



# Hilltown Township

## Comprehensive Plan Update

### September 23, 2019

**Hilltown Township**

13 West Creamery Road ▪ P.O. Box 260 ▪ Hilltown, PA 18927





## **RESOLUTION NO. 2019-017**

### **ADOPTION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2019**

**WHEREAS**, the Hilltown Township Planning Commission with the assistance of the Bucks County Planning Commission has prepared a draft of a Comprehensive Plan Update 2019 for Hilltown Township; and

**WHEREAS**, the Hilltown Township Planning Commission held a public meeting to discuss the draft of the Comprehensive Plan Update 2019 on July 23, 2019 and recommended that the Board of Supervisors adopt the draft as the Hilltown Township Comprehensive Plan Update 2019; and

**WHEREAS**, Hilltown Township mailed copies of the draft of the Comprehensive Plan to Telford Borough, West Rockhill Township, Sellersville Borough, Perkasio Borough, East Rockhill Township, Bedminster Township, Dublin Borough, Plumstead Township, New Britain Township, Silverdale Borough, Souderton Borough, Franconia Township, Hatfield Township and the Pennridge School District on July 23, 2019 seeking their review and comment on the draft before final action is taken by the Hilltown Township Board of Supervisors which will be at a public hearing on Monday, September 23, 2019; and

**WHEREAS**, a public hearing to adopt the Comprehensive Plan Update 2019 on September 23, 2019 was advertised in the Intelligencer once each week for two (2) successive weeks; and

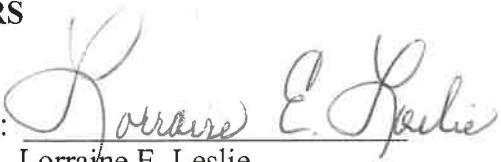
**WHEREAS**, following a public hearing and consideration of the comments received from the surrounding communities and the School District, if any, the Board of Supervisors of Hilltown Township believe that it is in the best interest of the citizens of Hilltown Township to adopt the draft of the Comprehensive Plan Update 2019 prepared by the Hilltown Township Planning Commission.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, AND IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED** that the draft of the Hilltown Township Comprehensive Plan Update 2019 prepared by the Hilltown Township Planning Commission is hereby adopted as the **HILLTOWN TOWNSHIP COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE 2019.**

**RESOLVED** this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of September 2019.

**HILLTOWN TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John B. McIlhinney, Chairman

Attest:   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Lorraine E. Leslie  
Township Manager/Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kenneth B. Bennington, Vice-Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
James C. Groff, Supervisor



# Hilltown Township Comprehensive Plan Update 2019

Adopted by the  
Hilltown Township Board of Supervisors  
Adopted September 23, 2019

## **Township of Hilltown**

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# Acknowledgements

## Hilltown Township Board of Supervisors

**Jack McIlhinney**, Chairman

**Ken Bennington**, Vice-Chairman

**Jim Groff**, Supervisor

## Hilltown Township Planning Commission

**David Christ**, Chairman

**Jon Apple**, Vice-Chairman

**Brooke Rush**, Secretary

**Kirk Hansen**, Member

**Eric Nogami**, Member

**Joe Marino**, *In Memoriam*

**Terry Carnes**, *Former Member*

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# Introduction

A comprehensive plan functions as a guide for the growth of a community, for its development policies and ordinances, and serves as the principal municipal long-range planning tool. Comprehensive plans are provided for under Article III of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (P.L. 805, "Act 247"), which states that any municipality may prepare and adopt such a plan after a recommendation by the planning agency (Hilltown Township Planning Commission), and following a public hearing(s) held by the governing body (Township Board of Supervisors). The Planning Code requires certain elements to be included in any comprehensive plan, including a statement of goals and objectives, land use and housing plans, a circulation plan, a community facilities plan, a statement on the interrelationships between the various plan elements and with surrounding communities, and a discussion of implementation strategies. (Action Plan)

The prior comprehensive plan for Hilltown Township was adopted in October of 2003. The intervening years have seen significant changes which have created a need for an update. Hilltown, traditionally rural in character with gently rolling topography, numerous small stream valleys and many operating farms, continues to experience suburban development pressure. Between the years of 2000 and 2010, the township's population increased by approximately 24 percent. It is expected that this development pressure will continue for years to come. According to forecasts from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), Hilltown's 2010 population can be expected to increase by about 10 percent in each of the next two decades. It is the purpose of this plan to provide a framework for managing this growth.

## Regional Location

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Hilltown is located in northwestern Bucks County. In its formative years, Hilltown, like most northern Bucks County communities, relied primarily upon agriculture as its main industry. Hilltown today still retains a predominantly rural/agricultural character but is experiencing new residential, commercial and industrial land use and development throughout the township.

Hilltown is bounded to the west by Souderton Borough and Franconia and Hatfield Townships in Montgomery County, to the north by East and West Rockhill Townships and Telford, Perkasie, and

Sellersville Boroughs, to the east by Bedminster and Plumstead Townships and Dublin Borough, and to the south by New Britain Township. Silverdale Borough is contained within the center of the township. Hilltown is approximately twenty-seven square miles in area and located approximately six miles north of the Borough of Doylestown.

Route 309, Bethlehem Pike, crosses through the western portion of the township providing access to Sellersville and Quakertown to the north and the Pennsylvania Turnpike and Philadelphia to the south. Other major roadways include: Route 113, Souderton Road which runs southwest to northeast through the township (and through the center of Silverdale), Route 313 on the eastern edge of the township (running through Dublin Borough) and Route 152, Limekiln Pike/Walnut Street. Limekiln Pike provides access to Route 202 to the South.

## Historical Overview

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Hilltown's early history can be traced as far back as the year 1683, when the area now known as the village of Hilltown was the site of a meeting between William Penn and the Indian Chiefs of the Delaware Nation. Much of Hilltown Township was originally within the Manor of Perkasio, which was granted by William Penn to Samuel Carpenter and others in the year 1701. The manor was laid out and surveyed in 1708 and included Perkasio Borough and much of Hilltown and West Rockhill Townships.

The first purchasers of land in the township were not settlers, but rather purchasers of large tracts of land. Settlers started to arrive in the township in the late 1600's and early 1700's. Many of the early settlers were Welsh, later followed by Germans and German Mennonites. Hilltown Township was incorporated around the year 1722, becoming the first township established northwest of Buckingham Township within Bucks County. Many of the individuals who petitioned for the new township were Welsh and the original name suggested for the township was "Aberystwith", after a town in Cardiganshire, South Wales. Other names suggested for the township included "Society" and "Muscamickan." For the first thirty years of its existence, the township was known as Hilton. The present name of Hilltown, while appropriate for the numerous hills in the area, may likely be a misspelling or adaptation of the township's first name.

Hilltown's location between Philadelphia to the south and Allentown, Bethlehem, and Easton to the north, prompted the development of several main roadways through the township. Present day Hilltown Pike was formerly part of an Indian trail established in the late 1600's through Upper Bucks County. Known as the Minsi Trail, this route crossed through Hilltown and enabled travel

between Philadelphia and the Durham iron mines in northeastern Bucks County. Another main roadway in the township, Route 113, became an east-west route linking many farming communities surrounding Philadelphia between the Delaware and Schuylkill rivers.

The establishment of transportation routes through the township helped pave the way for development of several historic villages, most notably Line Lexington, Blooming Glen, and the village of Hilltown. All three villages developed at crossroads within the township. Line Lexington and the village of Hilltown were located along stage routes and became popular stops for stagecoaches traveling between Philadelphia and the Lehigh, and Line Lexington and the village of Applebachsville in Haycock Township. Blooming Glen, originally known as Moyer's Store, developed after the establishment of a store in 1850 and a post office in 1864. The village grew to become a center of commercial activity which served the surrounding agricultural community.

Through the 1800 and 1900's, the township realized steady growth while maintaining a strong agricultural base. According to historical data, the township's population grew by almost 870 individuals between the years of 1850 (2,301 persons) and 1900 (3,170 persons). Over the next one hundred years, from 1900 to 2000, the township's population almost quadrupled, increasing from 3,170 persons in 1900 to 12,102 by year 2000. This trend continued into the early 2000's with the township experiencing an increase of approximately 24 percent, or almost 3,000 additional residents, between 2000 (12,102 persons) and 2010 (15,029 persons).

While the nearby towns of Dublin, Perkasio, Sellersville, Telford, Souderton, and Silverdale provide goods and services to residents and businesses in Hilltown and the surrounding area, commercial uses have developed within the township, primarily along Route 309, Bethlehem Pike, and Route 313. Industrial uses have developed primarily in the northwestern quadrant of the township, along Bethlehem Pike. In addition, there are two stone quarries that operate mostly in the eastern half of the township.

Today, Hilltown Township contains a mix of residential, commercial, and industrial development. Despite the township's growth over the last century, Hilltown has managed to retain much of its agricultural heritage and rural landscape. Rolling hills with farms are located throughout the township, particularly in areas east of Callowhill Road. With the township's proximity to the nearby urban areas of Philadelphia, Allentown, and Bethlehem, and to the business centers in nearby Montgomery County, development pressures in Hilltown are expected to continue. As the township plans for the next ten years, careful planning should continue to balance the

needs of residents and the farming community, while allowing economic development opportunities that meet the needs of the business community and that benefit those that live and work in the township.<sup>i</sup>

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<sup>i</sup> Endnotes: Historical Overview, pgs. 2-4:

Davis, W. W., Ely, W. S., & Jordan, J. W. (1905). *History of Bucks County, Pennsylvania: From the discovery of the Delaware to the present time*. New York: Lewis Pub. Co.

MacReynolds, G., & Bucks County Historical Society. (1955). *Place names in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, alphabetically arranged in an historical narrative*. Doylestown, PA: Bucks County Historical Society.

Mathews, E., & Adams, H. C. (1996). *Wanderings through historic Hilltown (Township, Bucks County, Pennsylvania) with Edward Mathews*. Bedminster, PA: Adams Apple Press.

Hilltown Township Website: <https://hilltown.org/>

# Demographic Analysis and Projections

Planning for the future requires an understanding of current conditions. This is done by reviewing Census and related demographic information. The Census keeps track of population statistics and also gathers information on housing characteristics, education, employment and occupation, income and poverty, etc.

It should be noted that this analysis is based on information from both the 2010 U.S. Census and the 2010-2014 American Community Survey (ACS). The 2010 Census did not record much of the data that had been solicited in earlier nationwide censuses. For analysis of information not available in the 2010 Census, such as housing and household characteristics, the ACS data was used. The ACS provides estimates based on samples, along with a margin of error, for the specific information it addresses. The ACS estimates are based on a smaller survey sample, and may be less accurate or reliable than those of the full census.

## Population

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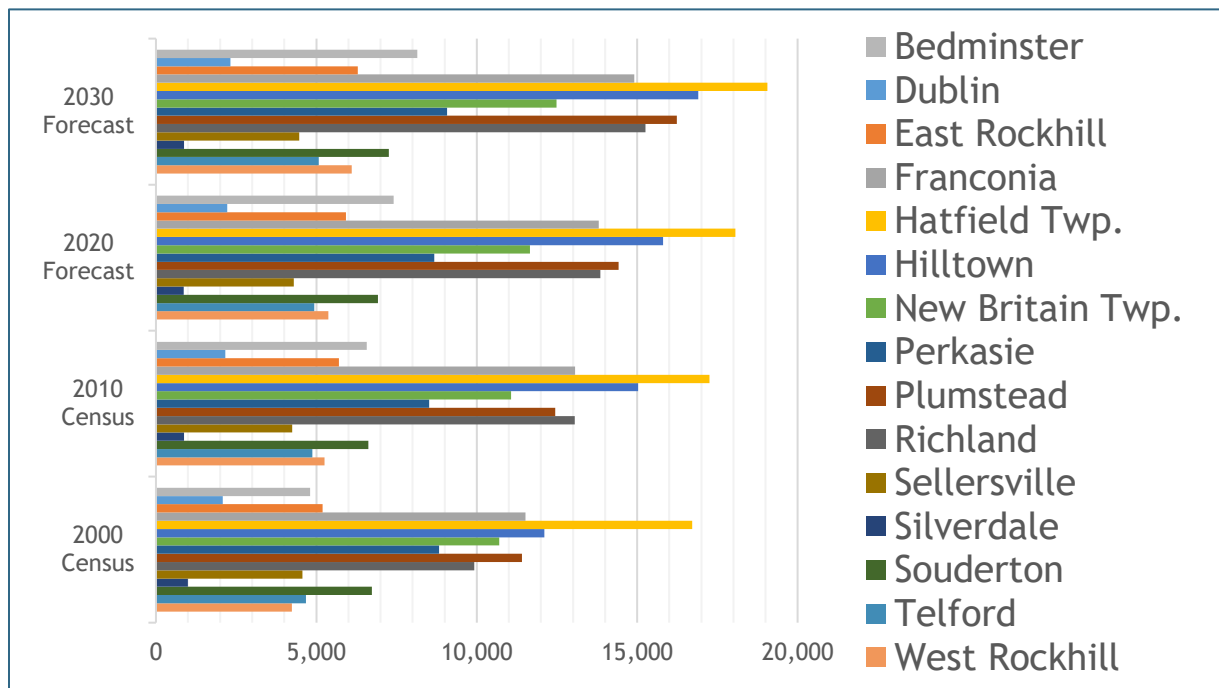
The population of Hilltown Township was 15,029 in 2010 compared to 12,102 in 2000, an increase of 24.2%. From 1990 to 2000, Hilltown experienced a 14.36% rate of growth (1990 population of 10,582). The 2000-2010 growth rate is higher than the Bucks County rate of 4.6%. According to the 2010-2014 ACS, Hilltown's population has grown to 15,122 in 2014. Shown in Table 1, Population Trends, are the 2000 and 2010 census figures, and the 2020 and 2030 forecasts produced by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission for Hilltown and similar near-by communities, along with Bucks County.

Figure 1, Population Comparison with Surrounding Areas, graphically shows the changes experienced and projected for Hilltown and nearby communities. In 2000, Hilltown was second to Hatfield Township in population. This trend continued into 2010 and is projected to continue into 2020. These projections are based on top-down assignment (region to county to municipality) of population figures, which also factors in the development regulations of the municipality. This document proposes to continue to focus growth in previously designated Development Areas through policies outlined in the Land Use Plan.

**Table 1. Population Trends**

	2000 Census	2010 Census	% Increase	2020 Forecast	% Increase	2030 Forecast	% Increase
Bedminster Township	4,802	6,574	36.8%	7,407	12.7%	8,149	10.0%
Dublin Borough	2,083	2,158	3.6%	2,221	2.9%	2,325	4.7%
East Rockhill Township	5,199	5,706	9.8%	5,924	3.8%	6,290	6.2%
Franconia Township	11,523	13,064	11.8%	13,798	5.6%	14,912	8.1%
Hatfield Township	16,712	17,249	13.4%	18,057	4.7%	19,057	5.5%
<b>Hilltown Township</b>	<b>12,102</b>	<b>15,029</b>	<b>24.2%</b>	<b>15,807</b>	<b>5.2%</b>	<b>16,900</b>	<b>6.9%</b>
New Britain Township	10,698	11,070	3.5%	11,653	5.3%	12,489	7.2%
Perkasie Borough	8,828	8,511	-3.6%	8,671	1.9%	9,071	4.6%
Plumstead Township	11,409	12,442	9.1%	14,417	15.9%	16,233	12.6%
Richland Township	9,920	13,052	31.6%	13,855	6.2%	15,258	10.1%
Sellersville Borough	4,564	4,249	-6.9%	4,297	1.1%	4,469	4.0%
Silverdale Borough	1,000	871		863	-0.9%	876	
Souderton Borough	6,730	6,618	-1.7%	6,917	4.5%	7,258	4.9%
Telford Borough	4,680	4,872	4.1%	4,934	1.3%	5,078	2.9%
West Rockhill Township	4,233	5,256	24.2%	5,369	2.1%	6,098	13.6%
<b>Bucks County</b>	<b>597,635</b>	<b>625,249</b>	<b>4.6%</b>	<b>640,495</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>669,299</b>	<b>4.5%</b>

Source U.S. Census and DVRPC 2015-2045 Forecasts

**Figure 1. Population Comparison with Surrounding Areas**


Source: DVRPC 2015-2045 Forecasts

The population sorted by age is shown in Table 2, Hilltown Township Age Cohorts 1990-2014. A comparison between the 1990, 2000 and 2010 censuses and 2014 ACS shows the population of Hilltown is aging. Compared with the total population, the percentage of township residents aged 45 years and older has risen from 31.9% in 1990, to 36.2% in 2000, to 42.7% in 2010, and 44% in 2014; within this group, the percentage of those 65 years and older has shown a steady increase (from 10% in 1990, to 12.1% in 2000, to 13.5% in 2010, to 15.2% in 2014). During this same time period, the percentage of township residents aged 25 to 44 decreased from 32.3% in 1990, to 30.5% in 2000, down to 24.9% in 2010 and remained steady at 24.9% in 2014. Between 2010 and 2014, the age cohort representing residents between the ages of 60 and 64 experienced the largest change, an increase of nearly 37%. The one age cohort that has experienced a steady decline since 1990 is the 25-34 age bracket, which declined by 13.7% between 1990 and 2000, 6.8% between 2000 and 2010, and 1.4% between 2010 and 2014. The number of school age children, between the ages of 5 to 19, has remained fairly constant since 1990.

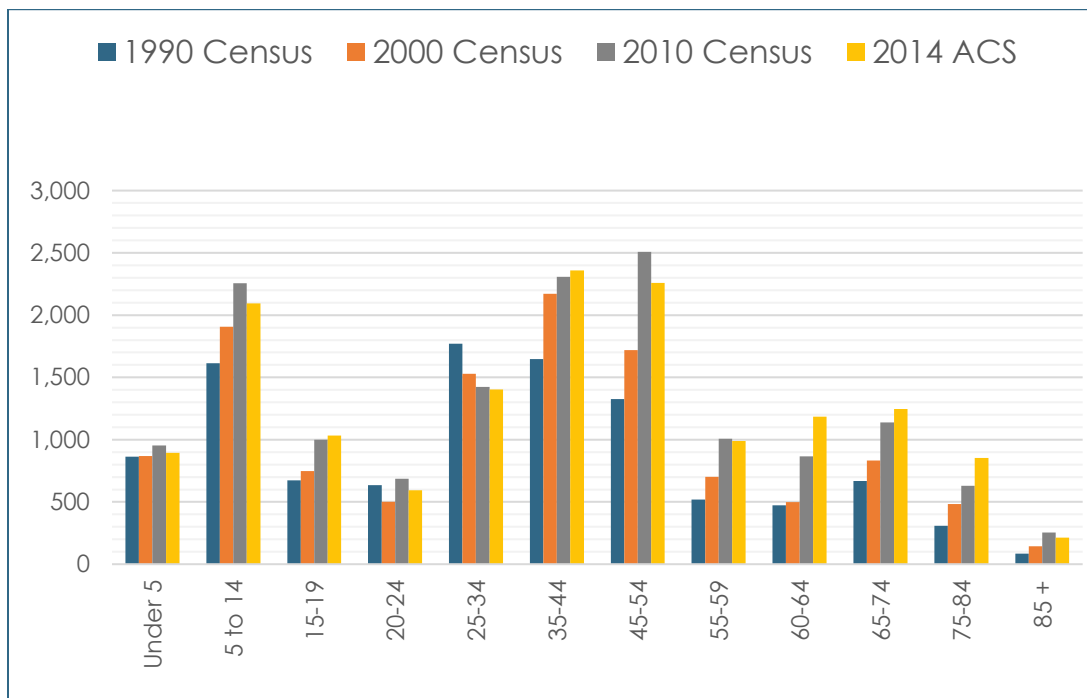
Figure 2 graphically shows the age cohorts for Hilltown since 1990, and Figure 3 shows the percentage breakdown by age cohort. In 2014, adults in the 35-to-54 age brackets formed the largest segment, about one-third, of the township's population. Children, between the ages of 5 to 19 accounted for slightly over 20% of the population, and adults between the ages of 55 to 64 represented 14.3% of the population, while seniors aged 65 and up accounted for 15.2% of the population.

**Table 2. Hilltown Township Age Cohorts 1990 - 2014**

	1990 Census	% of Total	2000 Census	% of Total	2010 Census	% of Total	2014 ACS	% of Total	Change 2010- 2014
Under 5	864	8.2%	868	7.2%	954	6.3%	894	5.9%	-60
5 to 14	1,614	15.3%	1,907	15.8%	2,255	15.0%	2,095	13.8%	-160
15-19	673	6.4%	748	6.2%	999	6.6%	1,032	6.8%	33
20-24	635	6.0%	500	4.1%	687	4.6%	593	3.9%	-94
25-34	1,770	16.7%	1,528	12.6%	1,424	9.5%	1,404	9.3%	-20
35-44	1,646	15.6%	2,171	17.9%	2,308	15.4%	2,358	15.6%	50
45-54	1,325	12.5%	1,720	14.2%	2,507	16.7%	2,258	14.9%	-249
55-59	520	4.9%	701	5.8%	1,008	6.7%	989	6.5%	-19
60-64	473	4.5%	499	4.1%	865	5.8%	1,185	7.8%	320
65-74	667	6.3%	832	6.9%	1,139	7.6%	1,247	8.2%	108
75-84	309	2.9%	484	4.0%	629	4.2%	853	5.6%	224
85 +	86	0.8%	144	1.2%	254	1.7%	214	1.4%	-40
Total	10,582		12,102		15,029		15,122		

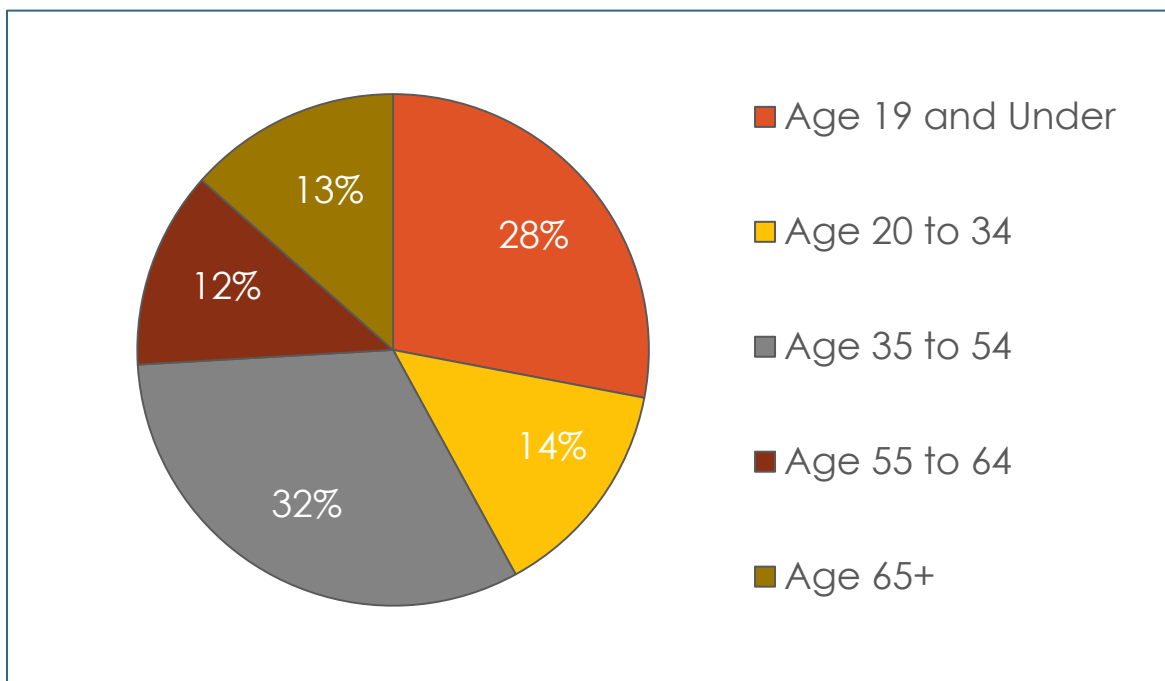
Source: 2010 U.S. Census, 2010-2014 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

**Figure 2. Hilltown Township Age Cohort**



Source: U.S. Census, 2010-2014 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

**Figure 3. Age Cohort Percentages for 2014**



Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau



The census figures show that the Hilltown population age breakdown is fairly similar to Bucks County. According to the American Community Survey (ACS), the median age in Hilltown, 42.2 years, is just slightly lower than Bucks County's median of 42.6 years. In addition, Hilltown and Bucks County have similar median ages compared to the other counties in the region, with the median age in Chester, Delaware and Montgomery Counties being 39.9, 38.9, and 41.0, respectively. The comparison of age cohorts in Table 3 shows that Hilltown has a higher percentage of people under the age of 20 (26.5%) than Bucks County (25.4%) and the four county region (25.5%). Hilltown also has nearly the exact same percentage of people over the age of 65 (15.2%) compared to the region (15.0%); however, both are below Bucks County (15.7%).

**Table 3. 2014 Census Age Cohorts Comparison to Region**

	Hilltown		Bucks		Region	
	Population	% of Total	Population	% of Total	Population	% of Total
Under 5	894	5.9%	32,301	5.2%	142,545	5.7%
5 to 14	2,095	13.8%	79,308	12.6%	322,045	12.9%
15-19	1,032	6.8%	41,511	6.6%	173,358	6.9%
20-24	593	3.9%	33,913	5.4%	148,375	5.9%
25-34	1,404	9.3%	67,880	10.8%	293,690	11.7%
35-44	2,358	15.6%	78,430	12.5%	317,440	12.7%
45-54	2,258	14.9%	105,415	16.8%	394,325	15.8%
55-59	989	6.5%	48,513	7.7%	181,914	7.3%
60-64	1,185	7.8%	41,009	6.5%	152,662	6.1%
65-74	1,247	8.2%	52,354	8.4%	195,443	7.8%
75-84	853	5.6%	30,801	4.9%	120,015	4.8%
85 +	214	1.4%	14,750	2.4%	60,962	2.4%
Total	15,122		626,205		2,502,774	

Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

## Migration

As shown in Table 4a– New Residents for Select Municipalities and Table 4b – Migration Patterns for Select Municipalities, the majority of new residents for Hilltown Township are coming from other communities in Bucks County. The tables do not show figures which can be directly compared due to the use of the American Community Survey data from 2010-2014 which is an average, not an absolute figure. The figures do show continued growth in the faster growing townships of Plumstead and Hilltown, albeit at a slower rate due to an economic downturn in the late 2000's.

**Table 4a. New Residents for Select Municipalities**

	New Residents									
	2010		2011		2012		2013		2014	
	Number	Percent*	Number	Percent*	Number	Percent*	Number	Percent*	Number	Percent*
Bedminster	359	5.7%	351	5.5%	361	5.5%	399	5.9%	252	3.7%
East Rockhill	243	4.3%	141	2.5%	170	3.0%	163	2.9%	144	2.5%
<b>Hilltown</b>	<b>1,334</b>	<b>9.2%</b>	<b>1,308</b>	<b>8.9%</b>	<b>1,571</b>	<b>10.6%</b>	<b>1,804</b>	<b>12.1%</b>	<b>1,352</b>	<b>9.0%</b>
New Britain Twp.	895	8.2%	931	8.5%	748	6.8%	604	5.5%	636	5.8%
Plumstead	1,066	8.7%	1,100	9.0%	1,102	8.9%	1,254	10.0%	1,157	9.2%
Richland	1,215	10.0%	891	7.2%	963	7.7%	743	5.9%	773	6.0%
West Rockhill	309	6.1%	416	8.1%	499	9.6%	487	9.3%	508	9.6%
Bucks County	45,065	7.3%	43,715	7.1%	43,245	7.0%	43,141	7.0%	47,008	7.6%

\*Percentage of total population over 1 year old

Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

**Table 4b. Migration Patterns for Select Municipalities**

	Origin of New Residents														
	Bucks County					Areas in PA					Other States & Abroad				
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Bedminster	324	317	323	373	226	26	25	22	13	12	9	9	16	13	14
East Rockhill	197	123	149	147	144	40	17	20	16	0	6	1	1	0	0
<b>Hilltown</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>635</b>	<b>961</b>	<b>1,060</b>	<b>978</b>	<b>580</b>	<b>503</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>412</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>257</b>
New Britain Twp.	529	549	419	283	356	259	259	193	202	179	118	133	152	119	108
Plumstead	503	364	452	574	630	106	67	128	166	151	457	669	522	514	376
Richland	642	484	643	539	579	489	306	168	124	133	127	149	196	130	111
West Rockhill	161	210	169	157	157	108	198	301	301	334	49	119	39	42	31
Bucks County	24,614	23,906	23,186	23,919	25,497	10,842	10,217	10,166	9,761	11,324	10,834	10,433	10,866	10,800	11,983

Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

## Land Density

As shown in Table 5 - Land Density, Bucks County, with an average of over 1,030 people per square mile, has almost double the average density of Hilltown. The four-county region has a density of 1,232.3 persons per square mile. Only Hatfield Township has a higher density than both Bucks County and the four-county region (Bucks, Chester, Delaware and Montgomery counties).

**Table 5. Land Density**

	Land Area (Square Miles)	Population	Density (People/Sq. Mi.)
Bedminster Township	30.2	6,847	226.7
East Rockhill Township	12.9	5,719	443.3
Hatfield Township	10.0	17,460	1,746.0
<b>Hilltown Township</b>	<b>26.9</b>	<b>15,122</b>	<b>562.2</b>
New Britain Township	14.7	11,095	754.8
Richland Township	20.5	13,081	638.1
West Rockhill Township	16.3	5,275	323.6
Bucks County	607.9	626,205	1,030.1
4 County Region*	2,030.9	2,502,774	1,232.3

Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

## Housing

The Census provides information on housing, including the number of housing units, types, cost, and vacancies. This data provides some understanding of Hilltown's housing stock which can be used in planning future land use patterns and in identifying needs.

According to the 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, there were 5,711 housing units within Hilltown Township in 2014, of which 5,503 were occupied. As shown in Table 6, of the occupied units in Hilltown, 82.0% are owner occupied in comparison to an overall Bucks County owner occupancy rate of 77.2%. The owner occupancy rate in the four county suburban region is lower still at 69.3%.

The 2010-2014 ACS showed that the vast majority of housing units in Hilltown (88.7%) are single family, either detached or attached. As shown in Table 6, the percentage of occupied housing in Hilltown is considerably higher than in Bucks County and in the four-county suburban region. The percentage of single family detached housing in Hilltown is the same as New Britain Township at 68.9%. Single family detached housing accounts for 78.9 and 52.7 percent in East and West Rockhill townships, respectively, and 69.3% in Bedminster Township.

The only housing type that experienced a decline in the township between 2010 and 2014 is in the category of 5 to 9 units, which decreased from 134 to 51 units, and now represents only 0.9% of the total units. Larger multi-family buildings, those having more than 10 units, represent between 9.4% and 9.3% of the units in both Bucks County and the region; while there was a 67.6% increase in these units in the township, they still represent only 4.0% of all units in Hilltown

Township. It appears as though the decrease in the 5 to 9 dwelling unit category and much of the larger increase in the 10-plus dwelling units category can be attributed to a number of housing units that were previously identified as 5 to 9 and are now identified as 10-plus units.

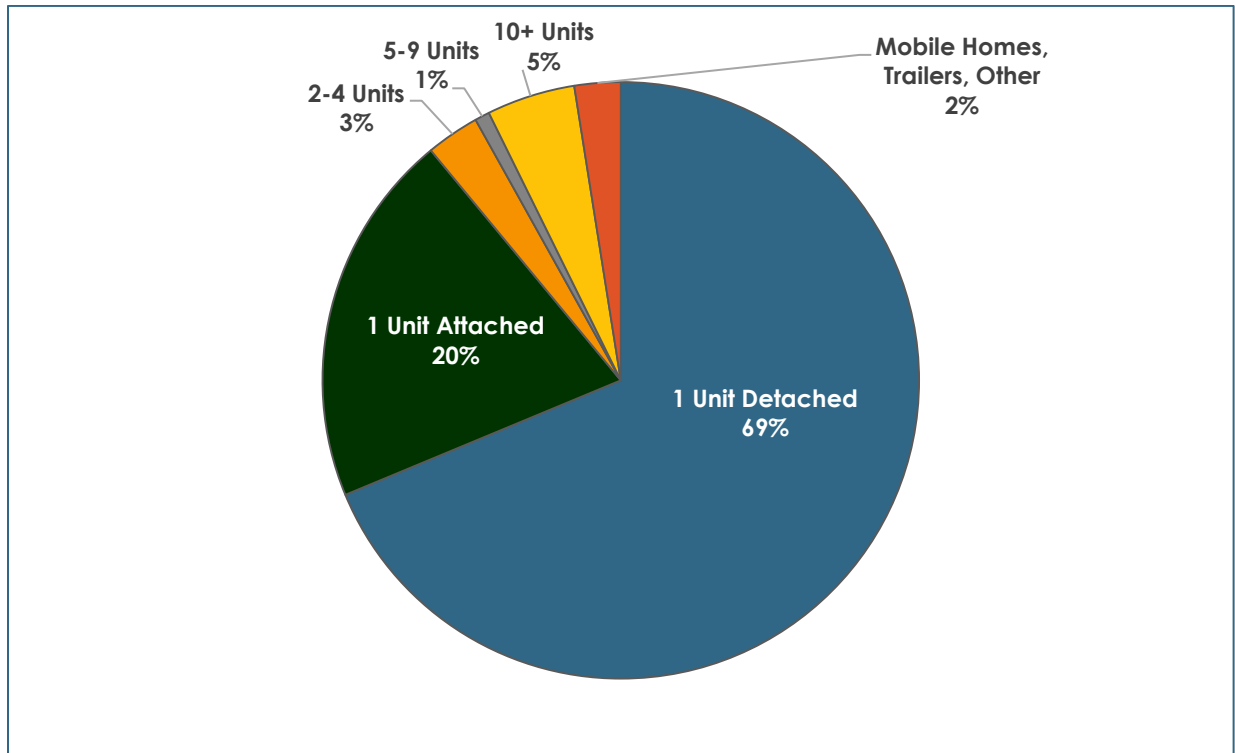
Figure 4 shows the breakdown of housing unit types in the township.

**Table 6. Housing Units**

	Hilltown Township			Bucks County			4 County Region*		
	2000	2014	% Change	2000	2014	% Change	2000	2014	% Change
Total Units	4,370	5,711	30.7%	225,498	246,231	9.2%	903,683	989,284	9.5%
Occupied	4,275	5,503	28.7%	218,725	231,959	6.1%	869,048	929,789	7.0%
Owner Occupied	3,586	4,513	25.9%	169,205	179,188	5.9%	648,250	685,474	5.7%
1 unit detached	3,215	3,883	20.8%	144,555	155,431	7.5%	508,475	552,246	8.6%
1 unit attached	567	1,180	108%	31,382	37,820	20.5%	182,574	204,474	12.0%
2 to 4 units	200	231	15.5%	11,715	15,468	32.0%	64,069	70,918	10.7%
5 to 9 units	134	51	-61.9%	8,258	9,037	9.4%	30,063	32,188	7.1%
10+ units	136	228	67.6%	23,796	23,165	-2.7%	104,168	115,156	10.5%
Mobile home, trailers, other	118	138	16.9%	5,723	5,310	-7.2%	14,343	14,302	-0.3%
% Owner occupied	83.9%	82.0%	-1.9%	77.4%	77.2%	-0.2%	74.6%	69.3%	-5.3%
% Single family	86.5%	88.7%	2.2%	78.0%	78.5%	0.5%	76.5%	76.5%	0.0%

Source: 2000 U.S. Census, 2010-2014 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

**Figure 4. Hilltown Housing Types**



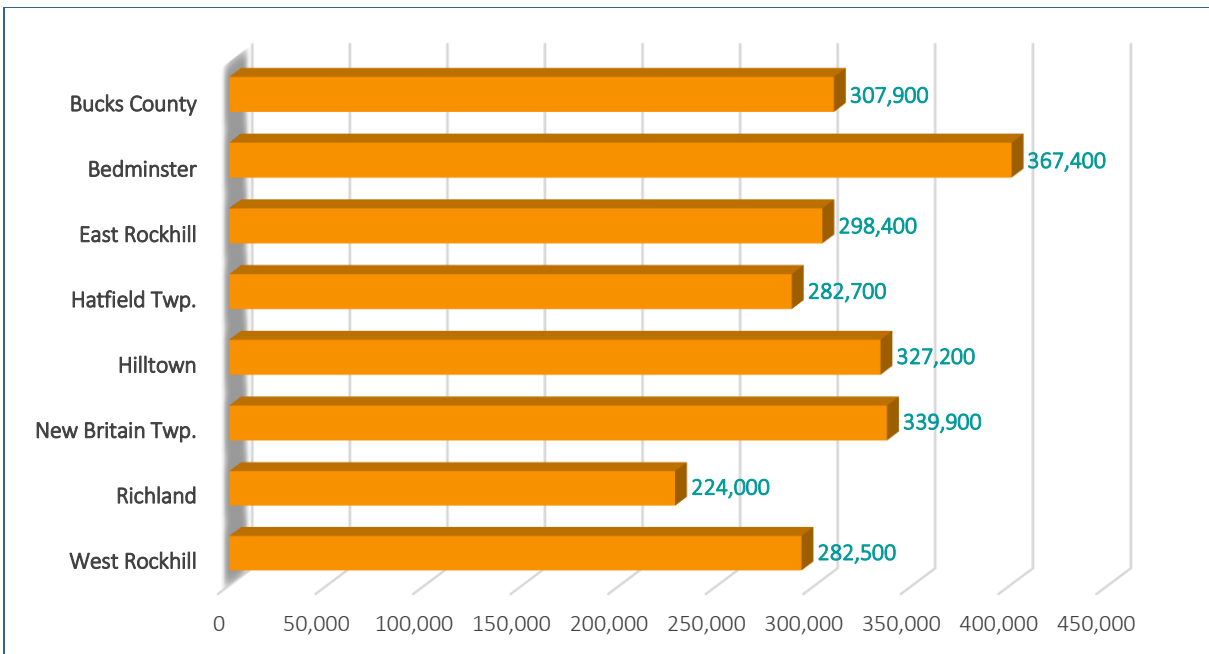
Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey, U.S. Census

According to the 2010 Census, the median value of owner occupied housing units in Hilltown was \$333,800, a significant increase from the 2000 Census figure of \$170,600. This compares to the median value of owner occupied housing units for Bucks County in 2010, as a whole, of \$309,900. The median value of owner occupied housing units in Chester, Delaware, and Montgomery Counties was \$325,200, \$234,000, and \$296,600, respectively. The median value of owner occupied housing units in Chester, Delaware and Montgomery Counties was \$323,600, \$233,400 and \$290,800, respectively. According to the 2010-2014 ACS, the median value of owner occupied housing units in Hilltown is \$327,200, and in Bucks County is \$307,600. This 2014 data also indicates the median value of owner occupied housing units in Chester, Delaware, and Montgomery Counties was \$323,600, \$233,400, and \$290,800, respectively.

Median housing value from the 2010-2014 ACS for nearby municipalities is shown in Figure 5. With the exception of New Britain and Bedminster townships, Hilltown has the highest median value of owner occupied units compared with other nearby townships.

The median 2014 contract rent in Hilltown was \$1,278, an 8.4% increase over the 2010 median rent of \$1,179. For Bucks County, the median rent was \$1,128, as compared to \$997 in 2010, an increase of 13%.

**Figure 5. 2014 Median Value of Owner Occupied Unit**

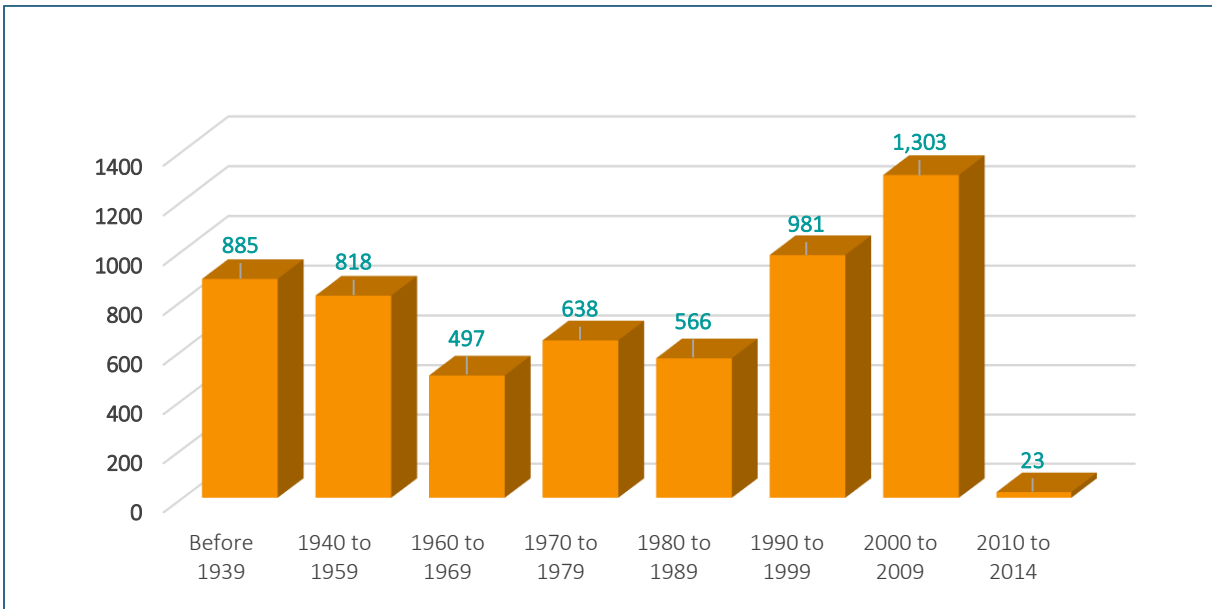


Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

Hilltown added 1,303 units between 2000 and 2009, which accounts for 22.8% of the township's housing stock. This represents a 32.8% increase over the number of housing units added during the previous decade. In comparison, over this same time period, there was a 9.6% increase in the number of new units built in the County as a whole. In neighboring Bedminster, 707 housing units were constructed between 2000 and 2009, which accounts for 25.7% of that township's housing stock. This is an increase of over 286% from the number of units constructed in Bedminster from 1990 to 2000.

