

Darby Township Delaware County

Comprehensive Plan

A Comprehensive Plan for the Development and
Conservation of Darby Township



Draft July 2024

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Darby Township Comprehensive Plan

A Comprehensive Plan for the Development
and Conservation of Darby Township

Delaware County, Pennsylvania



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INTRODUCTION

This Comprehensive Plan is an overall guide for the development and conservation of Darby Township over the next 10 to 15 years. It is not a regulation by itself, but is intended to provide the rationale for updates to Township development regulations. The Comprehensive Plan includes background information about existing conditions and trends, mapping and a set of recommended policies. This Plan is intended to be implemented through many short-term actions that are carried out within a long-term perspective. The Comprehensive Plan primarily includes policies to address the following topics:

- Land Uses and Housing (including proposed residential, commercial and industrial areas)
- Community Facilities and Services (including parks, recreation and trails)
- Natural Features Conservation and Environmental Sustainability (including conservation of creek corridors)
- Transportation (including traffic, pedestrian and bicycling improvements)
- Ways to Carry Out the Plan

Major Benefits of the Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan offers many benefits, including the following:

- Addressing land uses in coordination with transportation issues, to avoid traffic problems;
- Avoiding conflicts between different types of development, such as not allowing intense business uses adjacent to a residential neighborhood;
- Considering development policies in a comprehensive and coordinated manner for an entire area, as opposed to piecemeal review of individual parcels or lots;
- Recommending ways that natural features should be preserved and conserved; and
- Suggesting improvements that should be the basis of future grant applications.

How Was This Plan Prepared?

This Plan was developed in draft form during monthly meetings of a Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, which included participation by members of the Township Commissioners and Planning Commission, members of other Township boards, Township Staff, and other interested citizens.

First, maps showing existing conditions were prepared, as well as summaries of previous plans and reports. Information was collected on existing conditions. An online citizen survey was conducted, with paper copies also being made available. A set of Goals were then prepared to provide overall direction for the Plan. Various subject areas were discussed at workshop meetings. The Plan document will then be prepared.

Next, a public meeting will be held with the public by the Township Planning Commission to discuss the draft Plan. The Township Commissioners will then hold a public hearing on the Plan, before considering the Plan for adoption.

Major Goals for the Comprehensive Plan

The following are suggested major goals to provide overall direction for the Comprehensive Plan.

Land Use and Housing Plan

Continue to provide areas for a range of housing types and densities, to meet needs of various types and ages of households. Seek additional opportunities for housing for older persons and persons with disabilities.

Provide for compatible transitions between different land uses, while making sure that the livability of residential areas are prioritized.

Strengthen business areas of Darby Township, in a manner that increases tax revenue and improves the attractiveness of the community.

Promote appropriate types of business development in different areas, to increase tax revenues and employment opportunities, and provided needed local services, while promoting entrepreneurship.

Natural Features and Environmental Sustainability Plan

Encourage modes of transportation, patterns of land uses, tree planting, designs of sites and other actions that conserve energy and promote sustainability.

Protect and enhance important natural features, including the creek corridors and wetlands.

Community Facilities and Services Plan

Continue to provide high-quality community facilities and services in the most cost-efficient manner.

Transportation Plan

Make well-targeted cost-effective street improvements, while improving safety, in cooperation with PennDOT, adjacent landowners and developers.

Retrofit streets to incorporate "complete streets" principles that place a priority on: public transit, pedestrian and bicycle travel, moderating traffic speeds, managing stormwater, and providing room for trees and greenery.

Make Darby Township more bicycle and pedestrian-friendly, including offering safe connections between residential areas and stores, schools, parks and trails within Darby Township and neighboring municipalities.

Promote expanded use, availability and frequency of service of public transit.

Putting This Plan Into Action

Promote citizen input, including making sure residents are well-informed about community issues and have adequate opportunities to provide their opinions on Township matters.

Coordinate transportation, development and infrastructure across municipal borders, and seek opportunities for additional shared municipal services.

Continually work to put this Plan into action through a program of updated planning and short-term actions, in accordance with a long-range perspective.

Land Use and Housing Plan

This section describes the land use categories that are shown on the Draft Comprehensive Plan Map. In most cases, these land use categories relate to the substance of existing zoning districts. The specific text of each zoning district is intended to be rewritten as part of the preparation of a new Zoning Ordinance, but the types of zoning districts are intended to be maintained to increase public understanding.



Zoning is one of the main tools available to carry out the land use policies in the Comprehensive Plan. The Zoning Ordinance is mainly intended to provide compatibility between different types of development, to protect residential areas from nuisances and hazards, to avoid traffic problems, and to protect important natural features. Zoning is also used to encourage different types of businesses to locate in various areas to grow the tax base and expand employment opportunities. The Zoning Ordinance divides the Township into various zoning districts. Each zoning district allows a range of land uses and varying intensities of development. The full ordinances of the Township are available online.

Zoning is primarily directed towards new development, new construction and expansions of existing uses. If an existing legal use operates today, it can generally continue to operate regardless of the zoning district. This is known as a “non-conforming use.” A non-conforming use typically predates zoning or a zoning amendment. Generally, a non-conforming use can expand within limits, can be sold, and can be changed to a different non-conforming use, provided the new use is not more intensive than the previous use.

It is recommended that the new conversion of an existing one family home in a residential district into two or more units be prohibited. All of the residential areas are also intended to provide for places of worship, provided there is compliance with a minimum lot size (such as 1/2 acre).

