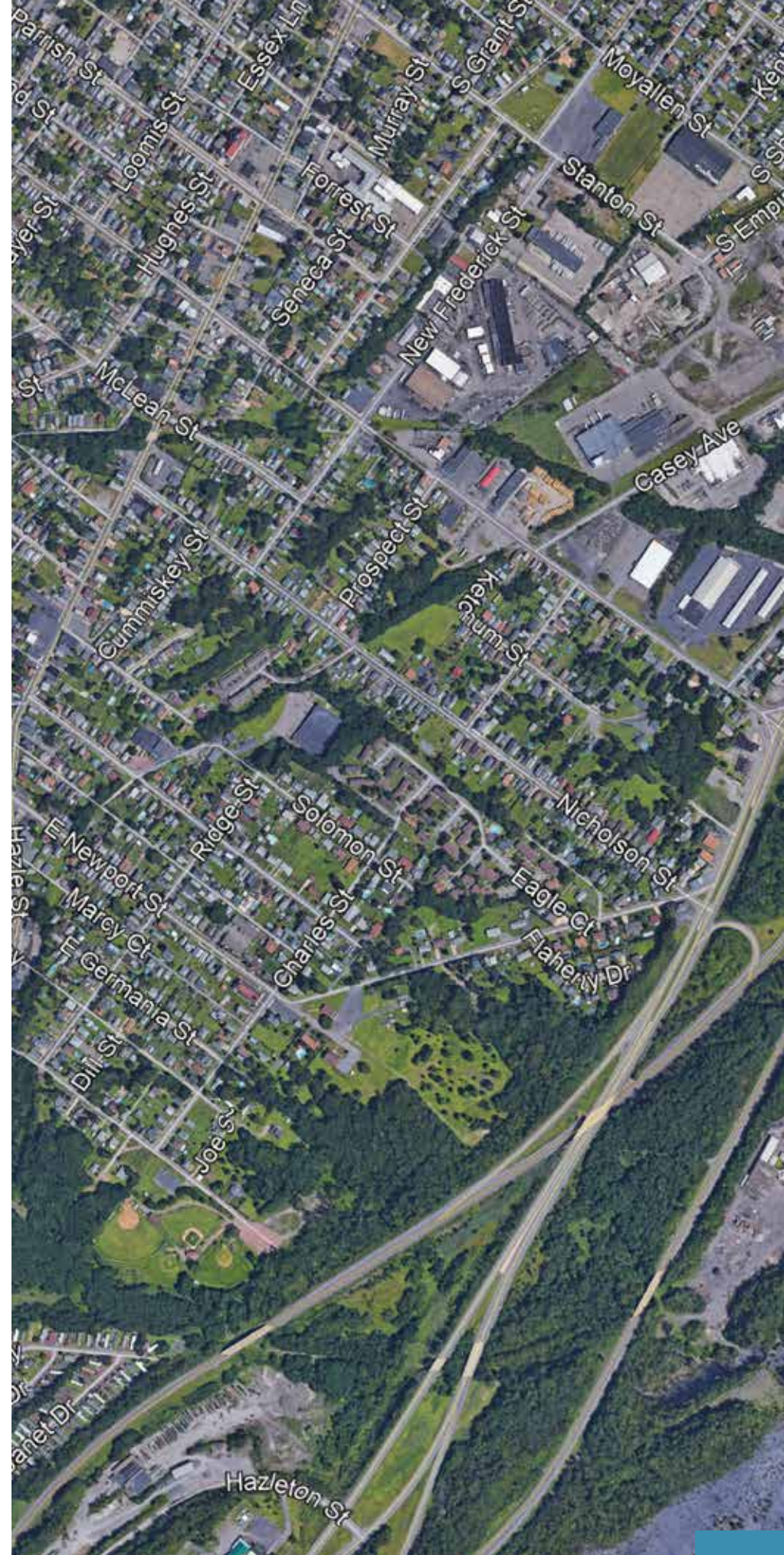
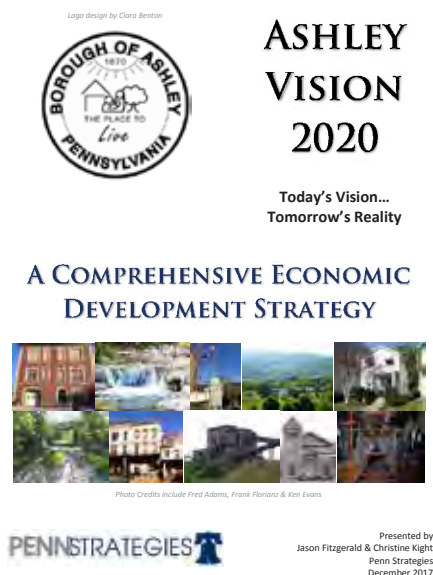
Background

Ashley Borough, a community of approximately 2,700 people located in Luzerne County just off I-81 near Wilkes-Barre, prepared the Ashley Vision 2020 plan in 2017 as a roadmap to enhance its downtown, improve its infrastructure and augment its cultural and recreational assets. The plan outlines specific steps that, if taken, would make Ashley a better place to live, work and raise a family.

Lessons Learned

Some of the recommendations proposed in the Ashley 2020 Vision plan that could be applied toward West Conshohocken include:

- Prioritization of streetscape improvements along the main thoroughfare
- Issuing an RFP to seek development options for the Borough building
- Repurposing old industrial sites and pursuing developers who would have interest in repurposing sites in a manner consistent with Borough goals
- Developing high quality housing, possibly on repurposed sites where mixed-use developments could be built with market rate housing, multi-generational recreational opportunities and small specialized retail stores





Revitalization and Visioning Plan for Dublin Borough (Dublin Borough, Bucks County)

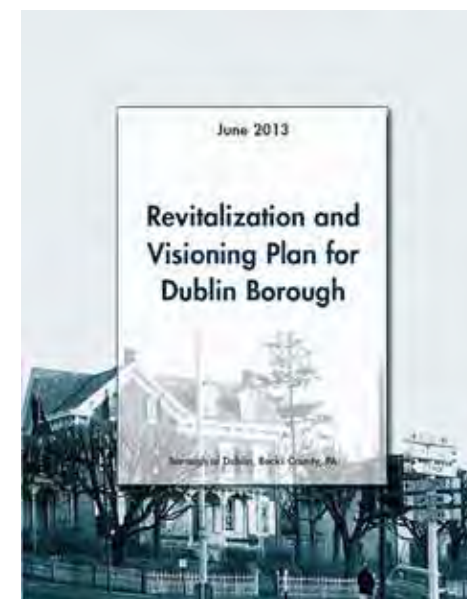
Background

Dublin Borough, a community of approximately 2,100 people located in Bucks County along Route 313 between Nockamixon State Park and Peace Valley Park, prepared a Revitalization and Visioning Plan in 2013 as a means to develop planning tools and marketing materials that all stakeholders in the Borough can reference to help guide future businesses and community development.

Lessons Learned

Some of the recommendations proposed in the Revitalization and Visioning Plan for Dublin Borough that could be applied toward West Conshohocken include:

- Creating a pedestrian plaza at a marque location with signature features that help to define the space
- Creating gateways into the Borough with signage and landscaping
- Creating zoning incentives to encourage mixed-use development that will encourage walkability and that maximize ratables for the Borough
- Developing under-utilized parcels with intensive mixed-uses in conjunction with through roads
- Introducing design elements within the street design that can be incorporated to enhance pedestrian safety and walkability
- Amending the Official Map to include proposed roads and through streets



Flourtown-Erdenheim Vision Plan (Springfield Township, Montgomery County)

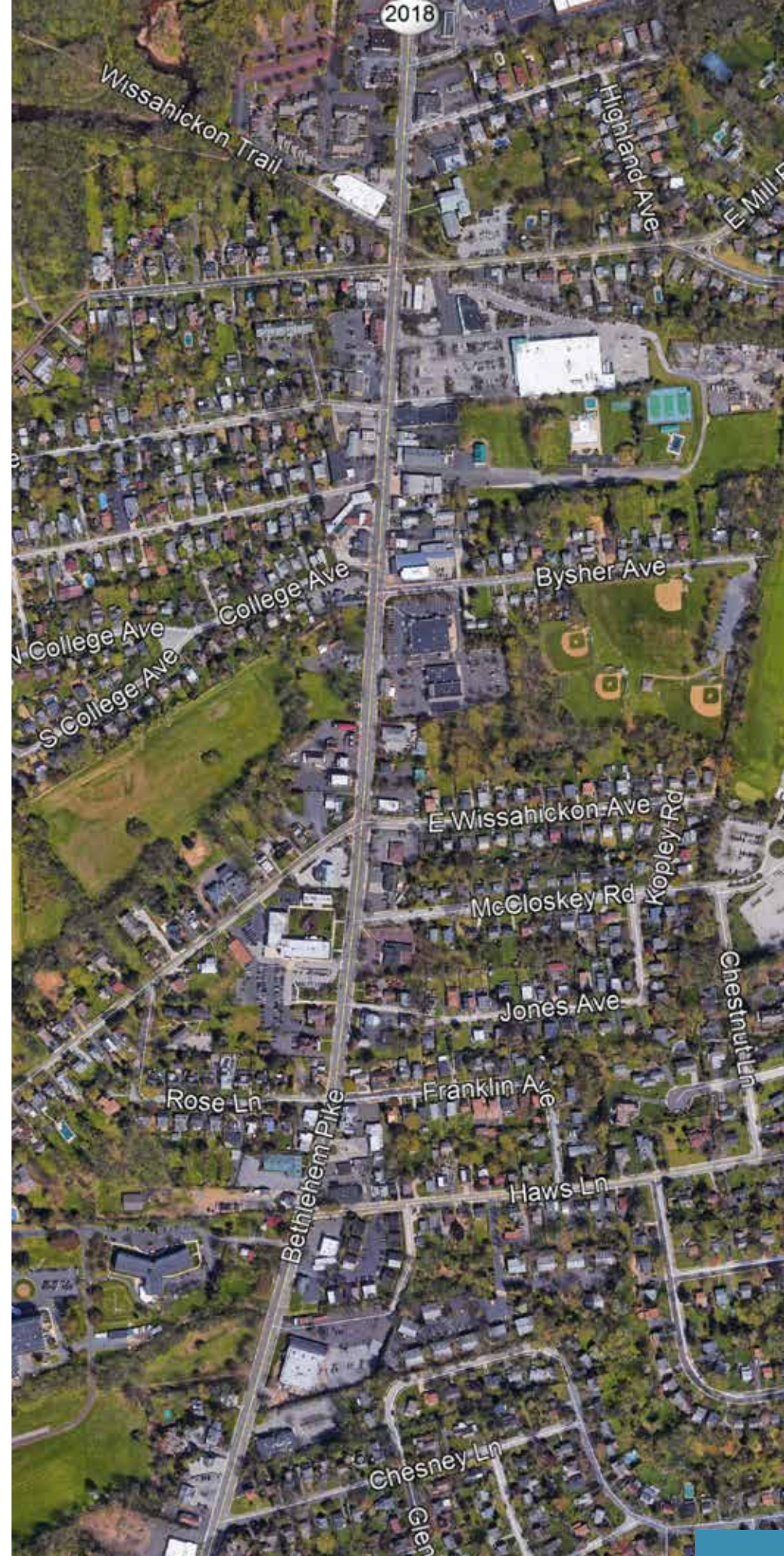
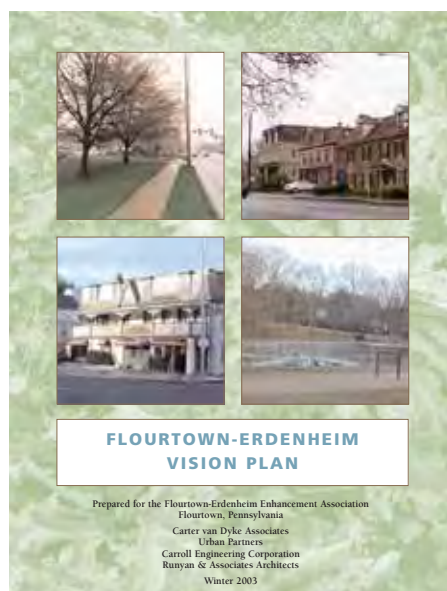
Background

The adjoining communities of Flourtown and Erdenheim in Springfield Township, Montgomery County prepared a Vision Plan in 2003 to provide a new director for the development and revitalization of the Bethlehem Pike Corridor, which runs through both communities between Fort Washington and Philadelphia. Plan goals focused on economic development strategies, transportation improvements and streetscape enhancements.

Lessons Learned

Some of the recommendations proposed in the Flourtown-Erdenheim Vision Plan that could be applied toward West Conshohocken include:

- Creating a gateway entrance with new landscaping and signage
- Encouraging shared parking and linking existing parking to increasing parking efficiency
- Incorporating traffic calming and safe pedestrian walks
- Proposing reconfigured roads
- Enhancing the corridor with streetscape treatments
- Creating a town green that can host community events and be a space for casual gatherings





Vision Plan for Downtown Prospect Park (Prospect Park Borough, Delaware County)

Background

Prospect Park, a community of about 6,500 people located in Delaware County along the Darby Creek near the Philadelphia International Airport, prepared a Vision Plan for its downtown in 2018 in order to create a downtown, or central core, experience that community members desire, built around the themes that the downtown should be welcoming, unified, experiential and connected.

Lessons Learned

Some of the recommendations proposed in the Vision Plan for Downtown Prospect Park that could be applied toward West Conshohocken include:

- Addressing issues with current zoning that affect the health of downtown businesses
- Creating gateways into the area with planting and signage that presents visual cues to indicate entry into the downtown
- Arranging with local businesses to utilize parking lots for public parking during hours they are not utilized by the businesses





MARKET ANALYSIS

3



West Conshohocken Market Study

West Conshohocken, PA

September 9, 2019



ECONOMIC AND REAL ESTATE ANALYSIS FOR SUSTAINABLE LAND USE OUTCOMES™

Project Scope

West Conshohocken Borough is relatively small, suburban community located in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, across the Schuylkill River from its larger sister community Conshohocken Borough. With its proximity to highways I-76 and I-476 (Blue Route), the surrounding area experiences large volumes of traffic to and from the northern and western Philadelphia suburbs. West Conshohocken has experienced moderate office and retail development and is easily identified by the mid and high-rise commercial development along its waterfront. 4ward Planning is providing market and real estate analysis services to the Borough in support of the West Conshohocken Vision Plan. This market study is aimed at establishing baseline demographic conditions and key market drivers within the Borough and the region, and identifying potential market-receptive economic development opportunities within the Borough.

Study Takeaways: Market Study

Socio-Economic Analysis

Absent large-scale development, population growth in both West Conshohocken Borough and the 20-minute PMA is expected to remain relatively flat over the next five years (increasing by just 0.45 and 0.58 percent per year, respectively). Despite relatively flat growth, both the Borough and the PMA are projected to experience some near-term increase in the number of persons ages 65 and older, who are partially represented by the baby boom generation (those born between 1946 and 1964). An increase is also expected, albeit to a lesser degree, among the early-stage family cohort or persons ages 35 to 44, who are partially represented by the millennial generation (those born between 1981 and 1996). Importantly, the shifting and aging of the region's

population will present opportunities for new housing types, as early-stage families seek to purchase homes (whether existing or newly built) and older empty nesters downsize from single-family housing to multi-family rental units.