Based on 2010-2014 ACS information, there are 5,711 housing units in Hilltown. Figure 6 shows the age of the housing stock in the township. Of the 5,711 housing units in the township almost one-quarter of them have been built between 2000 and 2009 and almost one half of the units were built since 1980.

**Figure 6. Age of Housing Stock**



Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

## Households and Families

Census data distinguishes between households and families. A household is defined by the Census Bureau as all the people who occupy a housing unit, whereas a family is a group of people (two or more) that are related by birth, marriage, or adoption. Thus, all families are part of a household, but not all households are families. Of the households in Hilltown, according to the 2010-2014 ACS, 78.2% are family households. This is a larger percentage than Bucks County as a whole which has a family household percentage of 71.5%. The percentage of family-households in the four-county suburban region is 69.2%. The average household size in Hilltown is 2.74 people per household, and the average family size is 3.14 people per family. This compares to an average household size of 2.66 people and an average family size of 3.19 people in Bucks County.

In order to compare trends over the last few decades, 2010 U.S. Census information has been included. In Hilltown, there were 5,362 households in 2010 which represents a 25.4% increase over 2000, as seen in Table 7a. From 2010 to 2014, the number of households in the township increased to 5,503, up 2.6% from 2010. Between 2000 and 2010, the total number of families increased by 22.5%, a larger increase than the increase from 1990 to 2000 of 12.8%. According to 2010-2014 ACS data, the number of families in the township continued to increase to 4,303 in

2014, a jump of 3.6% from 2010. Following a nationwide trend toward smaller households, household size in Hilltown has seen a continuous decline from 1990, from 2.95 persons per household in 1990 to 2.74 in 2014. The Bucks County household size is slightly smaller at 2.66 persons per household in 2014. The average household size in the region is higher than both Hilltown and Bucks County, at 2.81 persons per household. Using 2010-2014 ACS figures, a comparison of Hilltown to nearby townships showed only East Rockhill and New Britain townships had larger household sizes. While Hilltown has a larger average household size than many nearby townships, East Rockhill, Hatfield, New Britain, and Richland townships have higher average family sizes. Table 7b provides information for nearby communities.

**Table 7a. Households and Families in Hilltown**

	1990	2000	2010	2014
Total Households	3,568	4,275	5,362	5,503
% Change		19.8%	25.4%	2.6%
% Change since 1990		19.8%	50.3%	54.2%
Total Families	3,004	3,390	4,154	4,303
% Change		12.8%	22.5%	3.6%
% Change since 1990		32.3%	38.3%	43.2%
Persons per Household	2.95	2.81	2.80	2.74
% Change		-4.7%	-0.4%	-2.1%
% Change since 1990		9.6%	-5.1%	-7.1%

Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

**Table 7b. Households and Families for Nearby Communities**

	Households					Families				
	2000	2010	% Change	2014	% Change	2000	2010	% Change	2014	% Change
Bedminster	1,788	2,498	39.7%	2,508	0.4%	1,333	1,814	36.1%	1,879	3.6%
East Rockhill	1,828	1,999	9.4%	1,989	-0.5%	1,428	1,581	10.7%	1,656	4.7%
Hatfield Twp.	6,302	6,575	4.3%	6,571	-0.1%	4,452	4,663	4.7%	4,643	-0.4%
New Britain Twp.	3,895	3,917	0.6%	4,017	2.6%	3,033	2,982	-1.7%	3,064	2.7%
Richland	3,763	4,845	28.8%	4,774	-1.5%	2,667	3,584	34.4%	3,587	0.1%
West Rockhill	1,636	2,194	34.1%	2,221	1.2%	1,147	1,389	21.1%	1,428	2.8%
Bucks County	218,725	230,366	5.3%	231,959	0.7%	160,946	165,708	3.0%	165,939	0.1%
4 County Region	869,048	927,413	6.7%	929,789	0.3%	611,342	641,883	5.0%	643,016	0.2%

Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau



## Income

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The 2010-2014 ACS reported a per capita income for Hilltown of \$35,730 (a 38.5% increase from 1999), while per capita income for Bucks County was \$37,910 (a 38.2% increase from 1999). The median household income was \$83,810 for the township (a 32.7% increase from 1999) and \$76,824 for Bucks County as a whole (a 28.6% increase from 1999).

## Employment

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The 2010-2014 ACS reports that Hilltown has 11,955 people sixteen years of age and older. Of these individuals, 8,086, or 67.6%, are in the labor force. The township's unemployment rate at the time of the 2010-2014 ACS was 6.9%. Bucks County had 68.7% of persons in the labor force, but had a slightly higher unemployment rate of 7.8%.

The largest percentage of workers, 41.3%, are employed in management, professional and related occupations. Sales and support office positions are held by 30.0% of employed township residents. Production, transportation and material handling positions are held by 10.3%, service positions by 11.1%, and natural resources, construction and maintenance by 7.4% of the township's workforce.



# Statement of Community Goals and Objectives

## Overview

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Hilltown Township's residents believe that the township is a very desirable community in which to live. The desirable aspects of the township are its rural atmosphere, open space and scenery. The goal of the revised Comprehensive Plan is to preserve and enhance these characteristics to the greatest extent practicable.

Since population growth is inevitable, the issues then become how and where should future development occur. It is recommended that future development occur in areas where existing utilities, transportation and sewage disposal and water supplies are adequate to accommodate the proposed levels of development. Therefore, future growth should be encouraged in the Development Districts and discouraged in areas not designated for short-term growth and development. This will help promote the effective and efficient use of the existing land base and public facilities, maintain moderate separation of suburban and rural land uses, lessen development pressures in agricultural areas, minimize travel distances, and promote the cluster and village design concepts which, in turn, reduces suburban sprawl.

The updated Comprehensive Plan is a statement of objectives and policies regarding the future physical development of Hilltown Township. The objectives are statements of purpose and commitment on behalf of the township to achieve a desired condition of performance. The policies provide direct approaches, standards and guidelines for achieving the stated objectives. These objectives and policies reflect the thinking of the township officials and a majority of their constituents, and are based upon sound community planning and development principles.

## Quality of Life

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The objective addresses the quality of life available to residents in their home and neighborhood environments. It incorporates scenic and aesthetic concerns, the need for good public services including schools, potable water, sewage disposal, protection of historic and scenic areas, development and maintenance of community facilities and private dwellings, a healthy environment, and encouraging a variety of housing and neighborhood types.

### Objective

*To promote a quality environment by preserving and enhancing the township's charm and appearance, to protect its unique natural features, its historic and scenic values, and its rural setting by permitting developments which provide quality neighborhoods for people of diverse life styles and to provide for adequate public services.*

### Policies

1. To provide for neighborhood parks and adequate township recreational facilities within easy access of all township residents.
2. To promote sound development practices, which make it possible to provide for adequate schools, public facilities, police, and fire protection.
3. To promote sound standards for land development to ensure that the community's roads and stormwater management systems are not adversely affected while carrying the burdens that the new development places upon them.
4. To maintain Hilltown's country character.
5. To plant more trees as sound barriers and traffic buffers which will improve air quality and provide other ecological benefits.

## Patterns of Growth

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Patterns of growth are dominant factors in developing a plan for an area such as Hilltown Township. Almost all of the problems that face a community are generated as the direct or indirect result of growth patterns. The process of regulating development, the demand for services, and the impact of development on schools, the environment, and roads is related directly to the form and location of growth.

## Objective

*To control the form and location of growth within Hilltown Township while recognizing the needs and rights of all socioeconomic groups to have equal access within the community.*

## Policies

1. To manage the location of development in the community through the use of the development district concept by identifying areas most suitable for growth and those areas unsuitable for intensive growth.
2. To allow economic development opportunities that meet the needs of the business community and that benefit those that live and work in the township.
3. To allow for and investigate incentives to ensure that a variety of housing types is available.
4. To coordinate water and sewage facilities planning with land use planning.
5. To encourage development in the Village Centers.
6. To provide trail systems that link together community facilities within Hilltown as well as those in adjoining communities.
7. To consider the potential for regional planning in managing future growth patterns.

## Natural Resources Protection

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The natural environment should be looked upon as a common public good. The Pennsylvania Constitution guarantees the right of the public to clean air, pure water and to the preservation of natural, scenic, historic, and aesthetic values of the environment. It provides for the State to protect these resources for present and future generations. Municipalities can enact regulations to protect environmental features in furtherance of this Constitutional provision. The township plans and regulations must strike a balance between the goal of protecting the environment and protecting individual property rights.

## Objective

*To protect the people's right to clean air, pure water, and other natural, scenic, historic, and aesthetic resources of our environment and to guarantee a quality environment for present and future generations.*

## Policies

1. To continue protecting important natural resources through zoning and subdivision and land development ordinance standards.
2. To evaluate the environmental impact of all planning, zoning, and development decisions, making every effort to minimize adverse environmental impacts through sound land use planning and design.
3. To plan for future growth, which can be accommodated without exceeding the supply of available groundwater.
4. To preserve natural and scenic resources through the use of conservation easements and other appropriate means.
5. To protect the quality and quantity of existing water supply.

## Farmlands

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With an increasing population and its demand for food, it is important that steps be taken to preserve the better agricultural lands. The implication of preserving agriculture land reaches beyond municipal boundaries. This plan recognizes agricultural land as a natural resource.

## Objective

*To encourage the continuation of the Hilltown Township Agricultural Security District.*

## Policies

1. To identify the needs of the farm community as they relate to land use regulation.
2. To have a viable development district in the township in order to minimize development pressure on areas of active farming. Include other agricultural related activities, i.e., farm stores and accessory business, in the district.
3. To investigate techniques that may assist in the preservation of agricultural areas.

4. To recognize agriculture as a legitimate land use.
5. To promote the preservation of the remaining working farms utilizing participation in the Bucks County Agricultural Land Preservation and Hilltown Township Open Space Programs.
6. To continue efforts to preserve agricultural lands through the use of conservation easements, the township's earned income tax program, and other appropriate means.

## Community Development

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A balance must be sought between land uses and the community's roads, schools, sewers, and other facilities.

### Objective

*To provide for a balanced community containing all types of land uses for housing, industry, and commerce, and to coordinate land uses with the existing and proposed community facilities.*

### Policies

1. To provide zoning that promotes a balanced community in terms of land uses while, at the same time, ensuring the preservation of neighborhoods. Where appropriate, buffers should be provided between existing development and new development.
2. To utilize the development district concept as a tool for planning improvements to the community's facilities and for coordinating the improvements with zoning.
3. To analyze the impacts of zoning changes and land development to ensure that facilities are adequate or are upgraded as part of the development process, to sustain all proposed development activity, and so that any impacts for which individual developments are responsible can be mitigated.
4. To assure the provision of adequate public facilities. To plan for and fund emergency services.
5. To preserve the integrity of Hilltown in planning the location for land uses and associated public facilities.
6. To preserve natural areas in the township in which no development occurs.

7. To provide sufficient areas in the township to accommodate commercial and industrial development.

## Community Planning and Design

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These policies are intended to encourage innovation and to promote flexibility, economy and ingenuity in development.

### Objective

*To set forth regulations and zoning and subdivision ordinances which provide enough freedom to encourage good design and sound development practices, and to set forth standards of performance which the landowner must meet and which shall integrate the concepts set forth under other goals and objectives.*

### Policies

1. To provide performance standards that include various factors that will affect the ability to use the land and to make known to Developers and Realtors those standards which the community intends to follow so that the developers may take these into account in their investment decisions.
2. To provide performance standards, which protect the environment, allow for a variety of land uses and housing types, and promote a balanced community within a high-quality environment.
3. To develop regulations so that the landowner has a variety of methods for the use of his or her land.
4. To consider performance standards and bonuses the landowner may use to increase the intensity of use if the landowner makes specific improvements or meets specific goals that would not otherwise be achieved.

## Historic Preservation

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Hilltown is rich in historic buildings and villages. Preservation of these resources is important to maintain a link with the past and to help preserve the character of Hilltown.



## Objective

*To preserve the historic assets of Hilltown Township.*

## Policies

1. To preserve, restore, and maintain historic sites, buildings, and neighborhoods, to allow creative re-use of historic structures, and to encourage preservation through the use of village districts and bed and breakfast ordinances.
2. To maintain the integrity of the historic villages of Hilltown Township.

## Infrastructure

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Development standards should ensure the protection of public rights while offering the developer freedom of choice and flexibility of design.

## Objective

*To ensure the safe, orderly and coordinated development of water, sewage disposal, and transportation systems.*

## Policies

1. To assure that a safe and efficient transportation network is developed in accordance with an overall plan and that the land use pattern is planned in concert with the capabilities of the road network.
2. To ensure the continuation of the integrity of the major arterial roads in the township by planning land uses and controlling access points to allow for efficient traffic flow.
3. To encourage intensive land uses to develop on only higher order streets and highways.
4. To maintain and promote vehicular and pedestrian mobility, access, and safety throughout the township.
5. To promote the use of pedestrian/bike trails linking schools, parks, employment and commercial centers, and community facilities as alternative means of transportation.
6. To link transportation planning efforts with future land use planning.
7. To discourage the use of stream discharge and instead, encourage wastewater treatment systems that are consistent with the township's Act 537 Plan, and which

replenish ground water, provided adequate controls are in place to protect the environment and the health and safety of township residents.

8. To require public ownership of all sanitary sewage and water supply facilities (except individual on-lot systems) serving township residents.
9. To rely on individual systems for development outside the development district where conditions are acceptable.
10. To educate homeowners as to the proper use and care of on-lot sewage disposal systems to ensure the longevity of the system.
11. To continue to encourage best management practices for stormwater management.

## Housing

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These policies are intended to provide for a variety of housing types and densities that meet the needs of the existing and future residents of the township.

### Objective

*To promote adequate, safe and sound housing for the present and future residents of Hilltown Township.*

### Policies

1. To develop a land use and housing plan which ensures that all types of housing, as required by the MPC, will be provided within the township.
2. To promote the health, safety and welfare and to ensure a quality living environment by providing quality housing through the enactment and enforcement of sound zoning standards and modern building and fire codes.

## Open Space/Land Preservation

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Hilltown's rural atmosphere, open space and scenery are among the most desirable attributes of the township. Preserving those qualities as Hilltown develops is an important goal of the comprehensive planning process.

## Objective

*To ensure that sufficient, appropriate and conveniently located lands will be permanently preserved to satisfy the immediate and future population growth, and/or expanded recreation programs.*

## Policies

1. To protect and preserve remaining woodlands, steep slopes, floodplains, lakes, ponds, wetlands, and watercourses in the township.
2. To complement existing open space and land preservation programs, and create linkages of contiguous preserved lands.
3. To create linkages between natural, cultural, and recreational resources by promoting a trail network that connects with other township, county, and state open or preserved lands.
4. To continue the township's park and recreation program which provides opportunities for active and passive recreation where appropriate.
5. To manage growth through selective public acquisition of land and through the utilization of programs for the purchase of development rights.
6. To identify and map areas which the township would like to see preserved as open space through the land development process.
7. To continue to require the provision of open space and recreation facilities through the land development process.
8. To maintain mechanisms for funding the preservation of open space through landowners and other private initiatives such as donations, bequests, etc.

## Nonresidential Development and Economic Activity

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A sustainable land use pattern with appropriate nonresidential development is important to help balance the tax base, and to offer diverse economic activity, employment opportunities, and commercial services and goods that residents desire.

## Objective

*Encourage nonresidential development that is well integrated and compatible with the surrounding context and character of the area and that serves to enhance the township's economic vitality.*

## Policies

1. To strive for a balanced and diversified economic base by permitting a variety of nonresidential uses that provide jobs and tax revenue to support public services and that enhance the quality of community life.
2. To ensure adequate land area is available and suitable to allow for nonresidential growth while attracting and retaining businesses.
3. To ensure that lot area and dimensional requirements are not unnecessary constraints to nonresidential development.
4. To coordinate the location of nonresidential uses with the availability of public services and infrastructure.
5. To promote adaptive re-use and redevelopment initiatives for abandoned industrial and commercial sites.
6. To promote access management techniques for commercial and business uses in order to protect the function of arterial and collector roadways and to increase public safety.

# Land Use Element

## Existing Land Use

### Current Development Trends

Hilltown still retains a rural character, though population continues to grow at a more rapid rate than Bucks County as a whole. A large portion of the township, particularly in the eastern section, as seen on Map 1 - Existing Land Use, remains in agricultural use.

Growth in the township has occurred, for the most part, in the Development Districts of the township which coincide with the availability of public services. Residential growth in the township is expected to continue, given population trends and forecasts for the future.

Figure 7, Hilltown Township Existing Land Use, provides a snapshot of land use acreages and percentages within Hilltown Township in 2016. Aerial photographs and Bucks County Board of Assessments (BOA) information served as primary sources in compiling an updated land use inventory for the township. The acreages and percentages of various land use categories were obtained using computer calculations generated through the county's GIS (Geographic Information System), and verified by township officials.

### Bucks County Land Use Classification Definitions

**Single-Family Residential--Less than 5 Acres** – Consists of properties with single-family detached, or attached, one- or two-unit dwellings on lots less than 5 acres. This category also includes mobile home parks.

**Single-Family Residential--Greater than 5 Acres** – The same as “Single-Family Residential” except dwellings are on lots that are 5 acres or more (but do not qualify as “Agricultural”).

**Multifamily Residential** – Includes properties with 3 or more attached dwelling units. This category includes independent living units.

**Agricultural** – Based upon an analysis of 2010 orthographic aerial photos, consists of land that is 20 acres or greater where at least one-third of the parcel exhibits agricultural or farm-related characteristics such as stables, orchards, and active or fallow fields, except for those lots identified specifically by the township as agriculture. This category may also include residential dwelling units and farm related structures on the same lot.

**Mining and Manufacturing** – Consists of heavy manufacturing industries, and painting and advertising industries, as well as building and landscaping material extraction.

### Bucks County Land Use Classification Definitions

**Government and Institutional** – Includes all Federal, State, County, and Municipal buildings and facilities, except those that are park and recreation related. All private, parochial and public schools are included as well as, churches, cemeteries, emergency service facilities, and fraternal organizations. This category includes medium- to long-term housing accommodations, such as retirement complexes, assisted living facilities, continuing care retirement communities, and nursing homes.

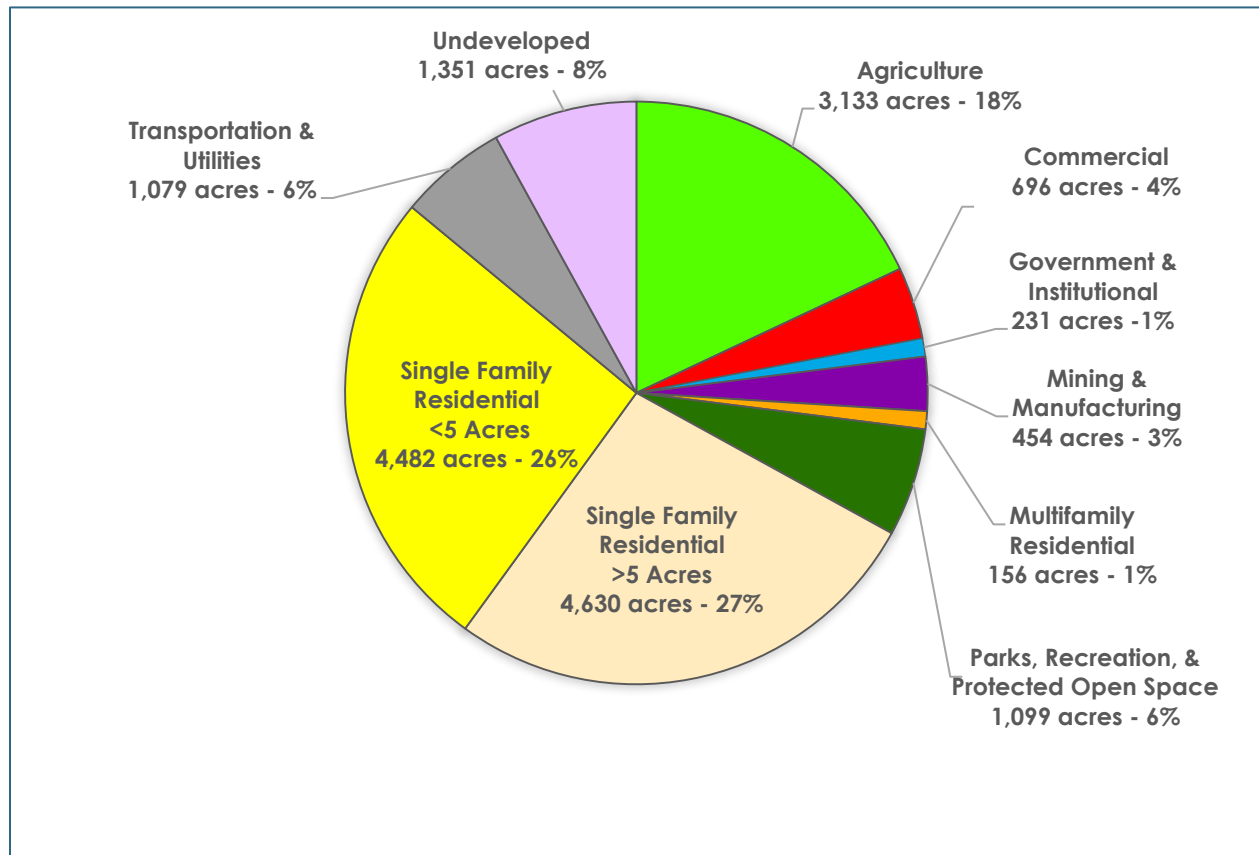
**Commercial** – Includes (but is not limited to), wholesale and retail trade establishments, finance and insurance, real estate, and hotels.

**Parks, Recreation, and Protected Open Space** – Consists of Municipal, County, and State parks, State Game Lands, County preserved land and flood control sites, golf courses, scout camps, and campgrounds. Includes land preserved by conservation organizations and deed-restricted land or common open space areas associated with residential developments.

**Transportation and Utilities** – Consists primarily of utility installations and right-of-ways, terminal facilities, automobile parking, and stormwater management basins. Calculations for roadway acreage are also included.

**Undeveloped** – Includes parcels without dwelling units or buildings containing nonresidential uses but may include structures such as barns, stables, sheds, etc.

**Figure 7. Hilltown Township Existing Land Use**



## **Residential**

Hilltown remains a largely residential community. With the exception of the Route 309 and Bethlehem Pike corridors, the village areas and several small pockets of commercial/industrial development, Hilltown's predominant land uses are residential and agricultural. The majority of the residential units in the township are single-family dwellings, many on large lots fronting on existing roads. The Single Family Residential – Greater than 5 Acres land use category, which includes single-family residential uses on lots of 5 acres or greater, accounts for slightly less than 27 percent (4,630 acres) of land in the township. Smaller lot sizes on newly created streets are more prevalent in the development districts of the township.

Single-Family Residential, which includes a single-family residential use on a parcel of less than 5 acres, makes up approximately 26 percent (4,482 acres) of land area in the township. Multifamily Residential development accounts for slightly less than 1 percent (156 acres) of the land area in Hilltown. The majority of multifamily residential units is located in the western portion of the township near Silverdale, Perkasio, Sellersville, and Telford boroughs; however, a large multifamily residential development consisting of 268 age-restricted units is currently under construction along Route 313 and Minsi Trail in the northern portion of Hilltown.

Based on population projections, it is anticipated that residential development in Hilltown will continue to grow at a rapid pace. According to forecasts from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), Hilltown's 2010 population of 15,029 can be expected to increase by about 10 percent in each of the next two decades, to 16,540 in 2020 and 18,190 in 2030.

## **Agricultural**

While Hilltown has witnessed significant housing and population growth over the last several decades, agriculture has remained a predominant land use in the township, accounting for 18 percent (3,133 acres), or about one-fifth, of the land area. Efforts to encourage continued farming include the Pennsylvania Agricultural Area Security Act (Act 43 of 1981), which enables municipalities to establish voluntary agricultural districts. The agricultural district is not intended to regulate or restrict development in these areas, but allows farmers to make known their long-term commitment to farming. Under this Act, the township is precluded from adopting ordinances which will adversely impact agriculture. The owners of farmland who have chosen to participate in the program are located throughout the township. These include lands in the northern half of the township where most of the agriculture is found, as well as in other areas where the surrounding land has already been developed as larger lot single-family homes. Act

149 of 1988 amended the Agricultural Security Law to provide a funding mechanism for the Pennsylvania Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase program. As of 2016, the Bucks County Farmland Preservation Program, which is based on Act 43 and Act 149, has preserved seven farms, consisting of approximately 759 acres of farmland within Hilltown.

## **Non-Residential**

### ***Commercial***

Commercial land use accounts for approximately 696 acres, or roughly 4 percent of the township's land area. Commercial development in the township is located, for the most part, along Route 309 and Bethlehem Pike. Much of the commercial development along these corridors consists of auto dealerships and auto-oriented businesses, several large shopping centers, restaurants, and similar highway-oriented commercial uses. There is also commercial development in several areas along Route 313 in the vicinity of Dublin Borough. Commercial uses along Route 313 are generally of a smaller scale than those found along Route 309 and Bethlehem Pike. While primarily residential in nature, the village areas also contain some smaller scale commercial uses along with other mixed uses. The Philadelphia Glider Council owns the large area of commercial land shown on Mill Road. While a commercial venture, this land is largely open.

### ***Mining and Manufacturing***

The Mining and Manufacturing land use category includes land containing various industrial operations and land used for quarry and extractive industries. These uses account for almost 3 percent (454 acres) of the township's land area. Heavy and light industrial uses are located almost exclusively in the southwestern portion of the township, along Bethlehem Pike largely to the north of Central Avenue and near the Cherry Lane/Bethlehem Pike intersection.

Hilltown Township is home to two separate quarry/extractive operations. There are two locations of the Blooming Glen Quarry; one is on Skunk Hollow Road and the other is on Minsi Trail, between Forest and Hayhouse roads.

### ***Government and Institutional***

Government and Institutional land uses are located throughout the township and make up almost 1.5 percent (231 acres) of Hilltown's land area. Schools, places of worship, fire stations,



and municipal uses, are among the uses included in this category. One of the largest parcels categorized as Government and Institutional is the Pearl S. Buck Foundation, Inc. National Historic Landmark, which is located along Dublin Road in the northern section of the township.

### **Transportation and Utilities**

Consisting of slightly greater than 6 percent (1,079 acres) of the township's land area, the transportation and utilities category includes utility installations and rights-of-way, stormwater management basins, roadway acreage, and operations typically associated with transportation-related uses. One of the larger tracts included in this category is the PECO utility rights-of-way that cross through the southern portion of the township.

### **Open Space**

Parks, recreation land, and protected open space consist of slightly over 6 percent, or 1,099 acres, of the township's land area. The township owns over 500 acres of open space and park lands. The township has acquired a large portion of this land through dedication of land as a result of the subdivision process. More than 20 acres are municipal parks. Bucks County owns several large tracts of land at the Church Road, Fairhill School Road, Park Road, Mill Road and Bethlehem Pike area for a flood control dam.

In addition to land owned by the township, there are other open space areas that are in private ownership, many of which are owned by several community associations. These areas are located primarily in and around residential neighborhoods near Silverdale and Perkasie boroughs.

### **Undeveloped**

At 1,351 acres, land classified as undeveloped accounts for almost 8 percent of the township. This land use category includes parcels without dwelling units or buildings containing nonresidential uses but may include structures such as barns, stables, sheds, etc. While many of the undeveloped parcels may have natural resource limitations, such as woodlands and wetlands, there is the potential for possible future development on many of these lots.

## **Land Use Plan**

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The land use plan is based on an analysis of all the background information on community characteristics discussed in the early sections of this document. It is also strongly based on the stated goals and objectives, and the prospects for future growth and change. The challenge

which the land use plan presents is how to allow Hilltown Township to maintain its current character and identity, while accommodating necessary growth and change. The main emphasis of the land use plan is the management of growth which can be anticipated over the next decade, and to do so in a legally defensible framework. As indicated in the Statement of Community Goals and Objectives earlier in this Plan, the township utilizes the Development District concept to plan for future growth. The fundamental objective of the Development District concept is to concentrate future development in areas best equipped to handle growth while minimizing land use conflicts and costs to residents.

The land use plan's importance cannot be overstated, since it provides critical guidance to the township in the preparation of updates to its Zoning and Subdivision/Land Development Ordinances. The Plan also aids township officials in their assessment of proposed zoning changes requested by landowners and developers, and in their assessment of development proposals.

As a starting point in preparing the land use plan, land use changes and changes in zoning since the 2003 Comprehensive Plan were reviewed. Heavy reliance was placed on the existing land use map discussed previously in this chapter and in the review of recent development trends in the township and region. Map 2 shows the township's land use plan.

## Land Use Plan Categories

### ***Conservation District***

#### **Rural Residential—RR**

Encompassing the majority of land in the township, development in the Rural Residential areas is dependent on the availability of safe and adequate groundwater supply and on-lot sewage disposal capabilities. The Rural Residential area is envisioned to have a density of one dwelling unit per three acres of land, when the area is not served by public water (as is true for most of the areas). In areas served by public water, development options include: Use B1 Single-Family Detached with lots having a minimum of 50,000 square feet (1.2 acres); a cluster option on a minimum site area of 20 acres, permitting lot sizes of 30,000 square feet (0.7 acres) provided 55 percent of the site is retained as open space; and Conservation Management Design on a minimum site area of 10 acres, which permits lot sizes of 20,000 square feet (0.5 acre) provided 65 percent of the site is retained as open space.

## Development Areas

### 1. Residential

#### Country Residential I—CR-1

This designation is designed to meet the current and future needs of Hilltown Township through the variety of housing types permitted in this area. Located adjacent to Silverdale, Perkasio, Telford, and Souderton boroughs, the CR-1 classification accommodates an assortment of housing types, including single-family detached, single-family attached, mobile home, and multifamily. Public water and sewer facilities are required for property to develop to the maximum density allowed. Standard Use B1 Single-Family Detached is permitted with minimum lot areas of 30,000 square feet. Single-Family Cluster developments are permitted on a minimum site area of 5 acres and allow 10,000-square-foot lots provided at least 40 percent of the site area is retained as open space. Also permitted in this district are performance standard subdivisions, which include a variety of residential options such as semi-detached, attached, and multifamily dwellings on a minimum site area of at least 5 acres with a minimum required open space ratio of 50 percent. In the Housing Plan component of this document, it has been demonstrated that development projected for the next decade, can be accommodated in the CR-1 areas shown on the land use plan. Although this land use category is intended to have adequate infrastructure and associated facilities to serve the current and future residents, the District encourages conservation design (cluster development) and open areas for natural resource protection and recreation.

#### Country Residential II—CR-2

The Country Residential II areas are located in the western portion of Hilltown Township, generally between higher density districts and the Rural Residential district. These areas are currently served by public sewer, but lie outside of the area planned for future sewer service expansion. The allowable land uses are the same as those in the Rural Residential District, with the overall intent of this district to contain the periphery of the sewer service areas and provide a transition between the Country Residential I and Rural Residential areas. Permitted densities generally fall in a range between that for CR-1 and RR areas. Conservation Management Design subdivisions are permitted on sites of at least 20 acres having public water and sewer facilities. Provided a minimum of 70 percent of a site is preserved in open space, permitted minimum lot sizes are 10,000 square feet.

## Village Center—VC

The pre-existing villages in this classification are the historic centers of Hilltown Township. The existing villages of Blooming Glen, Hilltown, and Line Lexington, are reflected on the Land Use Plan. The overall intent is to preserve the historic structures and character of these areas through the restraint of development to include limited mixed uses. Examples of the allowable uses in these areas are: limited commercial uses, construction of single-family dwellings, and conversion of larger structures into multifamily dwellings. New development is restricted to 'mirror' the existing village character through historic façade treatment, and limitation on the amount of commercial uses.

The importance of the three villages to the overall character of Hilltown Township cannot be overstated. One step already taken to ensure the preservation of one village has been taken. After identifying historic resources considered important for the designation of Blooming Glen as a historic district, an application was submitted to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) for eligibility on the National Register of Historic Places listing. In 2003, after reviewing the application, the PHMC approved a portion of the village core as eligible for the listing. The eligibility designation may enable certain property owners in the district to be eligible for federal tax benefits and qualify for funding for rehabilitation of historic structures.

As part of continued efforts to preserve the heritage of Blooming Glen, township officials, with assistance by the Bucks County Planning Commission, prepared the *Blooming Glen Historic Village Plan* in March of 2004. The Plan includes a historical background of the village's development, describes Blooming Glen in modern times, and provides strategies to preserve Blooming Glen's heritage and Hilltown Township's historic resources into the future. Considering the rural heritage of Blooming Glen as a mixed-use, pedestrian-scale community, key recommendations center around land use regulations, circulation and traffic calming, pedestrian access, agricultural preservation, open space and recreation, and historic preservation.

Following a recommendation in the township's 2003 comprehensive plan, *A Study of the Village of Hilltown* was prepared in 2008. The study describes existing conditions in the village of Hilltown and provides recommendations aimed at maintaining the traditional, rural look and feel of the village while accommodating future community development and improvements. Intended to serve as design guidelines, the study recommendations focus on

vehicular and pedestrian circulation, street trees, lighting, signage, public spaces and amenities, and ways to promote the village's existing historic resources.

In 2009, the township amended the zoning ordinance to allow Use B10 Traditional Neighborhood Development as a conditional use in the VC Village Center District. Allowed on a minimum site area of 5 acres, with a required minimum open space ratio of 20 percent, the use permits a combination of commercial and residential uses at a development intensity and with design standards similar to that of Blooming Glen and other existing villages.

The village of Line Lexington lies in the southern corner of Hilltown and is located in both Hilltown and New Britain townships, with the majority of the village in New Britain. It is recommended that the village of Line Lexington, be studied in the same fashion as has been done for Blooming Glen and the village of Hilltown. Further development of these areas, whether through the 'natural' course of development or through strict historic preservation, can impact both townships. One important purpose for the village studies is to develop strategies to preserve and enhance these areas and ensure that their identities are maintained, even as (limited) development may occur around them. With such study, foresight, and careful planning, these village areas can not only enrich the character of Hilltown, but educate the future residents of Hilltown about the past. Hilltown should be an active participant in any future studies of Line Lexington.

#### Mobile Home Parks—MHP

The areas designated as Mobile Home Park are located in two areas of the township, along Green Street directly to the east of Silverdale Borough and between Orchard and Highland Park roads in the western portion of the township. This land use category reflects the current zoning classification in place within Hilltown's Zoning Ordinance. According to that ordinance, the intent of this area is to provide for well-planned mobile (manufactured) home park developments as an affordable housing option within the township. The District is designed to insure that proper facilities are present to serve this land use type and that it will blend in with the surrounding land uses. In addition to the MHP Mobile Home Park District, mobile home parks are allowed in the LI and PC-1 Districts; as detailed below, there is substantial vacant land in the LI District.

### Age Qualified Residential Community—AQRC

Incorporated into the zoning ordinance in 2007, the Age Qualified Residential Community designation is intended to provide for private residential community living with a variety of housing options and active and passive recreational facilities for older residents. Use B9 Age Qualified Residential Community is permitted on a minimum site area of 100 acres with a maximum permitted density of 2.5 dwelling units per net buildable site area. Located along Route 313 and Minsi Trail in the northern portion of the township, this area borders Bedminster Township. The site is currently being developed with 268 age-restricted residential units.

## 2. Commercial

### Planned Commercial I—PC-1

Intended to provide commercial and service-type land uses along the Route 309 Corridor and southwest portion of the township; this area is the “regional” service district for Hilltown. According to the Zoning Ordinance, the uses and standards in this area are intended to be complementary to the existing commercial development located in the immediate vicinity. A variety of institutional, office, and retail and consumer service uses are permitted on minimum 20,000-square-foot lots if public water and sewer service is provided by a municipal authority. As discussed in Hilltown’s 1991 and 2003 comprehensive plans, careful consideration should be given to future access and circulation patterns; techniques such as marginal access roads, reverse frontage lots and limiting the number and locations of access points, should be emphasized in these areas.

### Planned Commercial II—PC-2

These areas, located in proximity to Dublin Borough and Bedminster Township along the Route 113 Corridor, are intended to accommodate small-scale, “neighborhood” commercial developments. A variety of commercial and service-type uses is encouraged, but certain highway-oriented uses, appropriate in PC-1, are not necessarily appropriate here. Uses served by public water and sewer in these areas are permitted on a minimum lot size of 50,000 square feet with a maximum impervious surface ratio of 70 percent. In addition to access management, conversions and maintaining the existing character along Route 313 should be considered for any development in these areas. For example, expansive parking areas should be discouraged from being located within the front yard along Route 313.

### 3. Industrial

#### Light Industrial—LI

Areas in the township designated to accommodate Light Industrial uses are located along portions of Bethlehem Pike and Route 309. This land use designation provides for commercial, office, and laboratory research facilities, as prescribed by the township's Zoning Ordinance. The intent of this land use category is to encourage high quality light industrial development, which relates well to the adjacent residential developments through the use of appropriate design standards to avoid impact on those neighboring residential areas. Development in these areas is permitted on minimum 2-acre lots, with a maximum impervious surface ratio of 60 percent, provided the lots are served by public water and sewer service.

#### Heavy Industrial—HI

The area intended to accommodate heavy industrial uses is located in the southwestern portion of the township, along Bethlehem Pike and Route 309, adjacent to West Rockhill Township. This area permits development at the same intensity as the Light Industrial area; however, many of the uses permitted in this area are more of a heavy industrial nature. Uses intended for this area include manufacturing, planing mill, auto salvage, junk yard, and resource recovery uses. According to the Zoning Ordinance, such types of development should be designed with an internal network of streets and serviceways.

### **Resource Extraction Areas**

#### Quarry

As detailed in the Zoning Ordinance, these areas are intended to “provide for the extraction of sand, clay, shale, topsoil, gravel, stone and/or similar materials,” as well as uses related to the processing or manufacturing of extracted material. Modifications were made to the zoning ordinance in 2005, through Ordinance 2005-2, to permit the construction and operation of concrete plants, asphalt plants, and other related processing, manufacturing, or industrial operations or activities. A minimum lot size of 10 acres is required for permitted uses in these areas. Ordinance 2005-2 also contains standards regulating quarry uses and reclamation performance standards when such uses cease operation. Re-use of any of the quarry areas, at the conclusion of their useful economic life, should also be addressed. At an appropriate time, separate studies should be undertaken as to the most logical redevelopment for the two quarries. These studies would be beyond the scope of the Comprehensive Plan, but could necessitate the need to amend it in the future.

## Implementation Techniques

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Many methods are currently used to encourage the preservation of the rural character of a municipality and to protect property values. These methods can include natural resource protection standards, open space subdivisions in which most of the natural features are preserved from development and the residential lots grouped (similar to Conservation, Cluster and Performance Subdivisions) in the more developable areas, and promoting additional opportunities for agricultural uses.

Hilltown has an active open space program and currently employs several of these strategies. As previously discussed, the township utilizes the Development District concept which directs future growth to development areas with existing infrastructure and keeps densities low in designated conservation areas. This land use policy, along with the township's adopted natural resource protection standards, are key methods to preserving Hilltown's rural character. Development options with required open space, such as Cluster and Performance Subdivisions, are permitted in most of Hilltown's zoning districts. In addition, the township's RR Rural Residential and CR-2 Country Residential 2 zoning districts, which cover a majority of Hilltown, permit Conservation Management Design subdivisions which require at least 65 to 70 percent of a site to be preserved in open space, provided minimum site criteria is met.

Hilltown has a strong agricultural heritage as evidenced by the fact that almost one-fifth of the township's land area is in agricultural use. In 2007, the zoning ordinance was amended to include Use A8 Farmstead, which allows for the preservation of an existing single-family dwelling and associated outbuildings on a designated farmstead lot having a minimum lot area of three acres within a standard single-family subdivision or a conservation design development. Farmsteads are not required to connect to public water and wastewater facilities, and agricultural and horticultural uses are permitted provided such operations comply with use regulations. Also in 2007, the zoning ordinance was amended to provide additional use opportunities for barns. Recognizing the unique character of barns as part of the Hilltown landscape, the provisions are designed to encourage the continued use and preservation of barns, and to facilitate their appropriate reuse.

The township currently permits agricultural retail where agricultural products are sold at roadside stands or other structures to the general public as part of principle agricultural uses on a site. Agricultural operations with retail components such as farm stands and stores are important parts of the township's economy and community and include Moyer's, Tabora Farm and



Orchard, Pennview Farm, Tussock Sedge Farm, Bolton's Market, and Blooming Glen Pork and Catering. These markets provide fresh produce and goods directly to the consumer. Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), in which consumers purchase shares in the seasonal harvest, has become more popular in recent years. The Blooming Glen Farm CSA currently operates within the township. By purchasing from local farms, Hilltown residents can support their own local farm economy. The township can provide assistance in bringing together local farmers with local consumers, by publishing local sources for produce and food products, or through the sponsorship of a local farmers market.

Other options which can serve to preserve the agricultural and rural character of an area include Community Agricultural Area (CAA), in which open space land is set aside and dedicated by easement for use as agricultural land to be shared by the community in new developments or greenbelt areas buffering villages. Also, new residential subdivisions could be designed with a provision of open space land to accommodate different types of farming, such as orcharding, where land is leased to a farmer and community residents share in the harvest, or horse farming, with open space in pasture, and a community barn and turn-out area, with loop riding trails.