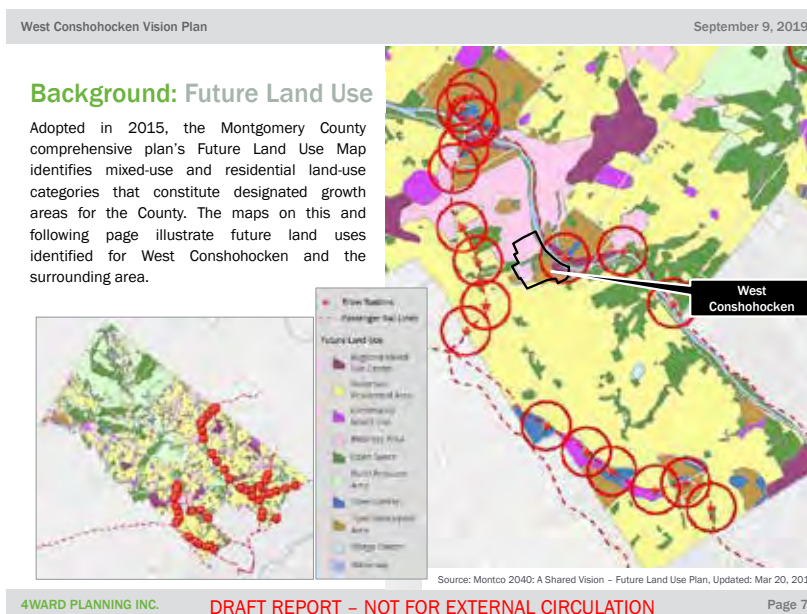
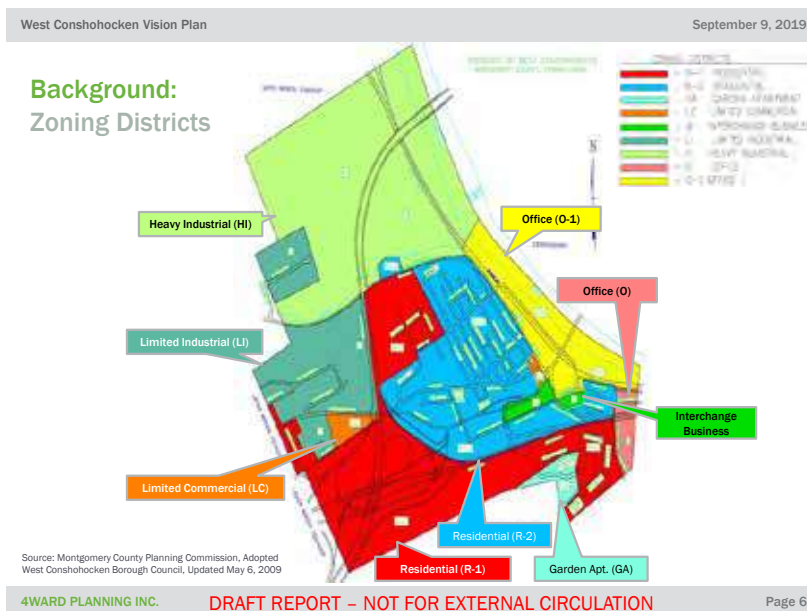
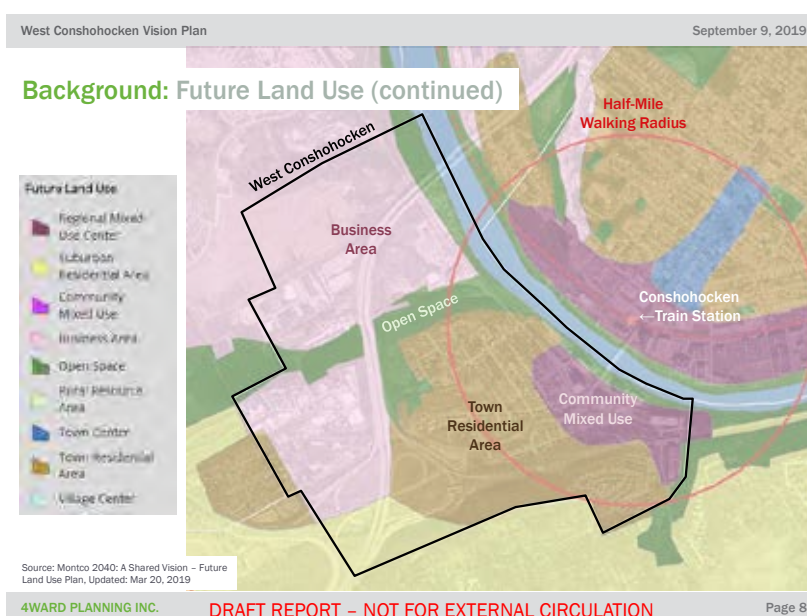
Labor and Industry Analysis

Near-term growth in Montgomery County's top two industry sectors by employment (the health care and professional, scientific, and technical services (PSTS) sectors) is expected to add relatively mid- and high-wage jobs in the County, while near-term decline within the County's third top sector by employment (the retail trade sector) will result in a loss of relatively low-wage jobs. Specifically, over the next five years, the health care sector is projected to add 5,980 relatively mid-wage jobs (average annual earnings of \$49,670), while the PSTS sector is expected to add another 3,020 relatively high-wage jobs (average annual earnings of \$107,592). In contrast, the retail trade sector is expected to lose 170 relatively low-wage jobs (average annual earnings of \$36,910) over the next five years within the County. Near-term job growth in Montgomery County will increase local demand for housing, and retail goods and services, particularly from new mid-and high-wage workers.

Multi-Family Residential

Traditional single-family detached structures represent approximately 88 percent of the Borough's existing housing stock and 93 percent of all housing units permitted in the Borough since 2001. Over the last five years, just 28 units have been permitted in the Borough, including eight multi-family housing units. This is unsurprising, as West Conshohocken Borough is relatively built-out and has limited land on which to develop new housing.

Nearly 69 percent of all the Borough's occupied housing units are owner-occupied, a share slightly higher than that found in the PMA (63 percent) but lower than that found in Montgomery County (71 percent). Esri projects the share of both owner- and renter-occupied housing units in all geographies will remain relatively flat through 2023, suggesting that demand for both owner- and renter-occupied housing (e.g., multi-family condo, townhouse, two-family or single-family detached housing) will remain relatively consistent in the near term. Consequently, developing new infill housing units within West Conshohocken could provide an opportunity to address its extremely tight vacancy rate (particularly among owner-occupied units, which exhibit a vacancy rate of 2.2 percent when excluding seasonal and other vacant units).



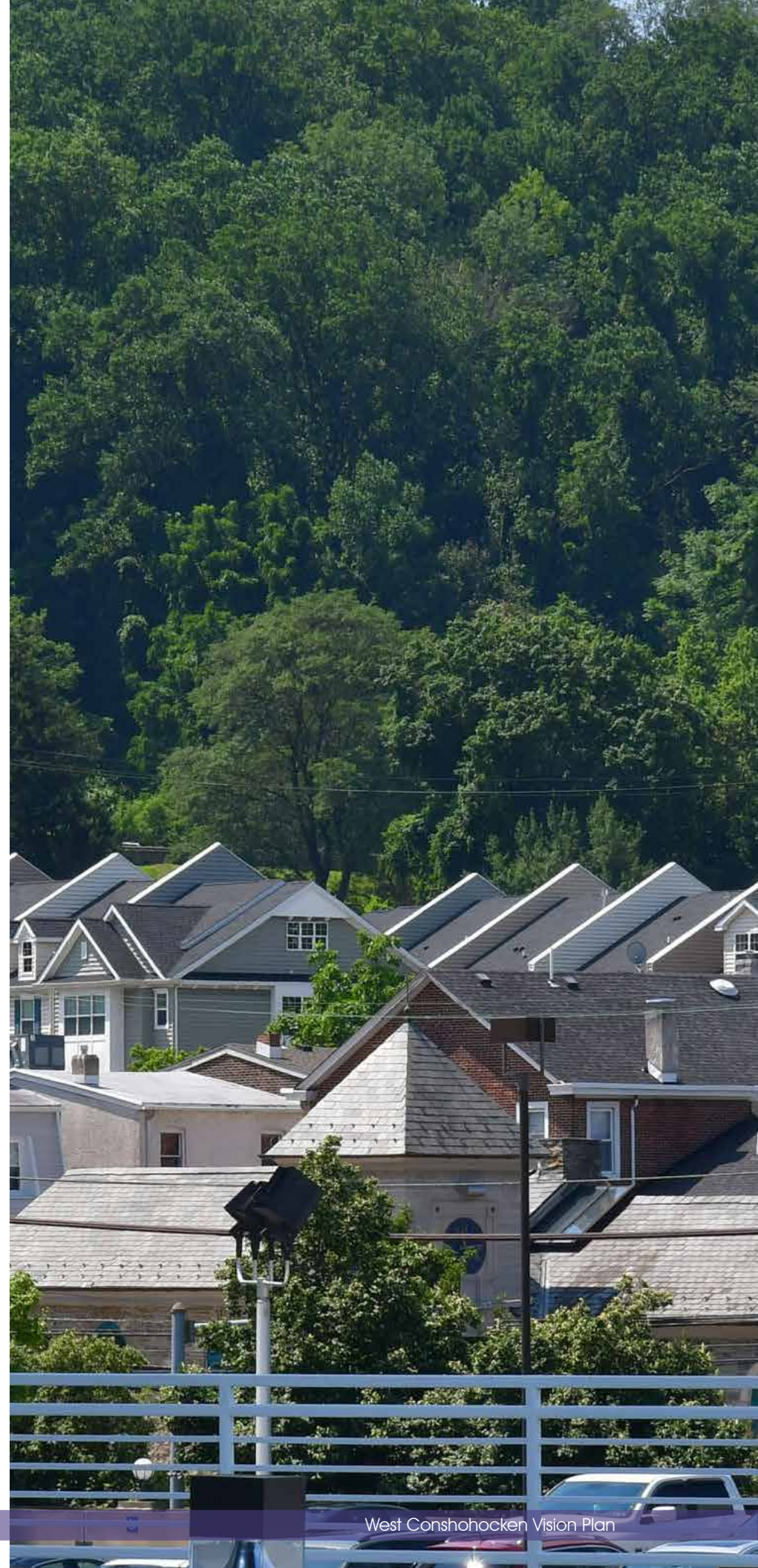
Largely due to pent-up housing demand from existing PMA workers commuting into the area (79 percent of workers) and growth in new mid- and high-wage jobs, 4ward Planning estimates there will be a projected net demand for approximately 13,180 residential units in the PMA by 2028. Assuming that between three- and five-percent of these units could be captured within West Conshohocken, the study area could accommodate between 395 and 659 units by 2028. Since the Borough is relatively built-out and has limited land upon which to build new housing, a smaller fraction of this capture rate is more realistic, particularly given that development will be limited to infill locations, as well as prospective fiscal impacts.

Retail

Higher-than-average household expenditures in the Borough, PMA, and County are reflective of the region's relatively high levels of educational attainment and median household income. Furthermore, based on 2019 data provided by the Directory of Major Malls, there are 20 major retail shopping centers within the 20-minute PMA (none located within West Conshohocken) containing over 8.8 million square feet of major retail shopping space (equivalent to 21.7 square feet per resident). Given the Borough's space constraints for development, and an already saturated regional retail market, small non-chain dining establishments and boutique/specialty retail and service businesses are the likely option for either adaptively reusing an existing underutilized building or infill development. It should further be noted that parking considerations will also influence the size of restaurant and retail establishments and, as a result, identification of a prospective shared parking scheme should be explored.

Office

By 2028, employment growth within the PMA will create demand for nearly 528,580 square feet of office space. Based on job growth within the PSTS, finance and insurance, management of companies and enterprises, and other services sectors, combined, there will be net new demand for approximately 259,430 square feet of professional office space within the PMA by 2028 (nearly 50 percent of all office space demand). Based on job growth within the health care and social assistance sector, there will be net new demand for approximately 179,340 square feet of medical office space within the PMA by 2028. While some of the near-term office space demand could be accommodated through new development, new, small scale (less than 5,000 s.f. total) office development in the study area should be limited to adaptively reusing existing space, particularly where off-street parking may already exist.





RECOMMENDATIONS

4

List of Improvements

Transportation Improvements

Page Location

- 50 **(A)** New Off-Ramp from I-76 Near Woodmont Road
- 51 **(B)** Removal of I-76 Off-Ramp at Moorehead Avenue
- 52 **(C)** Expansion of Crawford Avenue
- 54 **(D)** New Pedestrian Bridge Over Schuylkill River
- 56 **(E)** New Pedestrian Bridge at Front and Matsonford
- 58 **(F)** New On-Ramp to I-476 from former GSK Site / Jones Road Connector






Page Location

- 60 **(G)** New Ramp Next to Barr Harbor Dr.
- 62 **(H)** Address Sidewalk Gaps
- 66 **(I)** Merion Avenue Complete Street
- 68 **(J)** Improved Alleys
- 70 **(K)** New Residential Parking Lot at George St. and Merion Ave.
- 71 **(L)** New Parking / Driveway Between Moorehead Ave. and Matsonford Rd.
- 72 **(M)** Ford St. as a One-Way Eastbound Between William St. and Front St.t



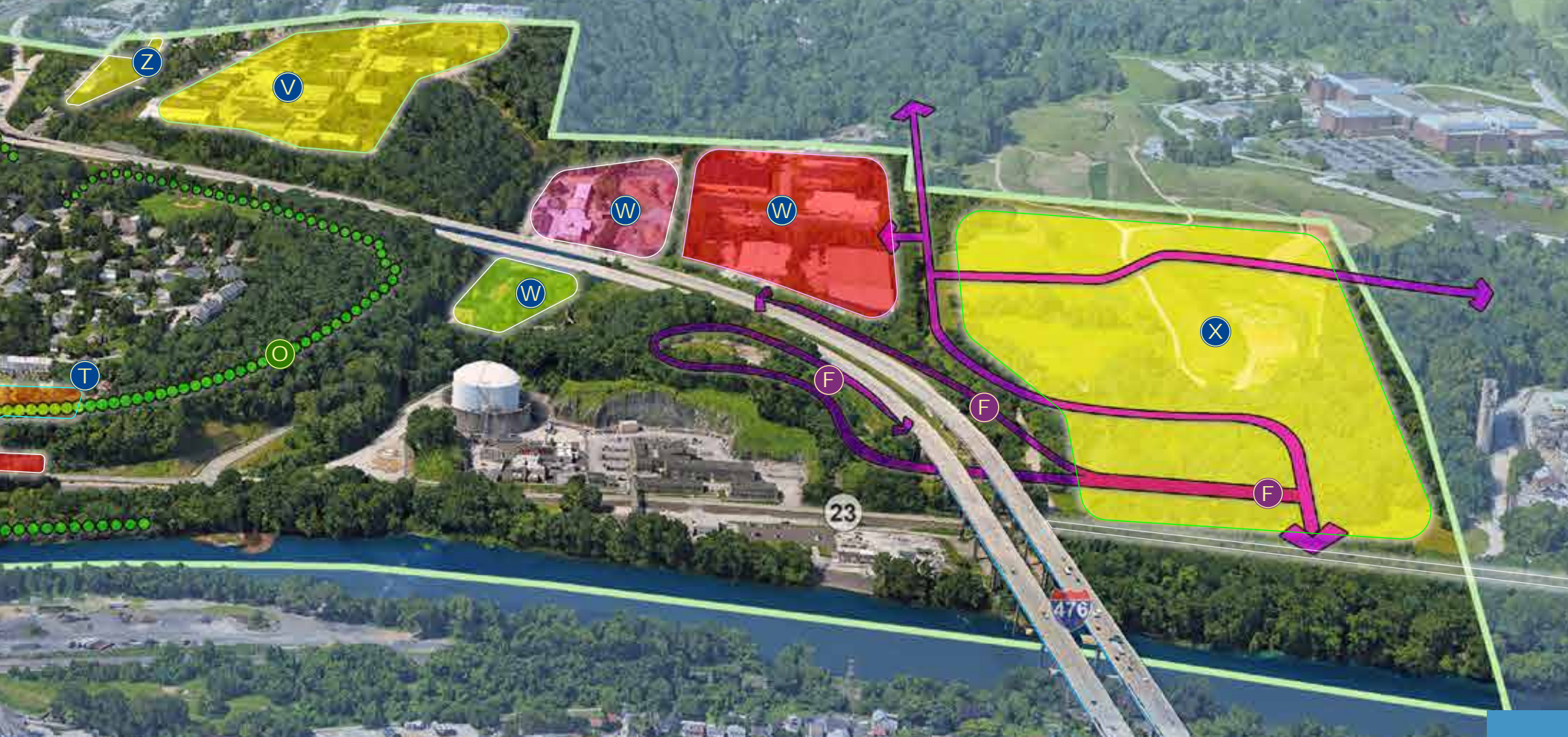
West Conshohocken Vision Plan

Proposed Amenities

Page	Location
74	 New Borough Playground at Nathans Place
76	 Balligomingo Trail
77	 Riverfront Access
78	 New Borough Wayfinding Signage / Landmark Signage
80	 Walking Trail in I-476 Cloverleaf off of Matsonford Rd. / Cloverleaf Signage and Planting

Potential Sites for Redevelopment

Page	Location
82	 Borough Hall Adaptive Reuse
86	 St. Gert's Church and Parking Lot
87	 Front Street Redevelopment
88	 Union Hill Industrial Area
90	 Balligomingo Industrial Area / Arader Site
92	 Landfill Site
94	 Extend Limited Commercial Zoning along Ford Street
96	 Matsonford Rd. and Dehaven Ave. Site



Vision Principles

A. Address Regional Transportation Issues in West Conshohocken Borough

The traffic congestion that is a symptom of the I-76 / 476 interchange's success has long ceased to be a local transportation issue. If West Conshohocken and its neighbors are going to continue thriving, these regional issues that reside in the Borough must be addressed.

B. Create a Community Gateway

Many (most) residents in the region are not aware that there is a West Conshohocken Borough as they only know the location as "Conshohocken". Regional and local improvements should include gateway enhancements that highlight the identity of West Conshohocken.

C. Provide a Central Public Space

Redevelopment over the last twenty years neglected the need of every town: civic space. The Vision Plan process clearly identified this need.

D. Enhance the Streetscape

While most of the Borough's streets have great human scale, many lack basic streetscape amenities that add richness and vitality to the public realm.

E. Connect Neighborhoods to One Another

Much of the Borough enjoys a good sidewalk network, however there are gaps and neighborhoods that are not interconnected.

F. Redevelop Toward Long-Term Sustainability and Competitiveness

The qualities that have drawn new residents and businesses to West Conshohocken must be maintained and enhanced while the community plans for future growth and maintains its vitality.



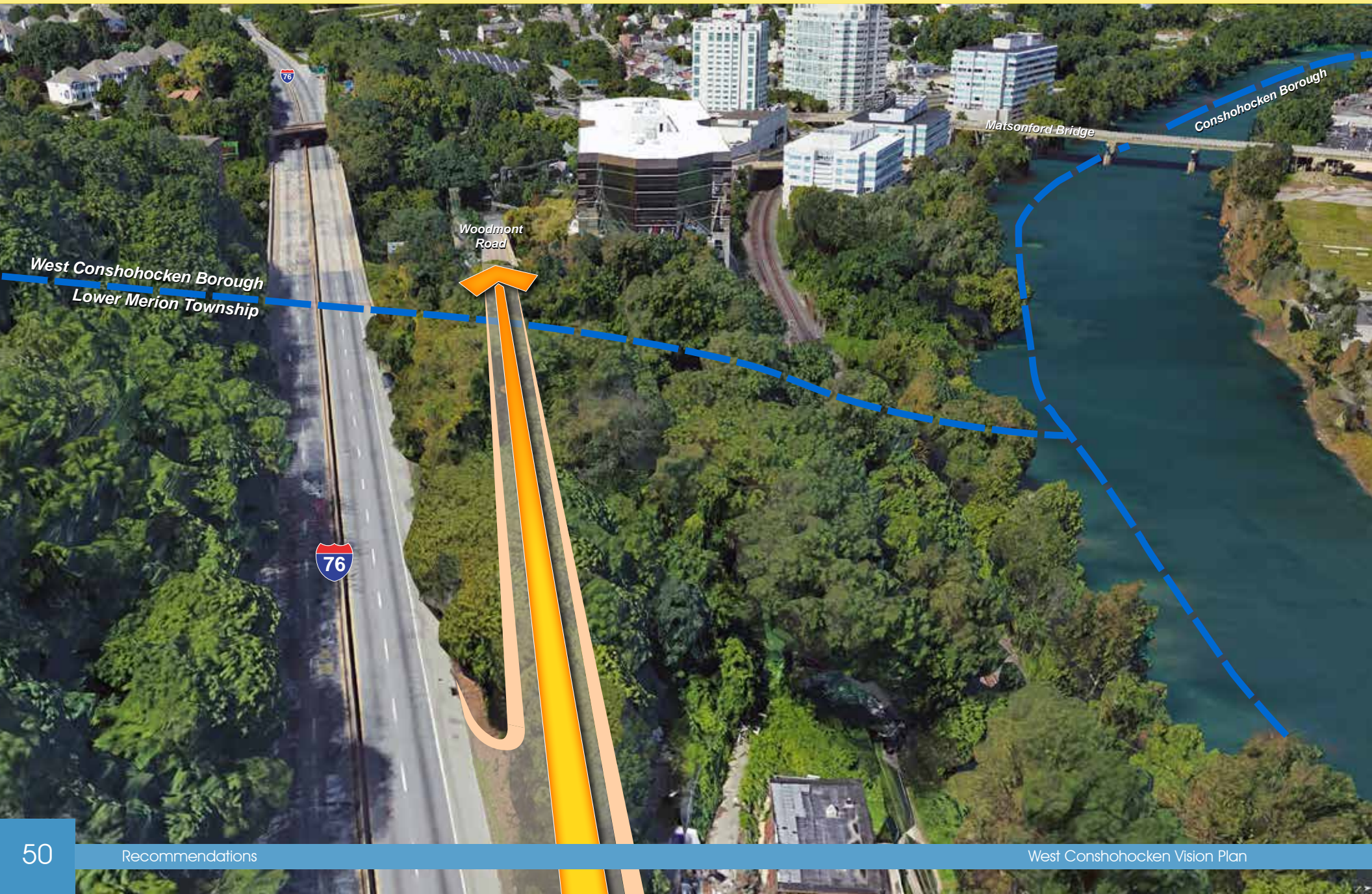
Transportation Improvements

The primary reason for West Conshohocken's redevelopment over the last twenty years is its crossroads location. It is a transportation hub that is also located close to other regional highways such as the Pennsylvania Turnpike and its "Northeast Extension" (I-476). The current configuration of the highways that serves both Boroughs and surrounding area has become a victim of its own success. The Vision Plan recommends that local solutions that address regional transportation problems (primarily extreme congestion) do exist. Working with the West Conshohocken Traffic Engineer (Pennoni – who is also traffic engineer for Conshohocken Borough), the Vision Plan suggests a series of road and highway improvements that can begin to mitigate congestion. Each of these suggested highway improvements has one thing in common: diverting traffic away from the intersection of Front Street and Matsonford Road (referred to in this report as "ground zero") through which today, virtually all traffic must pass.



New Off-Ramp from I-76 Near Woodmont Road

A new off ramp that begins in Lower Merion Township removes traffic earlier than the current ramp and diverts traffic directly to Crawford Ave. Some traffic may proceed eastbound on RT. 23 and avoid ground zero.





Removal of I-76 Off-Ramp at Moorehead Avenue

This is the companion change to the new WB off ramp from the expressway. This will allow much more room for NB Matsonford Road and the EB traffic turning right on Rt. 23 (Crawford Ave.).

Crawford Avenue Expansion

The intersection of Crawford Avenue, Moorehead Avenue and Spring Garden Street creates a huge bottleneck in the local road network. The expansion and improved horizontal geometry of Crawford Ave. will allow smoother flow for through traffic as well as improved at-grade pedestrian crossings where presently they are sub-standard. This expansion will necessitate the expansion of the right of way into the current gas station property eliminating that use at that location.





New Pedestrian Bridge Over the Schuylkill River

While the current Matsonford Bridge includes sidewalks on both side of the bridge, the long walk across the bridge is uninviting due to vehicular traffic speed and noise and a narrow walkway. During inclement weather or temperature extremes, the desirability to use these walkways deteriorates exponentially. A pedestrian bridge (from

the Whitemarsh and Conshohocken Riverfront Plan) is suggested under the existing Matsonford Bridge on the existing bridge abutments. The existing bridge deck above offers cover and this bridge will offer much improved access to the Conshohocken SEPTA station and the Schuylkill River Trail on the north bank. New ramps at the West Conshohocken landing will bring bridge users up to street (and building plaza level) in West Conshohocken.

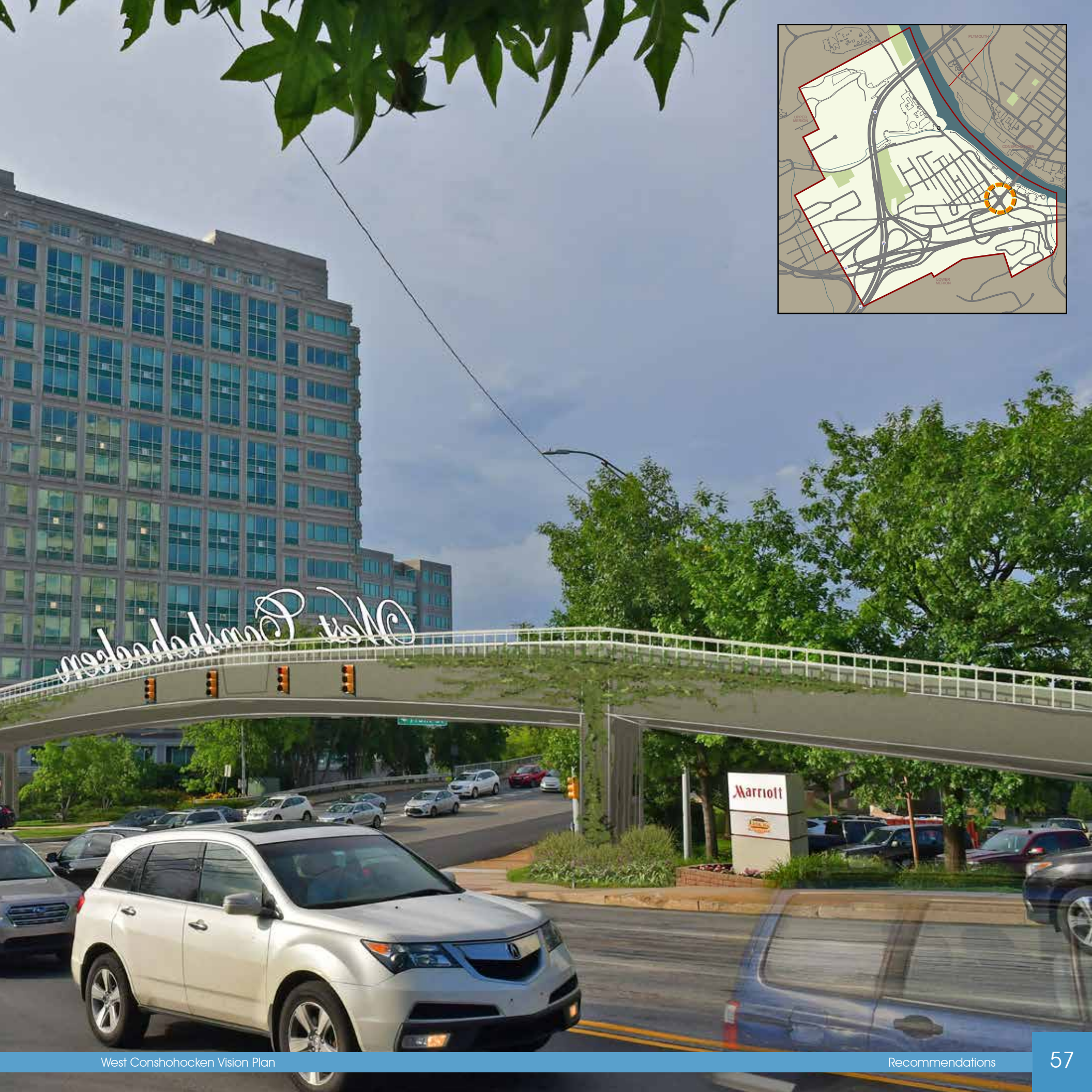




New Pedestrian Bridge at Front Street & Matsonford Road

Current pedestrian crossings from Crawford downhill across Matsonford to Front Street are nearly impossible to comfortably use. Given congestion at the intersection, there are no at-grade solutions that will appreciably improve the pedestrian experience. The Vision Plan proposes a new pedestrian bridge that will cross Matsonford and deliver pedestrians to the west side of the street as well as to the corner building's outdoor plaza level. This bridge will also become a dramatic gateway into West Conshohocken from the north. From here pedestrians can descend to the street or cross Front Street via the new pedestrian bridge that will connect to the new civic plaza at the location of the current Borough Hall. (See Borough Hall Redevelopment Site).