## Compatibility with Contiguous Municipalities, County, and Region

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As land use decisions in one municipality can substantially affect conditions in surrounding areas, it is important to ensure that policies developed for one community do not create conflicts with adjoining lands in another community. The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (PaMPC) requires that comprehensive plans take into account planning in surrounding municipalities and the county. In Bucks County, the municipalities that adjoin Hilltown are the townships of New Britain, Plumstead, Bedminster, East Rockhill, West Rockhill, and the boroughs of Dublin, Perkasio, Sellersville, Silverdale, and Telford. Montgomery County municipalities that border Hilltown include Franconia and Hatfield townships and Souderton Borough. The planning and zoning policies in effect in surrounding areas are described below.

### **New Britain Township, Bucks County**

Hilltown shares the length of its southern border, from the county line with Montgomery County to Route 313, with New Britain Township. The region between Route 152 (Limekiln Pike) and Route 313 contains Peace Valley Park and surrounding open lands with significant natural resources. Lake Galena, located within Peace Valley Park, is not only a recreational amenity but is also a

public water supply source. Several large parcels that border Hilltown Township in this area have been preserved through conservation easements and/or deed restrictions. The *New Britain Township Comprehensive Plan 2005*, recommends protection of the existing low density character and environmentally sensitive areas in this region. The township's Watershed zoning district permits primarily agricultural, recreational, and low density residential uses. This is consistent with Hilltown's RR Rural Residential land use and zoning designation along this border which also permits agricultural and recreational uses, in addition to low density residential development.

The region between Route 152 (Limekiln Pike) and County Line Road contains various residential neighborhoods, industrial, agricultural, and some recreational uses. The SR-2 District, which borders Hilltown's Rural Residential District in this region, permits single-family dwellings on a minimum lot area of 2 acres for a standard subdivision. Single-family cluster subdivisions allowing one-acre lots are permitted on sites having a minimum of 10 acres in the SR-2 district, provided 50 percent of the site is preserved as open space.

The area closest to Montgomery County contains existing village residential neighborhoods in the Line Lexington area and manufacturing and industrial uses located primarily along County Line Road. Both New Britain Township and Hilltown have designated the areas along Bethlehem Pike to accommodate commercial uses. Also, each municipality has adopted village zoning for Line Lexington which permits future development consistent with existing development patterns.

## **Plumstead Township, Bucks County**

Sharing a small portion of the eastern border of Hilltown Township, Plumstead Township is located to the northeast of Dublin Pike (Route 313) and Old Dublin Pike. Adjacent land uses in Plumstead along the Route 313 corridor include single-family detached dwellings on less than 5 acres, single-family residential uses on lots greater than 5 acres, and institutional (a place of worship). The *Plumstead Township Comprehensive Plan Update (2011)* calls for this region of the township to remain as a rural area, which is supported by the township's RO Rural Residential District. Permitted uses include farming, agricultural retail, riding stable, and detached dwellings. Single-family detached dwellings are permitted on two-acre lots. Parcels fronting on Route 313 in this region of Hilltown are planned to accommodate commercial uses; however, the township has planned for large-lot single-family residential uses beyond those first tier properties. While Plumstead's abutting R-O district is not generally consistent with Hilltown's PC-2 Planned Commercial II District along Route 313, Plumstead's existing land uses are fairly consistent with adjacent land uses in Hilltown.

## Dublin Borough, Bucks County

Dublin Borough borders the township to the north. The Borough is primarily built-out, and while a few vacant parcels exist, none of those parcels abut Hilltown. Existing land uses bordering Hilltown include single-family and multifamily residential uses, a few institutional uses, residential open space, and a borough park. The Future Land Use Map in the *Dublin Borough Comprehensive Plan Update* (2005), reaffirms the borough's land use pattern. A majority of the adjacent zoning is R-1 Mixed Use Residential, which permits various dwelling types at densities ranging from 2 to 3 dwelling units per acre. This area abuts Hilltown's Rural Residential district. Also, small areas zoned Ind Industrial, TC Town Center, and C-2 Regional Commercial border Hilltown's PC-2 Planned Commercial 2 district along Route 313. Dublin Borough is currently considering revitalization strategies aimed at improving the Town Center District along Main Street (Route 313). This initiative may include rezoning various properties, including the 26-acre Moyer Farm along Route 313. While land use intensities differ between the Dublin and Hilltown, land use planning and zoning is generally consistent between both municipalities.

## Bedminster Township, Bucks County

Bedminster shares an eastern border with Hilltown along Dublin Pike (Route 313). Adjacent land uses are primarily a mixture of agriculture, commercial, and scattered single-family residences. The *Bedminster Township Comprehensive Plan Update* (2008) calls for agricultural preservation in a majority of the township, including the bordering area along Route 313 from Bedminster Road (Route 113) to the East Rockhill boundary. In this region, AP Agricultural Preservation zoning allows low-intensity land uses including agricultural uses and single-family detached dwellings on large lots. Hilltown's land use policy of low density residential along much of this border is consistent with Bedminster. Hilltown's AQRC Age Qualified Residential Community District, which allows a maximum density of 2.5 dwelling units per net buildable site area, is located along a short stretch of the municipal border.

Closer to Dublin Borough along Route 313, Bedminster's Plan identifies a commercial area extending from Bedminster Road (Route 113) to Rickert Road, in which typical highway commercial uses are permitted on 1-acre lots. The area surrounding much of Dublin, from Route 113 to Applebutter Road, is identified as a residential development area. Zoned R-3 Residential-3, this district permits a minimum of a 40,000-square-foot (0.9 acre) lot for a single family detached dwelling, or a minimum 15,000-square-foot (0.3 acres) lot in a single-family detached cluster subdivision. As of the publication date of Bedminster's plan there were approximately 261 acres available for development in the existing R-3 zoning district.

## East Rockhill Township, Bucks County

East Rockhill Township borders the northwest portion of Hilltown, between Route 313 and Callowhill Road. In the area between Route 313 and Blooming Glen Road, adjacent land uses in East Rockhill are primarily agricultural. West of Blooming Glen Road to East Rockhill's border with Perkasio Borough, several residential neighborhoods abut Hilltown. The *East Rockhill Township Comprehensive Plan Update*, dated June 21, 2005, identifies the area from the northeast corner of Hilltown to Blooming Glen Road as an agricultural preservation area and from Blooming Glen Road to the border of Perkasio Borough as an existing/future development area. The agricultural area encourages farming as the primary land use, and the Plan notes that this region of East Rockhill contains areas of 'prime farmland' and 'farmland of statewide importance'. East Rockhill's AP Agricultural Preservation zoning follows the future land use recommended for this area and, for tracts containing 10 acres or more, permits no more than 40 percent of prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance to be developed. This area borders and is consistent with Hilltown's RR Rural Residential District.

The area identified as existing/future development in East Rockhill is zoned S Suburban due to its proximity to Perkasio Borough, access to public water and sewer facilities, and existing development in the township. The Suburban zoning district, which permits a minimum lot area of 22,000 square feet with single-family detached dwelling use and 12,500 square feet with single-family detached dwelling cluster option, is located opposite Hilltown's CR-2 Country Residential zoning district. The S Suburban District is generally consistent with Hilltown's CR-2 Country Residential District which permits a minimum lot area of 50,000 square feet with single-family detached use and 20,000 square feet with the single-family cluster option. The suburban area does have existing sewer and water facilities, but only allows low-density residential development.

## Perkasie Borough, Bucks County

Perkasie Borough shares a portion of Hilltown's western border. Existing land uses in this area of the borough include single-family residential, a few vacant lots, and the Pleasant Spring Creek Greenway which extends from the East Branch Perkiomen Greenway near the center of Perkasio to the Hilltown border. The subdivision of a large farmed parcel, just south of East Callowhill Street, recently obtained borough approval for 48 single-family detached lots. The subdivision, known as Hidden Meadow, also proposes to extend into Hilltown with the development of 11 additional lots, with access solely through the borough. Adopted in 2014, the *Perkasie Borough Comprehensive Plan Update* recommends low density residential along most

of the municipal border, with a small area of medium/high density residential between East Walnut Street (Route 152) and the riparian buffer along Pleasant Spring Creek. While Hilltown's future land use designation of Country Residential I in this area may require larger lot sizes, this future land use category is compatible with the corresponding area within Perkasio Borough. Opportunities exist to providing future greenway linkages connecting to the borough's Pleasant Spring Creek Greenway.

### **Sellersville Borough, Bucks County**

A small area of Sellersville, which contains existing single-family detached residential uses, adjoins the western boundary of Hilltown near Diamond Street. The *Sellersville Borough Comprehensive Plan Update* (1995) calls for the existing development patterns in the area to continue at the existing development density of one to three dwelling units per acre. The Borough's LR Low Density Residential District contains standards consistent with the existing development in this area. Hilltown's CR-2 Country Residential-2 land use and zoning designations abut Sellersville. The CR-2 zoning designation permits densities ranging from 0.75 to 2.15 dwelling units per acre and is consistent with adjacent zoning in Sellersville.

### **West Rockhill Township, Bucks County**

The shared border between Hilltown and West Rockhill extends between Telford and Sellersville boroughs in the eastern portion of Hilltown. Keystone Drive, Bethlehem Pike, and the Route 309 corridor cross through both townships. Industrial and commercial businesses are the predominant uses along these roadways at the municipal border. A large retirement community, Rockhill Mennonite Community, is located along Route 152, just north of Hilltown. A small residential neighborhood borders Hilltown, closer to Sellersville Borough off of Diamond Street. The *West Rockhill Township Comprehensive Plan* (2005) identifies this portion of the township as the area intended to accommodate the bulk of future development and infrastructure expansion. Most of the land adjacent to Hilltown (from Telford to just southwest of Old Bethlehem Pike) is zoned PI Planned Industrial, with the area closer to Sellersville zoned PC Planned Commercial, SR Suburban Residential, and IS Institutional Service. For the most part, land use planning and zoning in Hilltown is consistent with that along the border in West Rockhill. Where Hilltown's CR-1 Country Residential 1 District borders West Rockhill's PI District, from Telford Borough to Route 309, future development should be adequately buffered to protect residential uses from impacts associated with nonresidential development.

## Silverdale Borough

Located in almost the center of Hilltown, Silverdale Borough is surrounded completely by the township. As with most boroughs in the area, Silverdale contains a variety of land uses at a greater intensity than generally exists in the surrounding township. The Pennridge Central Middle School occupies much of the borough's western area and borders the township's CR-1 Country Residential District. Residential and commercial land uses are located along Main Street (Route 113); land uses adjacent to Hilltown are primarily residential and some open space.

The *Silverdale Borough Comprehensive Plan* (January, 2016) notes that the borough is mostly developed and contains few vacant or underutilized parcels. Silverdale's adjoining zoning districts permit development at densities ranging from 2.1 to 2.9 dwelling units per acre. With the exception of two areas intended to be in the conservation district, Hilltown's development district surrounds much of Silverdale. The CR-1 Country Residential, CR-2 Country Residential, and MHP Mobile Home Park zoning districts abut Silverdale and permit residential development at densities ranging from 0.75 to 5 dwelling units per acre.

## Telford Borough, Bucks/Montgomery County

Land uses along the Hilltown/Telford municipal border are primarily higher density residential. A plan for Telford is contained in the recently adopted *Indian Valley Regional Comprehensive Plan* (June 1, 2016). This regional planning area includes Franconia, Lower Salford, Salford, and Upper Salford townships, and Souderton and Telford Boroughs (with the exception of the Bucks County portion of Telford, the remainder of the region is in Montgomery County.) The future land use category identified for Telford Borough, is Borough Conservation, which calls for the preservation and revitalization of existing development patterns. Existing zoning permits residential uses to be developed at densities exceeding four units to the acre, and may include apartments, townhouses, twins and small lot single-family detached units. Hilltown's land use policy for this area recommends allowing for a variety of housing types and the existing CR-1 Country Residential zoning district permits various housing types at densities ranging from 1.2 to 5 dwelling units per acre.

## Souderton Borough, Montgomery County

Directly southeast of Telford, Hilltown shares a municipal border with Souderton between Central Avenue and Cherry Lane. The dividing line between both communities is County Line Road, along which exists a mix of residential and commercial land uses. As with Telford Borough, the current land use plan for Souderton Borough is included as part of the recently adopted *Indian*

*Valley Regional Comprehensive Plan* (June 1, 2016). Due to Souderton's existing development, the borough's future land use is identified as Borough Conservation, with the expectation that future development activity will most likely be that of infill and redevelopment. Hilltown's land use and zoning along County Line Road call for planned commercial development along this corridor. Due to heavy traffic volumes along County Line Road, access management and coordination of curb cuts should be considered as parcels redevelop.

### **Franconia Township, Montgomery County**

Hilltown and Franconia share a short border along County Line Road, between Cherry Lane and Township Line Road. This portion of County Line Road is characterized by a variety of land uses including single-family detached lots, scattered commercial and industrial uses, and some undeveloped land. The *Indian Valley Regional Comprehensive Plan* (June 1, 2016) targets this area of Franconia as a designated growth area intended to accommodate new residential and nonresidential growth. Hilltown's PC-1 designation, also a development area district, is intended to be complementary to the commercial uses along this section of the township border.

### **Hatfield Township, Montgomery Township**

Hatfield Township borders Hilltown along County Line Road, from the Hatfield/Franconia border to the intersection of Hilltown Pike at the village of Line Lexington. This section of County Line Road contains a mix of land uses that includes scattered residential, commercial, industrial, and undeveloped land. Hatfield adopted and utilizes Montgomery County's comprehensive plan. *Montco 2040: A Shared Vision* (2015), designates future land use for the area of Hatfield bordering Hilltown to be mostly a business area, with a small area at the southwest border as a suburban residential area. Both communities have planned for commercial and light industrial uses along County Line Road at fairly similar intensities. Generally, industrial development is permitted on 2-acre lots in each community and commercial development is permitted on 20,000-square-foot lots in Hilltown compared with Hatfield's minimum area of 11,250-square-foot lots.

### **Bucks County Comprehensive Plan**

The *Bucks County Comprehensive Plan* (2011) seeks to coordinate and assist the county's municipalities, agencies, and general public in the planning, development, and management of its natural and built environment. The Plan places a strong emphasis on sustainability and smart growth development strategies, which includes use of the development district concept. While the Plan does not detail any specific land uses or land use policies for Hilltown Township, it

does include a Future Land Use Map which attempts to focus development on existing developed areas, preserve open space and natural resources, and link transportation and land use planning efforts.

On the Future Land Use Map in the County Plan, the township falls within four different categories. The Plan designates Hilltown primarily as a Rural Resource Area, which is characterized by large lots with very low density and generally not meant for significant development due to the presence of farms and significant agricultural soils. Portions of the township along the Route 309, Bethlehem Pike, and County Line Road corridors, are identified as Employment Areas, where primarily nonresidential growth has and will continue to occur along or near arterial corridors having access to the regional transportation network. The northwest area of the township, located primarily between the boroughs of Silverdale, Sellersville, and Perkasie, is designated as an Emerging Suburban Center, which has experienced significant development in the last 20 years and is intended to accommodate future development. Areas bordering the Route 113 Heritage Corridor, the Morris Run, and preserved lands, are designated as Natural Resource/Conservation Areas. Such areas include greenway corridors, recreation areas, and significant natural resource areas and are largely undeveloped due to the presence of natural resources.

The county comprehensive plan identifies various strategies and actions for each category. For Rural Resource Areas, the Plan recommends efforts be made to preserve the rural character of such areas, such as through farmland preservation initiatives. Within Employment Areas, mixed use developments are encouraged to better link jobs and housing, and emphasis on access control, streetscape appearance, pedestrian travel and safety is encouraged. For Emerging Suburban Areas, the Plan recommends that new development should be compact and built where existing infrastructure is adequate and development should be constructed to accommodate pedestrians. Recommendations for Natural Resources/Conservation Areas stress the importance of preserving greenway corridors, recreation areas, and conservation lands.

Most of the suggested strategies and actions have been put into action by township officials. Likewise, this Plan, through its goals and objectives, is consistent with many of the recommended strategies and actions of the county's comprehensive plan.

## **DVRPC Connections 2040: Plan for Greater Philadelphia**

In 2013, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) developed *Connections 2040: Plan for Greater Philadelphia* (adopted July 2013). *Connections* is a long-range plan that



outlines a vision for the future growth and development of the Greater Philadelphia region. The Land Use Vision in the Plan identifies most of Hilltown as Rural Resource Lands containing much of the Bucks Agricultural Heritage Area. Areas along the southern and western township borders are identified as Infill and Redevelopment. The Plan notes that allowing limited growth through appropriate land use regulations will help to preserve the character within different areas of this region.

In mapping the region's Planning Areas, the regional plan indicates that Hilltown is a Growing Suburb since it has a significant number of developable acres remaining and has experienced significant population growth. The long-range planning policies established for Growing Suburbs include employing smart growth techniques that support a more concentrated development, such as clustering or permitting mixed use developments. Hilltown's comprehensive plan is consistent with the land use element of *Connections 2040: Plan for Greater Philadelphia*.

## Conclusion

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The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code requires that plans state compatibility with those plans of neighboring municipalities and the County's Comprehensive Plan, or that the plan provide buffers to protect neighboring municipalities from incompatible land uses. After reviewing the above plans, and analyzing the current and proposed land uses within Hilltown, the land use plan does not present any conflict. While zoning is generally compatible across municipal boundaries, buffering should always be considered when a proposed use may negatively impact an adjacent existing use in an adjoining municipality.



# Natural Resources/ Open Space

*(Note: Much of this text is taken from the township's 1991 and 2003 comprehensive plans.)*

## Natural Resources

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### **Pennsylvania Guidance on Natural Resources**

Many of Pennsylvania's natural resources are protected by state and federal regulations. Some of these regulations, such as those pertaining to wetlands protection, establish standards that must be adopted into local government zoning ordinances. However, not all natural resources are protected by state or federal law. Local governments, empowered with land use planning authority, have the ability to plan for and develop local ordinances to protect the natural resources they deem most valuable in accordance with federal, state, and local law.

The Pennsylvania Constitution provides a solid basis for municipal policies to address conservation and preservation of a community's natural features and resources.

*The people have a right to clean air, pure water, and to the preservation of the natural, scenic, historic and aesthetic values of the environment. Pennsylvania's public natural resources are the common property of all people including generations yet to come.*

In addition, the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, also known as Act 247, states, that the purpose of this Act, in part is:

“...to ensure that municipalities adopt zoning ordinances which are generally consistent with the municipality's comprehensive plan; to encourage the preservation of prime agricultural land and natural and historic resources through easements, transfer of development rights and rezoning;...”

In order to best preserve and protect the state constitutional obligation, a survey of the existing natural elements relating to the land, water, air, plant and animal life of the community must be identified, inventoried, analyzed and ultimately utilized as a fundamental basis for making informed and appropriate land use and development policies and decisions at the local level.

This process is collectively referred to as a Natural Resources Inventory (NRI). The component elements of the Hilltown Township NRI are discussed below. Map 3 Hydrologic Resources and Map 4 Land Resources identify important natural resources in the township.

## Physiography

Physiography is the primary study of the interactions between man and his natural environment.

The physiography of a community plays an important role in establishing sound land use and community development planning policies. The township's main assets of adequate drinking water, clean streams, and a variable landscape with woodlands and open areas, can be conserved if sound land use policies are developed in concert with natural features information. The consequences of not taking into consideration the natural environment during the development process include flooding, erosion, water pollution, groundwater depletion and/or contamination, loss of wildlife habitat and species, and destruction of scenic areas. Local government can play an active role in resource protection by identifying, documenting, and ultimately controlling the potentially adverse effects of development which will help to reduce public hazards, protect adjoining property owners, maintain water quality, and reduce future governmental costs from unwarranted environmental degradation.

Environmentally sensitive areas, as identified by the Natural Resources Inventory, are areas whose destruction or disturbance will affect the quality of life of a community by:

1. Creating hazards such as flooding, excessive soil erosion, and landslides;
2. Destroying important public resources such as water supplies and the water quality of lakes, streams, rivers and aquifers; and
3. Destroying and/or needlessly wasting productive lands and other valuable natural and/or renewable and non-renewable resources.

## Geology and Groundwater Hydrology

Hydrogeology is the area of geology that deals with the distribution and movement of groundwater in the soil and rocks of the Earth's crust (commonly in aquifers). In Hilltown, the bedrock geology is composed of the Brunswick and Lockatong formations. The eastern and southern portions of the township are comprised predominantly of the Lockatong Formation. The capacity of the Lockatong Formation to store and transmit water is very low, making this formation a less reliable source for large amounts of groundwater. The Brunswick Formation is

generally considered to be a reliable source of groundwater in moderate supplies. Wells in the Brunswick Formation, if properly located, constructed and developed, may yield more than 500 gallons per minute.

State enabling legislation authorizes municipalities to consider the availability and limitations of water resources for land use planning. The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code, Act 247, Section 301(b) states:

*The Comprehensive Plan shall include a plan for the reliable supply of water, considering current and future water resources availability, uses and limitations, including provisions adequate to protect water supply sources. Any such plan shall be generally consistent with the State Water Plan and any applicable water resources plan adopted by a River Basin Commission.*

## Topography and Surface Hydrology

Hilltown Township lies within four major watersheds: the Skippack Creek; the East Branch of the Perkiomen Creek; the Neshaminy Creek (divided into two sub-basins, the North and West Branch); and the Tohickon-Deep Run. While the township lies mostly in the East Branch of the Perkiomen, the ridgeline dividing the watersheds crosses the township approximately diagonally from just below Telford to the southeastern corner of the township below Dublin.

The headwaters of three of the watersheds (including the two sub-basins) and a small area of Skippack Creek headwaters are located in Hilltown. As such, many first- and second-order dendritic streams are located throughout the township. Some of these waterways include: Mill Creek, Pleasant Spring Creek, and the Morris Run draining the Upper Perkiomen Watershed; and County Line Creek and the Deep Run draining the upper waters of the Neshaminy Creek to the southeast.

The township's topography is generally characterized by a gentle rolling terrain with many broad flat topographic regions with slopes generally less than fifteen (15) percent. The township also boasts the second highest elevational point in the County. Most areas of the township afford long views throughout both Bucks and Montgomery Counties.

## Steep Slopes and Erosion

Hillsides are geographic landforms whose slopes and soils are in balance with their vegetative cover, underlying geology, and the weathering process. Maintaining this equilibrium reduces the

danger to public health and safety posed by potentially unstable hillsides primarily caused by surface erosion.

The limited areas of the township with slopes in excess of 15 percent are located along the New Britain Township boundary to the southeast, and along the Perkasie-Sellersville border to the northwest. In addition, the numerous stream banks and corridors located within the township also typically display slopes in excess of 15 percent.

Development on hillsides with steep slopes potentially affects the natural equilibrium of vegetation, slope, and soil. Unrestricted and/or poorly planned disturbance of steep slopes may also potentially alter the natural drainage pattern of a hillside, producing increased stormwater runoff and soil erosion.

Construction of impervious surfaces, such as roads and buildings, also increases the amount of stormwater runoff by decreasing the amount of surface water infiltration into the sub-soil and ultimately the groundwater aquifer systems of the township. Poorly managed surface disturbances can aggravate the potential for soil loss during rainstorms and high winds thereby increasing potential runoff in addition to producing intensified erosion. This erosion may then result in the loss of soil productivity and lead to the resultant deposition of sediment in streams or onto down-slope lands creating the potential hazards of downstream flooding and/or sedimentation.

Soils can also be impacted by erosion and sedimentation caused by construction activities and the extraction of minerals. Soil can become compacted during the construction process, which prevents water from infiltrating into the ground. Under Pennsylvania State Code Title 25, Chapter 102, regulations require erosion control planning for all types of earthmoving: land development, agricultural plowing and tilling, forestry, mining, utilities, and other types. Plans and inspections for soil erosion and sedimentation control are handled by the Bucks County Conservation District and by the township.

The impacts of soil erosion are seen by Hilltown Township to be significant for several reasons. First, soil erosion reduces the productivity of uplands for agriculture or landscaping purposes thus increasing the need for fertilizers and/or soil conditioners. Fertilizers and pesticides are washed into streams during rain events, contaminating surface water with an overabundance of phosphates and nitrates. This can lead to the development of large algae blooms which can rob aquatic life of oxygen and kill fish and other aquatic creatures.

Also, eroded soils deposited down slope may kill vegetation or collect in streets and storm sewers where removal is costly to the public. In addition, stormwater runoff can carry soil particles to streams and other water bodies down-flow, potentially destroying aquatic habitats and scouring stream and other natural waterways in the process.

The township zoning ordinance currently regulates development on steep slopes. Article V., Section 160-28 of the zoning ordinance requires protection ratios of: 60 percent for slopes of 8 to 15 percent; 70 percent for slopes of 15 to 25 percent; and 85 percent for slopes of 25 percent or more.

## **Soils**

The study of the physical properties of soils has become one of the most important land use planning indicators in establishing the intrinsic suitability of land to sustain specific types and intensities of land use and development. The proper use of soils information can be utilized, in part, to rationally establish and reasonably defend a land use and conservation plan that identifies areas most suited for development activities, while restricting ill-suited land uses in areas of environmental sensitivity. In addition, soils information can be a reliable indicator of valuable natural resources required for farming, resource extraction, and open space planning.

## ***Agricultural Soils***

According to the United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Web Soil Survey, Hilltown has some prime farmland soils as well as farmland soils which are of statewide importance. To be classified as prime farmland, the soils must meet certain moisture, temperature, drainage, acidity, and compositional criteria. Prime farmland soils present in the township include Readington Silt Loam, Raritan Silt Loam, and Lawrenceville Silt Loam. Prime agricultural soils, or prime farmland soils, are located in the area south of Mill and Dublin Roads.

Soils of statewide importance are those soils, which are significant because of their composition as well as for their use for food and crop production locally. Prime farmland soils of statewide importance are generally located throughout much of the township. Examples of this type of soils present in the township include Culleoka-Weikert Channery, Abbottstown Silt Loam, and Reaville Channery Silt Loam.

## ***Upland Soils***

Soil characteristics can also determine which areas of the township can effectively be developed using on-lot sewage disposal systems. Because there are no public sewers proposed for the township outside of the Development Districts, this Plan will recommend the type, intensity, and location of rural development based in part upon soil characteristics and their suitability for on-lot sewage disposal. The traditional on-site sewage disposal system works primarily on soils that have the proper characteristics to filter and purify the wastewater without contaminating the groundwater. Technological advances in wastewater treatment and disposal systems have been made in recent years to include community septic systems, drip irrigation, sand mounds, spray systems, and package plant stream discharge systems. All of these systems fall under the regulatory jurisdiction of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and/or the Bucks County Health Department.

The appropriateness of these various systems relies in part upon the soil in which they are located. While some systems utilizing sand or gravel mounds, drip irrigation, or spray irrigation may work properly on soils which would normally not be suitable for traditional subsurface septic systems, the soil types and their general suitability for on-lot sewage disposal still remains invaluable land use planning information. Additional information is provided in the township's Act 537 "Wastewater Facilities Plan", dated November 22, 1999.

## ***Floodplain and Alluvial Soils***

Floodplains are level, streamside areas that are covered periodically by floodwater that cannot be contained in the stream channel. The amount of area covered by floodwaters varies with the intensity of a flood. The breadth of a floodplain is measured in terms of the probability that an area will be covered by floodwaters. For example, "100-year floodplain" indicates there is one chance in one hundred that floodwaters will cover an area in any given year.

Soils on the floodplain are deposited from previous floods along stream banks or other watercourses by stormwater. Floodplain soils may indicate flooding but are not always directly related to Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) floodplain maps. Significant floodplains and floodplain soils occur along the Neshaminy Creek and the Delaware River and, to a lesser extent, other streams and tributaries throughout the county. Alluvial soil is fine-grained fertile soil carried by rushing water and streams and deposited by water flowing over flood plains or in river beds where the stream slows down. Areas subject to periodic flooding as listed on the Web Soil Survey are those having a flood frequency other than none.



Floodplain identification and protection is important for two reasons:

1. Development within floodplains is subject to the destructive force of floodwaters and urbanization may augment downstream flooding hazards, and
2. Floodplains have significant ecological, recreational, and amenity values.

Floodplains have historically been attractive areas for development due primarily to the ease of transportation and development of their relatively flat and attractive landscape. But as development increases in and around floodplains, the potential for flood losses correspondingly increases. In urbanizing areas, extensive impervious surfaces and the associated floodplain encroachments augment both the increased volumes of floodwater that flows downstream and the associated increased potential for flood damage.

Floodplains are a valuable natural resource. Wildlife is abundant along streams because of their diverse natural habitats. The potential for water-based recreation and the productivity of the soil give floodplains a positive socioeconomic value.

Generally, only floodplains of larger streams are mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). In addition to these FEMA mapped floodplains, and in lower order streams that may not be mapped, "Soils on Floodplain", as identified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Web Soil Survey, are utilized to indicate potential flood hazard areas for land use planning purposes. A floodplain study is required for streams where FEMA has not mapped an AE zone (whether the stream is a FEMA A zone or if omitted entirely from the Flood Insurance Rate Map.)

Municipalities are required to adopt regulations to control development in floodplains in order to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program. In 2015, the township adopted a stand-alone ordinance which complies with the updated floodplain regulations required by FEMA. In addition, environmental performance standards are contained in Article IV, Section 160-28 of the township's zoning ordinance, which states that floodplains shall be permanently protected and undeveloped, except that utilities, roads, and driveways, may cross the floodplain where design approval is obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and as permitted within the Hilltown Township Floodplain Ordinance. Also, Article IX of the zoning ordinance contains floodplain use regulations that permit uses such as agriculture, recreation, and temporary uses, provided they are in compliance with the township's floodplain ordinance.

## Hydric Soils and Wetlands

Hydric soils are soils that form the basic component of wetlands. The hydric soils in Hilltown Township, as determined by the 2002 Bucks County Soil Survey, are two types of Towhee Silt Loam (the soil types differ with the slope of the ground), another type of Towhee, the Towhee-Glenville Silt Loam, Doylestown Silt Loam, Hatboro Silt Loam, and Bowmansville-Knauers Silt Loam. Because soil type is only one indicator of the existence of wetlands, the presence of these soils alone is generally not adequate proof of the existence of wetlands. In many instances; however, the presence of hydric soils is generally considered to be the primary indicator of the presence, or potential presence, of wetlands. Hydric soils pose basic limitations for development due to the low permeability, low run-off rates, and subsurface saturation conditions.

In the context of land use planning, wetlands are similar in character and function to floodplain and alluvial soils. Wetlands include swamps, marshes, bogs and similar areas displaying a seasonally high water table. Wetlands are also valuable natural resources because they provide groundwater recharge, provide wildlife habitat, help with flood control, and filter sediments that affect water quality. These public values depend directly on the presence of healthy wetlands. Despite the advantages provided by wetlands to both the natural and human environment, they too often are considered unimportant areas, to be filled, drained and converted to other uses rather than conserved in their natural state.

Wetlands are regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection under the Clean Stream Act. These agencies have strict regulatory guidelines on the disturbance of wetlands within the Commonwealth. The Army Corps defines wetlands as follows:

*Wetlands are areas that are inundated by surface or ground-water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions, including swamps, bogs, and similar areas.*

Preliminary wetland mapping has been completed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service through its National Wetlands Inventory Project. Major wetland areas were identified from aerial photographs using wetland vegetation, and open water as primary indicators. Smaller wetland areas are not included. Wetland delineation should occur on a site-by-site basis using soil and hydrology information as well as vegetative indicators. The township's responsibility with respect to wetlands is to establish policies on their disturbance and to alert landowners that in areas

where wetlands soils and vegetation may exist, environmental and/or engineering studies may be required to determine if, and to what extent, development may or may not be appropriate. In addition to the identification of wetland areas, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection has proposed that transition areas around exceptional wetlands also be protected.

Article V, Environmental performance standards, of the township's zoning ordinance contains provisions for lakes, ponds, wetlands and watercourses that require these areas to be left as permanently protected. The ordinance states that there shall be no development, filling, piping or diverting of wetlands, except for required roads as approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

## **Woodlands**

The public interest in woodland protection extends far beyond aesthetics. Not only do the recreational, aesthetic and economic benefits of woodlands suffer from poorly regulated land use, but other less familiar benefits of woodlands are also harmed. Woodland vegetation moderates the effects of winds and storms, stabilizes and enriches the soil, stabilizes stream banks, helps control erosion, and slows runoff from precipitation, thereby allowing it to be filtered by the forest floor as it percolates down into the groundwater reserves. Woodlands are also buffers to the sights and sounds of civilization. They mute the noise from highways and factories, as well as absorb some air pollutants. Moreover, woodlands are moderators of climatic extremes. The microclimate of a forest, created in part by the shade of the trees and the transpiration of water from the leaves, keeps surrounding air at an even temperature. Woodland temperatures are generally cooler in the day and warmer at night than the more widely fluctuating temperatures of unforested areas. Woodlands adjacent to, and interspersed among, suburban and urban areas thus act as natural air conditioners.

Woodlands provide a varied and rich environment for many kinds of plants and animals. In addition, trees provide shade to keep the stream water temperature low, thus helping to support the aquatic life in streams. This environmental diversity is an important resource for wildlife habitat and is a general environmental and recreational asset to the community. To encourage community forestry and promote the benefits of trees, township officials may consider establishing a shade tree commission. Officials may also wish to investigate the merits of participating in a program such as Tree City USA through the Arbor Day Foundation.

The township zoning ordinance contains woodland protection requirements. The environmental performance standards in Article V, Section 160-28 of the zoning ordinance states that no more than 20 percent of wooded areas are allowed to be removed.

## **Additional Natural Resource Protection Initiatives**

In 2009 and 2011, the township amended the zoning ordinance to include Use B1A, Conservation Management Design, as a development option in the RR and CR-2 districts. The Conservation Management Design use was created to allow increased flexibility of lot design and an environmentally sensitive approach to development and stormwater management. The Zoning Ordinance requires preparation of an existing resource and site analysis plan (ERSAP) for Use B1A, Conservation Management Design, when six or more lots are proposed. This ordinance stipulates that the ERSAP meet all requirements to ensure that the proposed development occurs in a manner that respects the natural environment and that the applicant and township have a solid understanding of the natural conditions of the development site, as well as conditions around the site.

## **Open Space Inventory**

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Hilltown Township has been progressive in its open space preservation efforts. As of the date of the 1998 Open Space Preservation Plan, the township owned over 150 acres of open space ground, with almost 20 of those acres used for municipal parks. The township's 2003 Comprehensive Plan identified an increase in open space preservation to approximately 260 acres plus the 20 acres of municipal parks. According to the *Hilltown Township 2010 Open Space Plan*, the township has preserved a total of 877.26 acres, which includes designated township open space, township park land, undesignated township land, and agricultural conservation easements.

In addition to the township-owned open space, there are various parcels owned and preserved by organizations other than the township that can be considered open space. The two largest parcels of which are owned and operated by a private organization and Bucks County. Southeast of the intersection of Rickert Road and Green Street, is a large parcel of ground owned and operated by the Philadelphia Glider Council Inc., which the township's open space plan designates as temporarily preserved open space. East of the township border, near Church and Fairhill School Roads, the county owns a flood control dam and land for flood control, consisting of nine parcels totaling approximately 109 acres. According to the township's open space plan, approximately 105 acres are preserved through private land trusts and almost 150

acres have been preserved as residential open space (owned by Homeowners Associations). Open space and preserved lands are shown on Map 5 - Open Space, Preserved Lands and Community Facilities.

## **Current Development Trends and Open Space Planning**

The township's 2010 Open Space Preservation Plan divides Hilltown into four regions with each of those regions experiencing development pressure. The Northwest Region (Bethlehem Pike Region), along with the Northeast Region (Minsi Trail Region), are experiencing the greatest amount of development pressure. Specifically, the Bethlehem Pike Region has the most diverse zoning (including the CR-1, CR-2, MHP, PC-1, LI, and HI districts), includes a section of the Bethlehem Pike Corridor, and shares a large segment of the border with Souderton, Telford, Perkasio, and Silverdale boroughs. The township's 2010 Open Space Plan recommends creating a link connecting Silverdale with Perkasio, and states that the needed open space in this area of the township should be for both passive and active parks; however, the Plan questions the availability of land for recreation uses.

Also bordering Silverdale Borough, the Northeast Region (Minsi Trail Region) is the other area of strong residential development pressure. This region contains a significant portion of the CR-1 Development District, as well as land zoned CR-2, Q, PC-2, and VC (Village Center), which corresponds with the village of Blooming Glen. In addition, approximately 179 acres near the township border with Bedminster have been zoned Age Qualified Residential Community (AQRC). This area was designed to receive a considerable portion of development as outlined in the Land Use Plan of this Comprehensive Plan and is currently under construction for 279 residential units. The Open Space Plan goals for this area include the need to create a nature area and trail/greenway system along the East Branch of the Perkiomen Creek, a trail/greenway connecting Frontier Park with Forest Road Park, links along creek beds and rural roads connecting the various villages within Hilltown to neighboring boroughs and townships, to incorporate the township-owned Beyer Farm in the Forest Road Park Master Plan, and to promote the preservation of working farms.

The southern portions of the township are zoned primarily for rural residential uses. Of the two southern quadrants of the township, the Southwest Region (Mill Road Region), has experienced more development pressure, mainly centered along the Route 309, Bethlehem Pike Corridor. In addition to the commercial development pressure along that corridor, this area has experienced residential development. The Berry Brow development, a large single-family subdivision, contains open space set aside for future parkland. The goals for this area, as defined

by the Open Space Plan, call for negotiation for easement rights for a trail/greenway system within the PECO right-of-way (extending between Montgomery Township and the Southeast Region of Hilltown), acquisition of a property near the Bucks County Flood Control Dam for passive and active recreation uses, and completion of a master plan that investigates the future use of the Berry Brow Farm open space.

According to the 2010 Open Space Plan, the Southeast Region (Pearl Buck Region) is under the least development pressure of the four areas. Within this region, the area along the border with Dublin Borough is the most likely to see development pressure. Goals for this area, according to the 2010 Open Space Plan, include creating linkages between Deep Run Valley Sports Association and the Hilltown Civic Park and between Hilltown Village and Peace Valley Park (in New Britain Township), to develop a master plan for Frontier Park, to work toward the possible acquisition of trail easements along the PECO power lines, the acquisition of land around the Pearl S. Buck National Register Historic Landmark, and to promote and encourage preservation of working farms in the area. Acquisition of land around the Pearl S. Buck's Green Hills Farm has occurred since the 2010 Open Space Plan.

## **Process of Land Dedication**

The procedure for dedicating Open Space to the township is outlined in Article V, Section 160-25, Site Capacity Calculations, of the zoning ordinance. In addition, a minimum open space ratio, when required for new residential developments, is detailed in Article V, Section 160-26, Performance Standards, which lists a high of 65% required open space in the CR-2 zoning district when using the Single Family Cluster Option 2. In Section 160-60, Conveyance & Maintenance of Municipal Use/Open Space Lands, the Zoning Ordinance details the requirements that must be met in order for the township to accept the dedication. Section 160-57 also contains provisions for Design Standards for Open Space Land and outlines designation of and permitted uses on open space and easement requirements. Overall, these requirements have been adequate to meet the needs of the township, specifically concerning the lands dedicated and those parcels under development.

## **Agricultural Land and Open Space Conservation Trends**

Although the township does not have a separate agricultural land preservation program, Bucks County's program has been hugely successful both for the County and for Hilltown in preserving agricultural land within the township. The Bucks County Agricultural Land Preservation Program is based upon Act 43 (1981), Pennsylvania's Agricultural Security Area Law, and Act 149 amending the Agricultural Security Law, in 1988. Initially, the Security Area Law enables the creation of

agricultural security areas by local governments (which has been done by Hilltown Township), based upon a landowner's petition. The amendments contained in Act 149 provided the funding mechanism for the Pennsylvania Agricultural Conservation Easement Purchase program. Agricultural Security Areas are intended first to protect farmers from ordinances which would unreasonably restrict their operations, and secondly, to provide for the permanent purchase of their development rights.

Overall the County program is striving to protect 17,000 acres of farmland throughout the county by the end of 2017. At the end of 2016, the Bucks County Agricultural Preservation Board had protected 15,945 acres of prime farmland, according to the Bucks County Agricultural Land Preservation Programs Coordinator, with Hilltown contributing over 759 acres to that total.

In addition to the County's agricultural preservation program, Hilltown has parcels reserved from future development through the County's Open Space Program, and through easement agreements with the Heritage Conservancy, a private land conservation organization. A 58-acre group of parcels near Forest and Hayhouse roads (Forest Road Park) and two parcels totaling almost 39 acres along Frontier Road (Frontier Park), have been reserved through the County program. A collection of parcels between Souderton Road extending southward toward Rickert Road, near the border with Bedminster, totaling 82.88 acres, has been preserved through the Heritage Conservancy. Cooperation with local organizations to explore additional techniques to encourage open space preservation, as well as alternative design standards, should be pursued.

## **Regional Open Space/Greenway Planning**

The Pennridge Area, consisting of the townships of Bedminster, East Rockhill, Hilltown, West Rockhill, and the boroughs of Perkasié, Sellersville, and Silverdale, and the Pennridge Chamber of Commerce, Pennridge School District and Bucks County Community College, published the *Pennridge Area Greenway Plan* in April 2000. This Greenway Plan details some specific goals and proposed greenways for the region, including some affecting Hilltown Township (though the township has not specifically endorsed this plan). The plan aims to maintain and improve the quality of life and environment for the residents of the area by providing adequate open space.

The plan contains a Model Greenway/Bike Route ordinance, and guidelines and standards for Natural Resource Protection, Performance Subdivisions, Overlay Districts, Mandatory Dedication/Fees In-Lieu, Transfer of Development Rights, Farmland Preservation, Design

Standards, Joint Municipal Planning and Zoning and various other Land Acquisition Options. Many of these options are included as recommendations or goals of this Comprehensive Plan.