New On-Ramp to I-476 from Former GSK Site

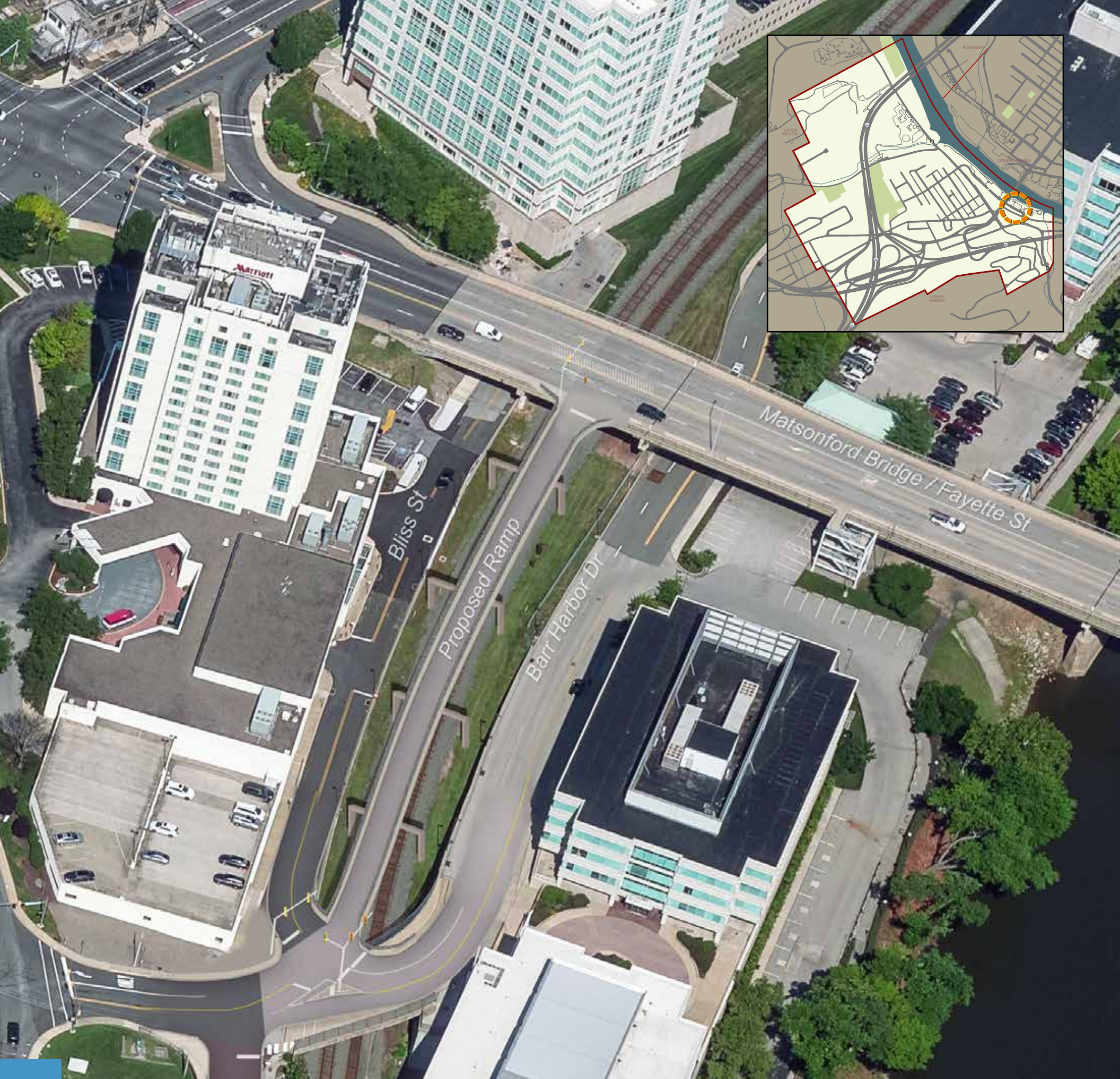
As the former GSK site is redeveloped into pharmaceutical co-working space or other types of uses, new roadway access to both local roads and new connections to regional roads is needed. New ramps will have the ability to divert traffic away from ground zero and thus mitigate congestion. Other nearby companies, such as FedEx located less than a half mile away will also be able to use this new access to make more direct connections to the highway network. Local access can also be improved with local roads (Jones Road Connector) to the Balligomingo industrial site.

*Proposed
On-Ramp*

*Proposed
On-Ramp*



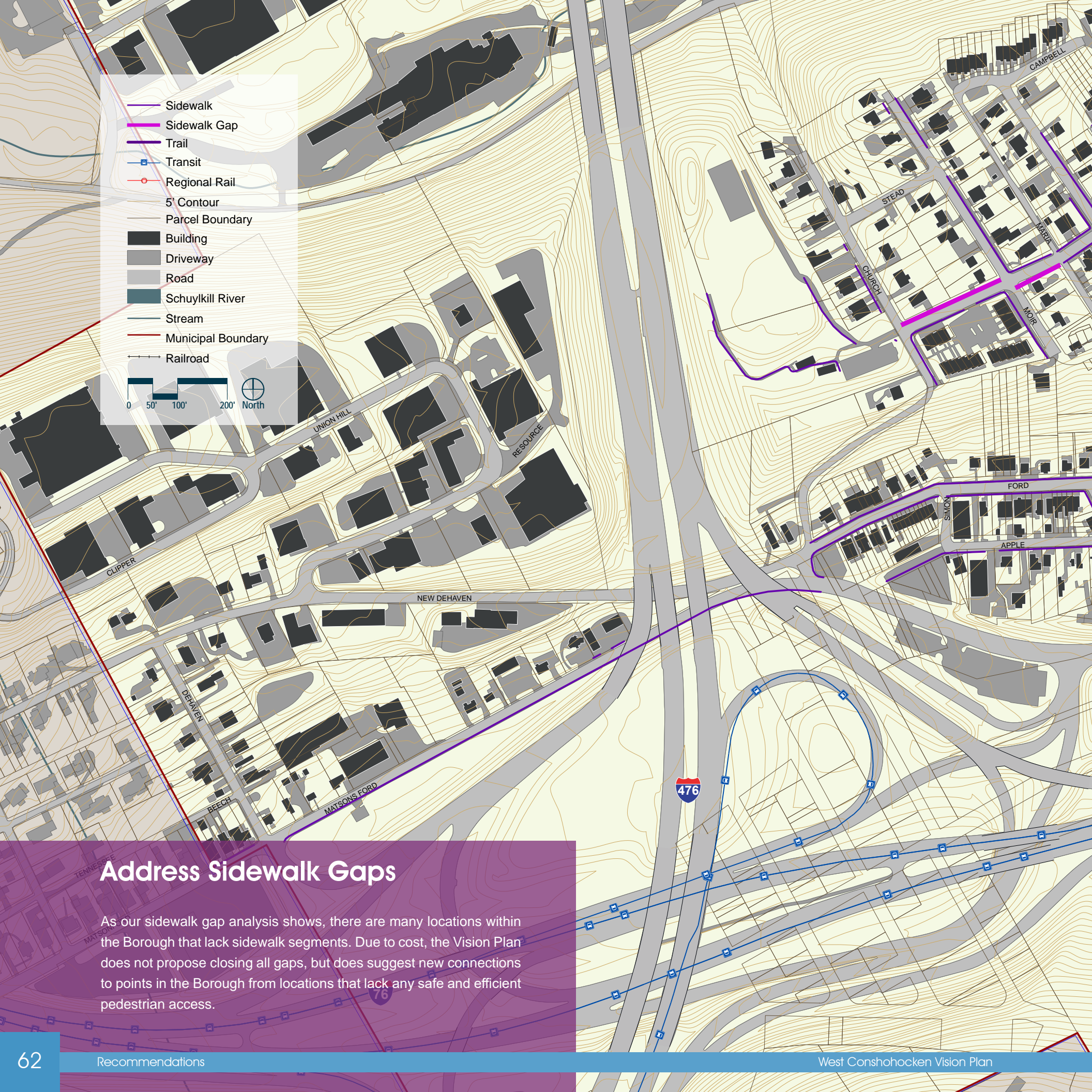
Jones Road Connector



New Ramp Next to Barr Harbor Drive

A new ramp, utilizing the air rights of the existing railway line is proposed to connect the Matsonford Bridge to Crawford Ave. Currently conceived as a one-way ramp, it might function in either direction. Its primary benefit would be connecting WB traffic from the expressway to Conshohocken Borough – or if traffic is directed in the opposite direction, taking traffic from Conshohocken to Rt. 23 / Upper Merion (avoiding ground zero in both scenarios).



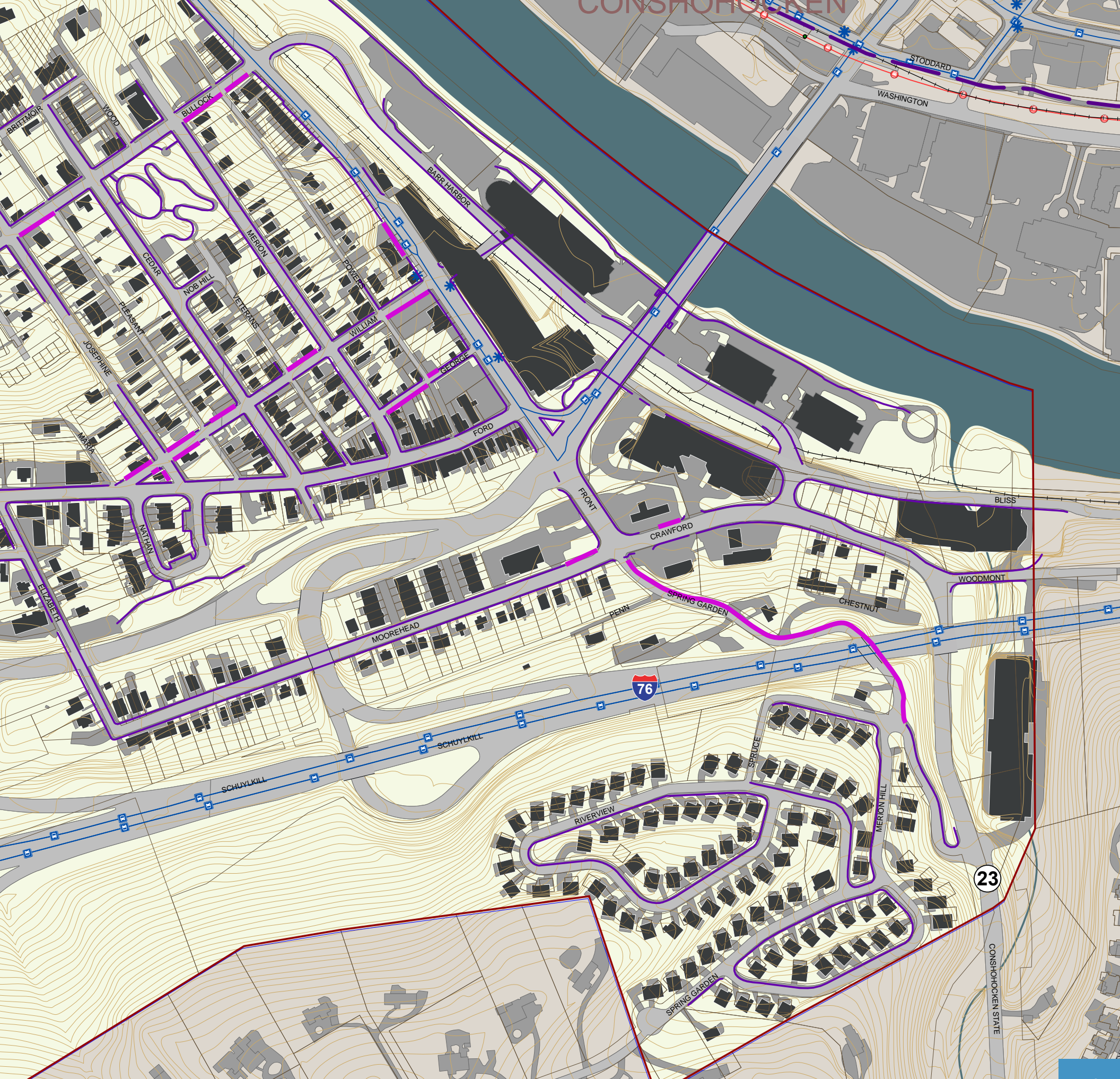


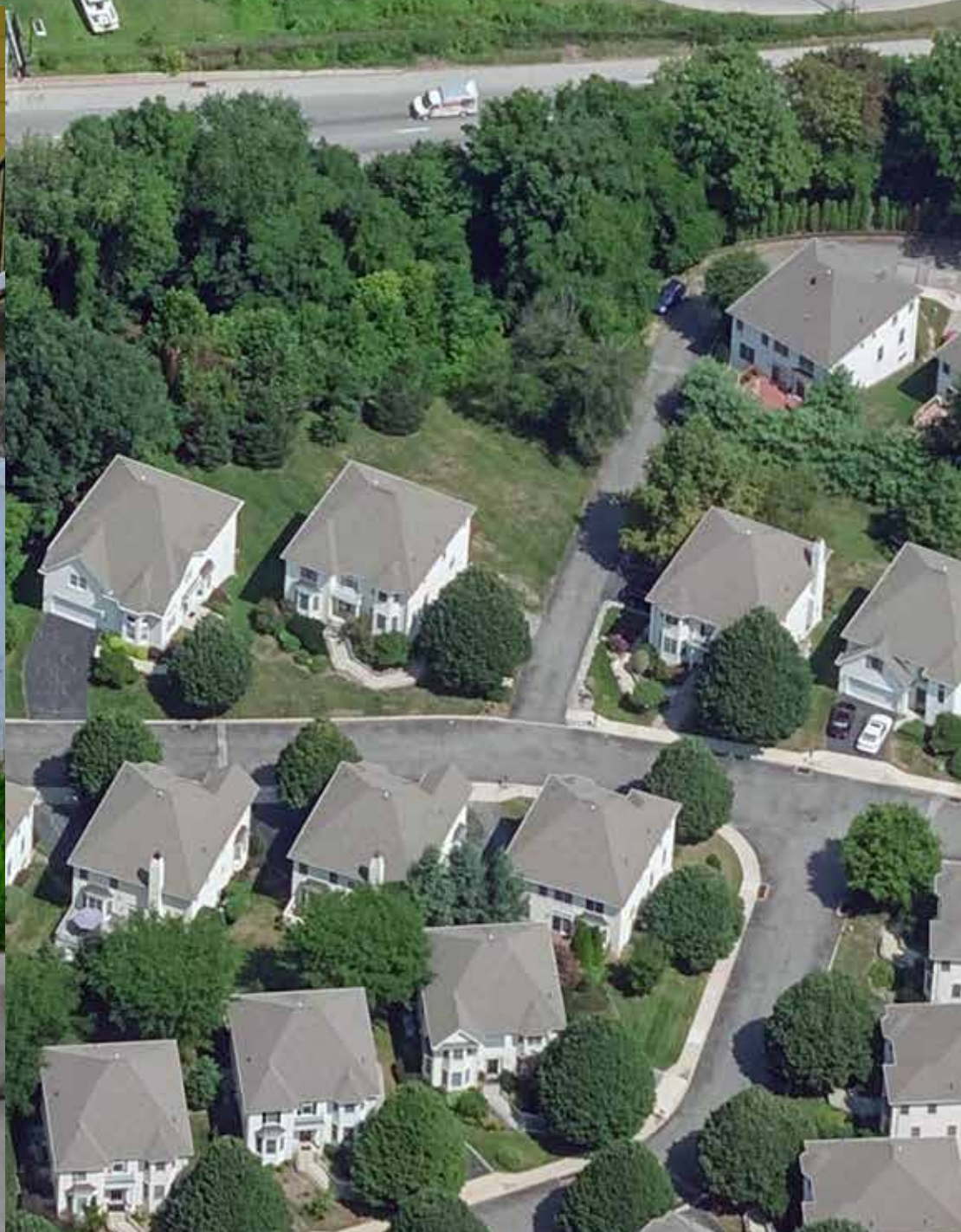
- Sidewalk
- Sidewalk Gap
- Trail
- Transit
- Regional Rail
- 5' Contour
- Parcel Boundary
- Building
- Driveway
- Road
- Schuylkill River
- Stream
- Municipal Boundary
- Railroad

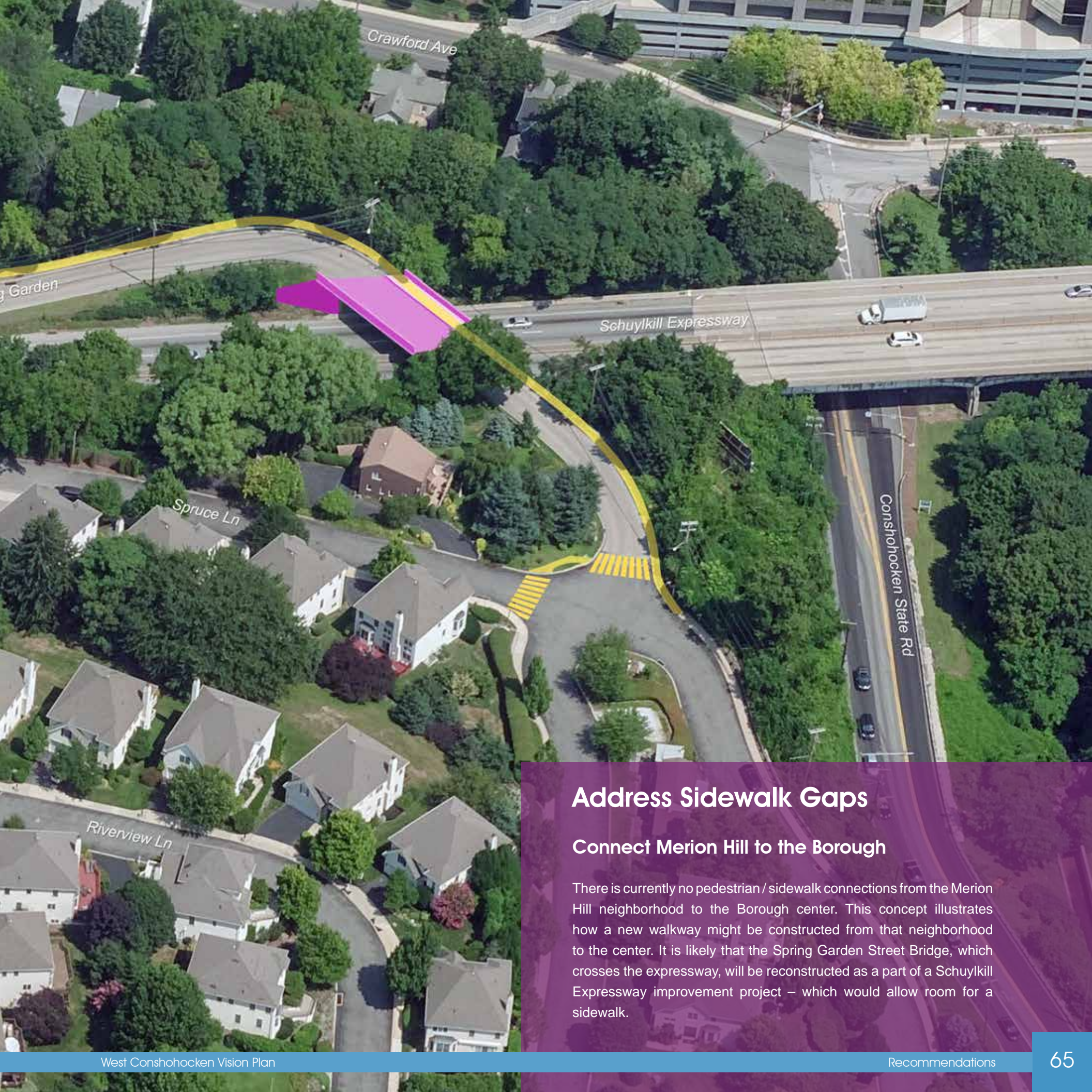


Address Sidewalk Gaps

As our sidewalk gap analysis shows, there are many locations within the Borough that lack sidewalk segments. Due to cost, the Vision Plan does not propose closing all gaps, but does suggest new connections to points in the Borough from locations that lack any safe and efficient pedestrian access.



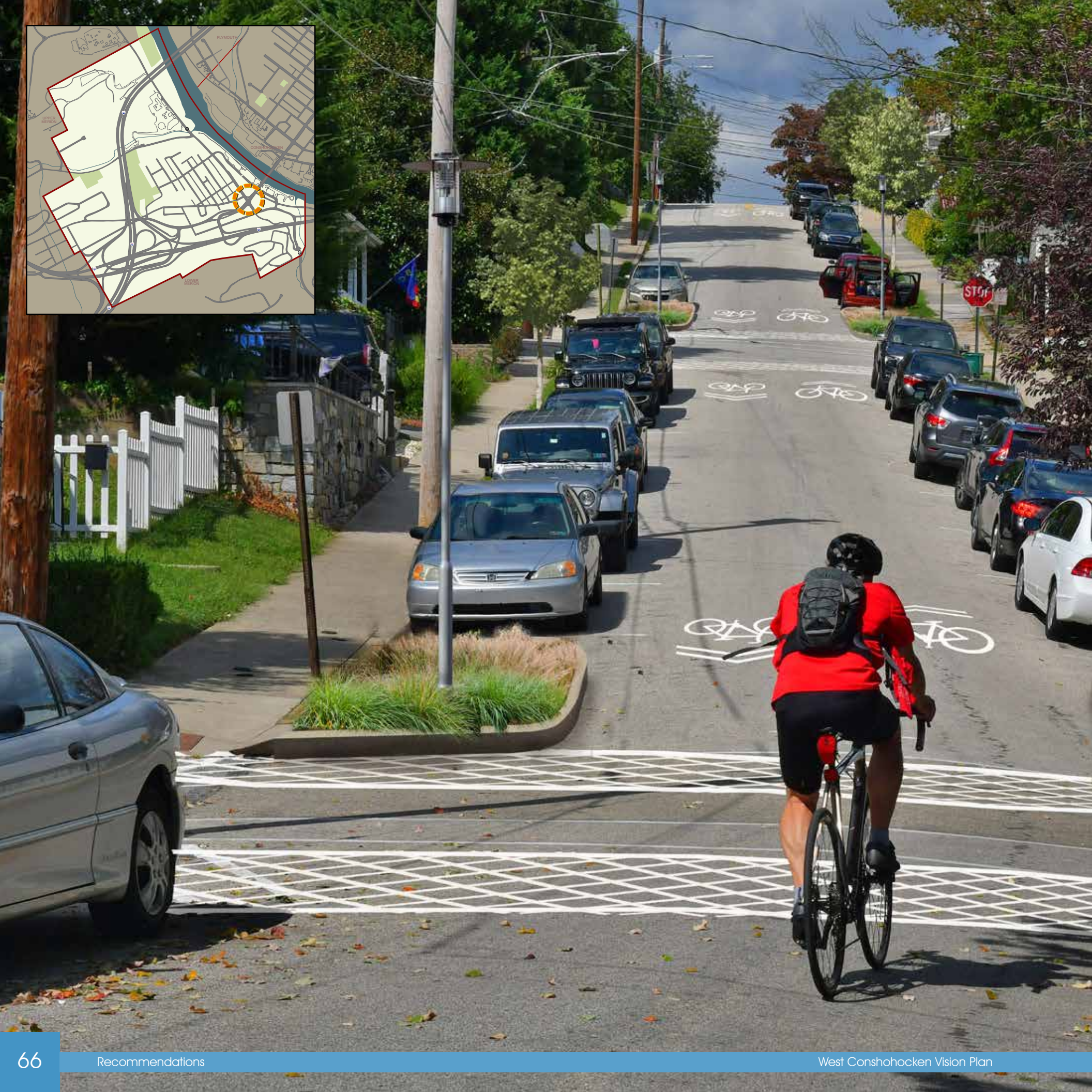




Address Sidewalk Gaps

Connect Merion Hill to the Borough

There is currently no pedestrian / sidewalk connections from the Merion Hill neighborhood to the Borough center. This concept illustrates how a new walkway might be constructed from that neighborhood to the center. It is likely that the Spring Garden Street Bridge, which crosses the expressway, will be reconstructed as a part of a Schuylkill Expressway improvement project – which would allow room for a sidewalk.





Merion Avenue Complete Street

Merion Avenue is used as an example of the types of streetscape, safety and stormwater improvements that could be made on many of the Borough's local roads. These improvements could include improved pedestrian crosswalks (some with pedestrian bump-outs to shorten crossing distances); rain garden or bio swale infiltration areas to infiltrate storm water flows; new street tree plantings; and new pedestrian level lighting. All of these enhancements are aimed at making Borough streets more attractive and hospitable to encourage residents to walk more and farther to Borough destinations and beyond.



CONSHO

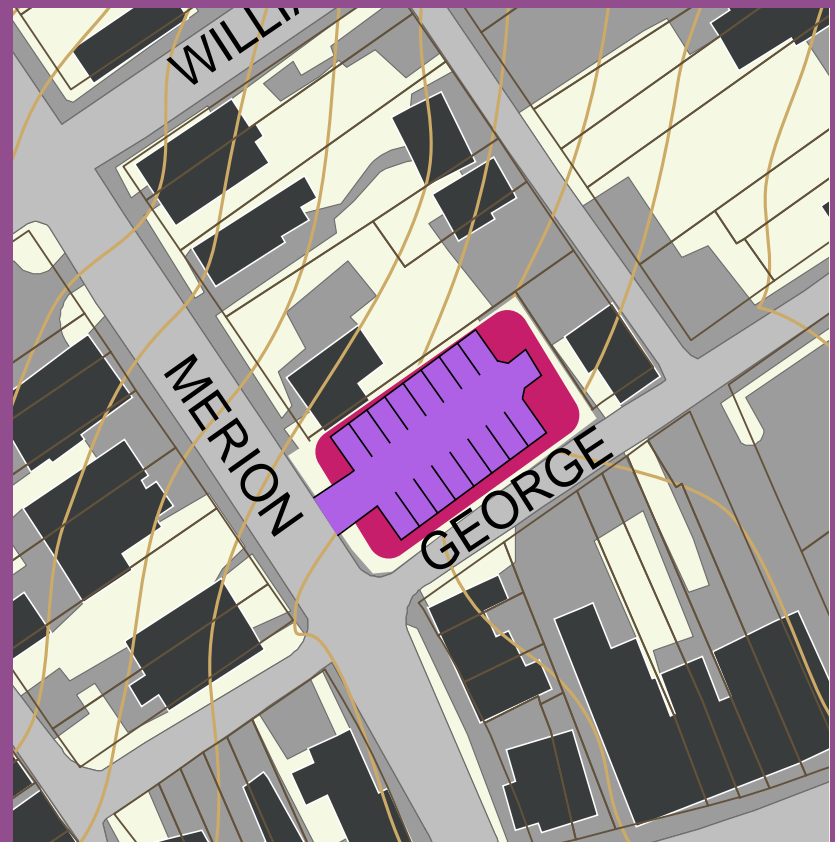
Improved Alleys

West Conshohocken's alleys exist in many neighborhoods and provide alternative motor vehicle and pedestrian connections. Enhancements can potentially include new, small scale street trees, lighting and crosswalks.



New Residential Parking Lot at George Street & Merion Avenue

The Borough recently purchased residential lot with the intent of demolishing the building to provide public parking. This lot will provide about a dozen spaces. While this is a good short term “fix” for local parking, it is not a sustainable strategy or one that should be duplicated often, since it could denigrate the architectural character of the Borough while it creates more and more surface parking areas.



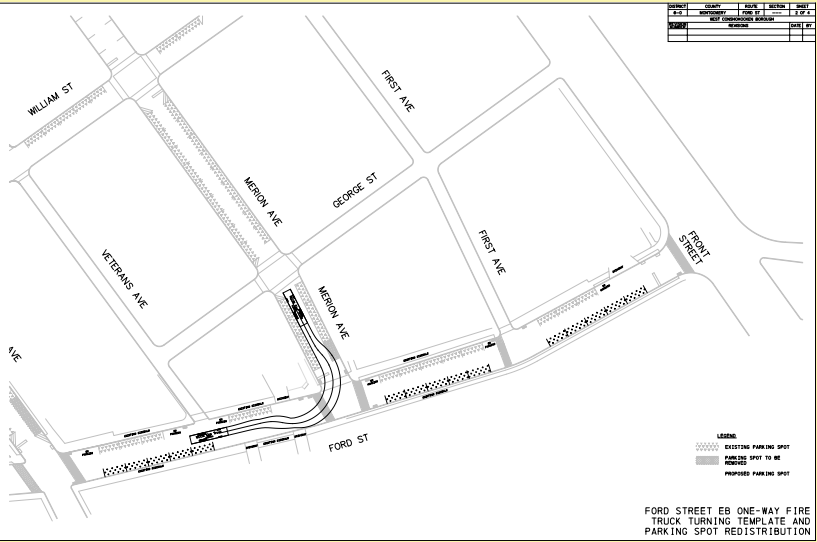
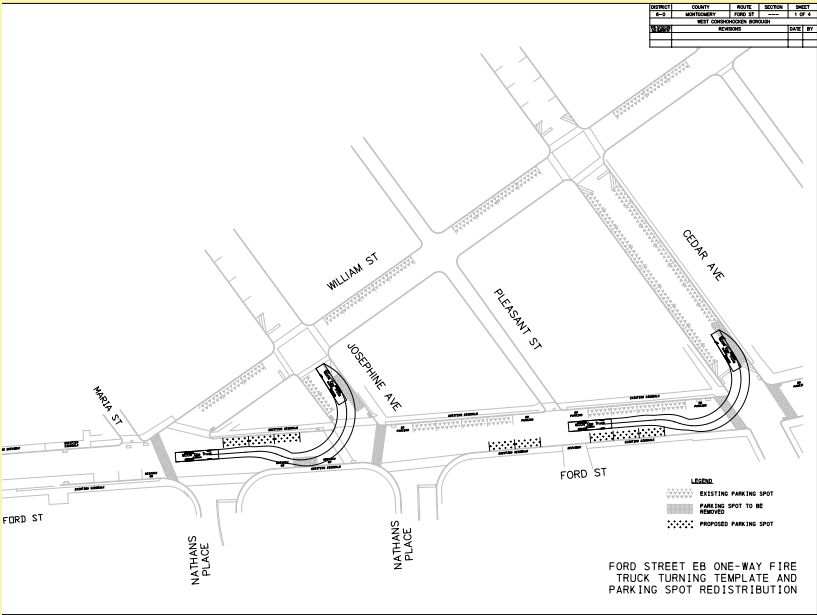
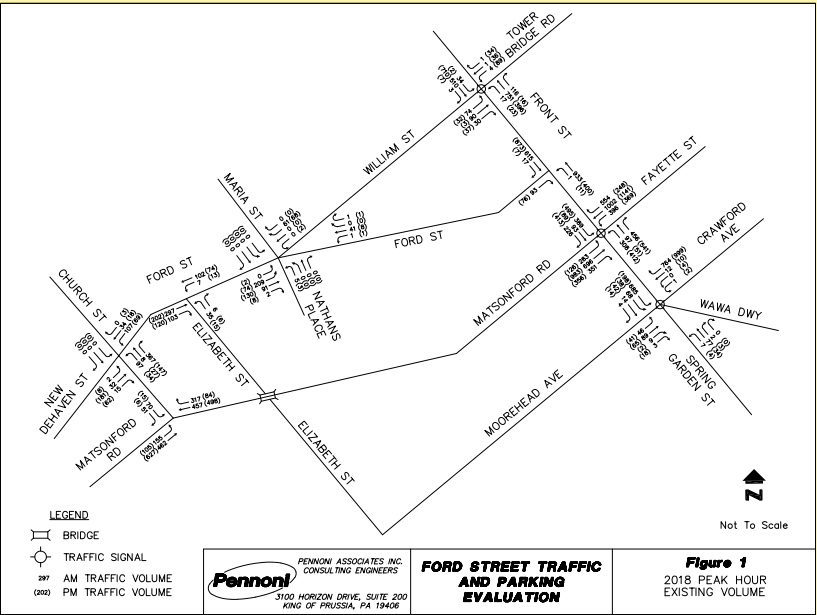
New Parking / Driveway Between Moorehead Avenue & Matsonford Road