The Area Greenway Plan also includes a recommendation for Hilltown Township to work with the Pennridge Area Coordinating Committee (PACC) to extend the Mill Creek Greenway through the acquisition of easements along portions of Mill Creek that extend through private property. In addition, the Plan recommends that Hilltown work with the PACC to acquire easements from private property owners along the West Branch of the Neshaminy Creek and work with PECO to secure access arrangements along their rights-of-way.

Another regional plan, the *Bucks County Open Space and Greenways Plan* (2011), was adopted by the County Commissioners in June of 2011. The Plan identifies three greenways that cross through Hilltown Township: the Liberty Bell Trail and Route 113 Heritage Corridor cultural greenways and the Morris Run multi-use greenway.

## Calculation of Recreation Need

A needs analysis for recreation land was prepared for this plan using population projections for the year 2015 from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) and the Recreation, Park, and Open Space Standards and Guidelines published by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA, 1983). These guidelines were not included in the 2010 Open Space Preservation Plan, as they are intended here as a general measure of recreation land in the township. These standards are generalized and other factors may also be considered. The standards address land for recreation, not open space, and are only a single tool to determine park adequacy. Demand for park facilities, such as athletic fields, is also an important factor to consider since fields may require more land than recreation facilities such as playgrounds.

The 2015 Census indicated that the township population was 15,533. DVRPC population projections for the year 2025 show the expected population of Hilltown to be 17,365. Using this population projection and the NRPA standard (6.25 to 10.5 acres/1000 residents), it is estimated that the township will require between 109 and 182 acres of recreation land in the year 2025 to adequately serve the recreational needs of its residents. The table below (Figure 8. Recreation Need) shows the estimated necessary acreage for recreation currently and for the projected population using NRPA guidelines. Because recreation is considered to be a municipal responsibility only public recreation lands are considered in the needs analysis.



The 2010 Open Space Plan indicates that there were 180.5 acres of designated township park land in Hilltown, in addition to land that has been acquired by the township that could be developed as park land in the future. Much of this land is not improved with recreational facilities. The township currently has two improved public parks listed on the township website. Hilltown Township Civic Park (11.96 acres) and Blooming Glen Park (5.13 acres). Hilltown Civic Park has several athletic fields and courts and a fitness walk. Blooming Glen Park has fields and a picnic area and benches.

Although not counted as township park land in the 2010 Open Space Plan, an additional township facility is the Hilltown Soccer field across Limekiln Pike from the township building which contains 12.61 acres. Also, in 2014, the township purchased a recreation easement on land that is privately owned by the Deep Run Valley Sports Association. The site has a large athletic complex which contains multiple fields on a 16.57-acre parcel near the intersection of Callowhill Road and Hilltown Pike.

**Figure 8. Recreation Need**

Year	Population	NRPA Acreage	Existing Acreage of Recreation Land
1990 Census	10,582	66.1 to 111.0	20
2000 Census	12,102	75.6 to 127.1	20
2010 Census	15,029	93.9 to 157.8	180.5
2015 Census ACS*	15,533	97.1 to 163.1	209.7***
2020 DVRPC Projections**	16,540	103.4 to 173.7	NA
2025 DVRPC Projections**	17,365	108.5 to 182.3	NA

\*2015 population information based on the American Community Survey (ACS)

\*\*2020 and 2025 population information based on projections by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)

\*\*\*Includes parcels containing the Hilltown Soccer fields and the recreation easement on the Deep Run Valley Sports Association property purchased by the township.

As of the 2010 Open Space Plan, the township owned over 380 acres of open space consisting of parks, and undeveloped open space parcels. This total does not include the over 363 acres owned by other agencies, private land trusts, and homeowners associations (i.e., the 112 acres owned by Bucks County), or the over 1,077 acres with permanent easements against development (privately owned and conservation easements and total agricultural easements).

It should be noted that easements do not ensure the use as recreation—passive or active—for the residents.

By comparing the 2015 population to the most stringent NRPA public recreation land guidelines (10.5 acres/1000 persons) and what exists in Hilltown currently, the amount of recreation land in the township exceeds the recommended guidelines by over 45 acres (209.7 acres minus the NRPA high-range number of 163.1 acres). The existing recreation land of 209.7 acres is within the recommended range based on the NRPA guidelines and is over 27 acres more than the high-range number for 2025. Based on the information presented in Figure 8, it appears that the existing recreation land area would be adequate to serve the projected population for the next decade.

Recreation planning is a means to meet recreation needs for both land and facilities. A park and recreation plan defines needs and provides policy and recommendations to meet those needs. A plan may also include a survey to determine the specific recreation needs, such as tot lots or trails, so that these needs can be addressed effectively. A community survey to obtain public input on the township's parks, recreation, and open space was conducted in 2009. Regarding type of recreational facilities, survey results indicated that residents are interested in the development of pedestrian and bicycle trails that connect neighborhoods and parks. An inventory of all land owned by the township which could be utilized for active or passive recreation purposes should be prepared.

The township amended its Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance in 1999 to include requirements for the mandatory dedication of recreation land or a fee in lieu thereof for all residential subdivisions or land developments. For all residential subdivisions of 25 or more dwelling units, recreational facilities are to be provided by the developer. In addition, the Ordinance contains minimum recreation facility requirements for tot lots, playfields, basketball and tennis courts, and swimming pools.

## Natural Resources/Open Space Plan

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The section on open space is based on an analysis of the background information in the previous sections of this document, and the township's 2010 Open Space Plan. It is also strongly based on the stated goals and objectives, and the prospects for future growth and change. The challenge presented by the open space plan is how to allow Hilltown Township to maintain its current rural and agricultural character and identity, while accommodating necessary growth

and providing existing and future residents with an adequate amount of passive and active recreational areas, and preserving the natural features in the township. The township should continue to educate landowners with alternate methods of land development and preservation techniques that help the township achieve the goals of this Plan.

As the township continues to grow, it is recommended that future residential developments continue to provide open space as a benefit to residents. The identification of specific parcels of land to be reserved in the future would be inappropriate without further study. Studies should be undertaken to identify those parcels that are considered ecologically fragile, important to wildlife and their habitats within Hilltown (and surrounding areas), and areas that preserve natural features important to the residents of the township, as well as ones which will serve concentrations of future population. The following criteria should be used in conjunction with those already outlined in the township's Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance, for future open space acquisitions, (but not be limited to):

- Maximization of “buffers” between incompatible land use types, developed land uses, existing farmland, and ecologically fragile areas
- Protection and preservation of remaining woodland and steep slopes in the township
- Creation of a ‘relationship’ with existing and other planned parks/open spaces within the township
- Creation of linkages between different portions of the township with open spaces
- Maintaining a desirable ratio for active and passive recreation lands
- Relationship of open space/parks with existing and planned population centers
- Relationship of open space with village areas (to reinforce and/or create open space ‘rings’ around villages)

The 2010 Open Space Plan includes discussion on open space linkages, specifically regarding planned greenways and trailways through the township. The Plan identifies trail linkages that were previously discussed at public meetings or were identified in the township's previous open space plan (1998) as future trail possibilities to develop.

The exact location of any trail should be determined by availability of land when financing becomes available, or when development is proposed. The following criteria should be used for future trail alignments, (but not be limited to):

- Conservation of Ecologically Fragile Areas
- Creation of a 'relationship' with existing open space within the township.
- Creation of linkages between portions of the township.
- Creation of linkages between population concentrations and both passive and active open space areas.
- Determination of the need for rest stops along the length of the trail system.

## Natural Resources/Open Space Implementation Strategies

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The township has adequately addressed the protection of natural resources through standards included in the zoning and subdivision and land development ordinances. The preservation of significant natural features is consistent with stated policies for natural resources protection and open space/land preservation as outlined in the Statement of Community Goals and Objectives of this Plan. In addition, protection of natural resources contributes to open space preservation efforts. Many of the implementation strategies recommended within this section on open space are currently used within the township, and are taken from the township's previously adopted Open Space Plan.

To help identify open space needs and priorities related to stated goals, the township's open space plan recommends using a parcel rating system to determine the most appropriate locations and types of open space. According to the open space plan, the Board of Supervisors has established an overall land preservation goal of obtaining parcels larger than 35 acres. For parcels meeting this minimum size, the Open Space Plan contains criteria for ranking properties for open space preservation. In addition, any analysis should also consider potential linkages within the township, as well as potential connections to neighboring communities. This process is an objective tool used to 'systematically focus' on appropriate locations, and requires mapping and an in-depth study of numerous factors regarding parkland development. While a study of this nature and depth is not an 'overnight' process, it is important in the short term to start this

process so that the governing body within the township can use whatever information is available at the time to render an informed decision regarding the acquisition of a parcel.

In addition to specific goals listed for each of the township regions, as noted earlier in this chapter (under Current Development Trends and Open Space Planning), the 2010 Open Space Plan also recommends preparation of a specific trails master plan for the entire township. Such plan should include the feasibility of, the potential location of, and the prioritization of all trail considerations in the township. Specific trail locations for the highest priority linkages identified in the township's open space plan should be identified.



# Community Facilities Element

## Inventory of Existing Municipal Services and Community Facilities

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### **Municipal Building**

The Hilltown Township Administration Building, built in 1989, is located at Route 152 and Creamery Road. A public works facility was built to the rear of the township building on existing township land in 2003. There is a pole barn for the storage of equipment and a salt storage building for use in winter snow and ice removal.

### **Police**

The Hilltown Police Department has seventeen officers, which includes the Chief of Police, lieutenant detective, and one detective. There are also three secretaries in the police department. The department currently operates out of the township Administration Building.

Hilltown's Police Department owns eight patrol, three administrative/investigative, two reserve/court/school and one special service vehicles. The Police Department also provides Silverdale Borough with police protection.

Emergency calls (911) are handled at a central location for all of Bucks County. The Bucks County Emergency Communications Department operates the 911 system which coordinates emergency response services throughout the county. When emergency calls are received by 911 operators, the appropriate emergency response is dispatched to the scene of the emergency. The system is based at the Emergency Management Agency in Ivyland, Pennsylvania.

The overall crime rate in the township has trended downward. However, according to the Hilltown Police Department, property crimes and fraud cases have increased in recent years.

The level of service provided by local police departments is based on community preference, and adequacy of police services. Due to technical, equipment and training needs, police services are expensive and usually represent one of the highest cost items in municipal budgets.

## Fire Companies

There are seven fire companies that serve Hilltown Township, each of which has contractual assigned coverage areas within the township. Most fire departments that serve Hilltown Township have achieved some level of certification through the Pennsylvania Fire Service Certification Program, which recognizes the number of emergency service personnel whose training and education meets or exceeds nationally recognized standards. As of 2017, the local fire companies in the township are working on the Insurance Service Organization (ISO) verification process which evaluates the quality of fire protection available and helps determine fire insurance premiums for property owners.

The Hilltown Township Volunteer Fire Company serves the southwestern portion of the township and maintains two fire stations in the township; one on Hilltown Pike near Route 309 (Station 60) and one on Route 152, west of Hilltown Pike (Station 61). Station 60 was built in the mid-1940s and contains four undersized bays and a kitchen on the first floor and a meeting room on the second floor. Station 61 was dedicated in 1983 and contains two bays and a small meeting/training room. There are approximately 40 volunteer members, 30 of whom participate in fire-fighting activities. Equipment includes two engines, a rescue truck, a Quick Response EMS vehicle, 2 building collapse/trench rescue trailers, and a tanker - 3000 gallons. While one vehicle is a dedicated EMS vehicle, the fire company has four pieces of equipment that are certified through the state as quick response units. Currently, one engine and the tanker are outdated and fall outside of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) retirement requirements. The company would like to replace both of the outdated units with a combination tanker/pumper to adequately serve the growing township. Also, the fire company needs to update the self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), which are several revisions old. Station 60 was reconfigured approximately ten years ago and is adequate to serve current needs. Station 61 will require an addition as the township grows.

The Perkasio Fire Company #1 serves the northern rural area of the township south of Perkasio Borough. There are 64 volunteer members of the Company. The Perkasio Borough station has six pieces of equipment; two engines (both 2000 gpm), one traffic control vehicle, one mini pumper, one tower truck (2000 gpm) with a 100-foot platform and one rescue pumper (2000 gpm). In addition, there are four chiefs' vehicles.



The Telford Volunteer Fire Company serves the western corner of the township adjacent to Telford Borough. Their facility is a 4,200 square-foot building and includes seven apparatus bays with drive-through doors. The facility has been upgraded with a fire sprinkler system and has a diesel emergency generator. There are 45 active volunteer members of the Company. The present 2016 equipment includes: two pumpers, a ladder truck, a special service rescue vehicle, and a utility pick-up truck. The previous pumper/tanker and field/brush truck have been disposed of due to reduced need for those type vehicles based on the response area and to reduce company operating maintenance costs. The company uses two sets of radios, one for each county, since Telford is partially in Montgomery County. The chief of the company feels that the current equipment, if maintained and replaced as necessary, will be adequate for the next ten years. Continuing to find new and retain present volunteers to maintain adequate staffing and obtaining dedicated funding to keep up with future demands for services will prove challenging.

The Dublin Volunteer Fire Company serves the northeastern portion of the township adjacent to Dublin Borough. The facility is approximately 6,000 square feet and includes six bays. There are 30 volunteer members of the Company. The company has seven pieces of equipment including two engines, one rescue truck, one ladder truck, one tanker and two field vehicles. The chief of the company feels that the equipment is adequate and, if maintained and updated, will serve for the future.

The Sellersville Fire Company consists of 60 volunteer members and serves a portion of the township near Sellersville. The equipment that the company has, two engines, one tower truck, one special services vehicle, three command vehicles, one spill/decon trailer for hazardous material clean-up, and one fire-police vehicle, are believed to be adequate.

Silverdale Fire Company currently has approximately 25 active members and 10 house members and serves all of Silverdale Borough and approximately one third (33%) of Hilltown surrounding the Borough. Approximately 50 percent of the members are EMT/EMR certified. The main firehouse is used for meetings and contains a small banquet room, a training room, and houses the field truck. A 4-bay pole barn, located behind the main fire station, houses the balance of the apparatus and has some limited storage space. The equipment that the company has, consists of two pumpers, one rescue/pumper, one field truck, and one utility truck equipped as a Quick Response Squad (QRS) to support Emergency Medical Services (EMS) needs. While the company's facilities are currently adequate, future growth in the existing location may be a concern since the main firehouse is a historic building and

the pole barn was built as large as setbacks would allow. Membership recruitment and retention, along with training requirements and fundraising, are constant challenges. Continuous training is essential to providing high quality fire and EMS services. Fundraising is equally important due to increases in costs, insurance, equipment purchases and repairs.

Perseverance Fire Company of Souderton serves the western portion of the township, near Souderton Borough. The company has 34 firefighters, 15 fire police, and a total of 60 volunteers. Since 2011, the company is listed with the Pennsylvania Department of Health and Pennsylvania State Fire Commissioners Office in the Voluntary Rescue Recognition Program as Advanced Vehicle and Machinery Level of Rescue. The equipment available for the Perseverance Fire Company includes: two engine trucks; one rescue truck; a utility/brush unit; a tower truck; a fire police unit; two sport-utility vehicles; and a large traffic arrow trailer. In 2015, new radios were purchased for the Bucks County 911 system; the company plans to purchase new radios for the Montgomery County 911 system in 2018. Other upcoming purchases anticipated within the next ten years include the possible replacement of an engine truck and the tower truck. The fire company remodeled the station in 2016.

Typically, the major issues regarding fire protection are inadequate volunteer staffing and funding. Fire company squads are staffed primarily by volunteers who are often difficult to recruit due to family obligations and the time demands for training and firefighting. Volunteers are often not available during the day, so fewer firefighters are available to respond to calls. Some volunteer fire companies offer incentives for service such as payments per call and pension benefits through a Length of Service Program. Some municipalities allow their public works employees to respond to emergencies during the work day. Several members of the Hilltown Township Water and Sewer Authority serve with the Silverdale Fire Company.

The Bucks County Fire Chiefs Association recently sponsored BucksFire.org, a recruitment and retention effort that referred applicants to local fire companies. The 3-year effort ended in 2015 after federal grant funding ended. The effort is expected to continue when additional funding becomes available.

Fire company operations are funded by a local fire tax, donations, and fundraising. Fundraising often requires significant time and effort throughout the year. Each company must continually raise money for equipment.

## Emergency Medical Services

Emergency medical service response is an essential component of adequate public health care. These services are funded by insurance reimbursements, taxes, direct payments, and donations. The Pennsylvania Department of Health defines levels of emergency services which are provided in Bucks County by the following types of squads:

- Advance Life Support (ALS) – provides cardiac arrest and trauma care
- Basic Life Support (BLS) – provides first aid and transport
- Quick Response Service (QRS) – provides quick response first aid, but does not transport patients. Police and Fire companies may offer this service.

Emergency medical service (EMS) is offered in Hilltown Township by the following squads, each of which has a contractual assigned coverage area within the township:

- Grandview Health in West Rockhill Township – ALS rescue squad
- The Souderton Community Ambulance – ALS/BLS <http://www.medic339.org/>
- Chal-Brit Regional EMS – ALS/BLS <http://www.chalfontems.org>
- Point Pleasant-Plumsteadville EMS – ALS/BLS <http://www.medic124.org/>

None of the squads is located in Hilltown and some portions of the township have longer response times due to farther distance from the closest EMS station. Quick Response Service is offered by the Hilltown Township Volunteer Fire Company (Hilltown Pike station), and the Perkasio, Sellersville, and Silverdale fire companies.

Hilltown Township currently allocates \$42,000 per year to the ambulance companies serving the township. These funds are allocated according to the number of calls in the township. The companies serving Hilltown also rely on insurance reimbursements, donations, and direct payments. Companies often face challenges with billing and receiving reimbursements from patient insurance companies after services are provided.

EMS units in the region are facing coverage volume issues and are increasingly relying on the local volunteer fire companies to provide additional manpower resources to fill the response

gaps. Demands for QRS services and first responder-type ambulance assist calls have increased markedly over the last several years.

## Schools

Hilltown Township's public school authority, the Pennridge School District, also includes Bedminster, East and West Rockhill townships, and Dublin, Perkasie, Sellersville, and Silverdale Boroughs. Students from Hilltown attend the following schools:

- M. M. Seylar Elementary School, located on Callowhill Road in Hilltown Township, had 438 students as of February, 2016.
- John M. Grasse Elementary School, located on Rickert Road in the township, enrolled 459 students (February, 2016).
- Penn Central Middle School, in Silverdale Borough, had a total of 658 students as of February, 2016.

Pennridge High School, in East Rockhill Township, had an enrollment of 2,328 students in February 2016. The school has a capacity of 2,626 students. High school enrollment projections do not exceed 2,379 by 2021, so it is anticipated that current and future enrollments can be accommodated.

In addition to the public school children, there are 384 students from Hilltown that attend private schools (February, 2016). Approximately 94 fewer students attended schools outside of the public school district between 2003 and February of 2016. The breakdown of township students that attend schools outside of the Pennridge School District is as follows:

**Table 8. Students Attending Non-Public Schools**

School	Students	Percent of Total
Homeschool	59	15.4%
Agora Cyber Charter	8	2.1%
Archbishop Wood	7	1.8%
Calvary Baptist	2	0.5%
Christopher Dock	33	8.6%
Commonwealth Connections Academy Charter	11	2.9%
Corpus Christi	2	0.5%
Faith Christian	26	6.8%
Germantown Academy	4	1.0%
Grace Christian	2	0.5%

School	Students	Percent of Total
Gwynedd Mercy Academy	16	4.2%
Gwynedd Mercy High School	6	1.6%
Lansdale Catholic	23	6.0%
Lehigh Valley Performing Arts HS	1	0.3%
Mary Mother of the Redeemer	9	2.3%
PA Cyber Charter	14	3.6%
PA Leadership Charter	2	0.5%
PA Virtual Charter	3	0.8%
Peace Valley	10	2.6%
Pennview Christian	26	6.8%
Plumstead Christian	14	3.6%
Quakertown Christian	7	1.8%
Saint Agnes Sacred Heart	37	9.6%
Souderton Charter	1	0.3%
St John the Baptist	1	0.3%
St Jude	58	15.1%
United Friends	1	0.3%
Upper Bucks Christian	1	0.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>384</b>	

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia closed Saint Agnes-Sacred Heart School, located on Broad Street in the township, as of the 2016-2017 school year due to declining enrollment.

## Library

Within Bucks County, Hilltown Township is served by the Bucks County Public Library System, and while there are no libraries within the township itself, residents are served by the main library in Doylestown, branch libraries in Perkasié and Quakertown, and a Community Public Library in Pipersville (Bedminster Township). The Indian Valley Public Library, an independent part of the Montgomery Library District, is also available to residents of Hilltown and is located in Telford Borough (Bucks County portion) on Church Road.

## Water Supply

Water is provided for most of the township's residents and businesses through existing on-lot systems. However, Hilltown is served by five municipal water purveyors:

1. Hilltown Township Water and Sewer Authority (HTWSA), serving the 'central' service area and a small area near Dublin Borough;

2. North Penn Water Authority, in the Mill Creek Service Area and in the area of Bethlehem Pike/Route 113 south of the Telford Borough Authority service area;
3. Telford Borough Authority, serving various properties along State Route 309, north of State Route 113, the HTWSA 'southern' sewer service area, and southwest corner of the township (Swartley Road/Keystone Drive/Mill Road area);
4. Perkasie Regional Authority, serving various properties adjoining Perkasie Borough;
5. Dublin Borough, provides water to the HTWSA to serve a limited number of houses along Rickert and Quarry roads.

In addition, Blooming Glen Estates, a privately owned centralized water system serves eleven houses south of the Village of Blooming Glen. The Quiet Acres residential community includes a combination of public and privately owned water lines.

Overall responsibility for all public water and sewer facility planning within the township lies with the Hilltown Township Water and Sewer Authority (HTWSA), which also is responsible for public facilities planning in Silverdale Borough. However, private wells are expected to remain the primary source of water for a majority of the township.

The highest concentration of water lines in the township is northwest of Silverdale Borough and north of Bethlehem Pike, with other water lines extending from this area connecting newer residential developments. A water tower, north of Hilltown Pike and Route 152, serves Silverdale Borough and the development north of that area. Water lines were extended to the northern portion of the township, bordering Bedminster Township, in 2015, to provide service to the 268-unit age restricted development located in the Age Qualified Residential Community zoning district known as the Regency at Hilltown, which is now under construction. HTWSA does not have a specific plan of action for the development or construction of new water lines or facilities; they will be built on an as-needed basis for new residential development. Map 6 shows the location of public water lines and the jurisdictions of the corresponding public water providers.

## Sewage Facilities

The township adopted the *Hilltown Township Wastewater Facilities Plan*, as its official sewage facilities plan in November of 1999. Following the requirements of Pennsylvania Act 537, the township's adopted plan outlines the existing conditions and recommendations for wastewater facilities within Hilltown.

Although Hilltown is served by five different sewer authorities and Souderton Borough, most of the township is not served by any central system. Some properties are using holding tanks which primarily were put in place to abate failing septic systems (Wastewater Facilities Plan, page 2-12), and several other properties use privately owned treatment facilities. The private treatment facilities use a range of systems including, but not limited to, stream discharge, spray irrigation, and industrial pre-treatment.

The sewage authorities serving Hilltown include: HTWSA, Telford Borough Authority, and Perkasie Regional Authority, which share the north/northwest portions of the township, and are connected to the Pennridge Wastewater Treatment Authority (PWTa) wastewater treatment plant in Sellersville Borough. The HTWSA also has its own treatment plant located on Highland Park Road. The Route 309 corridor is served by Hatfield Township Municipal Authority, Souderton Borough, and Chalfont-New Britain Township Joint Sewer Authority; each has their own wastewater treatment facility. Map 7 shows the location of sewer lines and public sewer service areas within the township.

### **Problem Areas**

Five problem areas were identified in the 2003 comprehensive plan. These areas have failing septic systems within HTWSA's central service district, and represent 58 dwellings. With the exception of the westernmost area, it is recommended by the Wastewater Facilities Plan (page 7-2) to extend existing public sewer lines. For the westernmost area (on Fairhill Road west of Diamond Street), it is recommended that individual repairs are adequate.

### **Plan Recommendations**

The *Hilltown Township Wastewater Facilities Plan* outlines six key recommendations for wastewater facilities for the township. The six recommendations are listed below. The bold text next to each recommendation indicates what has been implemented.

1. Implementation of a collection and conveyance system and construction of a sewage treatment plant to provide additional treatment plant capacity to serve that portion of the development district within the jurisdictional limits of HTWSA. **This recommendation was implemented through the construction of the sewage treatment plant located on Highland Park Road.**

2. Continued reliance on treatment facilities of the PWTa to provide public sewer service within the Telford Borough Authority Area of jurisdiction, and Perkasié Borough Authority Area. That includes a joint effort between Telford Borough Authority and the PWTa to expand the existing plant and for Telford Borough Authority to purchase additional capacity, and the execution of a service area agreement between the Perkasié Borough Authority and Hilltown. **The existing plant was expanded.**
3. Extension of Hatfield Township Municipal Authority public sewer collection system to serve residential and business properties along the Route 309 corridor, with treatment of the effluent occurring at the Hatfield plant. This involves the completion of a service agreement between the Hatfield Township Municipal Authority and Hilltown. **The service area was extended along Route 309 from the Hilltown Crossings Shopping Center to TMP #15-22-199 (across from Sterling Drive in Hatfield Township.)**
4. Increasing the level of municipal involvement in wastewater facility planning and maintenance through a public education program. **This recommendation has not been implemented.**
5. Implementing an inspection/monitoring program for the operation and maintenance of holding tanks, small flow treatment facilities, and individual residential spray irrigation systems within Hilltown. **The township requires a recorded maintenance agreement that gives the township the right, but not the obligation, to inspect these types of systems. If there is a complaint, the complaint is usually referred to the Bucks County Health Department.**
6. Implementing a wastewater alternative selection process for all developments to insure utilizing the most cost effective and environmentally sensitive disposal/treatment facilities. **There is no formal selection process; on-lot system suitability is determined by the Bucks County Health Department and extension of public sewers is driven by requirements currently in the Zoning Ordinance and/or poor soil conditions.**

## Water Resources Planning

The *Pennridge Water Resources Plan*, dated July 2002, is a comprehensive strategy for the eight participating municipalities (Bedminster, East Rockhill, Hilltown, and West Rockhill townships, Dublin, Perkasié, Sellersville, and Silverdale Boroughs) in Bucks County



to address “the impacts on and threats to water in an area where there is a steady conversion of the natural environment to the built environment” (*Pennridge Water Resources Plan*, July 2002, p.v.) by forming a basis for implementation and enforcement of a final ordinance.

The *Pennridge Water Resources Plan* was followed by the *Pennridge Water Implementation Component* (July, 2006), which included a draft Water Resources Management and Protection Ordinance for the Pennridge area.

Along with the seven other Pennridge Area municipalities and six water suppliers who service the Area, the township participated in development of the *Pennridge Area Source Water Protection Plan* (2009). Prepared in line with the state's Source Water Assessment and Protection Program (SWAPP), the purposes of the Plan include: identifying actual and potential sources of contamination; public education on the importance of protecting drinking water sources; long term planning for sustainability of community water supplies; and providing a comprehensive action plan in case of source water emergency. Associated Volume II plans were developed to be specific to each individual water supplier. The implementation of the *Pennridge Area Source Water Protection Plan* (Volumes I and II) provides a proactive approach to minimizing the possible contamination of water resources.

Several of the components of the Water Resources Plan existed or have been adopted within various ordinances (Zoning, Subdivision and Land Development, Stormwater Management, Floodplain) of the township including wetland protection, floodplain requirements, woodland protection, protection of steep slopes, stormwater management, and soil erosion and sediment pollutant control.

## **Stormwater Management**

Inadequate management of accelerated stormwater runoff resulting from development throughout a watershed increases flood flows and velocities, contributes to erosion and sedimentation, degrades water quality, overtaxes the carrying capacity of existing streams and storm sewers, greatly increases the cost of public facilities to convey and manage stormwater, undermines floodplain management and flood reduction efforts in upstream and downstream communities, reduces groundwater recharge, and threatens public health and safety. A comprehensive program of stormwater management, including reasonable regulation of development and activities causing accelerated erosion,

is fundamental to the public health, safety, welfare, and protection of the people of Hilltown Township, and all the people of the Commonwealth, their resources, and their environment.

Ordinance 2011-2, titled "Hilltown Township Stormwater Management Ordinance," adopted on April 25, 2011, includes all four watersheds within the municipality: Neshaminy Creek Watershed, Tohickon Creek Watershed, the East Branch Perkiomen Creek Watershed, and Skippack Creek Watershed. The ordinance applies to temporary and permanent stormwater management facilities constructed as part of any regulated activity including land development, subdivision, construction of new or reconstruction of, or addition of new impervious or semi-impervious surfaces (driveways, parking lots, etc.), except for reconstruction of roads where there is no increase in impervious surface, and/or construction of new buildings or additions to existing buildings redevelopment, diversion piping or encroachments in any natural or manmade stream channel, nonstructural or structural stormwater management Best Management Practices (BMPs) or appurtenances thereto, and temporary storage of impervious or pervious material where ground contact exceeds 5% of the lot area or 5,000 square feet (whichever is less) and where the material is placed on slopes exceeding 8%. Stormwater management, and erosion and sedimentation control measures during construction activities which are not specifically regulated by the Stormwater Management Ordinance continue to be regulated under existing laws and Ordinances.

### **Best Management Practices**

The Stormwater Management Ordinance requires utilization of BMPs to provide for water quality improvement, volume control, and groundwater recharge. In evaluating potential stormwater management BMPs, the order of preference is as follows: infiltration BMPs; flow attenuation methods (e.g. vegetated open swales and natural depressions); artificial wetlands, bioretention structures and wet ponds; and minimum first flush detention or dual purpose detention. Infiltration BMPs shall be utilized unless the applicant can demonstrate use of infiltration techniques is not feasible due to site conditions based on site specific soil testing. Vegetative swales, wetlands, or artificial wetlands, and bioretention structures shall be utilized wherever possible if infiltration BMPs are deemed unfeasible. Design criteria and specification for BMPs are included within the *Pennsylvania Handbook of Best Management Practices for Developing Areas* (1998).

## Community Facilities Issues and Policies

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Currently the issues facing Hilltown Township in terms of Community Facilities are within two separate categories. The first, water and sewer facilities, have been approached by the *Hilltown Township Wastewater Facilities Plan*, and the *Pennridge Water Resources Plan*. The second is the township's adequate provision of other public services (i.e. police and fire protection, libraries and schools) for the existing and new residents.

As discussed in the Open Space Element of this document, the need for recreation land to be used for both passive and active recreation, appears to be adequate for the next decade. The township has continued to plan for providing open space and recreation land and facilities in a variety of ways, including acquisition of new open space, requiring mandatory dedication of recreation land or a fee for all residential subdivision and land developments, development of a trail system, and continual evaluation of open space needs and potential sites.

## Community Facilities Plan

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Development Areas from the Land Use Plan remain unchanged from the 2003 Comprehensive Plan, with the exception of the addition of the Age Qualified Residential Community (AQRC) zoning district. The current recommendations of the Act 537 Plan and those programmed to be adopted with the *Pennridge Water Resources Plan* are adequate for the foreseeable needs of the township. However, this does not negate the need for close monitoring and coordination of the growth within the Development Areas for both Hilltown and the HTWSA. Coordination between the two organizations will ensure that all problem areas, future growth, and current areas in need of service are all adequately served. Also, it is recommended that the Act 537 Plan be re-evaluated on a periodic basis.

Coordination between the school district and township concerning the current and future growth is also necessary because the planning for facilities used by Hilltown residents, whether they are located in Hilltown or neighboring municipalities, is not under the direct purview of the Hilltown government.

In terms of the emergency services within the township the same need for a strong relationship holds true. Although the police are a municipal department, the 911 services

are located off-site. For this reason close coordination with the county offices is crucial to ensure proper response times.

In addition, continuing to have a strong role in the coordination of the seven fire companies and four EMS providers serving Hilltown ensures adequate coverage for existing and future development within the township. Assisting with volunteer recruitment, daytime staffing, and finances would strengthen the fire protection services.

## Community Facilities Implementation Strategies

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The Community Facilities Plan currently does not propose any changes to the existing public services within Hilltown Township. However, it does outline the needed monitoring, coordination, and consultation between the municipal staff and other agencies guiding those public services. Because those needs are ongoing and as land is developed, they can be considered both short- and long-term strategies. The following action plan items develop out of those outlined needs:

- Re-evaluate the Act 537 Plan on a periodic basis and coordinate with HTWSA to ensure that all problem areas, future growth, and current areas in need of service are adequately served.
- Pursue proactive cooperation with the Pennridge School District so that the District is well advised of potential development within the township, and to cooperate on pedestrian needs based on District busing policies.
- Work closely with the local fire companies to ensure sufficient coverage for existing and future development.
- Work with local emergency service providers to ensure adequate service for all areas of the Township.
- Work closely with the Hilltown Police Department and the Countywide 911 to ensure proper emergency response and coverage.
- Pursue proactive cooperation with the Pennridge Area Coordinating Committee (which includes representatives from Bedminster, East Rockhill, Hilltown, and West Rockhill townships, Dublin, Perkasio, Sellersville, and Silverdale boroughs, the Pennridge Chamber of Commerce, and the Pennridge School District) to share information and ideas.

# Transportation Element

## Existing Conditions

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### **Jurisdiction**

Within Hilltown Township, the following roads are state-owned roads: Bethlehem Pike, Blooming Glen Road, Blue School Road, Callowhill Road, Church Road, County Line Road, Diamond Street, Dublin Road, Hilltown Pike, Minsi Trail, Walnut Street and Routes 113, 152, 309, and 313. All other roads are under the township's jurisdiction.

### **Functional Street Classification**

According to Hilltown Township's Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance, there are four functional classifications for all roadways within the township. The following descriptions of these roadways and the streets listed within those classifications were taken from Section 140-29 of the Ordinance. Figure 10. Functional Classification, identifies roadway classifications in the township.

#### **Expressway**

This classification includes highways designed for large volumes of high-speed traffic with access limited to grade-separated intersection. Future rights-of-way shall be as determined by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT). A portion of Route 309 is the only expressway within the township.

#### **Arterial**

This classification includes highways which provide intra-county or inter-municipal traffic of substantial volumes where the average trip lengths are usually five miles or greater. Generally, these highways should accommodate operating speeds of 35 to 55 miles per hour. Arterials in the township include Bethlehem Pike, Route 113 and Route 313.

#### **Collector**

This classification is intended to include those highways that connect local access highways to arterial highways. They may serve intra-county and intra-municipal traffic. They may serve as traffic corridors connecting residential areas with industrial, shopping, and other service. They may penetrate residential areas. Generally, these highways will accommodate operating speeds of 35 to 45 miles per hour.

Collector Streets are sub-classified as Major and Minor Collectors within the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance. The main difference between a Major and Minor Collector is the width of the ultimate right-of-way. Those roads defined as Major Collectors within Hilltown are as follows: Callowhill Road, Route 152, Diamond Street, Hilltown Pike, and Stump Road. Those roads defined as Minor Collectors within the township include: Blooming Glen Road, Minsi Trail Road, Rickert Road, and Fairhill Road.

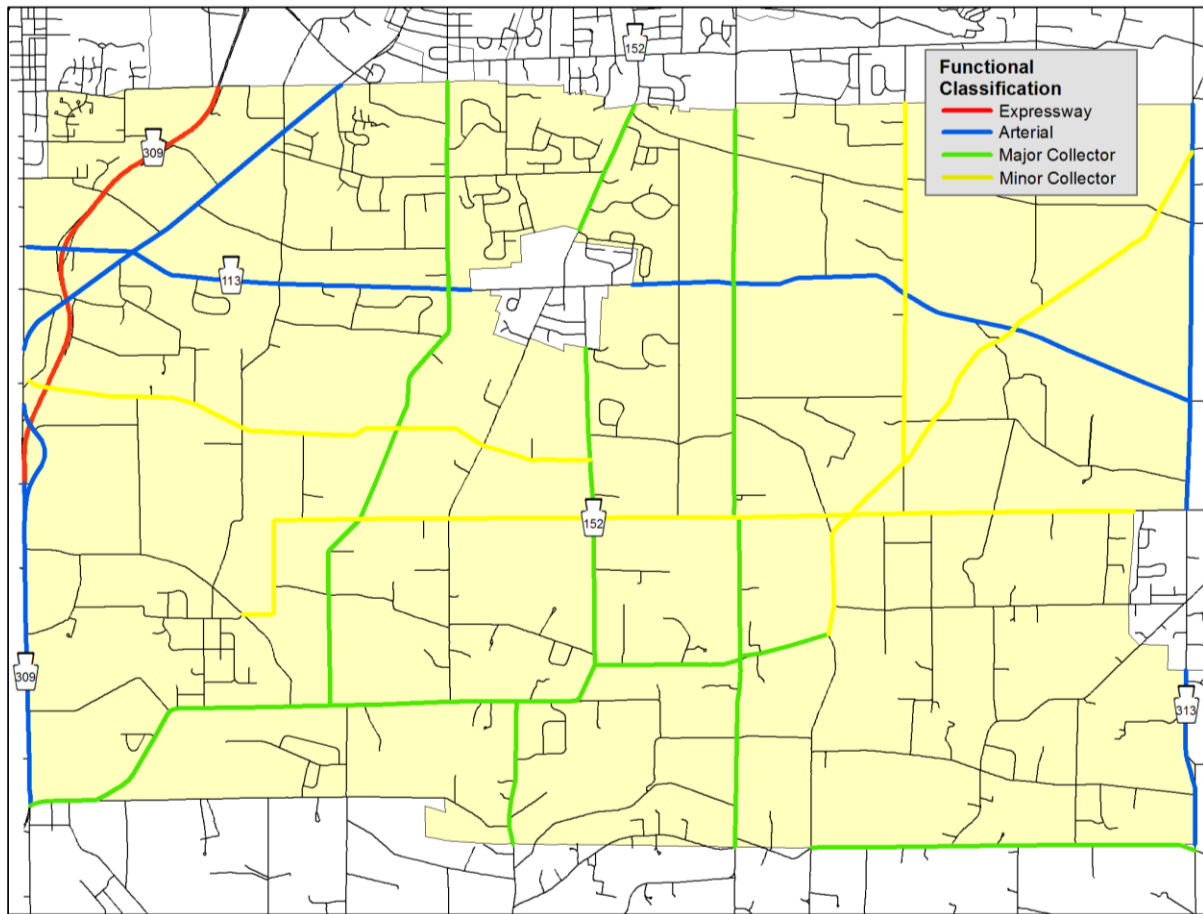
### Local Access Roads

This classification is intended to include streets and roads that provide direct access to abutting land and connections to higher classes of roadways. Traffic volumes will be low and travel distances generally short. These streets and roads should be designated for operating speeds of 25 to 35 miles per hour. All roads not classified as Expressway, Arterial, Major or Minor Collector are classified as Local Access.

According to the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance, each street classification shall have the following ultimate rights-of-way:

**Figure 9. Proposed Ultimate Rights-of-Way**

Street Classification	Ultimate Right-of-way
Expressway	To be determined by PennDOT
Arterials	100 Feet
Major Collectors	80 Feet
Minor Collectors	60 Feet
Local Streets	50 Feet

**Figure 10. Functional Classification**

Source: Hilltown Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance.

## Daily Trips

The Arterials and Expressway within Hilltown accommodate the majority of daily trips, and within those roads, County Line Road (Route 309) carries more than twice the number of trips as does Dublin Pike (Route 313), the second highest total trips in the township. For both roadways, the total trips carried were higher on the southeastern edge of the township, lessening progressively northward. From the counts, it is clear that Hilltown Pike and Route 113 are pass-through roads for the township, and in the case of Route 113, the main connection to Silverdale Borough.

## Current Road Conditions

Township-owned roadways are inspected by the Public Works Department. One of the most common problems on township roads is sight distance obstructed by vegetation at intersections. The Public Works Department trims the plants that obstruct the view three to four times a year

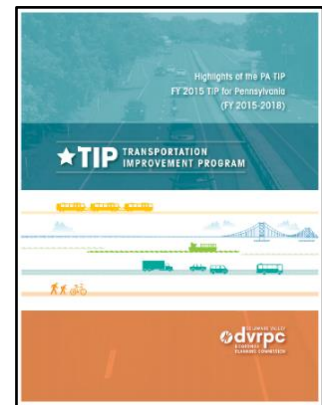
and works with landowners to remove or replace plants. Other roadway characteristics reviewed by the township include street width, vertical or horizontal alignment and drainage.

## Street Improvements

Where sufficient funds are available, Hilltown Township itself, or in conjunction with other government agencies will consider in-depth transportation studies that have as an objective the identification and evaluation of potential traffic flow problems within the township. An adequately funded and comprehensive study would help the township prioritize, develop, and orderly plan for improvements that may be necessary to existing township road system.

## DVRPC Transportation Improvement Program

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) produced the *FY 2015 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for Pennsylvania* for Bucks, Montgomery, Chester, Delaware and Philadelphia counties. DVRPC and its member governments prepare a program of projects that responds to the needs of the region and at the same time complies with federal and state policies. This list of transportation priorities must be financially constrained per the requirements of the *Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act* (FAST Act). In southeastern Pennsylvania, the TIP contains approximately 370 projects which total almost \$5 billion over the four years of the program.