This is another short term solution developed by the Borough Traffic Engineer to provide a parking remedy in this neighborhood of the Borough. This lot will provide about ten spaces, but is not moving forward due to costs.



Ford Street as a One-Way Eastbound Between William Street and Front Street

Proposed by the Borough Traffic Engineer, this will simplify the intersection of Ford and Front Street (especially in times of street gridlock) and provide a small number of on-street parking spaces.





Proposed



Existing

Residential Streetscape Improvements

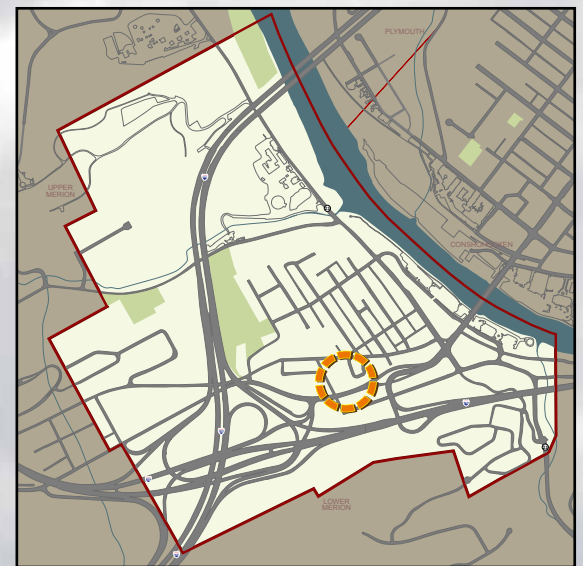
Streetscape improvements, like bed plantings, street trees, lighting, signage and sidewalk treatments, can dramatically improve the appearance of commercial corridors and residential sidewalks and also help to compliment the character of a community. If the improvements are uniform across several blocks and follow established design standards, they can enhance the pedestrian experience, especially if they are installed along roads that may be considered unfriendly to pedestrians. Moreover, streetscape improvements can also act as traffic calming devices and slow down speeds as drivers are more attuned to the pedestrian when traversing roads with these design enhancements.

Amenity Improvements

New Borough Playground at Nathans Place

A small playground is recommended for Nathans Place as a way to activate this small park space while serving the play needs of young children. There are concerns, however, due to air pollution generated by nearby traffic.







Balligomingo Trail

This hiking trail alignment has been recommended for some time by other Borough Plans. Easements from a series of property owners will need to be obtained for this trail to be built. This will connect several neighborhoods with MacKenzie Park.



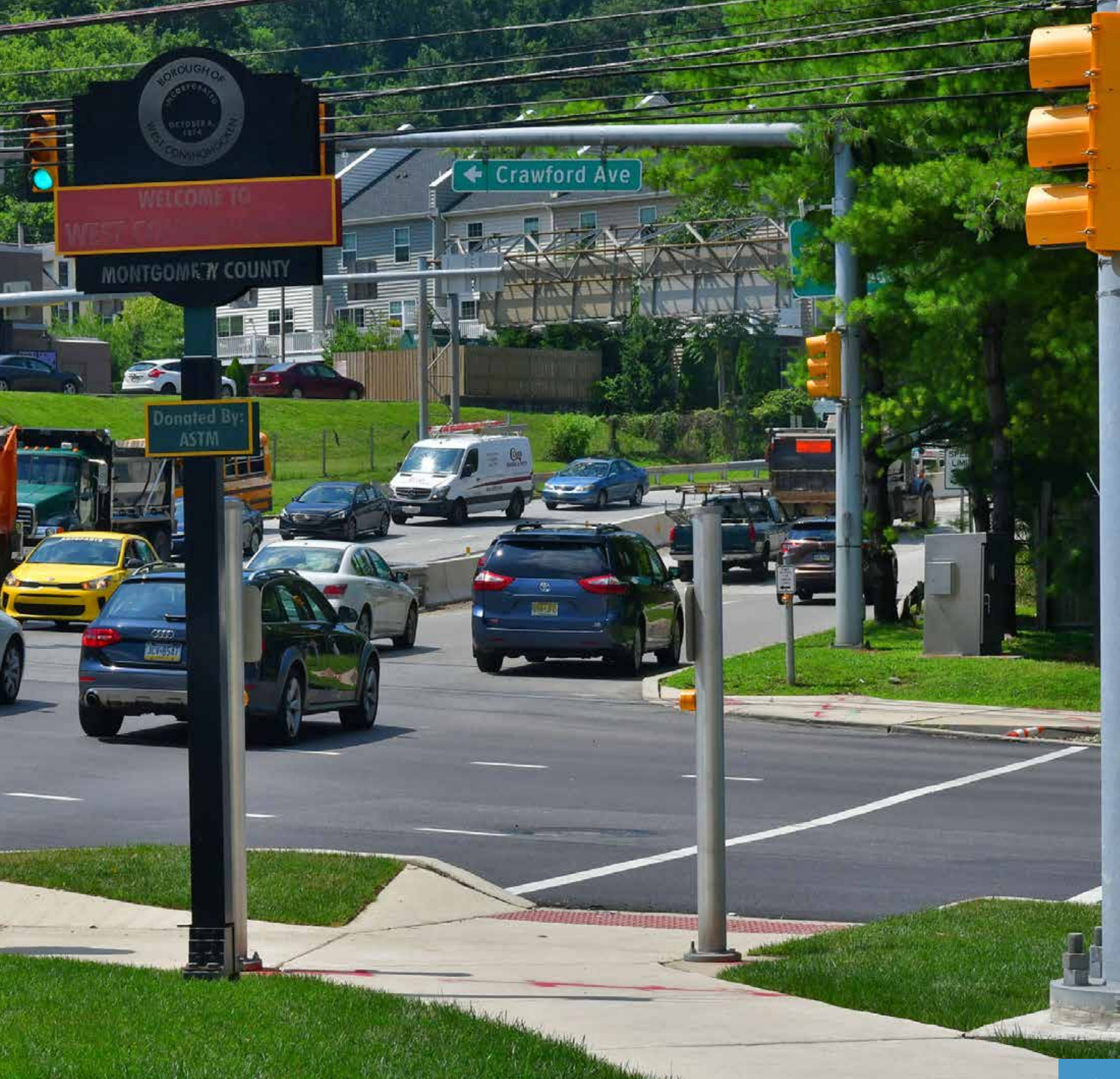
Riverfront Access

The current planning of a new riverfront office building at the upriver end of Barr Harbor Drive by Equus Development may be the last opportunity for the Borough to develop reasonably good access to the river. Since this site has no adjacent neighbors (except the adjacent office) the Vision Plan recommends a taller office building with more riverfront green ground area to remain. While it also may be possible to create boat access down to the river at this location, it is even more important to create green park space that can be enjoyed by residents on a daily basis. The only way this concept can be realized is through negotiation between the Borough and the developer during the land development process.

New Borough Wayfinding Signage / Landmark Signage

A system of wayfinding and landmark signage is recommended for West Conshohocken. Signage should be designed to orient and direct both the motorist and pedestrian. Connections to adjacent destinations (Conshohocken, King of Prussia, etc.) should also be provided. PennDOT should change expressway and I-476 exit ramps to “West” Conshohocken to accurately reflect bridge landing points. Interpretive signage should also be a part of the system to recall the history of this old riverfront industrial village.

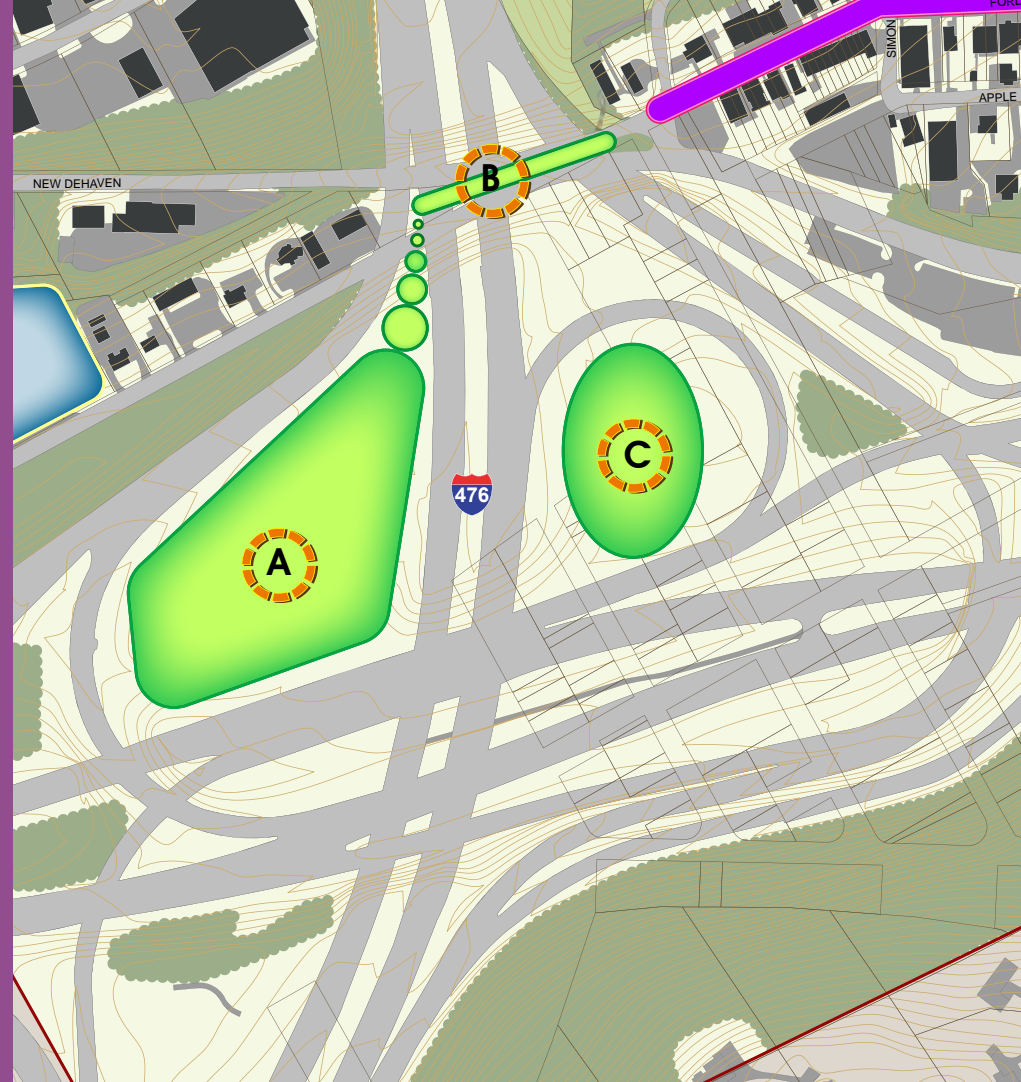




Walking Trail in I-476 Cloverleaf off of Matsonford Rd. / Cloverleaf Signage and Planting

One of the roadways cloverleafs of the I-476 ramps near the southern edge of the Borough could be made accessible for use as a walking trail. Access could be obtained with the construction of a ramp in an existing median island adjacent to Matsonford Road that leads to a new pedestrian bridge over Matsonford to the cloverleaf space. The inside of the cloverleaf would need secure fencing and the space would need to be maintained by the Borough. PennDOT is considering access to some limited access highway lands in some cases as long as user safety can be ensured.

The adjacent cloverleaf to the north is not accessible under any scenario, however the current somewhat unkempt and unattractive meadow could be transformed through flowering meadow plantings.



Improvement A



Improvement B



Improvement C



Potential Sites for Redevelopment

Borough Hall Adaptive Reuse

Borough Hall's location at Front and Ford is one of the prime locations in the Borough. The building is well designed and detailed, and it could be adaptively reused for a variety of uses. One potential use is as a restaurant and bar. The current parking lot could be converted into a long-wanted civic space that could accommodate a variety of events and civic gatherings as well as providing for some outdoor dining in the warm months. This can be an image-setting adaptive reuse. A bridge over Front Street could connect to the office building and the proposed pedestrian bridge that traverses Matsonford and delivers pedestrian up the hill to Crawford Street and the other offices to the east. The Borough Hall office function could be relocated to any number of locations including into one of the new office complexes.



Existing Conditions



Proposed Improvements









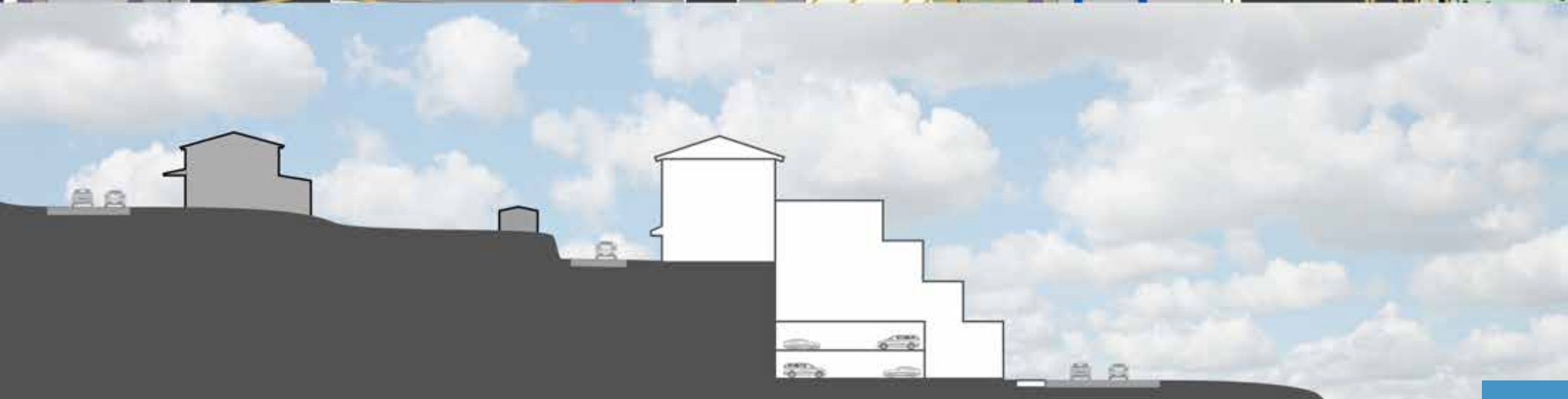
St. Gert's Church and Parking Lot

St. Gerts Church, rectory and parking lot was purchased by the Borough several years ago as a potential redevelopment site. The church building is architecturally undistinguished. A three year old cost estimate of \$2M was developed by the Borough to show what kind of investment is necessary to complete a basic renovation of the church. It is questionable whether this building is suitable for this level or investment of public or private use. Some have suggested community center in the building. The rectory is architecturally distinguished, and the building appears to be worth an investment - perhaps as a boutique hotel or bed & breakfast. The approximately 2 acre site is separated from Front Street by six privately-owned rowhouses. If these lots could be acquired and consolidated into the St. Gerts site, this would result in a large enough site to create a return on private investment. Potential uses includes luxury apartments, perhaps with some small commercial space that face Front Street. Structured parking would need to be integrated into this redevelopment.



Front Street Redevelopment

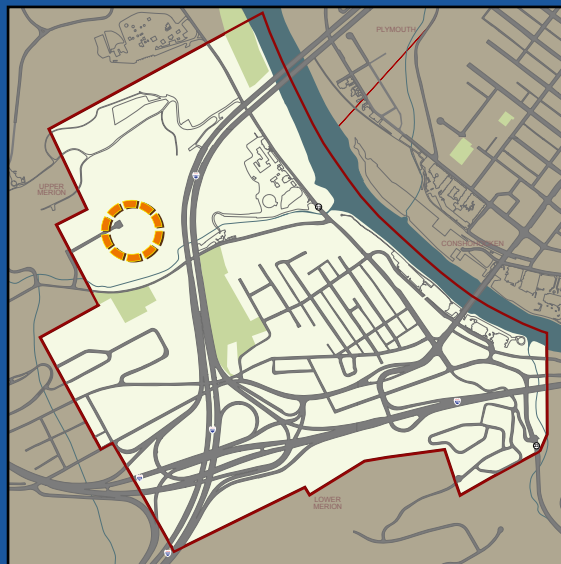
The Borough's "front door" is Front Street. Thousands of vehicles pass along this road each day and it is the most visible part of the Borough. Two primary scenarios are possible here. One is adaptive reuse of the row houses for small shops and or restaurants – integrated with existing homes. The second alternative is lot assembly and larger scale redevelopment as higher end apartments or condos, with a limited amount of small scale commercial or restaurant use at street level. New overlay zoning would be required to accommodate these changes.





Union Hill Industrial Area

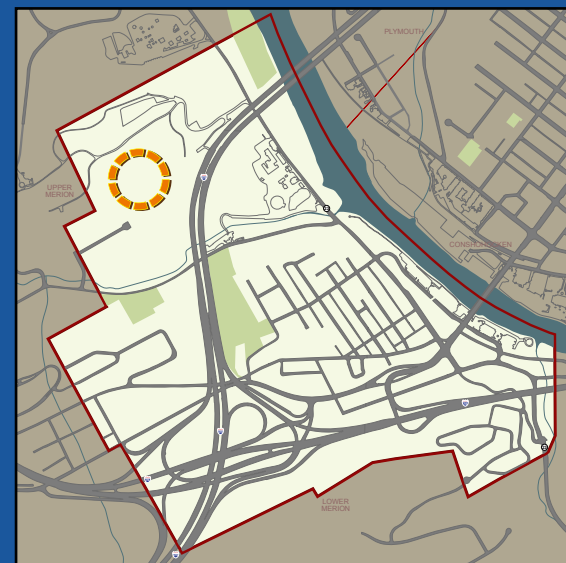
This area could continue to be used for light industrial use, as presently zoned. The hilly site is developed as a series of terraced pads of varying sizes. If redeveloped for any use in the future, the steep slopes will likely preclude any major regrading. Pad layouts are likely to remain the same or very similar as they are today. The Vision Plan examined the conversion of this area into a residential area, through the use of an overlay zoning district (which leaves existing zoning in place, with an overlay giving property owners additional choices for redevelopment). The Union Hill Industrial Area has amazing views and would be desirable for residential conversion. The need for new open space has been talked about often by planning participants, and public open space could also be an integral part of residential adaptive reuse. The concept blob plan shows three possible area of open space, and the remaining lots developed as town homes. The number of residences (at 8 units per acre, the approximate development density of the Borough) would yield 155 Units and about 341 new residents. Should the Borough plan for new residential areas like this, rather than just see a small but steady trickle of infill / new residential development take place in existing residential neighborhoods? New residents will create demand for more Borough services, etc. The community and Borough Council need to consider the general concept of creating new neighborhood for new residents. It is an important discussion to have since most new development in the Borough is likely to be residential. New residential could also take the form of age-restricted units, which would lessen the need for new services and reduce the number of school age children generated by new units. Unit cost would be relatively high.





Balligomingo Industrial Area / Arader Site

Similar to Union Hill, this area could remain light industrial or be redeveloped for another use. The lowest elevation areas of this area, closest to the creek are in the 100 year flood plain and make sense as future park use. A concept diagram showing residential units at 8 units per acre show a total of 134 units with approximately 295 new residents. New road access is possible here on the west side of the area, through new access developed for the former GSK landfill site.







**Future Landuse to
be determined,
including open space
(60 acres)**

UPPER
MERION

PORTLAND

476

BLUEROUTE
BLUEROUTE

RIVER

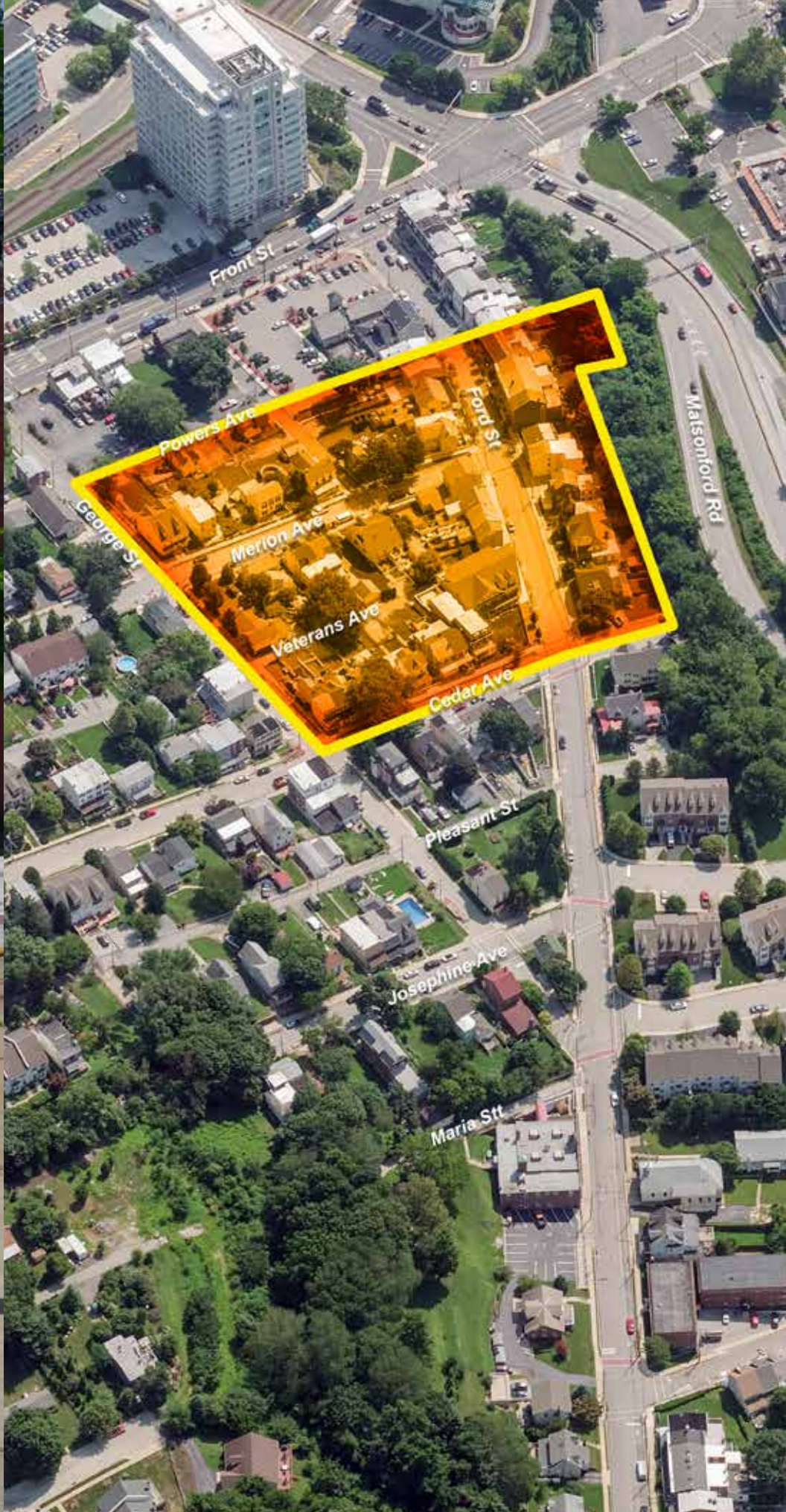
BALLIGONNE

CAMPBELL

Landfill Site

This 60 acre site is zoned Heavy Industrial and is a former landfill. Restrictions of redevelopment are not known. The Borough needs to consider a full array of desirable uses here and through conversations with current owners, work towards mutually beneficial solutions for new uses. Certainly, some portion of the property should be considered for open space / park use. Proximity to proposed on-ramps to I-476 could make this parcel very valuable.





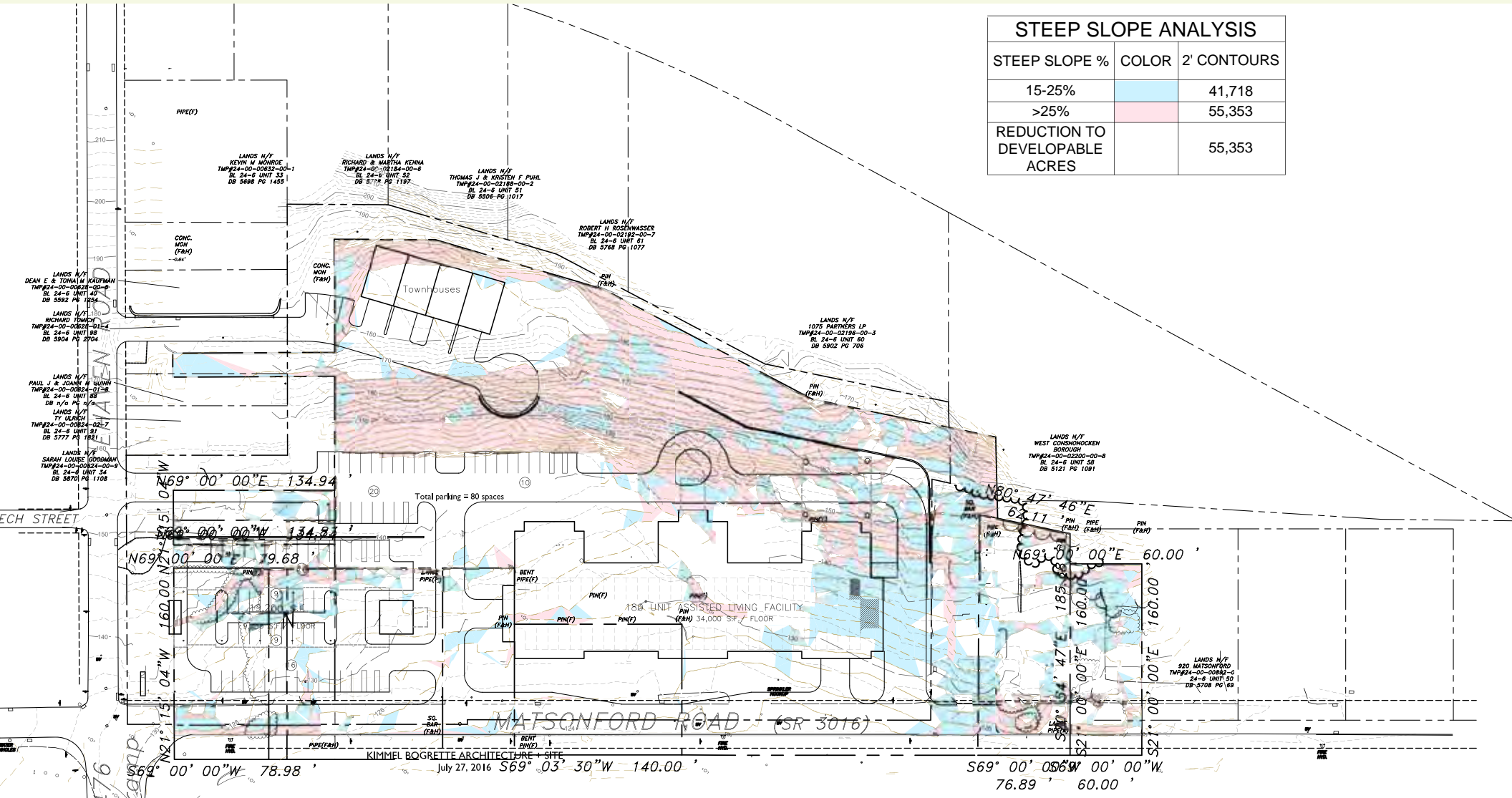
Extend Limited Commercial Zoning along Ford Street

One of the many attractive features of the Borough is its human-scaled architecture. There are two blocks of Ford Street from Front that are zoning Limited Commercial. The Vision Plan recommends extending this commercial zoning for three blocks to allow adaptive reuse of residential structures for small shops and restaurants.