As of the *FY 2015 Transportation Improvement Program for Pennsylvania*, there are 6 projects currently programmed for funding in Hilltown Township. These projects include:

- Rickert Road Bridge over Morris Run Creek
- PA Route 309 Connector – Phase 2 - The PA Route 309 Connector Project is a highway improvement project in a 5-mile corridor running east to west through five townships in Montgomery and Bucks counties. The purpose of the project is to provide a direct connection from Sumneytown Pike just north of the PA Turnpike's Lansdale Interchange to PA Route 309 in Hilltown Township in order to relieve existing and projected traffic congestion.
- Mill Road Bridge over Neshaminy Creek (completed)



- Route 309 Resurfacing Project - This project includes the resurfacing, repair or upgrade to guiderails, mile post sign repair and replacement, pavement marker installation, drainage, and safety signage for Route 309 from Church Road in Hilltown Township to Tollgate Road in Richland Township.
- Culvert Replacement Project (Dublin Pike over Morris Run)
- Quarry Road Bridge over Morris Run Creek

## Bicycling

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For many, bicycling is a form of recreation, for some, it may be the only form of transportation, except for walking. Biking is a modest type of exercise that most people are capable of performing. A bike-friendly town is typically associated with a high quality of life and a sense of community. In many communities, bicycle systems are important and much appreciated facilities. Furthermore, bicycling improves the quality of community life by increasing the social connections that take place when residents are active and spend time outdoors in their community.



Bucks County has adopted the *Bucks County Bicycle Master Plan, 2013*. The purpose of the Plan is to inventory existing conditions, advance opportunities for the improvement and expansion of a broader network of multimodal routes serving existing residential and business areas of the county, enhance the outreach and education of bicycle safety, and leverage the existing recreational resources in the communities at large.

This document is a master plan for an interconnected network of bicycle facilities for Bucks County and the region. It is a resource for municipalities in planning and implementing bicycle facilities across the county. It identifies priority roadways for bike lanes and shared-use paths. A major spine, called East/West Cross County Spine, follows Routes 663 and 313 from Milford Township, through Hilltown to Washington Crossing State Park in Upper Makefield Township. The intent of the major spines is to provide "connections" between transit centers, activity centers, tourist destinations, central business districts, recreation destinations and municipalities. A secondary goal of the network of major spines is to establish a group of bicycle facilities which provide coverage across the entire county.

The Route 113 Heritage Corridor is also identified in the bicycle master plan. The Route 113 Heritage Corridor provides a transportation and cultural link through historically significant towns, rolling landscape and green lands, and is described more thoroughly below.

## Route 113 Heritage Corridor Study

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The *PA 113 Heritage Corridor Transportation and Land Use Study* was completed in 2005. This study presents a summary of existing and anticipated future land use and transportation conditions within the 30-mile PA 113 Heritage Corridor, between Upper Providence Township, Montgomery County and Tinicum Township, Bucks County. The study notes that the Route 113 corridor through Hilltown contains various land uses including commercial, suburban residential and village, and rural agricultural areas. Based on land use characteristics along the corridor, the study offers recommendations related to roadway improvements, landscaping, and improving pedestrian and bike user safety.

For much of the Route 113 corridor through the township (from Route 313 to Bethlehem Pike), the study recommends a cross-section consisting of twelve-foot travel lanes with six-foot shoulders, and where possible in the residential villages, continuous sidewalks be provided. Due to the presence of the drainage ditches along this area, the plan recommends that the basic cross-section be modified to provide the ditches adjacent to the proposed six-foot shoulder. Regrading and the incorporation of plantings to prevent erosion, and the use of catch basins, as required, are also recommended.

For the township's commercial area from Bethlehem Pike to the border with Souderton, the study recommends the existing five-lane cross section be maintained with the center lane either striped as a two-way left-turn lane, or used for a planted median with openings for left-turn lanes at key intersections. It is noted that the existing cross section over Route 309 will most likely not be modified since any modifications would require widening which would, in turn, necessitate replacement of the existing bridge structure. Additionally, as a strategy to improve roadway function and pedestrian circulation, the study recommends that an access management study be conducted for this area to determine if the number of existing curb cuts can be reduced by providing shared access to businesses.

## Transportation Element Goals

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This Plan Element is intended to provide information related to the safe and efficient movement of people and goods which includes the local and regional streets and pedestrian and bikeway systems in and throughout the township, in accordance with Section 301.3 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (Act 247). Listed below are the implementation strategies of the Transportation and Energy Conservation Plan Element.

## Transportation Strategies

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1. Develop a transportation improvement program and develop incentives to implement necessary Master Plan Road improvements within the township.
2. Continue to require traffic impact studies of large developments, and consider undertaking an overall transportation and traffic improvement plan which can be used as a basis for requiring traffic improvement in conjunction with large developments.
3. Encourage intensive land uses to develop on only higher order streets and highways.
4. Develop a Pedestrian/Bicycle Master Plan that would interconnect neighborhoods to schools, parks, employment and commercial centers, and community facilities as alternative means of transportation.



# Housing Element

## Build-out Analysis

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The development areas of the township are intended to accept the majority of the growth projected for the township. These areas are currently served, or are adjacent to areas currently served, by public sewer and water. According to the Housing Element in the 2003 Comprehensive Plan, the majority of residential growth was anticipated to occur in the development area, primarily in the CR-1 Country Residential District 1 and CR-2 Country Residential District 2. The 2003 Plan stated that it appeared the development area could more than accommodate the growth projected for 2010. The following build-out analysis was completed to determine if the current development areas designated for residential construction are still adequate or if these areas need to be enlarged.

To determine the capacity of the residential development area, the potentially developable land remaining in the CR-1, CR-2, and VC zoning districts was analyzed.<sup>1</sup> Potentially developable lands consist of land classified as undeveloped, agricultural, and single-family—over 5 acres. Where properties within these three land use categories have been preserved or have conservation easements, that acreage has not been included in the developable land acreage. Based on a number of stated assumptions, a maximum density factor was applied to the potentially developable lands to calculate the potential number of dwelling units that could be built on those lands. Since these areas are within the township's delineated development district, calculations were made with the assumption that developable land will have public water and sewer service.

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<sup>1</sup> The two other residential zoning districts in the township's development area, the MHP Mobile Home Park and AQRC Age Qualified Residential Community Districts, have not been included in the build-out analysis. According to county records, the MHP District has several parcels classified as undeveloped and single-family—greater than 5 acres. However, individually, these parcels do not currently meet the minimum site area requirement in the MHP District. Land within the AQRC District has been committed to an age-qualified development that is currently under construction. There will not be any developable land remaining in the AQRC District once that development has been completed.

## Development Areas

### CR-1 District

In order to determine the maximum number of dwelling units possible, it was assumed that any tract greater than 5 acres in size would be developed as a performance subdivision. Net buildable site area was assumed to be 50% of the site area and the maximum density of 5 dwelling units per net buildable acre was used. Sites that were smaller than 5 acres were assumed to be developed as single-family detached lots on minimum lot sizes of 30,000 square feet (1.45 dwelling units per acre). For performance standard subdivisions, it was assumed that the dwelling units would be evenly split between single-family detached, single-family attached, and multi-family. Population estimated from these dwelling units was determined by using a household size of 2.74 persons per household (2010-2014 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau). This is a decline in household size from 2000 (2.81), as has been the trend. The maximum number of dwelling units, under the above assumptions (derived from current zoning), and the anticipated population in the CR-1 District is shown in Table 9.

### CR-2 District

There are two cluster options in the CR-2 District for tracts larger than 10 acres, and it was assumed that those tracts containing 10 acres or greater would be developed utilizing the Single-Family Cluster Option 1. Net buildable area was assumed to be 45% of the site area and the maximum density of 1.65 dwelling units per net buildable acre was utilized. Sites that were smaller than 10 acres were assumed to have a density of 0.65 dwelling units per acre (50,000 square foot [1.2 acres] lot with 25% inefficiency for roads, utilities, etc.) Table 9 shows the maximum number of additional dwelling units and the anticipated increase in population for the CR-2 District.

### VC District

The VC District permits Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) on a minimum site area of 5 acres. It was assumed that lots meeting this minimum site area would develop under the TND option. Net buildable area was assumed to be 70% of the site area, taking into account the required 20 percent open space and a minimum of 10 percent of site area required for nonresidential uses. A maximum density of 6.0 dwelling units per net buildable acre was utilized for the TND option. Sites that are smaller than 5 acres were assumed to have a density of 1.8 dwelling units per acre with the assumption they are served by public water and sewer facilities.

The maximum number of additional dwelling units which results and the anticipated increase in population is shown in Table 9.

## Conservation Areas

### RR District

Under the current zoning, tracts that are more than 20 acres can utilize a cluster subdivision. For tracts containing less than 20 acres but more than 10 acres, the Conservation Management Design development option can be utilized. Within the RR District, the housing yield of the Conservation Management Design option is less than that of a cluster. The density that is achieved using the cluster option, however, is similar to what would be achieved using 50,000 square foot (1.2 acres) lots, 0.65 dwelling units per acre, assuming a 25% inefficiency. For that reason, smaller tracts in the RR District were not factored out. If, however, there is no public water available, lots in the RR District must include an additional 80,680 square feet (1.85 acres) of deed restricted conservation land, until public water becomes available (unless the lots result from a "minor" subdivision). In this case, the minimum lot size would be three acres. Assuming a 25% inefficiency, the maximum density would be 0.25 dwelling units per acre on land that does not have public water provided by a municipal authority. Developable land in the RR District was divided between land that abuts an existing municipal water line and land that does not. The maximum number of additional dwelling units, under current zoning, and the expected increase in population is shown in Table 9. A density of 0.65 dwelling units per acre was used for the land that abuts an existing municipal water line and a density of 0.25 dwelling units per acre was used for the remaining land in the RR District.

**Table 9. Calculation of Build-out Based on Current Zoning**

	CR-1	CR-2	VC	RR, with public water	RR, without public water
Total Undeveloped Land (1)	320.4 ac	418.9 ac	24.4 ac	518.4 ac	6,584. ac
Undeveloped tracts > 5 acres	295.5 ac		12.0 ac		
Undeveloped tracts < 5 acres	24.9 ac		12.4 ac		
Undeveloped tracts > 10 acres		175.4 ac			
Undeveloped tracts < 10 acres		225.7 ac			
Net Buildable Site Area	147.75 ac	78.9 ac	8.4		
Units Possible	738	130	50	336	1,646
Maximum Density	5.0	1.65	6.0	0.65	0.25
Units from tracts < 5 acres	36		22		
Units from tracts < 10 acres		146			
Total Units Possible (2)	774	276	72	336	1,646
Single Family Detached	246	276		336	1,646
Single-Family Attached	246				
Multi-Family	246				
Increased Population Expected with calculated build-out (3)	2,120	756	197	920	4,510

Notes:

1. For this calculation, the sum total of developable lands was used. The number of potential residential units could be less based on individual site calculations.
2. The "Total Units Possible" calculations in this build-out projection have not projected, considered, or calculated acquisition of additional open space, land placed into permanent conservation and/or implementation of other recommended strategies within this comprehensive plan.
3. Assuming a calculation of 2.74 persons per household.

## Future Residential Development

The land that is currently zoned CR-1 could support about 2,120 additional people, the CR-2 District an additional 756 people, and the VC District an additional 197 people. The 2000-2014 ACS shows the township's population at 15,122 in 2014. Projecting population changes to 2025, the *DVRPC 2015-2045 Forecasts* project an increase in Hilltown's population to 16,349 by 2025, an increase over the 2014 population by 1,227.

According to township information, 235 residential building permits for new construction were issued from the beginning of 2011 through August of 2016. These records indicate that 32 of the



permits were issued for dwellings at Regency at Hilltown, an age-qualified residential development currently under construction in the AQRC District. The development has approval for a total of 268 age-qualified residential units; therefore, it is assumed that 236 permits will be applied for and issued in the future. Based on the remaining 236 building permits to be issued, the AQRC District can be expected to accommodate an additional 472 individuals (assuming a household size of 2.0 persons per dwelling unit based on the nature of the use.) Once construction of the approved development has been completed, the AQRC District will be built-out.

Using the projected population increase of 1,227 people (by 2025) minus the future population attributed with the remaining units at the Regency at Hilltown (472 persons), it can be anticipated that 755 additional people, outside of the approved age-restricted community, will reside within the township in the year 2025.

Subtracting the 32 permits issued in the AQRC District results in 203 building permits issued in other districts. Of this number, 1.5% has been issued for property in the CR-1 District, 47.8% in the CR-2 District, and 50.7% in the RR District. There were no residential building permits issued for new construction in the VC District during this time frame. If this trend continues, of the 755 additional people expected to live in Hilltown in the year 2025, outside of the AQRC District, approximately 12 (1.5%) will reside in the CR-1 District and 361 (47.8%) will reside in the CR-2 District.

As can be seen from Table 9, the vast majority of the developable land, over nine times the developable land in the CR-1, CR-2, and VC Districts combined, is located in the RR District. It can be expected, if development trends continue as they have for the last several years, that approximately 50.7% of the additional expected 2025 population of 755 people, approximately 383 people, would reside in the RR District.

While the township information indicates that building permits for new residential construction were not issued in the VC District from 2011 to July of 2016, it is noted that this district is able to accommodate some additional development based on the remaining developable land area shown in Table 9.

Considering the development trends and remaining developable acreages, it appears that the current development area can more than accommodate the growth projected for 2025.

## Future Land Consumption

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This section shows how much land could be developed based on development trends. Using the projected population increase of 755 people by 2025 (1,227 total persons minus the future population of 472 persons attributed with the remaining units at the Regency at Hilltown), the total number of new units would be 276 (755 persons divided by 2.74 persons per household). By using the proportions above, the CR-1 District is projected to have 4 new units (1.5% of the total), which, with a density of five (5) units per acre, would result in almost 1.0 acres being developed within that district. The CR-2 District's proportion (47.8%) would create 132 units, and consume 80.0 acres (at the assumed density of 1.65 units per acre).

Development within the RR District is based on the availability of public water, as previously mentioned; therefore, the land consumption may change based on changes to the existing water facilities within the township. The total number of new units implied for the RR District would be 140 (50.7% of the total.) In 2003, 6% of the units in the RR District were served by public water. For the purposes of these calculations, an estimate of 20% of the units in the RR District is assumed would be served by public water (based on the number of parcels that abut a municipal water line.) Therefore, of the 140 new units in the RR District, 28 would be served by public water and consume 43 acres (at the assumed density of 0.65 units per acre.) The remaining 112 units would consume 448 acres (at the assumed density of 0.25 units per acre.)

While development in the RR District would represent only 50.7% of the projected dwelling units, it would consume almost 86% of all the land that would be developed for residential purposes (the bulk of this, or 78.3% of the total land to be residentially developed, would be RR land without access to public water). The projected consumption of land in the CR-1 and CR-2 Districts are 0.2% and 14% respectively. These calculations are best summarized by Table 10.

While development trends over the past few years show no new construction in the VC District, there is remaining developable land which could accommodate future development in two of the three VC districts.

**Table 10. Projected Land Consumption**

Development District	# of Units	% of Units	Land Consumed (Acres)	% of Land
CR-1	4	1.5%	1.0	0.2%
CR-2	132	47.8%	80.0	14.0%
RR	140	50.7%	491	85.8%
RR (with public water)	28	10.1%	43	7.5%
RR (without public water)	112	40.6%	448	78.3%
Total	276	100%	572	100%

## Housing Plan

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The major goal for the housing plan is to provide a diversity of residential opportunities. Of particular concern is the ability to provide housing for a broad range of income groups, and to give options for a variety of housing types. Present zoning in Hilltown allows for a range of housing types which are designed to allow for variety in style, size and price range to accommodate individuals and families of different income levels, family situation, and stage of life. Residential densities in the township range from 1 housing unit per 3 acres in the RR District with no public sewer or water to 6.0 housing units per acre in a Traditional Neighborhood Development in the VC District. Lot sizes in a performance subdivision are as small as 1,800 square feet for a one bedroom townhouse.

The 2014 (ACS) population of Hilltown is 15,122 with a household size of 2.74 persons per household. The most recent DVRPC projections show a 2025 population forecast of 16,349 for Hilltown. This would be an increase of 1,227 people, or slightly greater than 8%, above the 2014 ACS figure. Of the projected increase of 1,227 people, 472 of those individuals can be assumed to live in the Regency at Hilltown age-restricted housing development. Based on the remaining projected population of 755 individuals and the current household size of 2.74 persons per household, it is projected that Hilltown will need to provide close to 276 new housing units by 2025. As the calculation of build-out based on current zoning in Table 9 shows, there is ample area available to accommodate these units.

Based on the current development trends in Hilltown and as measured against the MPC requirement to maintain an adequate mix of housing types, a reasonable mix of housing types is being provided in the township. In addition, there is adequate opportunity to provide for mobile homes. As stated in the Land Use Plan section of this document, mobile home parks are allowed

in the MHP, LI and PC-1 Districts. Overall, the equitable distribution of housing types, from large lot single-family to mobile home has been provided in Hilltown, and when considering the projected need, can easily continue to be provided over the next ten years.

## Housing Plan Implementation Strategies

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- Address the disproportionate land consumption in the RR District. Various options should be considered which either would direct development into the development districts or permit RR development using development techniques that are less land-consumptive. Options to consider would include a possible increase(s) in density in certain areas of the township (i.e., farm clusters, conservation developments, village centers, CR-1 and/or CR-2 Districts).
- Monitor the need to amend the housing mix provisions for CR-1 Performance Subdivisions (Zoning Ordinance). Market trend and developer preferences have historically provided a reasonable mix of housing types in these developments. Theoretically, however, developments under this option could be all single-family, since three of the unit types permitted are different variations of single-family detached units.
- Consider evaluating the merits of permitting residential uses on sites of less than the required 20-acre minimum site area in the MHP District.
- Monitor the development of LI land; should the majority of this land become developed for light industrial/office purposes, consideration should be given to identifying an additional location(s) for mobile home parks.

# Nonresidential Development and Economic Activity

A balance of residential and nonresidential development is essential for the economic well-being of a community. Economic development focuses on aspects such as employment opportunities, businesses providing goods and services to residents, and a stable and growing tax base. Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the township's economic base is important for making policy decisions as they relate to zoning and infrastructure.

This chapter includes an overview of the township's nonresidential land use base, employment characteristics of township residents, an analysis of developable nonresidential lands, a retail market analysis, an assessment of the areas planned and zoned for nonresidential uses, and a summary of the results of the Hilltown Township Business Survey. The information presented is intended to identify economic development opportunities within the township.

## Employment (Occupation and Industry)

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According to the 2010-2014 American Community Survey (ACS), 67.6 percent of the township's population, age 16 and older, participates in the labor force. The Census data indicate that 6.9 percent of the township's labor force was unemployed. In comparison, the County labor force had a 68.7 percent participation rate and a 7.8 percent unemployment rate. As of August, 2016, the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry reported Bucks County's unemployment rate at 4.4 percent. Municipal-level data is not available at this time.

**Table 11. Employment, Hilltown Township and Bucks County, 2014**

Locality	Population, 16 years and older	Civilian Labor Force	Armed Forces	Not in Labor Force	Participation Rate	Unemployment Rate
Hilltown Township	11,955	8,086	0	3,869	67.6%	6.9%
Bucks County	505,463	347,243	261	157,959	68.7%	7.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

The following tables provide insight to the employment characteristics of township residents. The first table indicates how residents are employed by occupation. Occupation is the kind of work a person does to earn a living regardless of what industry the occupation is classified under. Industry, as shown in the second table, is the type of activity at the workplace, the sector of the economy to which a specific occupation belongs. In some instances, a resident's occupation and industry will be the same (e.g., a construction worker), but not in all cases. These tables only indicate how township residents are employed, not the composition of employment in township-based businesses.

As shown in Table 12, the highest percentage of residents is employed in Management, Business, Science, and Art occupations (e.g., engineers, physicians, and executives), followed by Sales and Office occupations (e.g., cashiers, travel agents, and secretaries). Together these two categories of occupations make up slightly more than 70 percent of the township's work force. Service occupations (e.g., firefighters, home health aides, and child care workers) account for 11.1 percent, Production, Transportation, and Material Moving occupations (e.g., machinists, drivers, and welders) for 10.3 percent, and Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance occupations (e.g., electricians and mechanics) for 7.4 percent of all resident occupations.

**Table 12. Resident Occupation, 2014**

Occupation	Number	Percentage
Management, Business, Science, and Arts	3,106	41.3%
Sales and Office	2,257	30.0%
Service	837	11.1%
Production, Transportation, and Material Moving	773	10.3%
Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance	554	7.4%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>7,527</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: U.S. Census, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-year Estimate

Table 13 shows the types of industries township residents are employed in. The main employment strengths in the township are education, health, and social services fields in which almost 20 percent of working township residents are employed. This was followed by 14.4 percent of the township workforce in manufacturing jobs, 12.7 percent in the retail trade, and 12.4 percent in professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services. Approximately 8.2 percent of working township residents are employed in both the construction industry, and the finance, insurance, and real estate industries.

**Table 13. Resident Employment by Industry, 2014**

Industry	Number	Percentage
Educational, Health and Social Services	1,499	19.9%
Manufacturing	1,084	14.4%
Retail Trade	955	12.7%
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, and Waste Management Services	935	12.4%
Construction	617	8.2%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, and Rental and Leasing	616	8.2%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation, Accommodation, and Food Services	452	6.0%
Other Services	376	5.0%
Wholesale Trade	370	4.9%
Information	213	2.8%
Transportation and Warehousing, and Utilities	207	2.8%
Public Administration	126	1.7%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, and Mining	77	1.0%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>7,527</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: U.S. Census, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-year Estimate

The Census data does not detail information regarding the employment base on a municipal level. However, the largest employers in the township include Carson Helicopters, H & K Quarry, Blooming Glen Contractors, Giant Supermarket, Wal-Mart, Home Depot, and public elementary schools. As discussed above, the highest percentage of residents are employed in management and professional occupations followed closely by sales and office occupations. Given that this professional workforce already lives in Hilltown, it would be advantageous to encourage businesses that employ a professional work force to locate in the township.

## Fiscal Impacts of Different Land Uses

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In considering the balance between different land uses, it is important to understand the relationship between revenues and costs associated with various types of land uses. A 2006 Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences study<sup>2</sup> examined the fiscal impacts of commercial, industrial, residential, and open space<sup>3</sup> land uses and found that residential land generally costs local governments, while commercial, industrial, farm, and open lands help local governments by paying more than they require back in services.

Although residential land use provides a majority of overall revenues, it does not pay its own way, as the costs to educate school children are very high. Commercial and industrial land uses, however, provide more revenue to the school district and municipality than they generally require in expenditures. The immediate fiscal impact from commercial and industrial development is generally positive since there is often minimal demand for additional services. Expenditures for such nonresidential uses are often felt a few years later if services, such as increased police and fire protection and new infrastructure associated with roads and utilities, are needed. Other potential costs may be more difficult to identify, such as the loss of tax revenue from businesses closing because of competition from new businesses, increased residential development that often follows commercial development, and slow property appreciation since commercial property appreciates at a slower rate than residential property.

Farmland and open space land uses also provide more revenue to the school district and municipality than required in expenditures, although the amount of revenue and cost of services are much less for this land use category. Commercial, industrial, and open space land uses also provide a subsidy to both school districts and residential taxpayers in that none of these uses generates school age children. Consequently, nonresidential and open space land uses help keep residents' taxes low. Thus, a variety of nonresidential land uses should continue to be permitted in the township to help maintain a low tax burden on residents.

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<sup>2</sup> Kelsey, Timothy W.: The Fiscal Impacts of Different Land Uses. The Pennsylvania Experience in 2006 (College of Agricultural Sciences, Penn State University, 2006.)

<sup>3</sup> Including farmland.



## Nonresidential Land Use Characteristics

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Nonresidential development has been concentrated primarily in areas of the township with direct access to major transportation routes. With the exception of the Village Center and Quarry zoning districts located in the central and northern areas of Hilltown, the township's commercial and industrial districts are located primarily near Bethlehem Pike, Route 309, County Line Road, and along Route 113 between Bethlehem Pike and County Line Road in the southern portion of the township, and along Route 313, near Dublin Borough, in the northern portion of the township. While there are some existing nonresidential uses located outside of these districts, the township's commercial and industrial uses primarily fall within the designated nonresidential districts. Village areas containing a mix of residential and nonresidential uses have been zoned to preserve and encourage the continuation of existing mixed land use patterns.

## Local and Regional Economic Development

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Hilltown's land use pattern has largely been dictated by its location near several small boroughs and the highway network connecting the township to further regions such as Philadelphia, Montgomery County, and the Lehigh Valley. The nearby boroughs of Silverdale, Perkasio, Sellersville, Telford, Souderton, and Dublin have traditionally provided township residents, farmers, and small business owners with goods and services. Hilltown's mixed use villages of Blooming Glen, Hilltown, and Line Lexington also provide goods and services, which have allowed a majority of Hilltown, with its productive soils, to become a strong agricultural area. Consisting of almost one-fifth of the township's land area in 2015, agriculture remains an important economic activity in the township. Agricultural uses contribute to the local economy in terms of food and plant production, local farm stands and stores, employment opportunities, and sustainability. More information on this topic is provided in the Land Use Element of this Plan.

Most of the commercial and industrial uses in Hilltown are concentrated along Bethlehem Pike, Route 309/County Line Road, and Route 313. There are two transportation projects currently on the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) Transportation Improvement Program that will impact Route 309 and may have regional implications as related to nonresidential development within the township. These projects are the PA Route 309 Connector and the Route 309 Resurfacing Project. The PA Route 309 Connector, when completed, will provide a direct connection from Sumneytown Pike, just north of the PA Turnpike's Lansdale Interchange, to Route 309 in Hilltown. This project is intended to relieve existing and projected traffic congestion. It is likely that this improvement project will result in other economic benefits to

the township through increased patronage to businesses along Route 309 and by increasing the viability of additional development along the corridor. The Route 309 Resurfacing Project will include the resurfacing, repair, and upgrades to Route 309 from Church Road in Hilltown to Tollgate Road in Richland Township. These improvements should have a positive impact for economic development by improving access to the area and ensuring that the transportation infrastructure is in a state of good repair. These factors will make properties along the corridor more appealing to current and potential businesses.

Improvements to infrastructure, such as roadways, water, and sewer, rank high in importance from local business owners. In the Hilltown Township Business Survey sent to businesses within the township, when asked to select the five most important things the township could do to improve the ability to operate a successful business, an overwhelming majority of respondents identified “improve infrastructure (roads, utilities)” as the most important.

In addition to existing agricultural, commercial, and industrial operations, the township has other nonresidential uses that contribute to the local economy and the tax base through employment opportunities and by providing additional customer base to support local businesses. These include institutional uses, such as religious facilities, public and private schools, and two stone quarries.

## Inventory of Developable Land in Nonresidential Districts

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This section provides an analysis regarding the ability of the developable land in the nonresidential zoning districts to accommodate projected growth in the number of jobs that will be located in the township from 2015 to 2025. To determine the capacity of the nonresidential development areas, the potentially developable land remaining in the nonresidential zoning districts was analyzed. Potentially developable lands consist of agricultural, single-family—greater than 5 acres, and undeveloped that have not been preserved. Parcels that contain an existing nonresidential use but are large enough to accommodate further development were excluded from the calculation. Therefore, additional opportunities may exist for infill development or expansion on these lots. As with any zoning district, the development potential is dependent upon the presence of natural resources and applicable resource protection standards. Potential natural resources have not been determined and factored out for these calculations.

This inventory focuses on nonresidential districts that accommodate commercial, office, and industrial uses. For a complete understanding of the nonresidential potential in the region, the following briefly describes the purposes, ordinance requirements, and location of, as well as the potential developable lands in, the township's nonresidential districts. The Q Quarry District has not been included since that is considered a special use district specific to extraction-type uses. Also, the VC Village Center District has not been included since potentially developable land in that district has been included in the calculations for potential future housing units as described in the Housing Element of this Plan.

**PC-1 Planned Commercial-1 District** – Intended to have a “regional” draw, the purpose of this district is to provide commercial and service-type uses along Route 309, Bethlehem Pike, and County Line Road. A variety of institutional, office, and retail and consumer service uses is permitted on minimum 20,000-square-foot lots with a maximum permitted impervious surface ratio of 70 percent, provided public water and sewer service is available. Each of the three separate areas zoned PC-1 contains some potentially developable land for a combined total of approximately 54.71 acres.

**PC-2 Planned Commercial-2 District** – The purpose of this district is to provide small-scale commercial uses to serve nearby neighborhoods. Located along the Route 113 Corridor on each side of Dublin Borough, this district permits a variety of commercial and service-type uses on minimum 50,000-square-foot lots with a maximum permitted impervious surface ratio of 70 percent, provided public water and sewer service is available. This district is not currently served by public water and sewer service. A combined total of approximately 7.59 acres of land is potentially developable within the three areas zoned PC-2.

**LI Light Industrial District** – The intent of this district is to provide high quality light industrial development. Located along portions of Bethlehem Pike and Route 309, this district permits commercial, office, and laboratory research uses. Development is permitted on minimum 2-acre lots, with a maximum impervious surface ratio of 60 percent, provided public water and sewer service is available. A combined total of approximately 89.85 acres of potentially developable land is located in two of the four areas zoned LI (within the large LI District along Route 309, Bethlehem Pike and Reliance and School House roads, and along Route 309/County Line Road bordering Hatfield Township.)

**HI Heavy Industrial District** – Intended to accommodate heavy industrial uses, this district is located along Bethlehem Pike and Route 309, adjacent to West Rockhill Township. Uses such as

manufacturing, planing mill, auto salvage, junk yard, and resource recovery are permitted on minimum 2-acre lots, with a maximum impervious surface ratio of 60 percent, provided the lots have public water and sewer service. This district contains two parcels totaling 23.41 acres of potentially developable land; one large parcel along Bethlehem Pike and one parcel bordering Route 309.

Hilltown was estimated to have 6,113 jobs in 2015 according to the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) draft employment estimates and adopted employment projections. The township is projected to have 6,509 jobs in 2025, an increase of 396 jobs from nonresidential development. To determine if the potentially developable nonresidential areas of the township have the capacity to provide for this projected increase in jobs, the following calculations have been made in Table 14:

- The total acreage identified in nonresidential zoning districts was analyzed to determine the possible percentage of building area that reasonably could be constructed on that acreage.
- The base site area for each district was determined by subtracting the amount of area that would be associated with needed utilities and roadways from the total acreage. It was assumed that 15 percent of the total acreage would be used for utilities and roadways.
- The maximum amount of impervious surface that could be constructed on the base site area for each district was determined using the maximum impervious surface ratios established in the Hilltown Township Zoning Ordinance (70 percent for the PC-1 and PC-2 districts and 60 percent for the LI and HI districts.)
- The impervious surface area per employee was determined by adding the estimated building area square footage for each employee in commercial and industrial uses<sup>4</sup> to the calculated square footage of parking and driveway areas (based on the required parking stall size of 9.5 by 19 feet with a 24-foot wide driveway aisle per the Hilltown Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance) for each employee. For both the commercial and industrial districts, a conservative approach was taken by using the

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<sup>4</sup> The number of square feet required for each employee in each of the general categories of uses (commercial, office, industrial, and warehousing) was calculated based on a survey of several recent land use studies conducted in a variety of areas in the United States.

use composition with the lowest employee generator to calculate the total number of employees. In the commercial districts, calculations were based on 1-story commercial development; for the industrial districts, calculations were based on 1-story warehouse development. If future development in these districts were to occur as multiple-story buildings containing other permitted uses, the number of employees that the districts could accommodate would increase.

- The potential number of employees in each zoning district was added together to determine the number of potential jobs that could be created in the township.

The results of this nonresidential area analysis for the township are presented in Table 14 which follows.

**Table 14. Nonresidential Areas Analysis for Hilltown Township**

Zoning District	Total Acreage	Base Site Area (sq. ft.)	Maximum Impervious Surface Ratio	Maximum Impervious Surface (sq. ft.)	Impervious Surface per Employee	Potential # of Employees
PC-1	54.71	2,025,692	70%	1,417,985	694.5	2,042
PC-2	7.59	281,027	70%	196,719.1	694.5	283
LI	89.85	3,855,158	60%	2,313,094.8	1044.5	2,215
HI	23.41	866,778	60%	520,066.8	1044.5	498
					<b>Total</b>	<b>5,038</b>

This analysis indicates that potential jobs from nonresidential zoned areas, if fully developed, could produce slightly over 5,000 new jobs in the township. This is well over the projected increase of 396 additional jobs in the township by 2025, and demonstrates that the township has adequate areas zoned for nonresidential uses to accommodate employment growth well into the future.

## Retail Market Analysis

Environmental Systems Research Institute, referred to as ESRI, is a mapping software company that utilizes data to provide generalized marketing information to major companies. ESRI information is based on a calculation of many different factors that are used as a guide. The data is statistical in nature and is not meant to indicate that there isn't enough of a certain type of use or industry in an area.

A review of retail market data for the township's three most significant concentrations of commercial activity: at Line-Lexington (centered at the intersection of Line Lexington Road and Bethlehem Pike), the County Line Plaza/Hilltown Shopping Center market area (centered at the intersection of PA 113 and PA 309), and the Dublin market area (centered at Main Street (PA 313) and Dublin Road) can aid in determining actions that could support the township's economic development objectives. Economic development requires a multi-pronged, nuanced approach that understands the local market and business environment, engages business owners and residents, and builds on community strengths.

Data generated by ESRI can be used to create a market profile of retail sales supply and demand, which takes into account factors that include population, housing units, household income, median age, and driving time toward the market area under evaluation. The market areas cover nearly all of the township (a small portion of the far northeastern part township is not covered by the County Line Plaza/Hilltown Shopping Center trade area) and continue into the adjoining municipalities. The market areas have variable scope, depending on whether the 5-minute, 10-minute, or 15-minute drive time is under consideration. Detailed data tables for the 15-minute drive time and market area maps can be found in Appendix A.

The market profiles derived from the data note categories where retail "leakage" is taking place, that is, people are going outside of the trade area to purchase goods and services, resulting in excess demand, based on national consumer spending averages, and the potential opportunity for a retail category to locate in the area. Conversely, the market profile also notes categories where spending exceeds the national average, suggesting that a surplus of particular goods and services may exist within the trade area.

The median 2016 household income for the Line-Lexington market area ranged from \$89,367 within 5 minutes' driving time to \$84,964 within 15 minutes' driving time. The top categories showing leakage, or unmet demand, within up to 15 minutes' driving time of Line Lexington, and of a nature potentially suitable for the area, are: furniture stores; electronics and appliance stores; building material and supplies dealers; beer, wine, and liquor stores; gasoline stations; clothing stores; sporting goods, hobby, book, and music stores; general merchandise stores; florists; used merchandise stores (including consignment shops); and full-service and limited-service restaurants.

The median 2016 household income for the County Line Plaza/Hilltown Shopping Center market area ranged from \$62,078 within 5 minutes' driving time, to \$77,301 within 15 minutes' driving

time. The top categories showing leakage, within up to 15 minutes' driving time of the PA 113 and PA 309 intersection, and potentially suitable for this area, are: motor vehicle and parts dealers; electronics and appliance stores; building materials, garden equipment and supply stores; beer, wine, and liquor stores; gasoline stations; clothing and clothing accessories stores; book, periodical and music stores; florists; office supplies, stationery, and gift stores; and full-service and limited service restaurants.

The median 2016 household income for the Dublin market area ranged from \$76,523 within 5 minutes' driving time, to \$81,299 within 15 minutes' driving time. The top categories showing leakage, within up to 15 minutes' driving time of the intersection of Main Street (Route 313) and Dublin Road, and potentially suitable for this area, are: electronics and appliance stores; specialty food stores; beer, wine, and liquor stores; gasoline stations; clothing and shoe stores; general merchandise stores; sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores; and full-service and limited service restaurants.

## Business Survey

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In an effort to consider issues and concerns of local businesses, the township prepared and distributed a business survey in August of 2016. The survey was designed to garner input as to what qualities make Hilltown a good place to locate a business and what challenges face the business community. Using the township's business database, the survey was distributed to businesses located within Hilltown. A total of 63 surveys were completed and returned for an approximate response rate of 20 percent. Survey results are located in Appendix B of this document.

As would be expected, the majority of responses were received from businesses located in the northwest portion of the township, where the largest concentration of nonresidential uses exists. Slightly more than a quarter of the responses came from retail businesses, followed by 14 percent from industrial/manufacturing businesses, and 8 percent each from eating establishments and professional office uses. Almost half (47%) of the responses were received from long-time businesses in the township, those having operated in Hilltown for 21 or more years, and almost half (49%) of the respondents indicated they rented their place of business, as opposed to owning the business location. When asked why they chose Hilltown for their business location, 24 percent of respondents cited proximity to markets, customer base, suppliers, or complementary businesses. Responding businesses serve mostly local clientele as local residents make up almost 67 percent of the customer base. Hilltown, surrounding communities, and Bucks

and Montgomery counties, together make up 56 percent of the responding business' geographic market.

While 56 percent of responses indicated no business plan changes are planned in the township within the next three years, when asked what obstacles have been encountered or would be expected if the business tried to expand, 35 percent cited a combination of too many state and township regulations, 13 percent cited too much time required for local approval and the permitting process, and 17 percent indicated that expansion would exceed the amount of impervious surface allowed for the site. When asked if the business' physical location, or existing lot size, is a constraint on future plans for expansion due to zoning and other regulatory restrictions, 79 percent indicated it is not, while 17 percent indicated they would be constrained. Taxes and other costs, access to highways, and the costs of doing business, such as energy, rent, etc., surfaced as the biggest challenges for businesses looking ahead to the next 10 years.

Overall, 84 percent of respondents thought that the business climate in the township is good to very good. When asked to identify ways to improve business success, the top responses included "improve infrastructure (roads, utilities)", "provide more flexible zoning requirements", and "improve township licensing and regulatory process." While issues such as regulatory restrictions, approval and permitting processes, and highway access, surfaced as concerns by business owners, 68 percent of respondents indicated they would recommend Hilltown as a place to locate a business.

## Areas Zoned for Nonresidential Uses

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Market conditions, in addition to access to transportation routes, zoning regulations, and the availability of public water and sewer facilities, are prime factors that help determine where nonresidential uses will be located and at what level of intensity. Hilltown's existing nonresidential zoning districts are well planned along major transportation routes that cross through or border the township. As mentioned previously, the Route 309, Bethlehem Pike, and County Line Road corridors, located in the western and southern areas of the township, are zoned to accommodate a variety of highway commercial and service uses, as well as light and heavy industrial uses. The Route 313 corridor along the township's northeastern border is zoned to provide for smaller-scale commercial uses geared to serve nearby neighborhoods.

The analysis of potentially developable land in these districts indicates that the township has adequate areas zoned for nonresidential uses to accommodate employment growth. Most of



the land considered as potentially developable is classified as undeveloped or vacant. An element that largely influences how a lot can be developed is the availability of public water and sewer facilities. A major constraint to nonresidential development in the PC-2 district is the lack of public water and sewer facilities. This is also a limiting factor in some other nonresidential districts, as not all parcels have public water and sewer facilities. Improving infrastructure (roads and utilities) was the top response when business survey takers were asked what the township could do to improve their ability to operate a business. And, a number of survey write-in responses suggested that expansion of public water and/or sewer facilities would improve the viability of the township's business districts.

A comparison between land use and township zoning designations reveals that many of the nonresidential districts contain existing residential uses, primarily single-family detached residences. While the potential exists for these residential areas to be redeveloped in accordance with the applicable nonresidential district, the township should continue to ensure that adequate buffer and nuisance standards are applied to mitigate impacts to existing residences.

## **Zoning Requirements**

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In addition to considering potentially developable land in the nonresidential districts, it is also important to review the township's existing zoning regulations to ensure development and redevelopment opportunities are possible. A general comparison of nonresidential zoning district area and dimensional requirements between Hilltown and similar nearby townships was conducted. Generally, it was found that Hilltown's requirements for the PC-1, PC-2, LI, and HI districts fall within a range of similar requirements in other communities.

### **Impervious Surface Coverage**

A comparison of impervious surface coverage requirements with nearby townships found that Hilltown's requirements fall somewhere in the middle. Some surrounding communities permit slightly higher maximum impervious surface ratios in both industrial and commercial districts, while others permit slightly lower or similar maximum ratios. For instance, in Plumstead Township's Light Industrial District and New Britain Township's Industrial District, a maximum impervious surface ratio of 65 percent is permitted, compared to Hilltown's 60 percent maximum. Hatfield Township permits a maximum impervious surface coverage of 75 percent in both the Light Industrial and Light Industrial Restricted Commercial districts. Townships permitting lower or similar maximum impervious surface ratios include: Bedminster Township's Industrial District and West

Rockhill Township's Planned Industrial District which permit maximum impervious surface ratios of 55 and 60 percent, respectively.

Similar differences were also found in commercial district regulations. Hilltown permits a maximum impervious coverage of 70 percent in both commercial districts. Nearby townships permitting higher coverages include Milford and Richland townships which both permit a maximum impervious surface ratio of 85 percent in the PC Planned Commercial districts; adjacent East and West Rockhill townships permit lower or similar maximum impervious surface ratios of 55 and 60 percents, respectively, in their commercial districts.

## **Parking Standards**

A general overview of parking standards suggests that the township should examine its parking requirements. Some uses have parking standards that may be excessive. For instance, for Use E1 Retail Store, the zoning ordinance requires one off-street parking for each 100 square feet of gross area used or intended to be used for serving customers, plus one additional space for every two employees. Based on this requirement, a 10,000-square-foot retail store may require 100 parking spaces before the required employee parking is included. Surplus parking wastes land, results in disconnected development patterns, and results in excessive impervious surface which limits water recharge thereby affecting the water table and further exacerbating stormwater runoff problems. Surplus parking also adds substantial additional costs to development and redevelopment.

## **Vacant or Underutilized Parcels**

Nonresidential development can take place on undeveloped land in appropriate zoning districts, or through redevelopment efforts on sites with existing underutilized, or vacant, structures. Consideration of underutilized properties is important to identifying economic development opportunities in the township. The following areas have been identified as underutilized and potentially suitable for redevelopment due to current vacancy status, business relocation/closure, or site characteristics. This information is not meant to be an exact inventory of all potentially developable sites, but rather an attempt to highlight some of the larger areas of opportunity. For any of the sites noted, the availability of public water and sewer service is an important consideration and would need to be verified.

- Within the PC-1 district bounded by Bethlehem Pike, Orchard Road, and Pheasant Hill Road, two parcels have been identified as potentially developable: one vacant parcel consisting of 3 acres and one parcel containing an existing single-family residential use

on 11.2 acres. The 3-acre parcel is a vacant field owned by the Hilltown Township Historical Society and is across Keystone Drive from the Hartzel-Strassburger Homestead which was recently listed on the National Register of Historic Places as the Strassburger Farmstead. A preliminary plan to develop the 11.2-acre parcel with a religious temple and community center which offers cultural activities has been submitted to the township.

Both parcels are separated by an existing residential development and a separate residential lot within the PC-1 district, but are not far from commercial areas along Bethlehem Pike just north in West Rockhill Township and the R&S Diner located across Bethlehem Pike. Both parcels have frontage on at least two roadways. A majority of the larger parcel is wooded and contains floodplain which may limit the extent of future development on the site. Township officials may want to coordinate with the property owners of these potentially developable sites to see if there is any interest in having the properties developed for nonresidential uses in the future.

- The HI district is primarily occupied with existing businesses but it does contain two vacant parcels. The largest vacant parcel within this district is 19.18 acres and is located along Bethlehem Pike, bordering the township's LI district to the south. This parcel is fairly regular in shape and, due to its size, provides good opportunity for additional industrial development in this district. This district also contains some vacant building space.
- There are multiple vacant properties located within the LI district that borders E. Central Avenue, primarily in the area west of Bethlehem Pike and south of Reliance Road. Almost all of these vacant properties are over 5 acres, with two of the parcels containing slightly more than 10 acres each. In addition, within this district there are a few businesses located on portions of several large properties that could be further developed.
- The PC-1 district just south of E. Central Avenue contains two parcels totaling 23 acres that offer significant opportunity for new development. Located along County Line Road, west of Route 309, the site was previously used by the Souderton Area School District for athletic fields, and is currently up for sale. The site is fairly level and has no significant natural resources to limit the development potential. The site has been the subject of two different sketch plan proposals, both for residential development. However, given adjacent industrial and commercial land uses, the site is more suitable for nonresidential development. The site is located in close proximity to Telford and

Souderton boroughs and nearby commercial areas in Hilltown. Future development of the site should include pedestrian connections to nearby sidewalks.

- Also within this PC-1 district there are smaller residential parcels that may have some potential for development as nonresidential uses. These residential pockets are located along Cherry Lane, west of Bethlehem Pike, and between Spur Road and Bethlehem Pike just south of the LI district. Some of these parcels may lend themselves to adaptive reuse or to a new use.
- Two vacant industrial buildings with for-sale signs were identified within the LI district located just south of Cherry Lane. One of the vacant buildings appears to be a former collision center on a 2.95-acre lot located between Route 309 and Spur Road. While the building does not appear to house a business currently, the site is being used for storage of large recreational-type vehicles. The other building is located on a 2.6-acre lot at the corner of Bethlehem Pike and Spur Road. This lot may have some limitations due to its triangular shape. Both of these sites are located close to major roadways and the buildings may lend themselves to adaptive reuse or to a new use.
- Two large undeveloped parcels totaling approximately 36 acres are located within the LI district bordering the PECO power lines. Located just north of the Car Sense Auto dealer on Bethlehem Pike, both parcels are completely wooded and a stream is located on the smaller of the two lots. Future development on these parcels may be limited due to natural resource limitations.
- The PC-1 district along Route 309/County Line Road, located south of Church Road, contains few vacant or undeveloped properties. Development along much of this corridor has occurred on an individual lot basis most likely because a majority of the PC-1 district in this area includes only one tier of parcels along the main roadway. While almost all of this stretch contains existing businesses, there may be an opportunity for redevelopment involving multiple parcels bordering Route 309/County Line Road and along the northern side of Swartley Road. The parcels contain existing businesses (an auto parts business, an outdoor private recreation use) along with a fair amount of undeveloped land and some woodlands.
- The PC-2 district along Route 313 offers limited opportunities for development primarily because the district is not served with public water and sewer facilities and the commercial zoning includes only one tier of lots from Route 313. The portion of the district

north of Dublin contains mostly nonresidential uses, while the district south of Dublin is mostly residential. A vacant parcel containing almost five and a half acres just south of Dublin Borough presents an opportunity for future development. While there are few vacant parcels in this district, there are residential parcels south of Dublin that may lend themselves to adaptive reuse or a new use; however, the viability of redevelopment is limited due to the absence of public facilities.

Hilltown officials may wish to evaluate if the possible extension of public water and sewer facilities in select areas would be beneficial to the economic development of the township. If it is determined that expansion of services would have a positive impact, officials might want to initiate discussions with local service providers.

Also, in considering the above-noted opportunities, the township may want to assist in supporting local businesses and marketing vacant and underutilized commercial and industrial properties through partnerships with the Upper Bucks Chamber of Commerce and civic organizations and through media they use (e.g., website, newsletter, brochures, etc.)

## Commercial Corridor Issues

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The arterial highways in Hilltown include Route 309, Bethlehem Pike, Route 113, and Route 313. Given the extent of nonresidential uses and zoning districts present along these roadways, Route 309, Bethlehem Pike, and Route 113 between Bethlehem Pike and the township border, function as commercial corridors. A common problem with commercial corridors is the proliferation of unplanned growth and circulation patterns that result in strip commercial development. Strategic planning can improve the appearance and function of commercial corridors and make them safer to travel, provide an identity to various stretches of the roadways, and create a more attractive place in which to work and shop.

The township's ordinance regulations should be re-examined to ensure that sufficient standards are provided to promote attractive, well-planned development that will meet the commercial and service needs of the community. There are a number of design techniques that could be adopted that will improve the appearance and quality of future development and redevelopment along the commercial corridors.

One such method would be the use of access management regulations which would provide benefits to traffic flow as well as to the function and appeal of the township's commercial areas. Such regulations could involve standards for shared driveways, driveway spacing, planted

median strips, protected left turn lanes, and any other appropriate access control measures. Consideration should be given to developing an access management plan for the highway corridors in the township. In the interim, consideration could be given to adopting basic access management controls in line with PennDOT's access management model ordinance recommendations.

Other design considerations that could be implemented through ordinance regulation include requiring improved pedestrian connections between uses and providing for pedestrian-friendly amenities such as sidewalks, outdoor plazas, patios, and special landscaping requirements. Where feasible, pedestrian connections between commercial developments and nearby residential areas should be encouraged since linking residents with services would improve walkability in the township and would help to reduce the number of vehicular trips on the public road system.

Other strategies, such as orienting buildings closer to the roadway and providing parking in the rear of buildings, providing unified facades which help to create architectural interest, and eliminating drive-through establishments in front of buildings, will all help to improve the appearance of Hilltown's business corridors.

## Other Considerations for Nonresidential Uses

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Hilltown officials may also want to consider adding appropriate nonresidential uses not currently addressed by the zoning ordinance, including continuing care facility, outpatient surgical facility, flea market, outdoor eating accessory to a restaurant, catering facility, banquet hall, auction facility, and farmers market.

Township officials may wish to re-examine some use regulations to ensure that sufficient standards are provided to ensure attractive, well-planned development will occur to meet the commercial and service needs. For example, Shopping Center (Use E-16) could be provided with updated standards to reduce the aesthetic impacts often associated with these uses. Requirements to consider include access management, "green design", the use of high-quality material, such as brick or textured concrete, and such features as ground floor facades (awnings, arcades, or windows over a minimum percentage of its frontage). The use could also require pedestrian-friendly amenities such as sidewalks and linkages, outdoor plazas, patios, water features, and special landscaping requirements.

## Nonresidential Development and Economic Activity Strategies

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- Review lot area and dimensional requirements to reduce constraints to nonresidential development.
- Examine the parking requirements of the zoning ordinance to reduce excessive standards.
- Consider coordinating with commercial real estate developers regarding vacant and underutilized nonresidential sites.
- Where it may be determined beneficial to have public water and sewer facilities extended in select nonresidential areas, initiate discussions with local service providers.
- Consider supporting local businesses and marketing vacant and underutilized commercial and industrial properties through partnerships with the Upper Bucks Chamber of Commerce and civic organizations and through media they use (e.g., website, newsletter, brochures, etc.)
- Review ordinance regulations to ensure that sufficient standards are provided to promote attractive, well-planned development that will meet the commercial and service needs of the community.
- Consider adopting basic access management controls in line with standards provided in PennDOT's access management model ordinance.
- Promote pedestrian connections within and to all commercial areas.
- Consider adding use regulations for appropriate nonresidential uses not currently addressed in the zoning ordinance.
- Consider incorporating appropriate design standards to improve the appearance and quality of future development and redevelopment along the commercial corridors.





# Plan Element Interrelationships

Individual elements of this plan were produced with the recognition that they are interdependent on and interlocking with each other. Future land use decisions affect Hilltown's environment, circulation pattern, and needs for future community services such as water and sewer service, open space, and recreational land. Within this plan, the various elements are all consistent in their aim of attaining the overall purpose outlined in the Statement of Community Goals and Objectives, to manage growth.

In the overview to the goals and objectives, it is the intent that most of the development occurs in areas only currently served by existing utilities (sewage disposal and water supply) and where the transportation infrastructure is adequate. Therefore, to manage the future growth of Hilltown, as defined by the Land Use Plan, future growth is targeted primarily to the CR-1, CR-2 and VC areas, as well as existing industrial and commercial areas in the PC-1, PC-2, LI, and HI districts. Accommodating future development in areas with existing infrastructure will help to reduce development pressures in the rural residential areas. Since future development for the Plan horizon can be adequately accommodated in the Development District, existing facilities may be expanded, as determined necessary, within them, but new extensions outside of these areas is not envisioned. The rural residential areas can expect to see mostly residential development; facility expansions are discouraged or not allowed in these areas.

Only by directing most of the proposed development to essentially those areas in the township where development already exists or the areas that will enhance the villages, can new development minimize impact on environmental amenities and farmland which the Plan seeks to maintain outside of these areas. Purchasing development rights and/or open space, and providing cluster and conservation management development options are important strategies for the township's preservation efforts. Development options such as cluster and Conservation Management Design, allow residential development with slightly higher densities and require greater open space requirements in order to preserve farmland and natural resources.

Overall, it is the aim of this plan to protect the important natural resources of the township and support the agricultural community while providing a reasonable amount of land for future

residential, commercial, and industrial needs. In addition, the township desires to maintain the historical character of the villages, promote pedestrian accessibility through trails and walkways, provide safe and convenient circulation for motor vehicles, and provide essential services to taxpayers at minimal cost. The Land Use Plan has been designed to meet these desires, and various chapters of the Plan provide recommendations on how to accomplish the stated goals and objectives.

# Action Plan

The Action Plan is the implementation element of the Comprehensive Plan. Included in it are specific actions which should be undertaken in order to carry out the recommendations contained throughout the Plan. It is organized consistent with the Goals section of the Plan.

Within the Action Plan Summary Chart, at the end of this chapter, each objective category, along with stated policies are listed, and below those are one or more strategies which should be undertaken to accomplish that goal. Certain actions appear under more than one goal. In addition, there are some actions which are very similar to others.

For each action, the responsible party(ies) for carrying out the action is listed. A priority is also listed for each action, based on a ten-year schedule. "High" priority refers to an action which should be addressed in the first year or two. "Medium" priority refers to those actions which should be accomplished in Years 2 through 5, and "Low" priority refers to those actions which can wait until Years 5 through 10. Ongoing efforts are those currently being undertaken and which should continue into the future.

While all of the recommended actions are considered important for the future of Hilltown Township, the following strategies have been identified as top priorities and are considered most critical for implementation:

- Encourage intensive land uses to develop only on higher order streets and highway, such as Route 309, Bethlehem Pike, and Route 313.
- Encourage commercial and industrial development along Bethlehem Pike and Route 309.

An annual re-evaluation of this Action Plan should be undertaken, as circumstances can change resulting in a shifting of priorities. For example, the precise schedule for a study is certainly one occurrence which could cause priorities to shift. Re-evaluation of this Action Plan should be requested of the Planning Commission by the Board of Supervisors at their annual reorganization meeting.

The following Priority Listing is the full list of the Action Plan items from each Comprehensive Plan Element. They are categorized by their final ranking and are not listed in any particular order. After each action item, in parenthesis, is an abbreviation of the specific goal to which the item applies (the abbreviations correspond to the Action Plan Summary Chart and are listed first below).

QL	Quality of Life
PG	Patterns of Growth
NRP	Natural Resources Protection
F	Farmlands
CD	Community Development
CPD	Community Planning & Design
HP	Historic Preservation
I	Infrastructure
H	Housing
OSLP	Open Space/Land Preservation
NDEA	Nonresidential Development & Economic Activity

## Priority Listing

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### High Priority

- Review lot area and dimensional requirements to reduce constraints to nonresidential development. (NDEA)
- Prepare an inventory of all land owned by the township which could be utilized for active or passive recreation purposes. (QL)
- Consider adding use regulations for appropriate nonresidential uses not currently addressed in the zoning ordinance. (PG, CD, NDEA)
- Consider methods to assist the local farm economy, such as through the sponsorship of a local farmers market, or by publishing local sources for produce and food products. (F)
- Examine the parking requirements of the zoning ordinance to reduce excessive standards. (CPD, NDEA)

- Review ordinance regulations to ensure that sufficient standards are provided to promote attractive, well-planned development that will meet the commercial and service needs of the community. (CPD, NDEA)
- Consider adopting basic access management controls in line with standards provided in PennDOT's access management model ordinance. (CPD, NDEA)
- Consider incorporating appropriate design standards to improve the appearance and quality of future development and redevelopment along the commercial corridors. (CPD, NDEA)
- Encourage intensive land uses to develop on only higher order streets and highways. (I)
- Consider coordinating with commercial real estate developers regarding vacant and underutilized nonresidential sites. (NDEA)

### Medium Priority

- Where it may be determined beneficial to have public water and sewer facilities extended in select nonresidential areas, initiate discussions with local service providers. (CD, I, NDEA)
- Promote pedestrian connections within and to all commercial areas. (CPD, NDEA)
- Study Line Lexington Village Area. (H)
- Develop a transportation improvement program and develop incentives to implement necessary master plan road improvements within the township. (I)
- Consider undertaking an overall transportation and traffic improvement plan which can be used as a basis for requiring traffic improvements in conjunction with large developments. (I)
- Investigate and develop a Pedestrian/Bicycle Master Plan that would interconnect neighborhoods to schools, parks, employment and commercial centers, and community facilities as alternative means of transportation. (I)
- Pursue proactive cooperation with the Pennridge Area Coordinating Committee to share information and ideas. (QL)

- Update and refine natural resources inventory to identify and protect important, sensitive conservation areas with the township. (NRP)
- Determine specific trail locations for the highest priority linkages identified in the *Hilltown Township Open Space Plan – 2010*. (PG, OSLP)
- Re-evaluate the Act 537 Plan on a periodic basis. (PG)

## Low Priority

- Consider evaluating the merits of permitting residential uses on sites of less than the required 20-acre minimum site area in the MHP district. (H)
- Monitor development in the LI district as related to the district's ability to provide for mobile home park use. (H)
- Investigate the township's participation in Tree City USA or similar organizations and consider establishing a Shade Tree Commission. (QL)
- Monitor the need to amend the CR-1 Performance Subdivision requirements in the Zoning Ordinance to continue to assure a varied mix of housing units. (PG, CD, CPD, H)
- Pursue a working relationship with local conservancy organizations to explore additional techniques to encourage open space preservation, as well as alternative design standards. (NRP, F, H, OSLP)
- Study redevelopment scenarios for the two quarries. (CPD)

## Ongoing

- Pursue proactive cooperation with the Pennridge School District so that the District is well advised of potential development within the township, and to cooperate on pedestrian needs based on the District bus policies. (QL)
- Work closely with the local fire companies and emergency service providers to ensure sufficient coverage for existing and future development. (QL, CD)
- Work closely with the Hilltown Police Department and the Countywide 911 Service to ensure proper emergency response and coverage. (QL, CD)

- Help educate landowners with alternate methods of land development and preservation that helps the township achieve goals of this Plan and offers landowners competitive compensation. (F, H)
- Coordinate between the Hilltown Township Water and Sewer Authority (HTWSA) and Hilltown Township to ensure that all problem areas, future growth, and current underserved areas have adequate sewer and water service. (CD, I)

## Action Plan Summary Chart

Quality of Life				
<b>Objective:</b> <i>To promote a quality environment by preserving and enhancing the township's charm and appearance, to protect its unique natural features, its historic and scenic values, and its rural setting by permitting developments which provide quality neighborhoods for people of diverse lifestyles and to provide for adequate public services.</i>				
Policies	Implementation Strategies (Actions)	Responsible Parties*	Priority	
1. To provide for neighborhood parks and adequate township recreational facilities within easy access of all township residents.	A. Prepare an inventory of all land owned by the township which could be utilized for active or passive recreation purposes.	Township Staff; Township Engineer	High	
2. To promote sound development practices, which make it possible to provide for adequate schools, public facilities, police, and fire protection.	B. Pursue proactive cooperation with the Pennridge School District so that the District is well advised of potential development within the township, and to cooperate on pedestrian needs based on the District busing policies.	Township Staff	Ongoing	
3. To promote sound standards for land development to ensure that the community's roads and stormwater management systems are not adversely affected and can carry the burdens that the new development places upon them.	C. Pursue proactive cooperation with the Pennridge Area Coordinating Committee to share information and ideas.	Township Staff	Medium	
4. To maintain Hilltown's country character.	D. Work closely with the local fire companies and emergency service providers to ensure sufficient coverage for existing and future development.	Township Staff; Local Fire Companies	Ongoing	
5. To plant more trees as sound barriers and traffic buffers, which will improve air quality and provide other ecological benefits. To restore riparian forest corridors where possible to improve water quality.	E. Work closely with the Hilltown Police Department and the Countywide 911 Service to ensure proper emergency response and coverage.	Township Staff; Police Department	Ongoing	
	F. Investigate the township's participation in Tree City USA or similar organizations and consider establishing a Shade Tree Commission.	Township Staff; Planning Commission; Township Engineer	Low	

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## Patterns of Growth

### **Objective:**

To control the form and location of growth within Hilltown township while recognizing the needs and rights of all socioeconomic groups to have equal access within the community.

Policies	Implementation Strategies (Actions)	Responsible Parties*	Priority	
1. To manage the location of development in the community through the use of the development district concept by identifying areas most suitable for growth, and those areas unsuitable for intensive growth.  2. To allow economic development opportunities that meet the needs of the business community and that benefit those that live and work in the township.  3. To allow for and investigate incentives to ensure that a variety of housing types is available.  4. To coordinate water and sewage facilities planning with land use planning.	A. Monitor the need to amend the CR-1 Performance Subdivision requirement in the Zoning Ordinance to continue to assure a varied mix of housing units.	Planning Commission; Planning Consultant	Low	
	B. Consider adding use regulations for appropriate nonresidential uses not currently addressed in the zoning ordinance.	Planning Commission; Planning Consultant	High	
	C. Determine specific trail locations for the highest priority linkages identified in the Hilltown Township Open Space Plan – 2010.	Planning Commission; Park & Recreation Committee;  Township Engineer	Medium	
	D. Re-evaluate the Act 537 Plan on a periodic basis.	Township Engineer; Hilltown Township Water Sewer Authority	Medium	
5. To encourage development in the Village Centers.				
6. To provide trail systems that link together community facilities within Hilltown as well as those in adjoining communities.				
7. To consider the potential for regional planning in managing future growth patterns.				

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## Natural Resources Protection

### **Objective:**

*To protect the people's right to clean air, pure water, and other natural, scenic, historic, and aesthetic resources of our environment and to guarantee a quality environment for present and future generations.*

Policies	Implementation Strategies (Actions)	Responsible Parties*	Priority	
1. To continue protecting important natural resources through zoning and subdivision and land development ordinance standards.	A. Update and refine natural resources inventory to identify and protect important, sensitive conservation areas within the township.	Planning Commission; Planning Consultant	Medium	
2. To evaluate the environmental impact of all planning, zoning, and development decisions, making every effort to minimize adverse environmental impacts through sound land use planning and design.	B. Pursue a working relationship with local Conservancy organizations to explore additional techniques to encourage open space preservation, as well as alternative design standards.	Township Staff	Low	
3. To plan for future growth, which can be accommodated without exceeding the supply of available groundwater.				
4. To preserve natural and scenic resources through the use of conservation easements, and other appropriate means.				
5. To protect quality and quantity of existing water supply.				

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## Farmlands

### **Objective:**

To encourage the continuation of the Hilltown Township Agricultural Security District.

Policies	Implementation Strategies (Actions)	Responsible Parties*	Priority	
1. To identify the needs of the farm community as they relate to land use regulation.	A. Help educate landowners with alternate methods of land development and preservation that helps the township achieve goals of this Plan and offers landowners competitive compensation.	Township Staff	Ongoing	
2. To have a viable development district in the township in order to minimize development pressure on areas of active farming. Include other agricultural related activities, i.e., farm stores and accessory businesses, in the district.	B. Pursue a working relationship with local conservancy organizations to explore additional techniques to encourage open space preservation, as well as alternative design standards.	Township Staff	Low	
3. To investigate techniques that may assist in the preservation of agricultural areas.	C. Consider methods to assist the local farm economy, such as through the sponsorship of a local farmers market, or by publishing local sources for produce and food products.	Township Staff	High	
4. To recognize agriculture as a legitimate land use.				
5. To promote the preservation of the remaining working farms utilizing participation in the Bucks County Agricultural Land Preservation Program.				
6. To continue efforts to preserve agricultural lands through the use of conservation easements, the township's earned income tax program, and other appropriate means.				

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## Community Development

**Objective:**

To provide for a balanced community containing all types of land uses for housing, industry, and commerce, and to coordinate land uses with the existing and proposed community facilities.

Policies	Implementation Strategies (Actions)	Responsible Parties*	Priority	
1. To provide zoning that promotes a balanced community in terms of land uses while, at the same time, ensuring the preservation of neighborhoods. Where appropriate, buffers should be provided between existing development and new development.  2. To utilize the development district concept as a tool for planning improvements to the community's facilities and for coordinating the improvements with zoning.  3. To analyze the impacts of zoning changes and land developments to ensure that facilities are adequate or are upgraded as part of the development process, to sustain all proposed development activity, and so that any impacts for which individual developments are responsible can be mitigated.	A. Monitor the need to amend the CR-1 Performance Subdivision requirement in the Zoning Ordinance to continue to assure a varied mix of housing units.	Planning Commission; Planning Consultant	Low	
	B. Study redevelopment scenarios for the two quarries.	Planning Commission; Planning Consultant	Low	
	C. Consider adding use regulations for appropriate nonresidential uses not currently addressed in the zoning ordinance.	Planning Commission; Planning Consultant	Medium	
	D. Where it may be determined beneficial to have public water and sewer facilities extended in select nonresidential areas, initiate discussions with local service providers.	Township Staff	Medium	
	E. Coordinate between HTWSA and Hilltown Township to ensure that all problem areas, future growth, and current underserved areas have adequate sewer and water service.	Township Staff; Township Engineer; HTWSA	Ongoing	
4. To assure the provision of adequate public facilities. To plan for and fund emergency services.				
5. To preserve the integrity of Hilltown in planning the location for land uses and associated public facilities.				
6. To preserve natural areas in the township in which no development occurs.				
7. To provide sufficient areas in the township to accommodate commercial and industrial development.				

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## Community Planning and Design

### **Objective:**

To set forth regulations and zoning and subdivision ordinances which provide enough freedom to encourage good design and sound development practices, and to set forth standards of performance which the landowner must meet and which shall integrate the concepts set forth under other goals and objectives.

Policies	Implementation Strategies (Actions)	Responsible Parties*	Priority	
1. To provide performance standards that include various factors that will affect the ability to use the land and to make known to developers and realtors those standards which the community intends to follow so that the developers may take these into account in their investment decisions.	A. Monitor the need to amend the CR-1 Performance Subdivision requirements in the Zoning Ordinance to continue to assure a varied mix of housing units.	Planning Commission; Planning Consultant	Low	
	B. Examine the parking requirements of the zoning ordinance to reduce excessive standards.	Planning Commission; Planning Consultant; Township Engineer	High	
	C. Review ordinance regulations to ensure that sufficient standards are provided to promote attractive, well-planned development that will meet the commercial and service needs of the community.	Planning Commission; Planning Consultant; Township Engineer	High	
2. To provide performance standards, which protect the environment, allow for a variety of land uses and housing types, and promote a balanced community and high-quality environment.	D. Consider adopting basic access management controls in line with standards provided in PennDOT's access management model ordinance.	Planning Commission; Township Engineer	High	
3. To develop regulations so that the landowner has a variety of methods for the use of his or her land.	E. Promote pedestrian connections within and to all commercial areas.	Planning Commission	Medium	
4. To consider performance standards and bonuses the landowner may use to increase the intensity of use if the landowner makes specific improvements or meets specific goals that would not otherwise be required.	F. Consider incorporating appropriate design standards to improve the appearance and quality of future development and redevelopment along the commercial corridors.	Planning Commission; Planning Consultant	High	

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## Historic Preservation

### **Objective:**

To preserve the historic assets of Hilltown Township.

Policies	Implementation Strategies (Actions)	Responsible Parties*	Priority	
1. To preserve, restore, and maintain historic sites, buildings, and neighborhoods, and to allow creative re-use of historic structures, and to encourage preservation through the use of village districts and bed and breakfast ordinances.	A. Participate in any future study of the village of Line Lexington.	Planning Commission; Planning Consultant; Township Staff	Medium	
2. To maintain the integrity of the historic villages of Hilltown Township.				

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## Infrastructure

**Objective:**

To ensure the safe, orderly and coordinated development of water, sewage disposal, and transportation systems.

Policies	Implementation Strategies (Actions)	Responsible Parties*	Priority	
1. To assure that a safe and efficient transportation network is developed in accordance with an overall plan and that the land use pattern is planned in concert with the capabilities of the road network.	A. Develop a transportation improvement program and develop incentives to implement necessary Master Plan road improvements within the township.	Planning Commission; Traffic Consultant; Township Engineer	Medium	
2. To ensure the continuation of the integrity of the major arterial roads in the township by planning land uses and controlling access points to allow for efficient traffic flow.	B. Consider undertaking an overall transportation and traffic improvement plan which can be used as a basis for requiring traffic improvements in conjunction with large developments.	Planning Commission Township Engineer; Traffic Consultant	Medium	
3. To encourage intensive land uses to develop on only higher order streets and highways.	C. Encourage intensive land uses to develop on only higher order streets and highways.	Planning Commission	High	
4. To maintain and promote vehicular and pedestrian mobility, access, and safety throughout the township.	D. Develop a Pedestrian/Bicycle Master Plan that would interconnect neighborhoods to schools, parks, employment and commercial centers, and community facilities as alternative means of transportation.	Planning Commission	High	
5. To promote the use of pedestrian/bike trails linking school, parks, employment and commercial centers, and community facilities as alternative means of transportation.	E. Coordinate between Hilltown Township Water and Sewer Authority (HTWSA) and Hilltown Township to ensure that all problem areas, future growth, and current underserved areas have adequate sewer and water service.	Township Staff; Township Engineer; Hilltown Township Water and Sewer Authority	Ongoing	
6. To link transportation planning efforts with future land use planning.	F. Where it may be determined beneficial to have public water and sewer facilities extended in select nonresidential areas, initiate discussions with local service providers.	Township Staff	Medium	
7. To discourage the use of stream discharge and instead, encourage wastewater treatment systems that are consistent with the township's Act 537 Plan, and which replenish ground water, provided adequate controls are in place to protect the environment and the health and safety of township residents.				
<b>POLICIES CONTINUED</b>				

## Infrastructure

### **Objective:**

To ensure the safe, orderly and coordinated development of water, sewage disposal, and transportation systems.

Policies	Implementation Strategies (Actions)	Responsible Parties*	Priority	
8. To require public ownership of all sanitary sewage and water supply facilities (except individual on-lot systems) serving township residents.				
9. To rely on individual systems for development outside the development district where conditions are acceptable				
10. To educate homeowners as to the proper use and care of on-lot sewage disposal systems to ensure the longevity of the system.				
11. To continue to encourage best management practices for stormwater management.				

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## Housing

### **Objective:**

*To promote adequate, safe and sound housing for the present and future residents of Hilltown Township.*

Policies	Implementation Strategies (Actions)	Responsible Parties*	Priority	
<p>1. To develop a land use and housing plan which ensures that all types of housing, as required by the MPC, can be provided within the township.</p> <p>2. To promote the health, safety and welfare and to ensure a quality living environment by providing quality housing through the enactment and enforcement of sound zoning standards and modern building and fire codes.</p>	A. Monitor the need to amend the CR-1 Performance Subdivision requirements in the Zoning Ordinance to continue to assure a varied mix of housing units.	Planning Commission; Planning Consultant	Low	
	B. Pursue a working relationship with local conservancy organizations to explore additional techniques to encourage open space preservation, as well as alternative design standards for residential subdivisions.	Township Staff;	Low	
	C. Help educate landowners with alternative methods of land development and preservation that helps the township achieve the goals of this plan.	Township Staff	Ongoing	
	D. Consider evaluating the merits of permitting residential uses on sites of less than the required 20-acre minimum site area in the MHP district.	Planning Commission; Planning Consultant	Low	
	E. Monitor development in the U district as related to the district's ability to provide for mobile home park use.	Planning Commission; Planning Consultant	Low	

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## Open Space/Land Preservation

### **Objective:**

To ensure that sufficient, appropriate and conveniently located lands will be permanently preserved to satisfy the immediate and future population growth, and/or expanded recreation programs.

Policies	Implementation Strategies (Actions)	Responsible Parties*	Priority	
1. To protect and preserve remaining woodlands, steep slopes, floodplains, lakes, ponds, wetlands, and watercourses in the township.	A. Determine specific trail locations for the highest priority linkages identified in the Hilltown Township Open Space Plan – 2010.	Planning Commission; Park & Recreation Committee; Planning Consultant; Township Engineer	Medium	
2. To complement existing open space and land preservation programs, and create linkages of contiguous preserved lands.	B. Pursue a working relationship with local conservancy organizations to explore additional techniques to encourage open space preservation, as well as alternative design standards.	Township Staff	Low	
3. To create linkages between natural, cultural, and recreational resources by promoting a trail network that connects with other township, county, and state open or preserved lands.				
4. To continue the township's park and recreation program which provides opportunities for active and passive recreation where appropriate.				
5. To manage growth through selective public acquisition of land and through the utilization of programs for the purchase of development rights.				
6. To identify and map areas which the township would like to see preserved as open space through the land development process.				
7. To continue to require the provision of open space and recreation facilities through the land development process.				
8. To maintain mechanisms for funding the preservation of open space through landowners and other private initiatives such as donations, bequests, etc.				

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## Nonresidential Development & Economic Activity

### **Objective:**

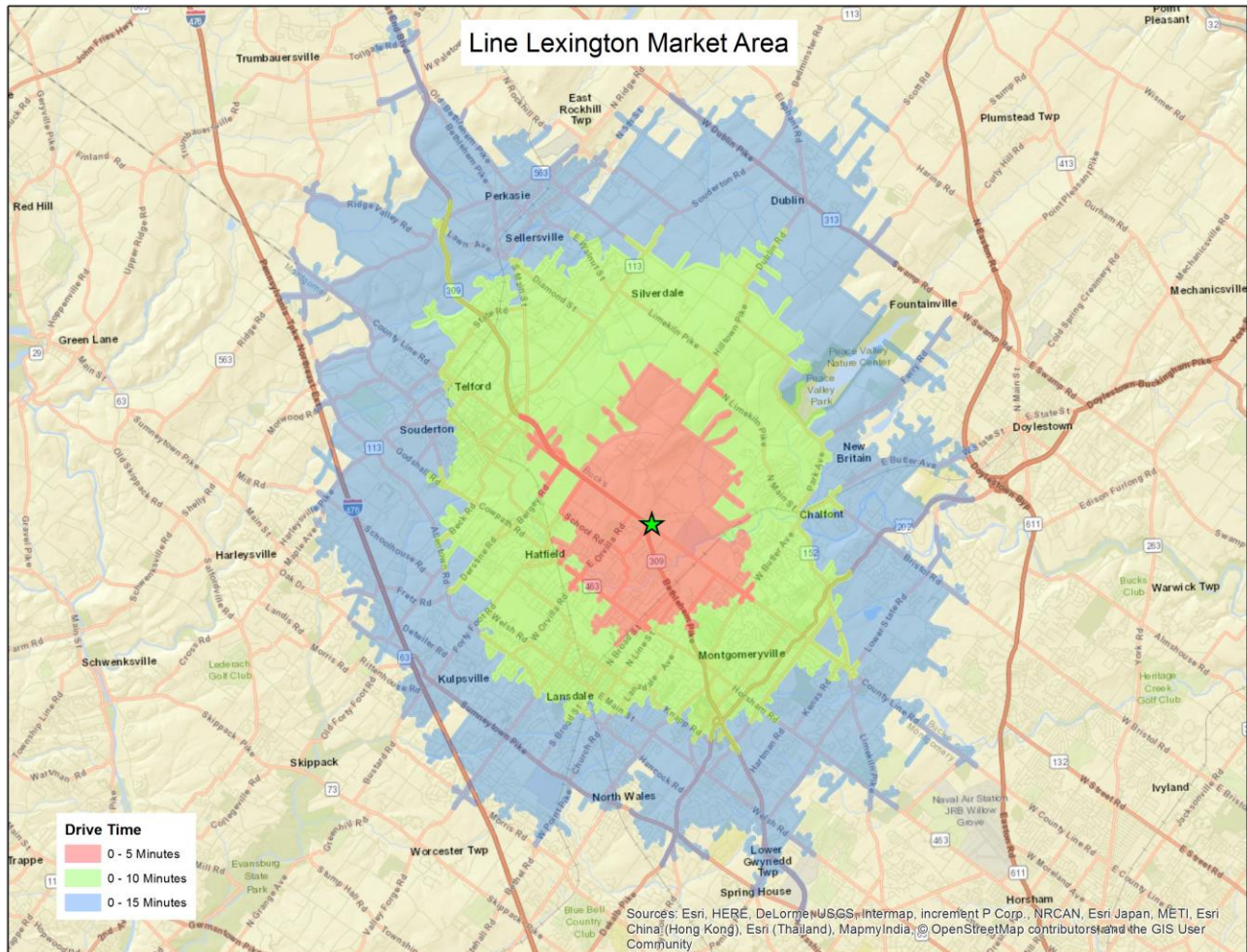
*Encourage nonresidential development that is well integrated and compatible with the surrounding context and character of the area and that serves to enhance the township's economic vitality.*

Policies	Implementation Strategies (Actions)	Responsible Parties	Priority	
1. To strive for a balanced and diversified economic base by permitting a variety of nonresidential uses that provide jobs and tax revenue to support public services and that enhance the quality of community life.  2. To ensure adequate land area is available and suitable to allow for nonresidential growth while attracting and retaining businesses.  3. To coordinate the location of nonresidential uses with the availability of public services and infrastructure.  4. To promote adaptive re-use and redevelopment initiatives for abandoned industrial and commercial sites.  5. To promote access management techniques for commercial and business uses in order to protect the function of arterial and collector roadways and to increase public safety.	A. Review lot area and dimensional requirements to reduce constraints to nonresidential development.	Planning Commission; Planning Consultant; Township Engineer	High	
	B. Examine the parking requirements of the zoning ordinance to reduce excessive standards.	Planning Commission; Planning Consultant; Township Engineer	High	
	C. Consider coordinating with commercial real estate developers regarding vacant and underutilized nonresidential sites.	Township Staff	High	
	D. Where it may be determined beneficial to have public water and sewer facilities extended in select nonresidential areas, initiate discussions with local service providers.	Township Staff	Medium	
	E. Consider supporting local businesses and marketing vacant and underutilized commercial and industrial properties through partnerships with the Upper Bucks Chamber of Commerce and civic organizations and through media they use (e.g., website, newsletter, brochures, etc.)	Township Staff	Medium	
	F. Review ordinance regulations to ensure that sufficient standards are provided to promote attractive, well-planned development that will meet the commercial and service needs of the community.	Planning Commission; Planning Consultant; Township Engineer	High	
	G. Consider adopting basic access management controls in line with standards provided in PennDOT's access management model ordinance.	Planning Commission; Township Engineer	High	
	H. Promote pedestrian connections within and to all commercial users.	Planning Commission	Medium	
	I. Consider adding use regulations for appropriate nonresidential uses not currently addressed in the zoning ordinance.	Planning Commission; Planning Consultant	High	
	I. Consider incorporating appropriate design standards to improve the appearance and quality of future development and redevelopment along the commercial corridors.	Planning Commission; Planning Consultant	High	

*\*Any task given to the Planning Commission, or other appointed body, staff, or consultant, would be assigned at the discretion of the Hilltown Township Board of Supervisors.*

# Appendix A

## Retail Market Data







## Retail MarketPlace Profile

Line Lexington  
1000 Bethlehem Pike, Hatfield Twp, Pennsylvania, 18915  
Drive Time Band: 10 - 15 minute radius

Prepared by Esri  
Latitude: 40.28474  
Longitude: -75.26223

Summary Demographics						
2016 Population						97,799
2016 Households						36,807
2016 Median Disposable Income						\$63,311
2016 Per Capita Income						\$40,547
Industry Summary	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	44-45,722	\$2,070,678,143	\$1,545,896,229	\$524,781,914	14.5	655
Total Retail Trade	44-45	\$1,869,111,570	\$1,424,317,456	\$444,794,114	13.5	491
Total Food & Drink	722	\$201,566,573	\$121,578,772	\$79,987,801	24.8	164
Industry Group	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	441	\$420,887,432	\$262,437,706	\$158,449,726	23.2	53
Automobile Dealers	4411	\$352,037,593	\$191,581,264	\$160,456,329	29.5	22
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	4412	\$42,814,254	\$20,871,873	\$21,942,381	34.5	9
Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores	4413	\$26,035,585	\$49,984,569	-\$23,948,984	-31.5	23
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	442	\$57,096,034	\$50,291,742	\$6,804,292	6.3	29
Furniture Stores	4421	\$35,155,233	\$10,176,906	\$24,978,327	55.1	10
Home Furnishings Stores	4422	\$21,940,801	\$40,114,836	-\$18,174,035	-29.3	19
Electronics & Appliance Stores	443	\$102,344,998	\$68,232,638	\$34,112,360	20.0	36
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	444	\$93,552,484	\$60,946,477	\$32,606,007	21.1	50
Bldg Material & Supplies Dealers	4441	\$82,579,980	\$43,730,951	\$38,849,029	30.8	37
Lawn & Garden Equip & Supply Stores	4442	\$10,972,505	\$17,215,526	-\$6,243,021	-22.1	13
Food & Beverage Stores	445	\$368,571,635	\$473,292,524	-\$104,720,889	-12.4	57
Grocery Stores	4451	\$311,825,610	\$443,936,136	-\$132,110,526	-17.5	29
Specialty Food Stores	4452	\$22,410,564	\$20,860,750	\$1,549,814	3.6	21
Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores	4453	\$34,335,461	\$8,495,638	\$25,839,823	60.3	7
Health & Personal Care Stores	446,4461	\$84,280,890	\$86,371,586	-\$2,090,696	-1.2	41
Gasoline Stations	447,4471	\$121,444,697	\$32,430,231	\$89,014,466	57.8	12
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	448	\$95,638,023	\$78,257,752	\$17,380,271	10.0	68
Clothing Stores	4481	\$69,536,024	\$62,327,438	\$7,208,586	5.5	46
Shoe Stores	4482	\$13,948,804	\$5,723,060	\$8,225,744	41.8	8
Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	4483	\$12,153,196	\$10,207,254	\$1,945,942	8.7	14
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	451	\$59,966,208	\$52,694,871	\$7,271,337	6.5	37
Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instr Stores	4511	\$48,185,876	\$43,898,592	\$4,287,284	4.7	34
Book, Periodical & Music Stores	4512	\$11,780,332	\$8,796,279	\$2,984,053	14.5	3
General Merchandise Stores	452	\$312,386,660	\$128,602,356	\$183,784,304	41.7	18
Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.	4521	\$243,450,692	\$90,701,361	\$152,749,331	45.7	3
Other General Merchandise Stores	4529	\$68,935,968	\$37,900,995	\$31,034,973	29.0	15
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	453	\$88,742,955	\$55,932,453	\$32,810,506	22.7	82
Florists	4531	\$4,526,336	\$1,560,255	\$2,966,081	48.7	6
Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores	4532	\$18,464,698	\$12,732,059	\$5,732,639	18.4	24
Used Merchandise Stores	4533	\$6,875,194	\$4,607,206	\$2,267,988	19.8	16
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	4539	\$58,876,731	\$37,032,933	\$21,843,798	22.8	36
Nonstore Retailers	454	\$64,199,550	\$74,827,119	-\$10,627,569	-7.6	7
Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses	4541	\$51,106,977	\$65,209,882	-\$14,102,905	-12.1	3
Vending Machine Operators	4542	\$1,925,091	\$1,602,072	\$323,019	9.2	1
Direct Selling Establishments	4543	\$11,167,481	\$8,015,165	\$3,152,316	16.4	3
Food Services & Drinking Places	722	\$201,566,573	\$121,578,772	\$79,987,801	24.8	164
Full-Service Restaurants	7221	\$106,851,995	\$66,829,333	\$40,022,666	23.0	92
Limited-Service Eating Places	7222	\$79,325,892	\$43,425,667	\$35,900,225	29.2	55
Special Food Services	7223	\$4,357,006	\$6,928,576	-\$2,571,570	-22.8	9
Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	7224	\$11,031,676	\$4,395,197	\$6,636,479	43.0	9