Matsonford Road & Dehaven Avenue Site

A few years ago, a developer assembled several lots in this location and proposed a senior facility with assisted living. The Borough was receptive to this proposal; however, the project did not move forward for other reasons. It is like that this corner will be proposed for redevelopment in the future and its s recommended that the Borough consider uses that is feels are desirable for this location and create zoning changes that would accommodate those uses.



STEEP SLOPE ANALYSIS		
STEEP SLOPE %	COLOR	2' CONTOURS
15-25%		41,718
>25%		55,353
REDUCTION TO DEVELOPABLE ACRES		55,353



IMPLEMENTATION

5

Improvement Priorities

Priority Recommendations have been made of each category of improvement type. This is a starting point for planning and action by the Borough. Some of the priority recommendations are relatively small projects that can be accomplished quickly for a relatively modest cost. Other are very large projects that will require many years, outside funding and assistance from area partners, state elected officials, federally elected officials, PennDOT and many other agencies. These recommended priorities DO NOT preclude the Borough from advancing other recommended items that are not on the list; they are meant to be a organizational tool that will help the Borough focus on what to do first and to include long-term components while being able to show the community action on some smaller, less-expensive project.

Priorities Transportation

- 1 ^(H) Address Sidewalk Gaps
- 2 ^(M) Ford Street as a One-Way Eastbound Between William St. and Front St.
- 3 Borough Streetscape Enhancements
- 4 ^(D) New Pedestrian Bridge Over Schuylkill River
- 5 ^(A) New Off-Ramp from I-76 Near Woodmont
^(B) Road /Removal of I-76 Off-Ramp at Moorehead Avenue



Priorities Amenity

- 1 (N) New Borough Playground at Nathans Place
- 2 (P) Riverfront Access
- 3 (C) New Borough Wayfinding Signage
- 4 Official Map
- 5 (O) Balligomingo Trail

Priorities Redevelopment

- 1 (Y) Extend Limited Commercial Zoning Along Ford Street
- 2 (S) Borough Hall Adaptive Reuse
- 3 (T) St. Gert's Church and Parking Lot
- 4 (U) Front Street Redevelopment
- 5 (V) Union Hill Industrial Area
- 6 (W) Balligomingo Industrial Area / Arader Site





General Organization & Ordinance Priorities

In order to advance the goals of the Vision Plan, there are several organizational / consensus building tasks that need to be completed first. Without these initial actions, it is likely that the Vision Plan recommendations will not advance and only collect dust on the Borough's storage room shelf. Borough Council must lead the way in this effort and move these goals forward with decisive action. Otherwise, private sector developers will continue to make the major planning decisions in the Borough in lieu of proactive community decision-making.

A. Enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Conshohocken and other regional partners to pursue regional highway improvements.

Whether or not any new development ever happens in the Borough, the need for improvements to the regional transportation infrastructure that is located in the Borough needs to occur. This Vision Plan outlines concepts for several of these improvements that should be explored. The October 31, 2019 partners meeting that occurred as a part of the Vision Plan laid the groundwork for a local coalition of partners to advance these transportation improvements. West Conshohocken and Conshohocken Borough should begin discussions immediately to develop a no-cost commitment memorandum of understanding to work together in advancing the preliminary engineering work to advance these concepts. Since both municipalities share the same transportation engineer, coordination should be seamless. Once a MOU is in place, recruiting active support from the business community on both sides of the river is critical. The thousands of jobs and residents represent a substantial part of the robust Montgomery County economy. These are statistics that will get the attention of PennDOT at the highest levels. Montgomery County has also indicated that they will be active partners. The Greater Valley Forge Transportation Management Association is also a resource and SEPTA can be another important partner in this regard.

B. Engage DVRPC and PennDOT

DVRPC will be an important ally in this initiative and can also become a consultant to the Boroughs in developing the traffic modeling information that will be needed to advance the transportation improvements. Connect with the DVRPC Executive Director to engage this agency in this important initiative.

Once municipal and business partners are in place, arrange meeting(s) with PennDOT. Solicit the advice of the County and state elected officials, GVF TMA and others as to the best strategy for this series of meetings. These meeting may take several months to obtain the desired outcomes.

C. Adopt an Official Map and add Vision Plan recommendations

Roadway, Pedestrian Access and Open Space Improvements can all be added to an Official Map for West Conshohocken Borough in order to advance all of these improvements as outlined in the Vision Plan. What is an Official Map? It is a combined map and ordinance designed to implement goals and community vision set by a municipality's Comprehensive Plan or other planning documents such as this Vision Plan. The map shows locations of planned future public lands and facilities such as transportation, recreational parks and trails, and open space. For example, the proposed ramp next to Barr Harbor Drive over the existing R.R. Line, or the new WB off-ramp from the Schuylkill Expressway can be shown as a desired improvement. Additionally, new open space locations as suggested by this plan can also be shown. This shows the Borough's desire to implement (possibly) these improvements at some time in the future. The Official Map can be an effective negotiating tool for municipalities to ensure development is compatible and supportive of public goals. The Official Map can also advance implementation of infrastructure and open space improvements, occasionally at no cost to taxpayers. It can also show municipal commitment to a concept and can be a positive when seeking grant funds to design and engineer these facilities. There are many misconceptions and misunderstandings about the Official Map, including the myth that it leads directly to eminent domain. Please refer to the web site at <https://www.dot.state.pa.us/public/PubsForms/Publications/PUB%20703.pdf> for a full and detailed review of the Official Map.



D. Examine, develop and complete necessary zoning ordinance amendments to allow for redevelopment options.

Many of the concepts recommended by the Vision Plan require amended zoning and / or subdivision and land development regulations that will allow these concepts to move forward. These might include revisions to existing ordinances, creation of new overlay zoning ordinances, new definitions, and possible changes to the Borough's Subdivision and Land Development Ordinances (SALDO).

Please note that an “overlay” zoning district is one that adds to or “lays over” a locations existing zoning. The overlay, in essence, gives the land owner additional options of how their land might be used. The “right” to use and overlay zoning might be triggered by a minimum lot area (to encourage parcel assembly) or other criteria that would be determined during writing of the ordinance. Revisions to the SALDO may be appropriate, for example, for an overlay zone, to ensure a higher quality of design for a particular type of use. If the Borough wishes to plan for any of the many Vision Plan recommendations, it should initiate this work as soon as possible, since the process can easily take 1 to 2 years to complete. The Vision Plan areas / recommendations that could require these types of ordinance revisions include:

- Zoning for St. Gerts / Front St. / Borough Hall Redevelopment
- Overlay Zoning for Union Hill / Balligomingo
- Zoning / Overlay Zoning for Landfill Site

Funding Sources

Multiple funding sources are available through grants, incentives and other programs for the implementation of the recommendations proposed in this report. Examples of funding sources are below:

PennDOT

Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside Program

The Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside Program (TA Set-Aside) is a Federal highway and transit funds set-aside under the Surface Transportation Program (STP) for community-based “non-traditional” projects designed to strengthen the cultural, aesthetic,





and environmental aspects of the nation's intermodal transportation system. The program seeks to provide funding for projects such as construction, planning, and design of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized forms of transportation. Non-motorized forms of transportation include sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure, pedestrian and bicycle signals, traffic calming techniques, lighting and other safety-related infrastructure, and transportation projects to achieve compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. There is a minimum award of \$50,000 for construction projects. There is a maximum award of \$1,000,000, although higher awards can be justified for "exceptional" projects. No applicant match is required. For more information, visit <https://www.penndot.gov/ProjectAndPrograms/Planning/Pages/Transportation%20Alternatives%20Set-Aside%20-%20Surface%20Trans.%20Block%20Grant%20Program.aspx>.

Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS)

Administered through TA Set-Aside, SRTS is a national and international movement to create safe, convenient and healthy opportunities for children to walk and bicycle to school. The program encourages children to walk and bicycle to school, helping to reverse an alarming decrease in students' physical activity and an associated increase in childhood obesity. By getting more children to walk and bicycle to school, communities are also reducing fuel consumption, alleviating traffic congestion, and improving air quality. SRTS programs are built on collaborative partnerships among many stakeholders, including educators, parents, students, elected officials, engineers, city planners, business and community leaders, health officials, and bicycle and pedestrian advocates.

Eligible activities include new or reconstructed sidewalks or walkways, pedestrian and bicycle signs or signals, transportation projects that achieve ADA compliance, such as curb ramps, bike parking facilities or bus bike racks, shared use paths, side paths,

trails that serve a transportation purpose, crossing improvements, and traffic realignments, road diets, or intersection changes. For more information, visit <https://www.penndot.gov/TravelInPA/Safety/SchoolResourcesAndPrograms/SafeRoutesToSchool/Pages/default.aspx>.

Multimodal Transportation Fund (MTF)

PennDOT's Multimodal Transportation Fund provides grants to ensure that a safe and reliable system of transportation is available to the residents of this Commonwealth. The program is intended



to provide financial assistance to municipalities, councils of governments, businesses, economic development organizations, public transportation agencies, rail freight, passenger rail, and ports in order to improve transportation assets that enhance communities, pedestrian safety, and transit revitalization. PennDOT will administer activities directly initiated or undertaken by it related to grants for eligible multimodal programs. Grants are available for projects with a total cost of \$100,000 or more. Grants shall normally not exceed \$3,000,000 for any project. The PennDOT Office of Multimodal Transportation will consider grant requests over \$3,000,000 for projects that will significantly impact PennDOT's goal to leverage private investment and create jobs in the Commonwealth. Financial assistance under the Multimodal Transportation Fund shall be matched by local funding in an amount not less than 30% of the amount awarded. For more information, visit <https://www.penndot.gov/ProjectAndPrograms/MultimodalProgram/Pages/default.aspx>

Commonwealth Financing Agency (CFA)

Multimodal Transportation Fund (MTF)

Administered through the PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), the Multimodal Transportation Fund provides grants to encourage economic development and ensure that a safe and reliable system of transportation is available to the residents of the Commonwealth. Funds may be used for the development, rehabilitation and enhancement of transportation assets to existing communities, streetscape, lighting, sidewalk enhancement, pedestrian safety, connectivity of transportation assets and transit-oriented development. Grants are available for projects with a total cost of \$100,000 or more and grants shall not exceed \$3,000,000 for any project. The CFA will consider grant requests over \$3,000,000 for projects that will significantly impact the CFA's goal to leverage private investment and create jobs in the commonwealth. Financial assistance under the Multimodal Transportation Fund shall be matched by local funding in an amount not less than 30% of the non-federal share of the project costs. For more information, visit <https://dced.pa.gov/programs/multimodal-transportation-fund/>

Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program (GTRP)

Administered through the DCED, the Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program (GTRP) provides funding for planning, acquisition, development, rehabilitation and repair of greenways, recreational

trails, open space, parks and beautification projects. The program awards up to \$250,000 per project to eligible applicants and requires a local match of 15% of the total project cost. Funding from DCED for “sidewalk” connections will need to be categorized as multi-use trails. Some of the recommended sidewalk gap improvements may fit within a “trail” designation. For more information, visit <https://dced.pa.gov/programs/greenways-trails-and-recreation-program-gtrp/>

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)

Community Conservation Partnership Program (C2P2)

C2P2 provides funding to municipalities and authorized nonprofit organizations for recreation, park, trail and conservation projects. These include planning for feasibility studies, trail studies, conservation plans, master site development plans, and comprehensive recreation park and open space and greenway plans; land acquisition for active or passive parks, trails and conservation purposes; and new development and rehabilitation of parks, trails, Riparian Forest Buffers, and recreation facilities. Most of these projects require a 50% match, which can include a combination of cash and/or non-cash values. Funding from DCNR for “sidewalk” connections will need to be categorized as multi-use trails. Some of the recommended sidewalk gap improvements may fit within a “trail” designation. For more information, visit <https://brcgrants.dcnr.pa.gov/>

Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)

Keystone Communities Program (KCP)

The Keystone Communities (KC) program is designed to encourage the creation of partnerships between the public and private sectors that jointly support local initiatives such as the growth and stability of neighborhoods and communities; social and economic diversity; and a strong and secure quality of life. The program allows communities to tailor the assistance to meet the needs of its specific revitalization effort.

Communities may wish to consider designation through the KC program as a Keystone Main Street, Keystone Elm Street, Keystone Enterprise Zone, or Keystone Community. Designation is an opportunity for targeted investment and development including the





identification of specific needs for investment and/or development and the design and implementation of a strategy to address those needs. For more information, visit <https://dced.pa.gov/programs/keystone-communities-program-kcp/>

Office of the Budget

Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP)

The Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP) is a Commonwealth grant program administered by the Office of the Budget for the acquisition and construction of regional economic, cultural, civic, recreational, and historical improvement projects. RACP projects are authorized in the Redevelopment Assistance section of a Capital Budget Itemization Act, have a regional or multi-jurisdictional impact, and generate substantial increases or maintain current levels of employment, tax revenues, or other measures of economic activity. RACP projects are state-funded projects that cannot obtain primary

funding under other state programs. A RACP project must have a total cost of at least \$1,000,000. At least 50% of the project cost must be match (non-state) participation. For more information, visit <https://www.budget.pa.gov/Programs/RACP/Pages/Main%20Page.aspx>

Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)

CMAQ funds transportation projects in the DVRPC region that improve air quality and reduce traffic congestion. CMAQ projects will demonstrate methods to significantly improve air quality and help the region meet federal health regulation standards. The CMAQ Program is not a grant program. The sponsor does not receive grant funds to start the project; rather, the sponsor is reimbursed for costs incurred after receiving funding authorization for the project and a notice to proceed. For more information, visit <https://www.dvrpc.org/CMAQ/>

Transportation and Community Development Initiative (TCDI)

The Transportation and Community Development Initiative (TCDI) is an opportunity to support smart growth initiatives that implement the Connections 2045 Plan for Greater Philadelphia. TCDI focuses on linking land use and transportation planning by: Improving the overall character and quality of life; Enhancing the existing transportation infrastructure capacity; Promoting and encouraging the use of transit, bike, and pedestrian transportation modes; Building capacity in our older suburbs and neighborhoods; Reinforcing and implementing improvements in designated Centers; and Protecting our environment. For more information, visit <https://www.dvrpc.org/TCDI/>

Montgomery County, Pennsylvania

Montco 2040 Implementation Grants

The Montco 2040 Implementation Grant Program is intended to assist municipalities in making targeted physical improvements that achieve real progress toward the goals of the county comprehensive plan, Montco 2040: A Shared Vision. The program focuses on supporting local projects that specifically further the goals of the county comprehensive plan and the plan's themes of Connected Communities, Sustainable Places, and Vibrant Economy.

While the program is open to a wide array of projects fitting within the comprehensive plan, specific Focus Categories that highlight recent county planning initiatives are announced prior to each funding year. Projects that fall under a Focus Category receive greater consideration during the application review. Grant amounts are available between \$10,000 and \$200,000; a realistic average award is around \$100,000. The grant program has awarded over \$5.5 million to 56 projects in 35 municipalities in Montgomery County. For further information on the grant program, contact Scott France at 610-278-3747.





SIMONE
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
COLLINS



Implementation



West Conshohocken Vision Plan