Data Note: Supply (retail sales) estimates sales to consumers by establishments. Sales to businesses are excluded. Demand (retail potential) estimates the expected amount spent by consumers at retail establishments. Supply and demand estimates are in current dollars. The Leakage/Surplus Factor presents a snapshot of retail opportunity. This is a measure of the relationship between supply and demand that ranges from +100 (total leakage) to -100 (total surplus). A positive value represents 'leakage' of retail opportunity outside the trade area. A negative value represents a surplus of retail sales, a market where customers are drawn in from outside the trade area. The Retail Gap represents the difference between Retail Potential and Retail Sales. Esri uses the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) to classify businesses by their primary type of economic activity. Retail establishments are classified into 27 industry groups in the Retail Trade sector, as well as four industry groups within the Food Services & Drinking Establishments subsector. For more information on the Retail MarketPlace data, please click the link below to view the Methodology Statement. <http://www.esri.com/library/whitepapers/pdfs/esri-data-retail-marketplace.pdf>

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September 19, 2016

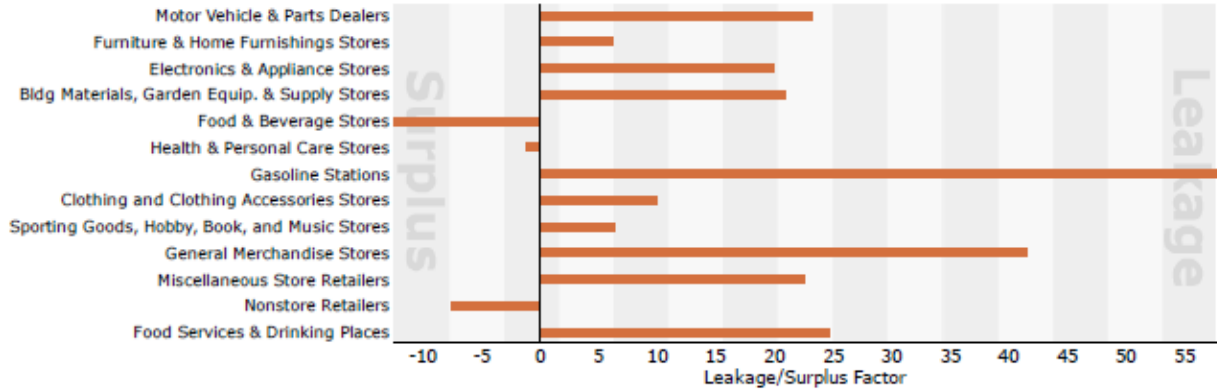


## Retail MarketPlace Profile

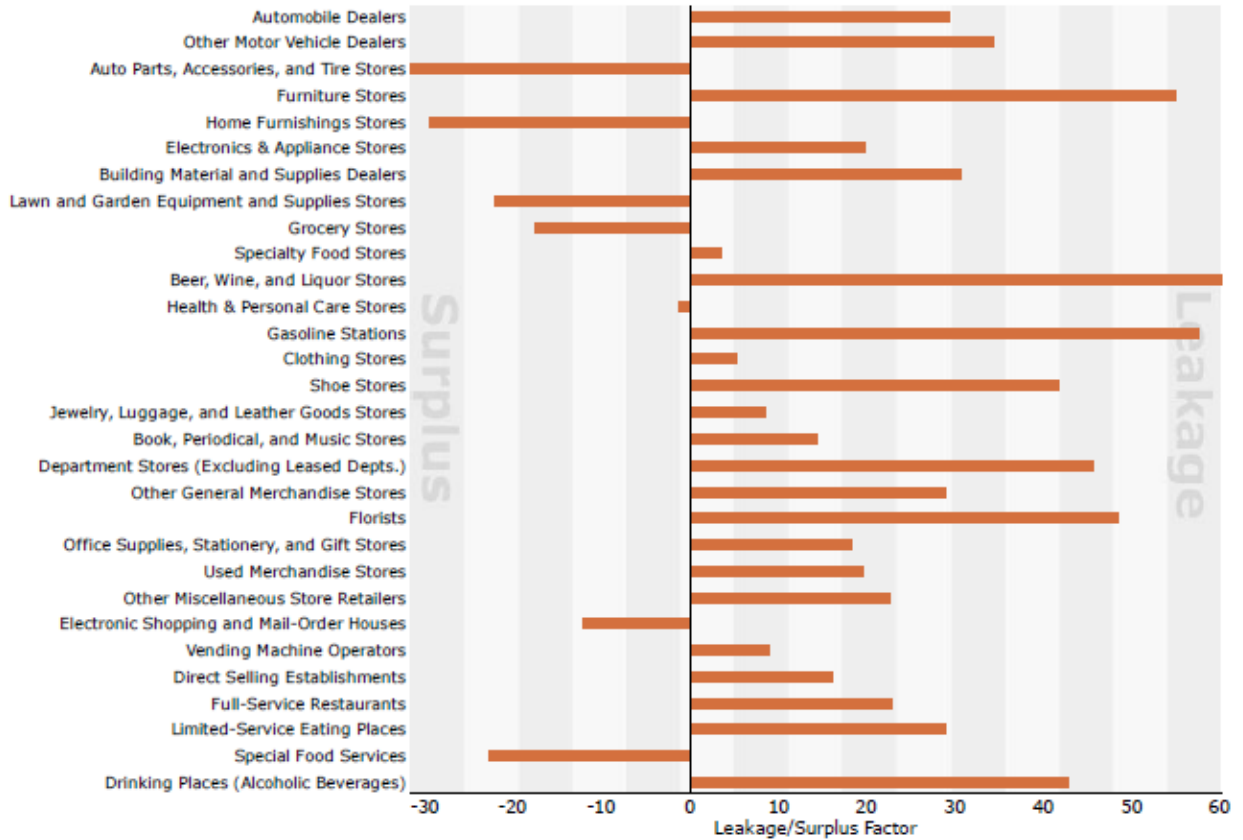
Line Lexington  
1000 Bethlehem Pike, Hatfield Twp, Pennsylvania, 18915  
Drive Time Band: 10 - 15 minute radius

Prepared by Esri  
Latitude: 40.28474  
Longitude: -75.26223

### Leakage/Surplus Factor by Industry Subsector

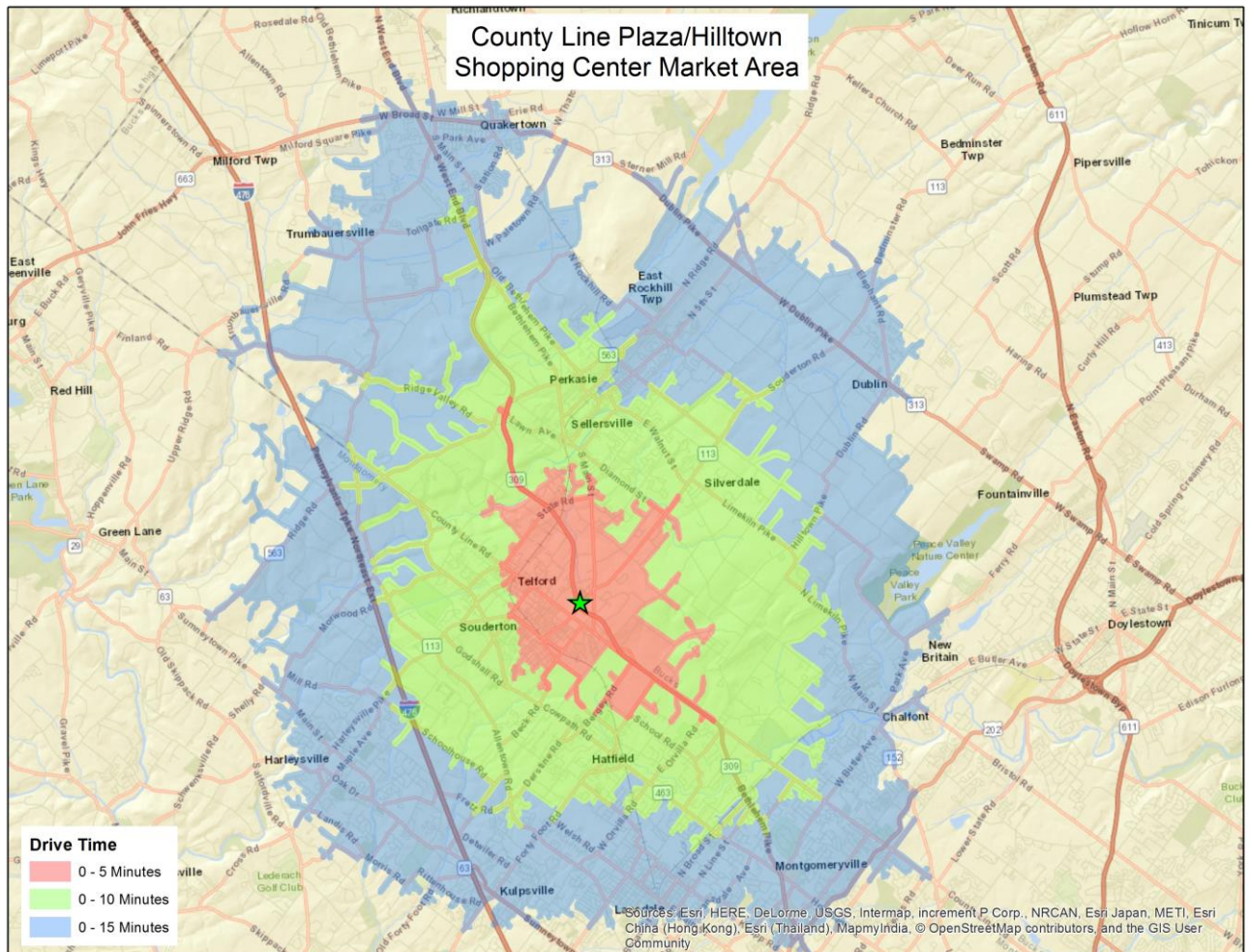


### Leakage/Surplus Factor by Industry Group



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September 19, 2016







## Retail MarketPlace Profile

113/309  
749 Route 113, Hilltown Twp, Pennsylvania, 18964  
Drive Time Band: 10 - 15 minute radius

Prepared by Esri  
Latitude: 40.31730  
Longitude: -75.30842

Summary Demographics						
2016 Population						107,197
2016 Households						41,076
2016 Median Disposable Income						\$58,188
2016 Per Capita Income						\$37,541
Industry Summary	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	44-45,722	\$2,119,735,935	\$2,185,606,394	-\$65,870,459	-1.5	1,013
Total Retail Trade	44-45	\$1,914,449,558	\$2,002,613,634	-\$88,164,076	-2.3	717
Total Food & Drink	722	\$205,286,377	\$182,992,760	\$22,293,617	5.7	297
Industry Group	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	441	\$432,030,453	\$410,943,461	\$21,086,992	2.5	79
Automobile Dealers	4411	\$361,204,045	\$348,802,695	\$12,401,350	1.7	36
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	4412	\$84,116,010	\$17,748,472	\$66,367,538	42.6	10
Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores	4413	\$26,710,395	\$44,392,294	-\$17,681,895	-24.9	32
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	442	\$58,259,253	\$76,339,152	-\$18,079,899	-13.4	49
Furniture Stores	4421	\$35,819,196	\$34,104,594	\$1,714,602	2.5	25
Home Furnishings Stores	4422	\$22,440,057	\$42,234,558	-\$19,794,501	-30.6	24
Electronics & Appliance Stores	443	\$104,739,531	\$97,077,245	\$7,662,286	3.8	61
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	444	\$95,803,032	\$69,946,641	\$25,856,391	15.6	59
Bldg Material & Supplies Dealers	4441	\$84,416,784	\$60,483,768	\$23,933,016	16.5	42
Lawn & Garden Equip & Supply Stores	4442	\$11,386,248	\$9,462,873	\$1,923,375	9.2	16
Food & Beverage Stores	445	\$377,314,820	\$528,737,239	-\$151,422,419	-16.7	72
Grocery Stores	4451	\$319,418,010	\$493,311,354	-\$173,893,344	-21.4	42
Specialty Food Stores	4452	\$22,954,453	\$26,768,352	-\$3,813,899	-7.7	24
Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores	4453	\$34,942,357	\$8,657,533	\$26,284,824	60.3	5
Health & Personal Care Stores	446,4461	\$86,479,565	\$124,017,861	-\$37,538,292	-17.8	69
Gasoline Stations	447,4471	\$124,950,852	\$66,121,467	\$58,829,385	30.8	25
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	448	\$97,423,042	\$80,639,079	\$16,783,963	9.4	74
Clothing Stores	4481	\$70,881,639	\$59,041,853	\$11,839,786	9.1	49
Shoe Stores	4482	\$14,228,938	\$10,892,720	\$3,336,218	13.3	13
Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	4483	\$12,312,465	\$10,704,506	\$1,607,959	7.0	12
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	451	\$61,161,498	\$75,920,370	-\$14,758,872	-10.8	70
Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instr Stores	4511	\$49,136,679	\$71,664,942	-\$22,528,263	-18.6	63
Book, Periodical & Music Stores	4512	\$12,024,818	\$4,255,428	\$7,769,390	47.7	8
General Merchandise Stores	452	\$319,402,037	\$385,799,767	-\$66,397,730	-9.4	30
Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.	4521	\$248,770,600	\$248,782,843	-\$12,243	0.0	13
Other General Merchandise Stores	4529	\$70,631,437	\$137,016,924	-\$66,385,487	-32.0	17
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	453	\$90,905,626	\$70,036,928	\$20,868,698	13.0	120
Florists	4531	\$4,683,512	\$2,986,351	\$1,697,161	22.1	11
Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores	4532	\$18,860,818	\$11,241,046	\$7,619,772	25.3	32
Used Merchandise Stores	4533	\$7,026,705	\$7,043,643	-\$16,938	-0.1	24
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	4539	\$60,334,591	\$48,765,888	\$11,568,703	10.6	53
Nonstore Retailers	454	\$65,979,846	\$17,034,423	\$48,945,423	59.0	10
Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses	4541	\$52,307,428	\$2,772,500	\$49,534,928	89.9	1
Vending Machine Operators	4542	\$1,970,398	\$1,796,295	\$174,103	4.6	2
Direct Selling Establishments	4543	\$11,702,021	\$12,465,627	-\$763,606	-3.2	7
Food Services & Drinking Places	722	\$205,286,377	\$182,992,760	\$22,293,617	5.7	297
Full-Service Restaurants	7221	\$108,791,603	\$96,711,019	\$12,080,584	5.9	177
Limited-Service Eating Places	7222	\$80,800,467	\$74,489,769	\$6,310,698	4.1	93
Special Food Services	7223	\$4,485,798	\$5,154,259	-\$668,461	-6.9	12
Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	7224	\$11,208,509	\$6,637,713	\$4,570,796	25.6	15

Data Note: Supply (retail sales) estimates sales to consumers by establishments. Sales to businesses are excluded. Demand (retail potential) estimates the expected amount spent by consumers at retail establishments. Supply and demand estimates are in current dollars. The Leakage/Surplus Factor presents a snapshot of retail opportunity. This is a measure of the relationship between supply and demand that ranges from +100 (total leakage) to -100 (total surplus). A positive value represents 'leakage' of retail opportunity outside the trade area. A negative value represents a surplus of retail sales, a market where customers are drawn in from outside the trade area. The Retail Gap represents the difference between Retail Potential and Retail Sales. Esri uses the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) to classify businesses by their primary type of economic activity. Retail establishments are classified into 27 industry groups in the Retail Trade sector, as well as four industry groups within the Food Services & Drinking Establishments subsector. For more information on the Retail MarketPlace data, please click the link below to view the Methodology Statement.  
<http://www.esri.com/library/whitepapers/pdfs/esri-data-retail-marketplace.pdf>

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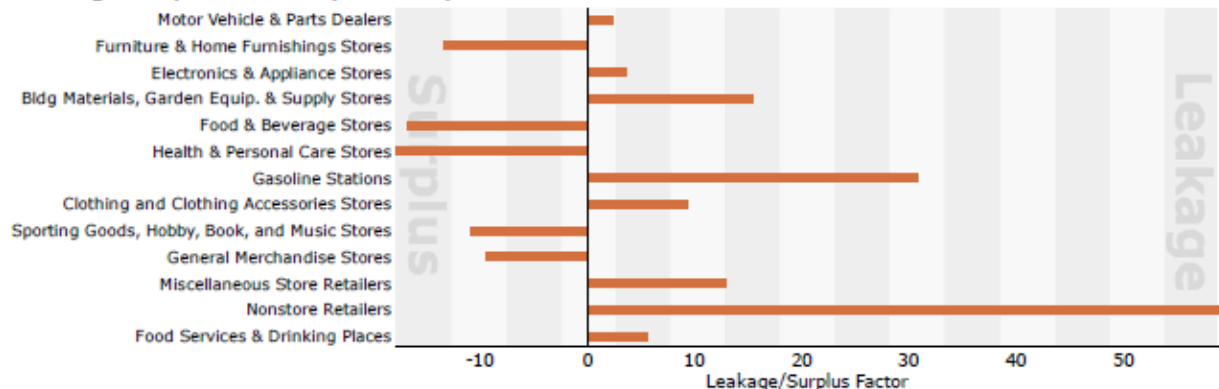


## Retail MarketPlace Profile

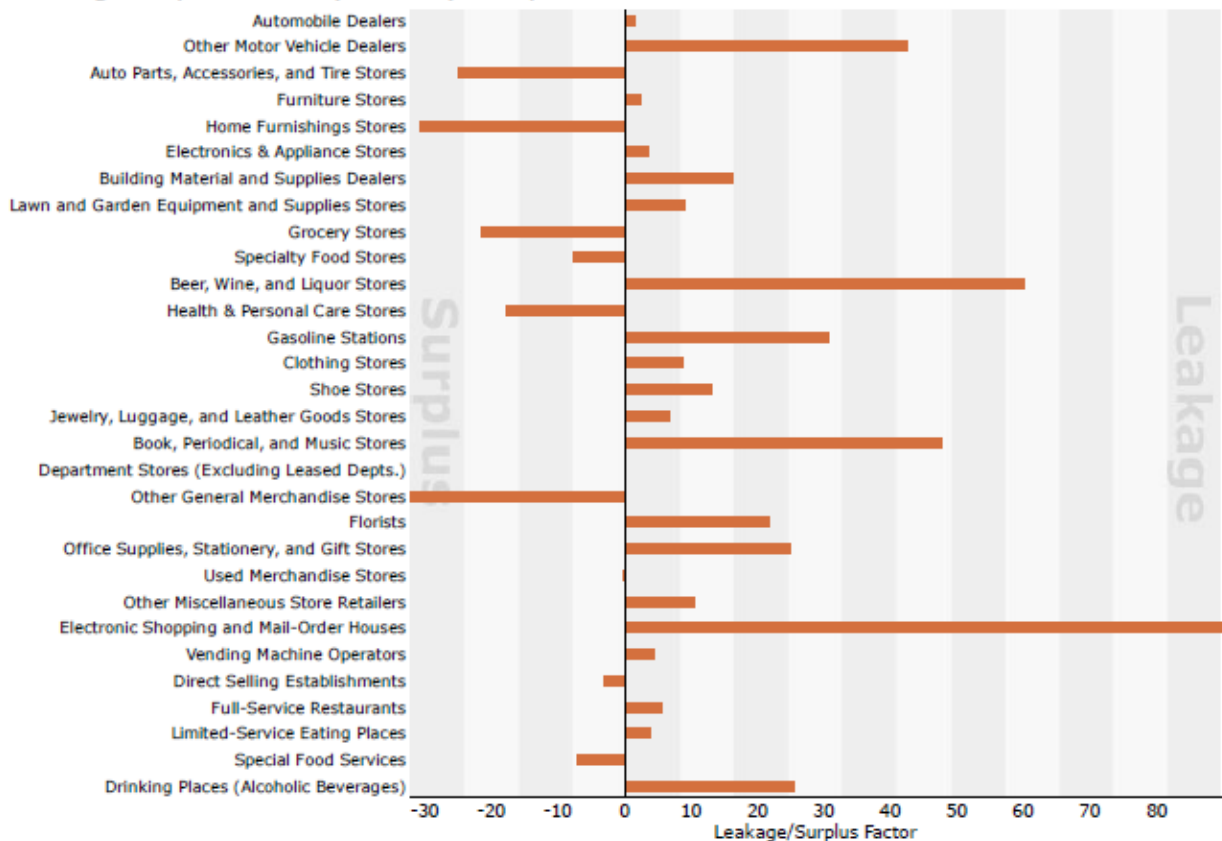
113/309  
749 Route 113, Hilltown Twp, Pennsylvania, 18964  
Drive Time Band: 10 - 15 minute radius

Prepared by Esri  
Latitude: 40.31730  
Longitude: -75.30842

### Leakage/Surplus Factor by Industry Subsector



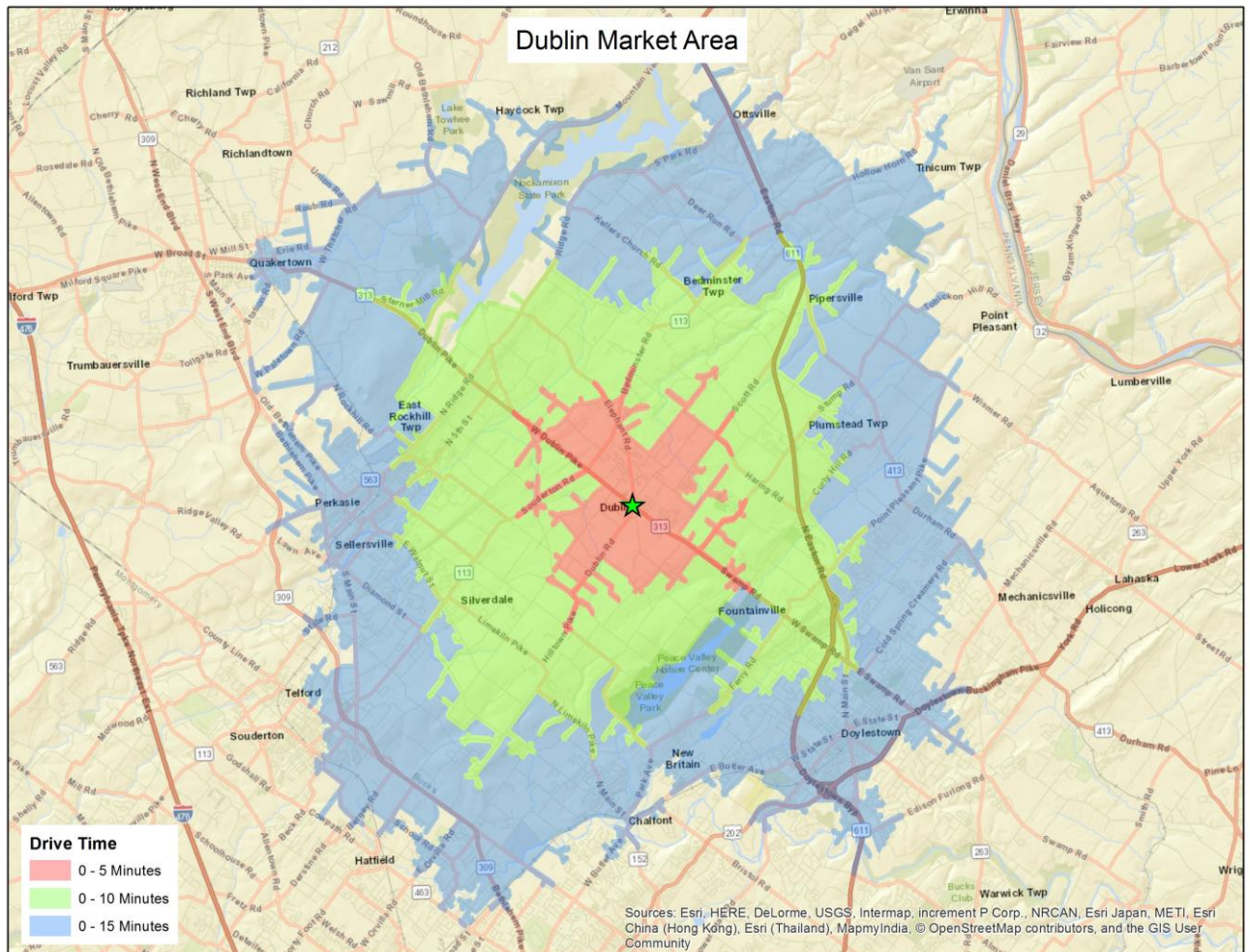
### Leakage/Surplus Factor by Industry Group



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September 19, 2016







## Retail MarketPlace Profile

Dublin Borough  
100 S Main St, Dublin, Pennsylvania, 18917  
Drive Time Band: 10 - 15 minute radius

Prepared by Esri  
Latitude: 40.37158  
Longitude: -75.20277

Summary Demographics						
2016 Population						69,758
2016 Households						26,460
2016 Median Disposable Income						\$61,369
2016 Per Capita Income						\$40,725
Industry Summary	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	44-45,722	\$1,472,720,197	\$1,855,362,537	-\$382,642,340	-11.5	752
Total Retail Trade	44-45	\$1,330,610,159	\$1,755,262,220	-\$424,652,061	-13.8	545
Total Food & Drink	722	\$142,110,038	\$100,100,318	\$42,009,720	17.3	207
Industry Group	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	441	\$300,486,403	\$866,509,620	-\$566,023,217	-48.5	75
Automobile Dealers	4411	\$250,731,582	\$731,584,415	-\$480,852,833	-49.0	33
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	4412	\$31,159,823	\$81,463,299	-\$50,303,476	-44.7	14
Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores	4413	\$18,594,998	\$53,461,906	-\$34,866,908	-48.4	28
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	442	\$40,542,304	\$39,481,643	\$1,060,661	1.3	39
Furniture Stores	4421	\$24,868,580	\$18,324,552	\$6,544,028	15.2	17
Home Furnishings Stores	4422	\$15,673,723	\$21,157,091	-\$5,483,368	-14.9	22
Electronics & Appliance Stores	443	\$72,730,381	\$60,904,357	\$11,826,024	8.8	46
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	444	\$68,410,826	\$68,416,306	-\$5,480	0.0	45
Bldg Material & Supplies Dealers	4441	\$60,422,055	\$59,623,609	\$798,446	0.7	35
Lawn & Garden Equip & Supply Stores	4442	\$7,988,771	\$8,792,697	-\$803,926	-4.8	10
Food & Beverage Stores	445	\$261,082,323	\$253,779,217	\$7,303,106	1.4	43
Grocery Stores	4451	\$220,919,015	\$222,375,914	-\$1,456,899	-0.3	18
Specialty Food Stores	4452	\$15,862,148	\$12,688,126	\$3,174,022	11.1	16
Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores	4453	\$24,301,160	\$18,715,176	\$5,585,984	13.0	9
Health & Personal Care Stores	446,4461	\$60,389,465	\$111,536,155	-\$51,146,690	-29.7	44
Gasoline Stations	447,4471	\$86,476,287	\$48,444,982	\$38,031,305	28.2	13
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	448	\$67,362,700	\$47,480,500	\$19,882,200	17.3	58
Clothing Stores	4481	\$48,935,326	\$33,114,294	\$15,821,032	19.3	36
Shoe Stores	4482	\$9,775,318	\$3,851,798	\$5,923,521	43.5	7
Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	4483	\$8,652,054	\$10,514,407	-\$1,862,353	-9.7	15
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	451	\$42,510,870	\$27,139,033	\$15,371,837	22.1	43
Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instr Stores	4511	\$34,164,122	\$23,714,387	\$10,449,735	18.1	36
Book, Periodical & Music Stores	4512	\$8,346,748	\$3,424,647	\$4,922,101	41.8	7
General Merchandise Stores	452	\$221,185,610	\$105,309,237	\$115,876,373	35.5	19
Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.	4521	\$172,284,725	\$92,905,099	\$79,379,630	29.9	4
Other General Merchandise Stores	4529	\$48,900,881	\$12,404,138	\$36,496,743	59.5	15
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	453	\$63,546,208	\$84,401,157	-\$20,854,949	-14.1	113
Florists	4531	\$3,261,592	\$3,980,514	-\$718,922	-9.9	14
Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores	4532	\$13,158,664	\$18,202,212	-\$5,043,548	-16.1	27
Used Merchandise Stores	4533	\$4,881,396	\$5,941,045	-\$1,059,649	-9.8	23
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	4539	\$42,244,556	\$56,277,386	-\$14,032,830	-14.2	49
Nonstore Retailers	454	\$45,886,783	\$41,860,012	\$4,026,771	4.6	7
Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses	4541	\$36,446,073	\$39,311,596	-\$2,865,523	-3.8	2
Vending Machine Operators	4542	\$1,361,977	\$116,658	\$1,245,319	84.2	1
Direct Selling Establishments	4543	\$8,078,733	\$2,431,759	\$5,646,974	53.7	4
Food Services & Drinking Places	722	\$142,110,038	\$100,100,318	\$42,009,720	17.3	207
Full-Service Restaurants	7221	\$75,323,518	\$55,052,030	\$20,271,488	15.5	123
Limited-Service Eating Places	7222	\$55,921,330	\$37,020,967	\$18,900,363	20.3	61
Special Food Services	7223	\$3,071,385	\$1,873,936	\$1,197,449	24.2	9
Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	7224	\$7,793,806	\$6,153,385	\$1,640,421	11.8	14

Data Note: Supply (retail sales) estimates sales to consumers by establishments. Sales to businesses are excluded. Demand (retail potential) estimates the expected amount spent by consumers at retail establishments. Supply and demand estimates are in current dollars. The Leakage/Surplus Factor presents a snapshot of retail opportunity. This is a measure of the relationship between supply and demand that ranges from +100 (total leakage) to -100 (total surplus). A positive value represents 'leakage' of retail opportunity outside the trade area. A negative value represents a surplus of retail sales, a market where customers are drawn in from outside the trade area. The Retail Gap represents the difference between Retail Potential and Retail Sales. Esri uses the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) to classify businesses by their primary type of economic activity. Retail establishments are classified into 27 industry groups in the Retail Trade sector, as well as four industry groups within the Food Services & Drinking Establishments subsector. For more information on the Retail MarketPlace data, please click the link below to view the Methodology Statement.  
<http://www.esri.com/library/whitepapers/pdfs/esri-data-retail-marketplace.pdf>

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September 19, 2016

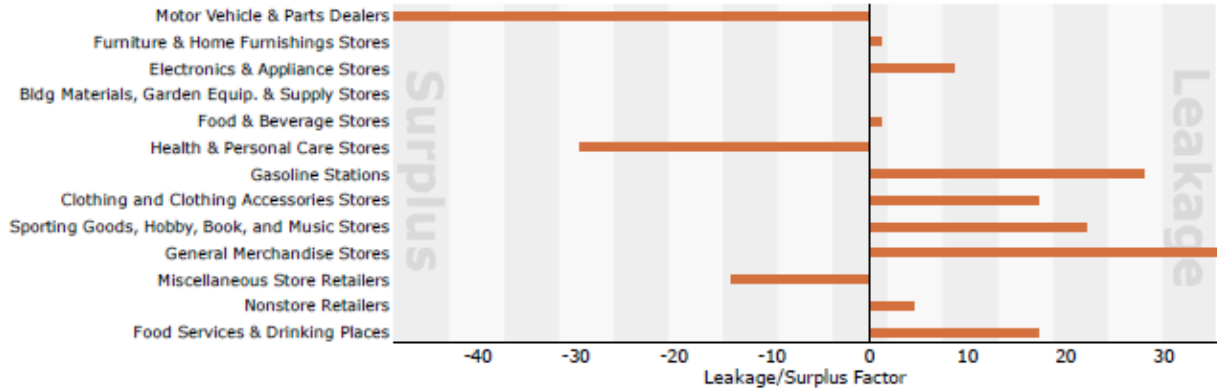


## Retail MarketPlace Profile

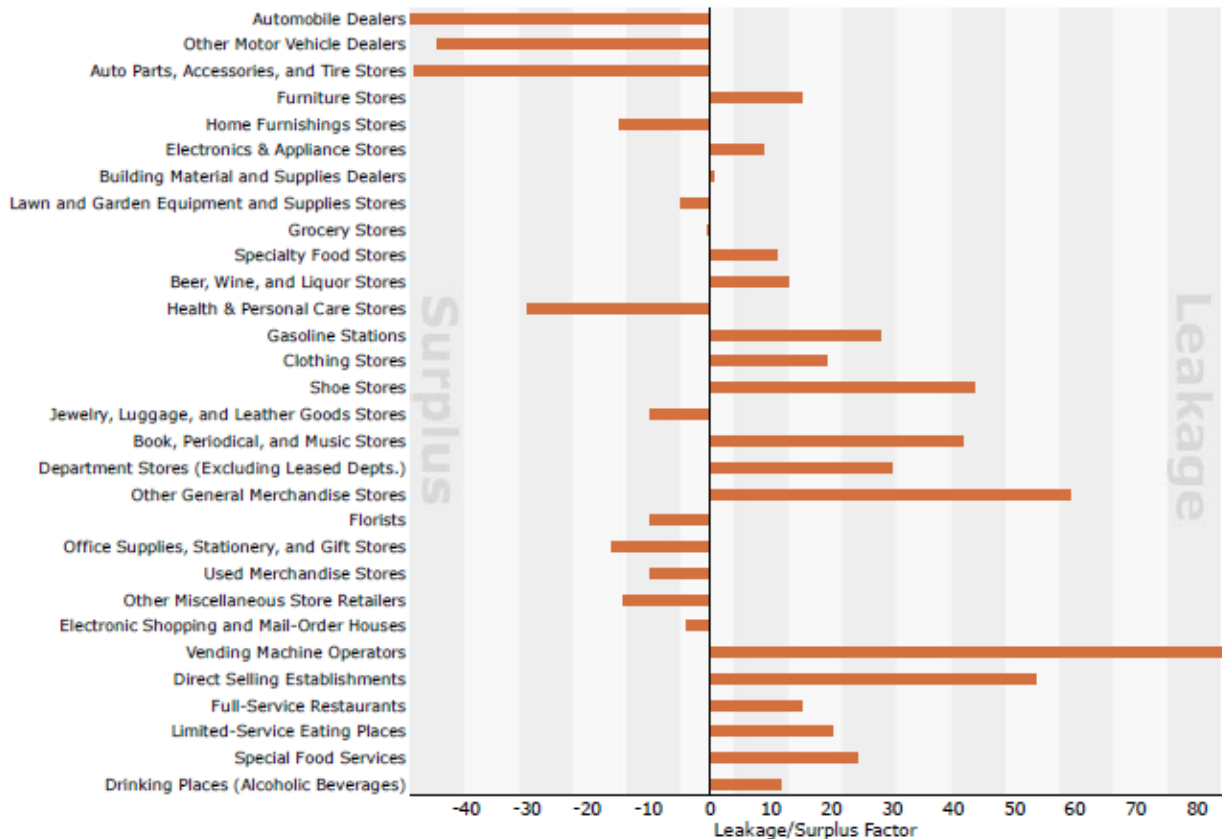
Dublin Borough  
100 S Main St, Dublin, Pennsylvania, 18917  
Drive Time Band: 10 - 15 minute radius

Prepared by Esri  
Latitude: 40.37158  
Longitude: -75.20277

### Leakage/Surplus Factor by Industry Subsector



### Leakage/Surplus Factor by Industry Group



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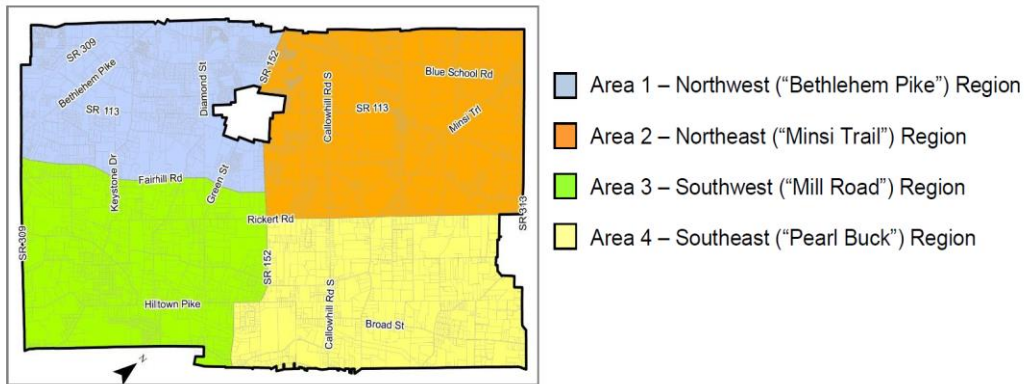




# Appendix B

## Hilltown Township Business Survey Summary

1. Please indicate where your business is located within Hilltown Township by placing a mark on the appropriate location.



**Total Responses 49**

**Not Answered 14**

Area 1 — Northwest Region	29	46%
Area 2 — Northeast Region	6	10%
Area 3 — Southwest Region	6	10%
Area 4 — Southeast Region	6	10%
Other — Silverdale	2	3%

2. What is the general nature of your business?

**Total Responses 61**

**Not Answered 2**

Eating Establishment (restaurant, café, etc.)	5	8%
Retail Store	17	27%
Professional Office (CPA, attorney, physician, etc.)	5	8%
Bank/Financial Service	1	2%
Personal Service (dry cleaner, beauty salon, etc.)	3	5%
Gas station/Auto repair	4	7%
Industrial/Manufacturing	9	14%
Warehouse/Wholesale trade	1	3%
Research/Development	0	0%
Technology/Communications	0	0%
Construction	0	0%
Other (See comments)	15	24%

### 3. How long has your business operated in Hilltown Township?

**Total Responses 62**

**Not Answered 1**

0 – 5 years	7	11%
6 – 10 years	10	16%
11 – 20 years	15	24%
21 years or more	30	48%

### 4. How many employees does your business employ in Hilltown?

**Total Responses 60**

**Not Answered 3**

Average	15.3333
---------	---------

### 5. Do you own or rent your place of business?

**Total Responses 61**

**Not Answered 2**

Own	30	48%
Rent	31	49%

### 6. Why did you choose Hilltown as your business location? (Check all that apply)

**Total Responses 62**

**Not Answered 1**

**84**

Proximity to markets, customer base, suppliers or complementary business	20	24%
Location in Bucks County	9	11%
Location in the Philadelphia Metropolitan Area	5	6%
Cost factors: building, utilities, etc.	14	16%
Quality of life/community appeal for employees or self	8	9%
Skilled or educated workforce	2	2%
Transportation network	2	2%
Other (see comments)	24	28%

### 7. What percentage of your patrons do you estimate make up each of the following categories?

**Total Responses 57**

**Not Answered 6**

Local Residents	66.95%
Internet/phone	6.90%
Out of town tourists	7.24%
Other (see comments)	18.91%

### 8. What geographic market(s) does your business service? (Check all that apply)

**Total Responses** 62  
**Not Answered** 1

Bucks and Montgomery Counties	42	40%
Philadelphia Metropolitan Area	17	16%
National markets	17	16%
International markets	10	10%
Primarily Hilltown Township and nearby communities	17	16%

### 9. What are your business plans for the next three years in Hilltown Township?

**Total Responses** 62  
**Not Answered** 1

No Change	40	56%
Add new products/services	14	20%
Expand	9	13%
Relocate (see comments)	3	4%
Reduce (see comments)	4	6%
Closing Business (see comments)	0	0%

### 10. Is your physical location, or existing lot size, a constraint on future plans for expansion due to zoning or other regulatory restrictions? (See comments)

**Total Responses** 61  
**Not Answered** 2

No	50	79%
Yes	11	17%

### 11. What kinds of obstacles have been encountered or would be expected if the business tried to expand? (Check all that apply. See comments)

**Total Responses** 47  
**Not Answered** 16

Too many state regulations (i.e., PA DEP)	14	14%
Too many township regulations	21	21%
Expansion would exceed the allowable impervious surface for the site	17	17%
Too much time required for local approval and permitting process	13	13%
Not enough land area to meet the minimum required lot area and/or minimum yard requirements	6	6%
Other	14	14%

## 12. What are the advantages and disadvantages of being located in Hilltown Township? (See comments)

	Advantage		Disadvantage		Neutral		No Response
	Response	%	Response	%	Response	%	
Access via highways, roads, and public transportation	44	73.3%	5	8.3%	11	18.3%	3
Availability of quality of workforce	25	43.9%	10	17.5%	22	38.6%	6
Availability and reasonable cost of commercial/ business space	21	37.5%	11	19.6%	24	42.9%	7
Adequate parking	34	59.6%	7	12.3%	16	28.1%	6
Access to banks and professional services	39	69.6%	1	1.8%	16	28.6%	7
Access to retail and shopping opportunities	35	60.3%	2	3.4%	21	36.2%	5
Access to parks, recreation, and open space	31	55.4%	3	5.4%	22	39.3%	7
Cost of doing business	19	33.3%	12	21.1%	26	45.6%	6
Crime rate	37	61.7%	6	10.0%	17	28.3%	3
Infrastructure conditions	16	28.1%	9	15.8%	32	56.1%	6
Restaurants, eateries, taverns	26	44.1%	6	10.2%	27	45.8%	4
Quality of school system (K -12)	22	37.9%	2	3.4%	34	58.6%	5
Overall community appearance	39	68.4%	1	1.8%	17	29.8%	6
Variety of residential housing	36	63.2%	0	0.0%	21	36.8%	6
Overall business environment	29	51.8%	2	3.6%	25	44.6%	7
Licensing, permitting, regulatory environment	17	29.8%	12	21.1%	28	49.1%	6

## 13. How would you describe the business climate in Hilltown?

**Total Responses 62**

**Not Answered 1**

Excellent	5	8%
Very good	26	41%
Good	27	43%
Poor	5	8%



#### 14. Would you recommend Hilltown Township as a place to locate a business? (See comments)

**Total Responses** 55  
**Not Answered** 8

Yes	43	68%
No	12	19%

#### 15. Which of the following do you see as the biggest challenges for your business in Hilltown in the next 10 years? (See comments)

**Total Responses** 39  
**Not Answered** 24

5 Greatest challenges ranked 1 to 5, 1 being the greatest challenge.						
	1	2	3	4	5	Weighted Rank
Taxes and other costs	12	5	4	1	2	2.00
Adequate and convenient parking	1	0	1	0	2	3.50
Access to highways	1	1	1	0	0	2.00
Retaining existing businesses	1	1	3	3	3	3.55
Attracting new/different types of businesses	3	0	3	2	3	3.18
Costs of doing business: energy, rent, personnel costs, healthcare costs, etc.	10	10	5	4	2	2.29
Quality/size of employee pool	4	1	3	2	2	2.75
Aging infrastructure	1	1	5	3	3	3.46
Traffic congestion	3	4	3	6	1	2.88
Regulatory environment	1	2	3	6	2	3.43
Ability to expand facilities	2	3	1	1	4	3.18
Other	1	1	0	0	1	2.67

#### 16. If you had \$100 to spend on physical improvements within Hilltown Township, how would you spend it? (See comments)

**Total Responses** 56  
**Not Answered** 7

Roads and traffic control	\$42.14
Recreation facilities/Open space	\$16.16
Sidewalks, pedestrian circulation	\$10.36
Parking	\$0.63
Streetscape beautification	\$8.48
Stormwater improvements	\$13.13
Other	\$9.11

**17. Select the five most important things Hilltown Township could do to improve your ability to operate a successful business.**

**Total Responses 41**

**Not Answered 22**

<i>Top 5 most important improvements 1 being the most important.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	Weighted Rank
Improve infrastructure (roads, utilities)	20	5	4	2	1	1.72
Enhance communication with business community	0	5	8	3	5	3.38
Provide more flexible zoning requirements	4	7	4	5	1	2.62
Improve Township licensing and regulatory process	5	7	3	6	2	2.70
Improve signage to township's attractions/businesses	7	4	4	4	5	2.83
Marketing coordination	2	2	2	1	7	3.64
Enhance pedestrian circulation	1	1	0	3	2	3.57
Increase police presence	1	1	4	2	2	3.30
Enhance bicycle ways (signage, trails, bike racks, etc.)	0	2	1	2	3	3.75

# Appendix C

## Hilltown Township Business Survey Comments

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### 2. What is the general nature of your business?

- Divisional Executive Office.
- Development.
- Farm market.
- Nursery, Landscape.
- Religious Institute (Church).
- Equestrian Therapy.
- Farm Market.
- Used Truck Dealer.
- Government Agency.
- Nursery.
- Green house.
- Childcare.
- Distribution.
- Auto Sales Detail.
- Car Wash.
- Lodging/tourism.
- Wholesale Nursery/Green House.

### 6. Why did you choose Hilltown as your business location?

- Didn't choose Hilltown.
- Purchased existing Business.
- Family land.
- Property and home.
- Previously established, too costly to move factory.
- Location to previous owner.
- Opportunity.
- Protected from wind.
- Established 1975 before I came.
- It was here when I purchased it.
- It was open land at the time.
- Here since 1856.
- Busy 309.
- Small Farm.
- Lived in location, converted barn.
- Bought existing.
- Only area affordable in 1985
- Born here.
- Proximity to 309.

### 7. What percentage of your patrons do you estimate make up each of the following categories?

- Word of mouth.
- Serve people all over the country.
- No real Patrons.
- Businesses within 75 mile radius.
- Visitors.
- Other businesses- out of the area.
- Vendors and MFG's.
- Local Bucks and Montgomery County residents other than Hilltown.
- Other states.
- US and Canadian Customers.
- Referral.

- 100 mile radius.
- We deliver to customers outside of Telford.
- Reputation.
- Other dealers.
- Surrounding areas.
- Local businesses.
- Traveling Bethlehem Pike & Business people.
- Builders: P.A., NJ.

**9. What are your business plans for the next three years in Hilltown Township?**

**If you checked “relocate”,  
please indicate why:**

- Restrictions/Permits.
- Lease expires, management decision to relocate.
- Maybe.

**If you checked “reduce”,  
please indicate why:**

- Not enough business.
- Cost of rent.
- Age and health.
- Retail is very slow.

**10. Is your physical location, or existing lot size, a constraint on future plans for expansion due to zoning or other regulatory restrictions?**

- Setbacks. Already gave township my land.
- We are a farm so we have room and have never had any issues with the town. However, we have looked at expansion and it's very costly.
- We are located on under 10 acres- cannot build more.
- Small parking lot; skateboarders.
- Need more room to expand (small lot size).
- It's very hard to get anything done in this township.
- See below.
- Don't want to deal with Township again.
- Hilltown Stormwater and PA D.O.T Road water is wrecking property.
- Would like to expand use.
- Building restrictions.

**11. What kinds of obstacles have been encountered or would be expected if the business tried to expand?**

- Setbacks, Doylestown has no setbacks.
- Huge expense for permits i.e. new septic system.
- Taxes too high.
- Rent this place, lease expires next year.
- Parking- Buildings too close.
- No "EDU's."
- None.
- No obstacles.
- Parking- Buildings too close.
- Burdened by easement owned by nobody.
- Approval of neighboring properties.
- The time and money required to meet government rules and regulations puts us at an economic disadvantage vs. the fly by nights.

**12. What are the advantages and disadvantages of being located in Hilltown Township?**

- Public Transportation.
- Quality workforce not available.
- Need train to Souderton and Telford.

**14. Would you recommend Hilltown Township as a place to locate a business?**

- Zoning, setbacks, permit structure.
- Good area, easy accessibility by roads from many areas.
- Beautiful Community rural, tranquil yet close to other commerce, shipping, septa commuter line.
- Population growth.
- Depends on type of business.
- High income residents.
- Proximity to Doylestown. Township personnel have always been responsive and helpful.
- Still growing in population, new housing.
- Access to major highways- PA Turnpike, I95, 309, I78, access to airports, PHI, ABE, EWR.
- Hilltown is beautiful with a wide variety of customers. It is expensive to be here but there is a high quality of life. Police, fire are great. We would love public sewer and water.
- A lot of Main roads.
- Needs traffic light at 309 and Swartley Road.
- Expansion of public transport/ walking paths.
- No, because the business I am in requires traffic flow and there is not enough traffic flow for excellent business.
- Hilltown is a nice community to live and work in.
- Families are plenty- better traffic here than some.
- No signage- clients cannot locate us. Skateboarders locate us too well.
- Great place to live and work.
- Property taxes are too high.
- Hilltown is a nice place to do business.
- Not easy to get permits.
- Middle to upper class residents serve with quality products.
- Beautiful area, nice preserved farm land.
- It is hard to get a business open in Hilltown, way too much regulation.
- Excessive school taxes.
- Depends on the type of business.
- After 20 years I am still upset at the way we were treated, we purchased a property zoned for all our use, it took over 2 years to be able to use it and a lot of aggravation and expense.
- Township is very difficult to deal with.
- Limited opportunity for growth due to nature of clientele.
- I have a good location, but retail is poor.
- Neutral.

**15. Which of the following do you see as the biggest challenges for your business in Hilltown in the next 10 years?**

- Need public water & sewer please.
- Undocumented workers, unregistered contractors- i.e. no D.O.T.#, no H.I.C.#, cash contractors not paying taxes (this should probably be #1).
- No sewer or water.
- Building and fence permits are too difficult.
- Public transportation, Septa bus, train connection.
- Very high rent for commercial place.
- Now.

**16. If you had \$100 to spend on physical improvements within Hilltown Township, how would you spend it?**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| • Public Sewer.                                | • The road conditions are poor.   |
| • Encourage more eating establishments.        | • Signs and Advertising.  |
| • Public Water.                                | • Sewers for wastewater.  |
| • Redo the light in front of Souderton Square. | • Our biggest issue is a drain on County Line Road at Aldis/Grafton Piano. Clogged for 5 years making ice dams. |
| • Public transportation.                       |   |

**18. What are your suggestions/recommendations to improve the township's business districts?**

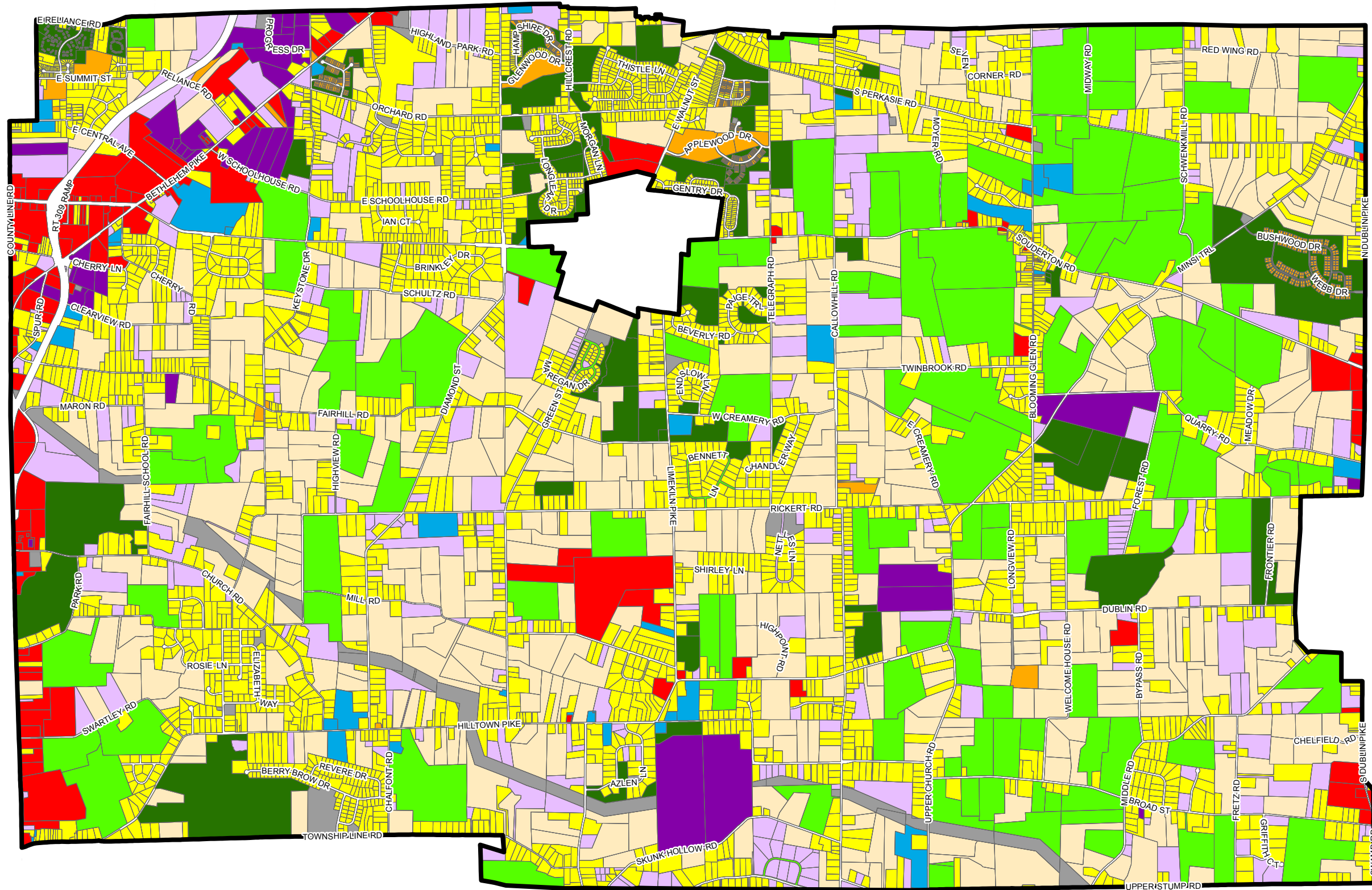
- Provide public sewer water. Help with permits to expand Hilltown and not work against us. In Doylestown you can eat and drink outside on the sidewalk where if you stick your foot out in the street you will get ran over by a car. Ease up on the setbacks and permits and work with us to expand Hilltown so we can attract more people with outdoor seating to view the beauty of Hilltown. (Looking to re-locate soon) too many empty- vacant buildings already. Thanks.
- Reopen and support the former Hilltown Business Association. Recognize and encourage positive interaction between Township and business owners. Acknowledge and strengthen the untapped resource of tax ratables that our commercial districts can provide to our local township citizens. Establish a "fast track" procedure for certain basic permits.
- Overall, very good township layout with rural housing areas and easy to access business areas.
- Taxes are getting stressful.
- None.
- Hilltown is great. However it does appear as though you are trying to protect green space, which is also great. I feel that expansion of water and sewer would be most helpful to us, but feel it's never going to be available because then houses will be built and green space would decrease. I wish there was a plan being developed to allow more sewer and water expansion for current businesses and residents while protecting our valuable green space. Even my family farm in Upstate New York has public water and the nearest neighbor is four miles away.
- Neutral.
- Traffic light at 309 and Swartley Road. Storm water runoff at 309 and Swartley Road (floods).

- Increase public transport- have the Septa Bus go where customers need to go. Create Safer walking areas between businesses.
- We need better quality of workers. Let us run our business. Every year we consider moving to another state that is business friendly.
- Government hands off.
- Sidewalks from Bethlehem Pike into Hilltown Plaza and from Hilltown Plaza to Staples would be helpful for those who walk to work at Giant and Home Depot and Staples.
- (attached a hand drawn map with highlighting over suggested changes on Route 113, and also on Old Beth and Cherry) Safe walking and bike sidewalks in highlighted areas, Septa Bus or other public transportation to these areas.
- Too many handicapped parking spaces in our lot. Create skateboard area for kids.
- Make improvement easy and quick to process.
- Make permits easier to get and faster to approve.
- Decreasing taxes is always a good way to put money back to the business therefore making it easier to improve the business. The hope then would be that the improved business would generate more taxable income.
- Try to increase business along 309. Stop punishing business owners for trying to make their properties nicer. Promote small business and stop trying to crush us. Make the run-down properties get fixed up. Work with business owners not against us. Hilltown has a poor reputation as being hard to do business with.
- At our location here we have no public sewer. All businesses should have access to that.
- Signs and advertising business attracts people to do business. My store does not have a road sign due to Township regulations. Please contact me and help me to have a road sign to have better business advertising.
- 1. Sewers along Bethlehem Pike. In a growing area a property across the street has been for sale for 15 years because lack of facilities. I have spent over \$90,000 over 14 years to have waste tank pumped.
- Building permits- I stopped plans to put a small porch on side. I had to hire an architect and lawyer just to start. Instead I repaired an old slate patio that had to be there for 30 years. One obstacle was the waste water and guarantees on removal.
- What do bicycles have to do with a business unless you own a bike store? Hilltown Township has been a good place to do business, live, and work. Keep government small and don't screw it up.
- County Line Road between Club EZ Fit and Grafton Piano & Organ has a clogged storm/sewer drain which has caused pot holes every year as well as ice dams. This is a state road; we finally got Penn DOT with Hilltown's help to regrade the side of the road so water didn't run out on the road. The drain is still clogged. I realize this is a state road, how can we try to get PennDOT to fix this?





# Map 1 Existing Land Use



- Single Family Residential  
(Less Than 5 Acres)
- Single Family Residential  
(Greater Than 5 Acres)
- Multifamily Residential
- Agricultural  
(Greater Than 20 Acres)
- Parks, Recreation  
and Protected Open Space
- Government and Institutional
- Commercial
- Mining and Manufacturing
- Transportation and Utilities
- Undeveloped

Hilltown Township  
Bucks County, Pennsylvania

0 2,500 5,000 Feet

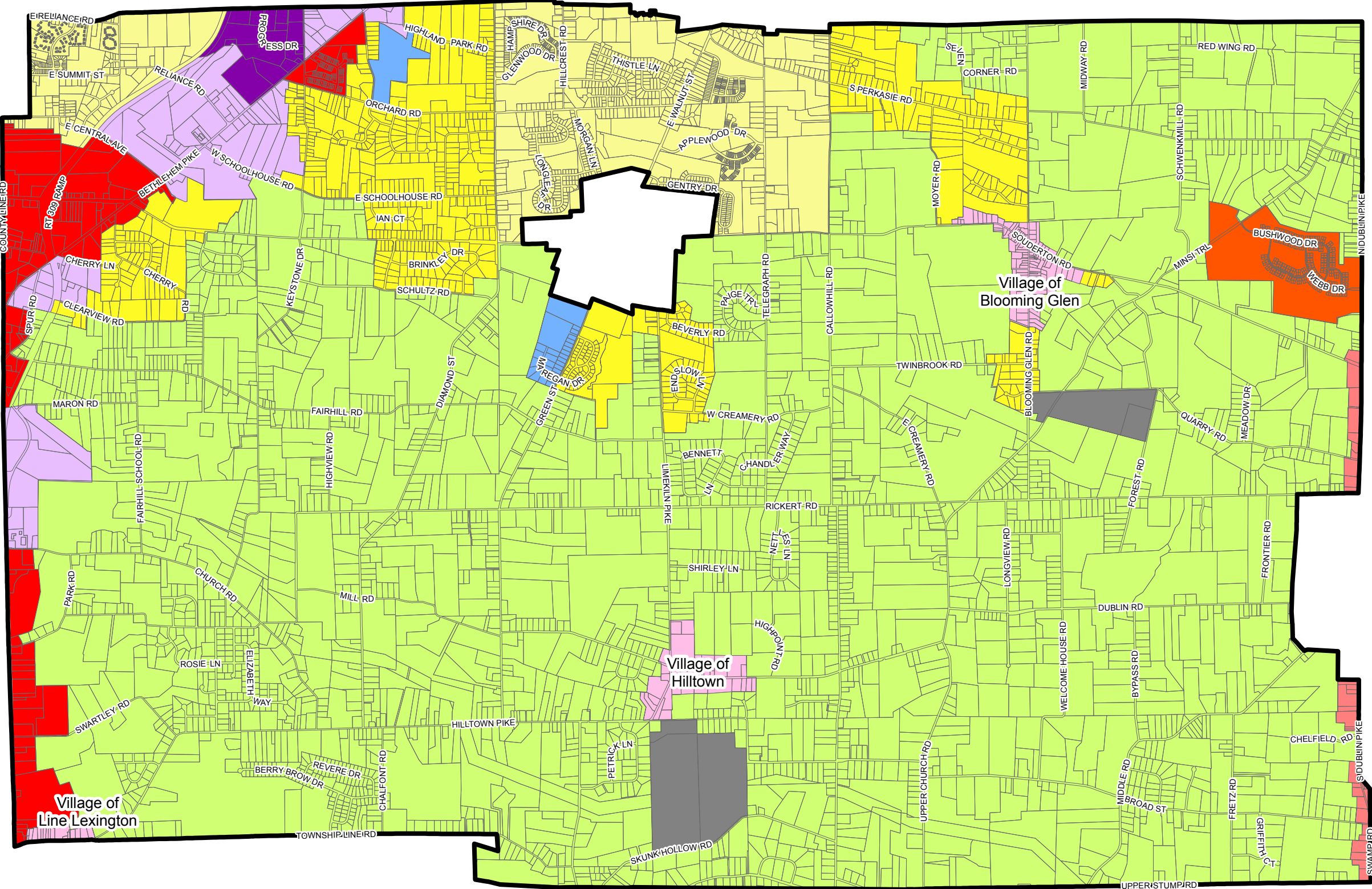
Prepared by: Bucks County Planning Commission  
2019







Map 2  
Future Land Use



Development Districts

- CR-1 Country Residential
- CR-2 Country Residential
- MHP Mobile Home Park
- VC Village Center
- PC-1 Planned Commercial
- PC-2 Planned Commercial
- LI Light Industrial
- HI Heavy Industrial
- AQRC Age Qualified Residential Community

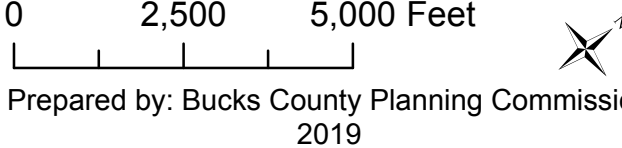
Conservation District

- RR Rural Residential

Extraction District

- Q Quarry

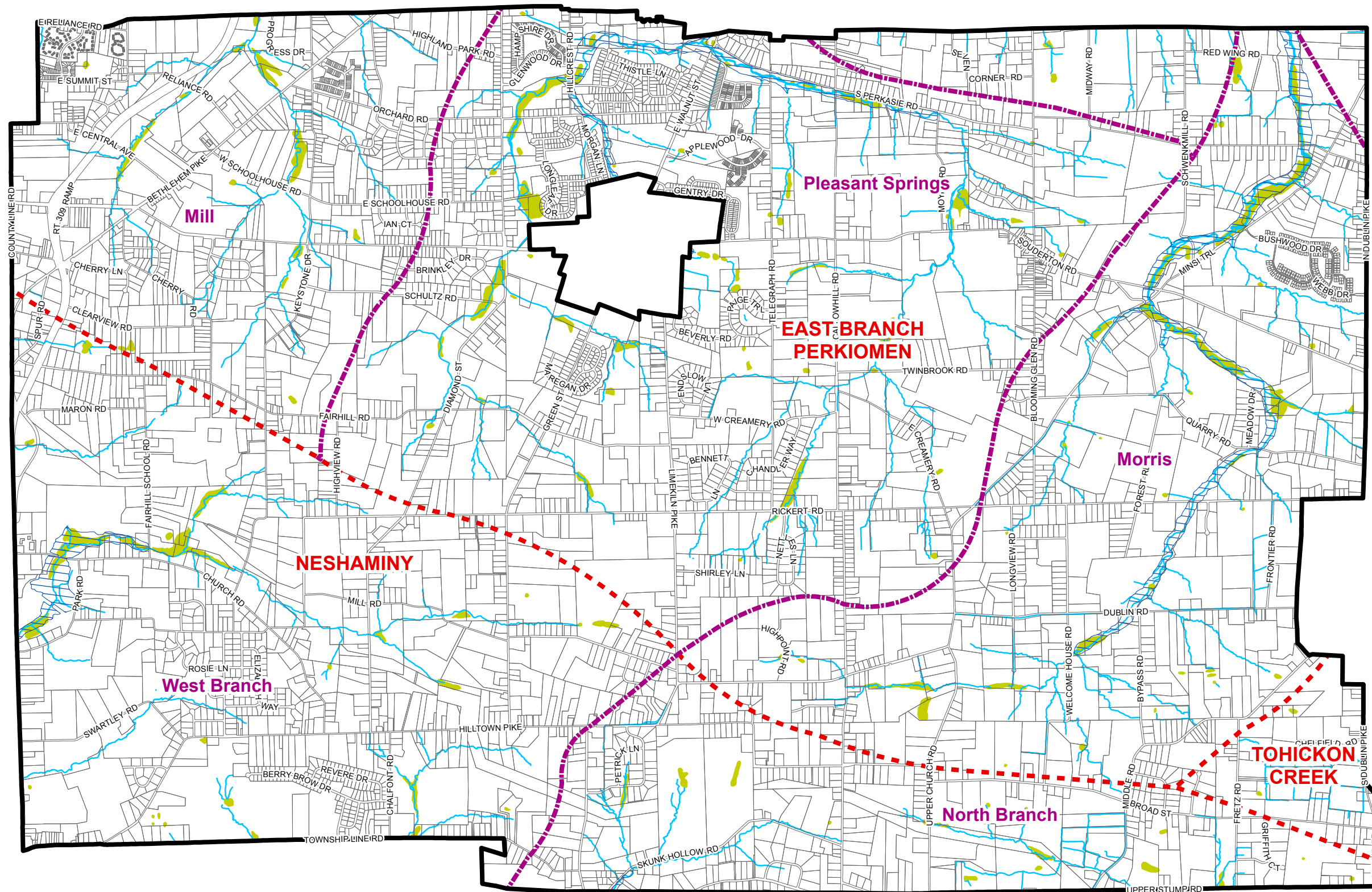
Hilltown Township  
Bucks County, Pennsylvania











# Map 3 Hydrologic Resources



-  100-Year FEMA-Designated Floodplain
-  Wetlands
-  PRIMARY WATERSHED BOUNDARY
-  Secondary Watershed Boundary

Hilltown Township  
Bucks County, Pennsylvania

0 2,500 5,000 Feet

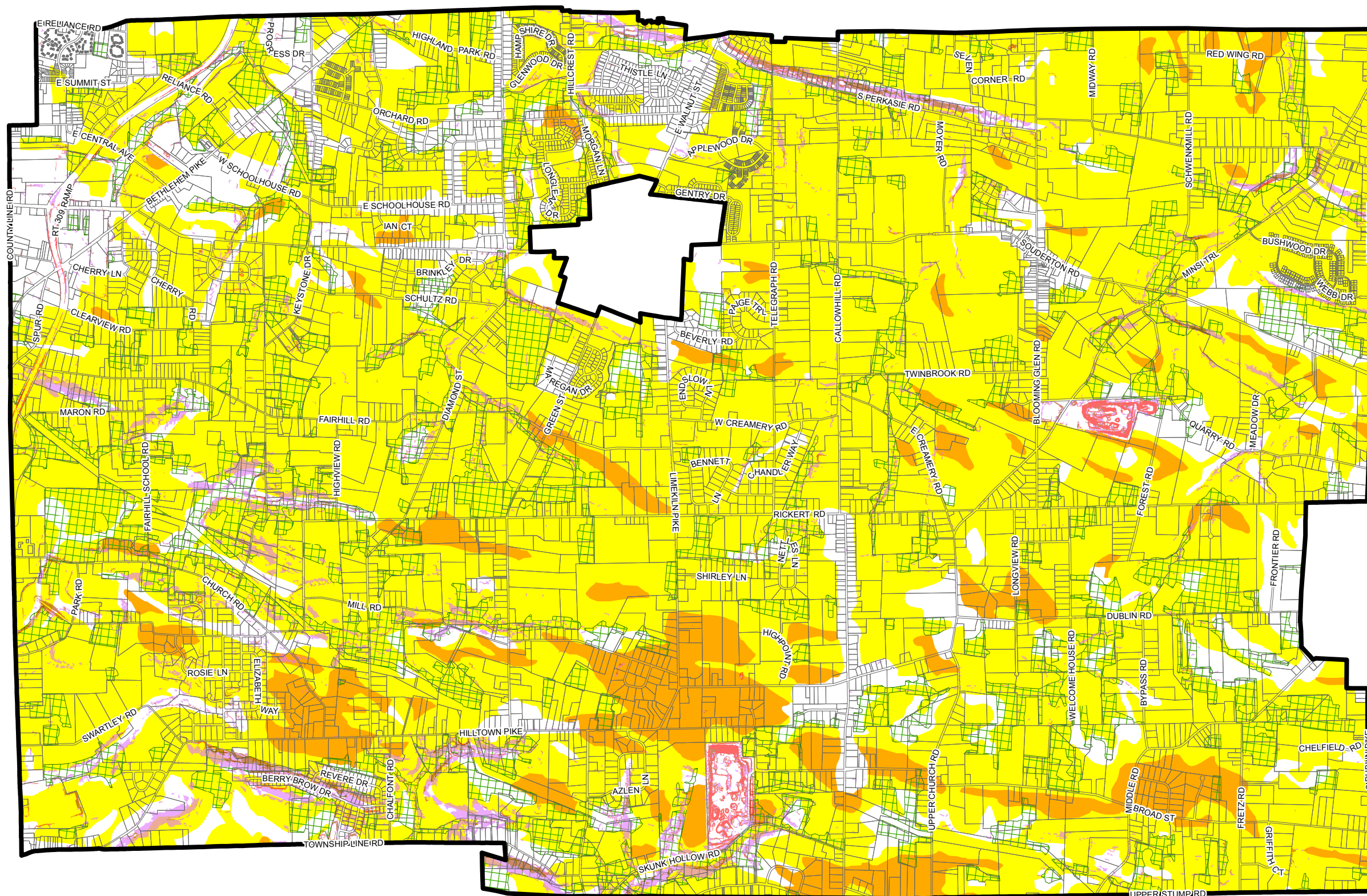
Prepared by: Bucks County Planning Commission  
2019







Source:  
Floodplains- FEMA, 2015  
Wetlands- National Wetlands Inventory, 2009





# Map 4 Land Resources



-  Woodlands
- Agricultural Soils**
  -  Prime Agricultural Soils
  -  Soils of Statewide Importance
- Steep Slopes**
  -  8 to 15 Percent
  -  15 to 25 Percent
  -  Greater than 25 Percent

Hilltown Township  
Bucks County, Pennsylvania

Source:  
Woodlands- DVRPC Land Cover Data Set, 2010  
Steep Slopes- DCNR PAMAP Program, 2008  
Soils- USDA- NRCS, 2008

0 2,500 5,000 Feet



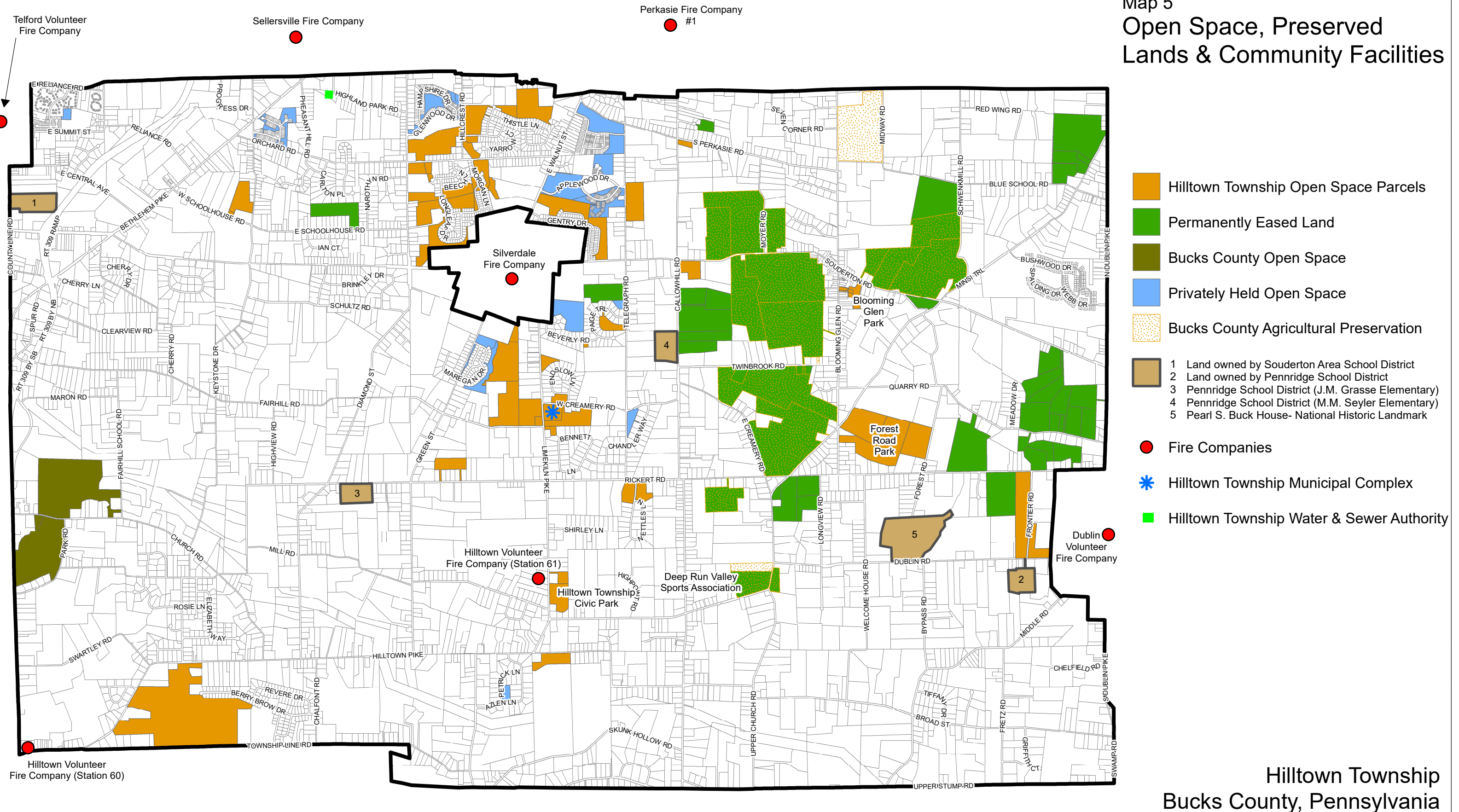
Prepared by: Bucks County Planning Commission  
2019





## Map 5

### Open Space, Preserved Lands & Community Facilities



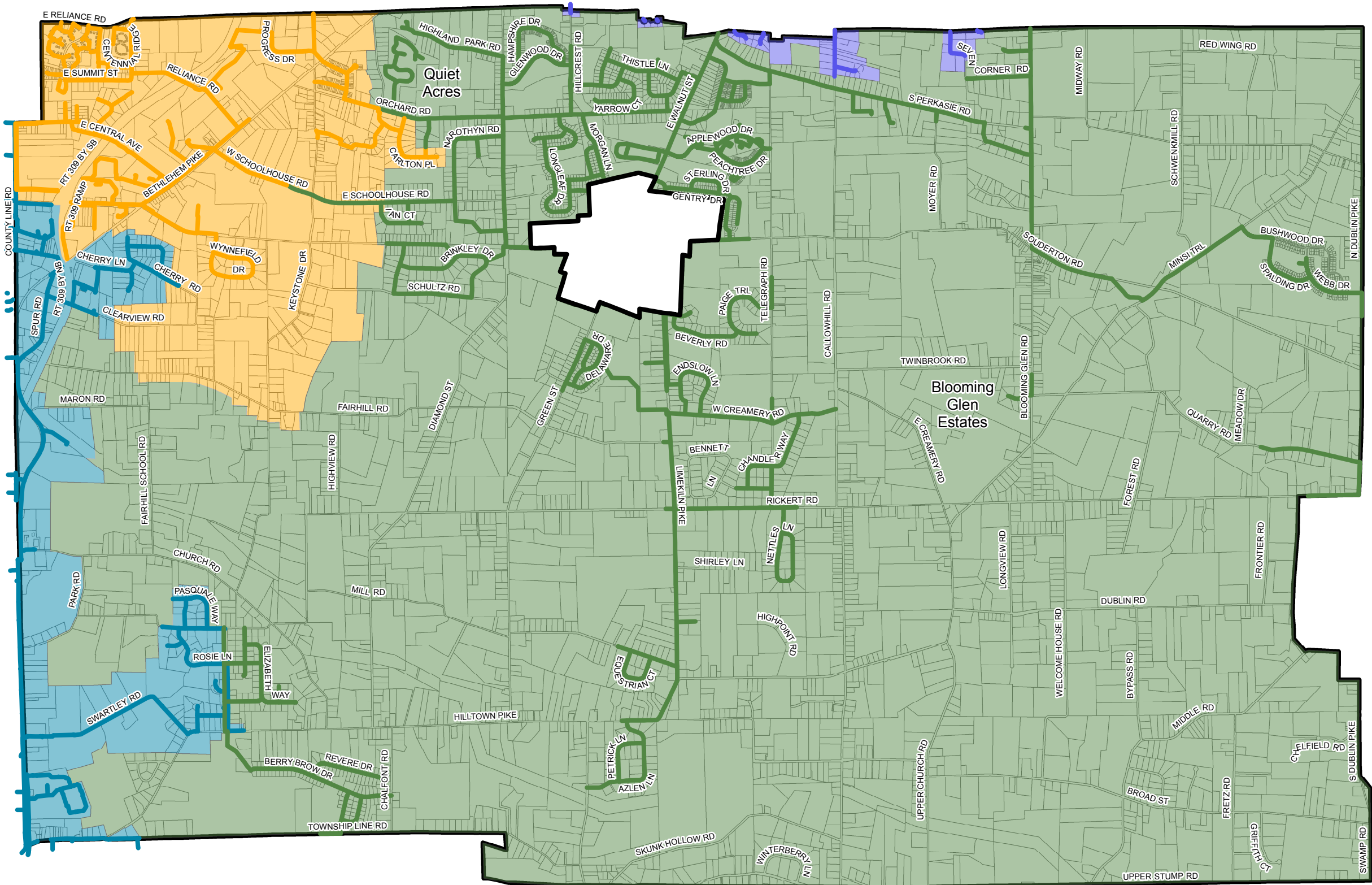
Source:  
Hilltown Township Open Space & Proposed Development Plan map, Revised October 2014  
Hilltown Township 2010 Open Space Plan

0 2,500 5,000 Feet

Prepared by: Bucks County Planning Commission  
2019



Map 6  
Water Service



- Public/Private Water Lines\*
- Hilltown Township Water & Sewer Authority
  - Telford Borough Authority
  - Perkasie Regional Authority
  - North Penn Water Authority

- Jurisdiction of Public/Private Water Providers\*
- Hilltown Township Water & Sewer Authority
  - Telford Borough Authority
  - Perkasie Regional Authority
  - North Penn Water Authority

\* Water lines and jurisdiction boundaries are approximate. For more detailed information, contact service provider.

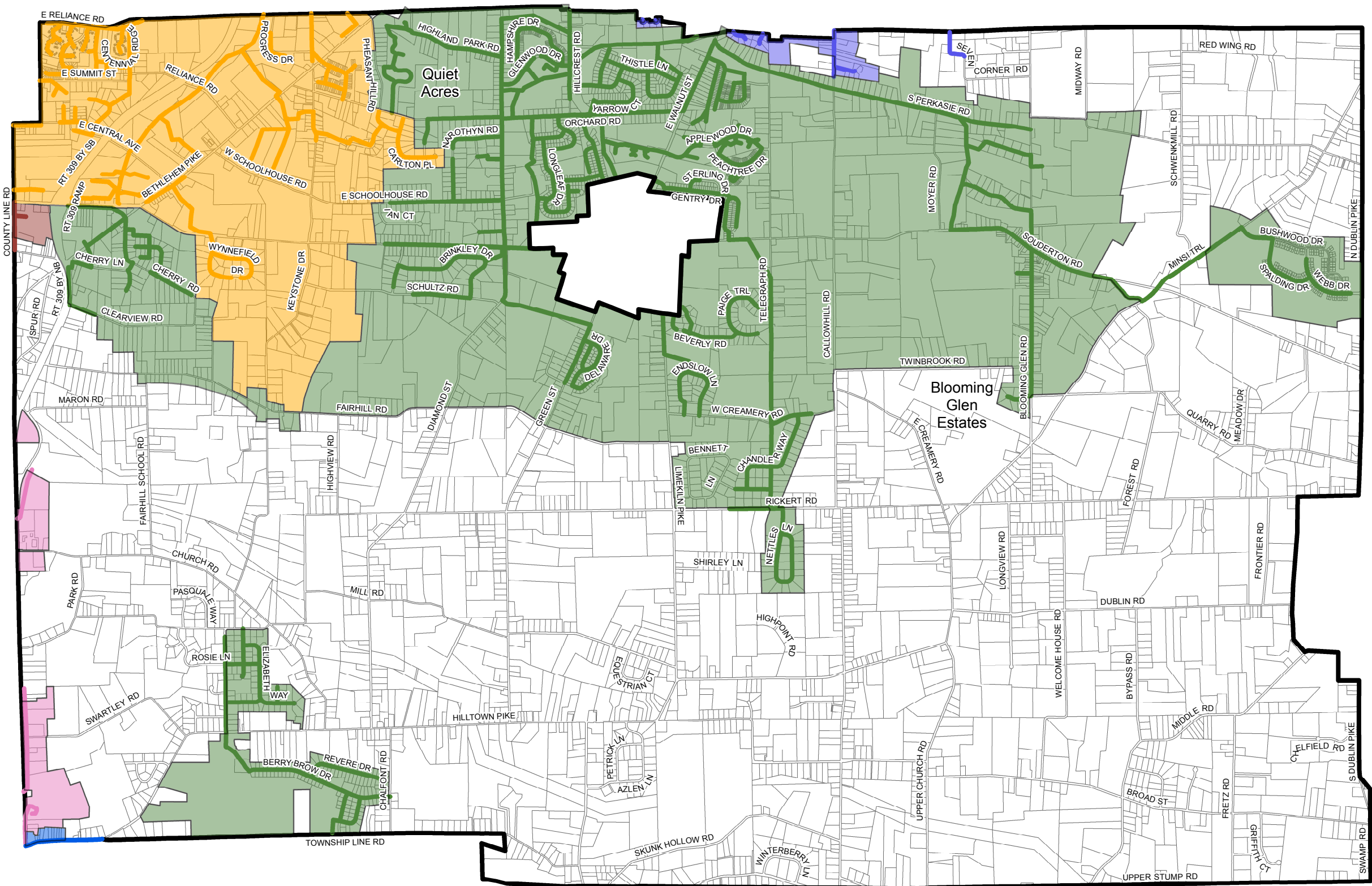
Hilltown Township  
Bucks County, Pennsylvania

Source: Municipal water providers, 2017





Map 7  
Sewer Service



Public/Private Sewer Lines\*

- Hilltown Township Water & Sewer Authority
- Hatfield Township Municipal Authority
- Telford Borough Authority
- Perkasie Regional Authority
- Souderton Borough Sewer Authority
- Chalfont-New Britain Twp Joint Sewage Authority

Sewer Service Areas\*

(Areas designated for public sewer service)

- Hilltown Township Water & Sewer Authority
- Hatfield Township Municipal Authority
- Telford Borough Authority
- Perkasie Regional Authority
- Souderton Borough Sewer Authority
- Chalfont-New Britain Twp Joint Sewage Authority

\* Sewer lines and service areas are approximate. For more detailed information, contact service provider.

Hilltown Township  
Bucks County, Pennsylvania

Source: Municipal service providers & township engineer, 2017