Single Family Detached Residential (relates to R-A zoning district) - These areas are primarily intended to provide for single family detached houses on 5,000 sq. ft. minimum lots. This category is only proposed to include a few areas, including along Greenhill Road.

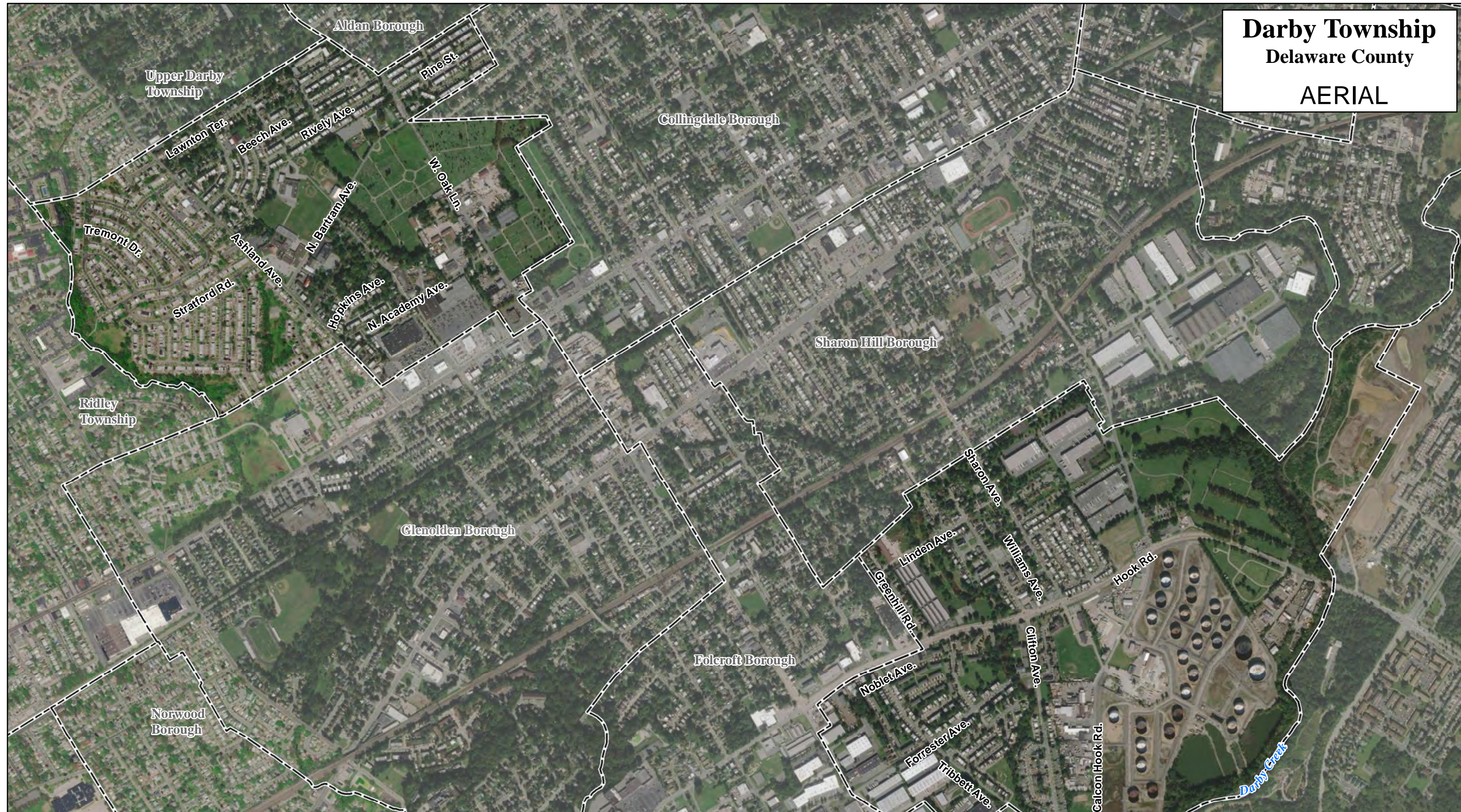
Because it is expensive to construct new single family detached housing, this Plan recommends changing some of the current Single Family Detached areas to also allow twins and changing some of the current Single Family Semi-Detached areas to also allow townhouses in selected areas where there is open land. In many of these areas, there already is a mix of housing types. Allowing new twin and townhouse construction would be particularly attractive where it would be within walking distance of a SEPTA station, such as south of the Sharon Hill station, or west of the Woodlawn Avenue stations, or south of the Primos station. These expanded options would make it easier to attract builders of middle-priced housing, and to promote transit-oriented development. Side-by-side twins and townhouses are more likely to be owner-occupied than apartments, which will improve neighborhood stability.

Single Family Semi-Detached Residential (relates to R-B zoning district) - These areas should continue to mainly provide for side-by-side twin homes on 2,500 sq. ft. minimum lots. The maximum height in all residential areas should be raised to 35 feet, versus it is currently only 25 feet in these areas. It includes areas along Lawnton Ter., Garfield Av., and Felton Av.

Darby Township

Delaware County

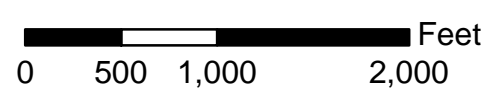
AERIAL



SOURCE: PASDA and ESRI.

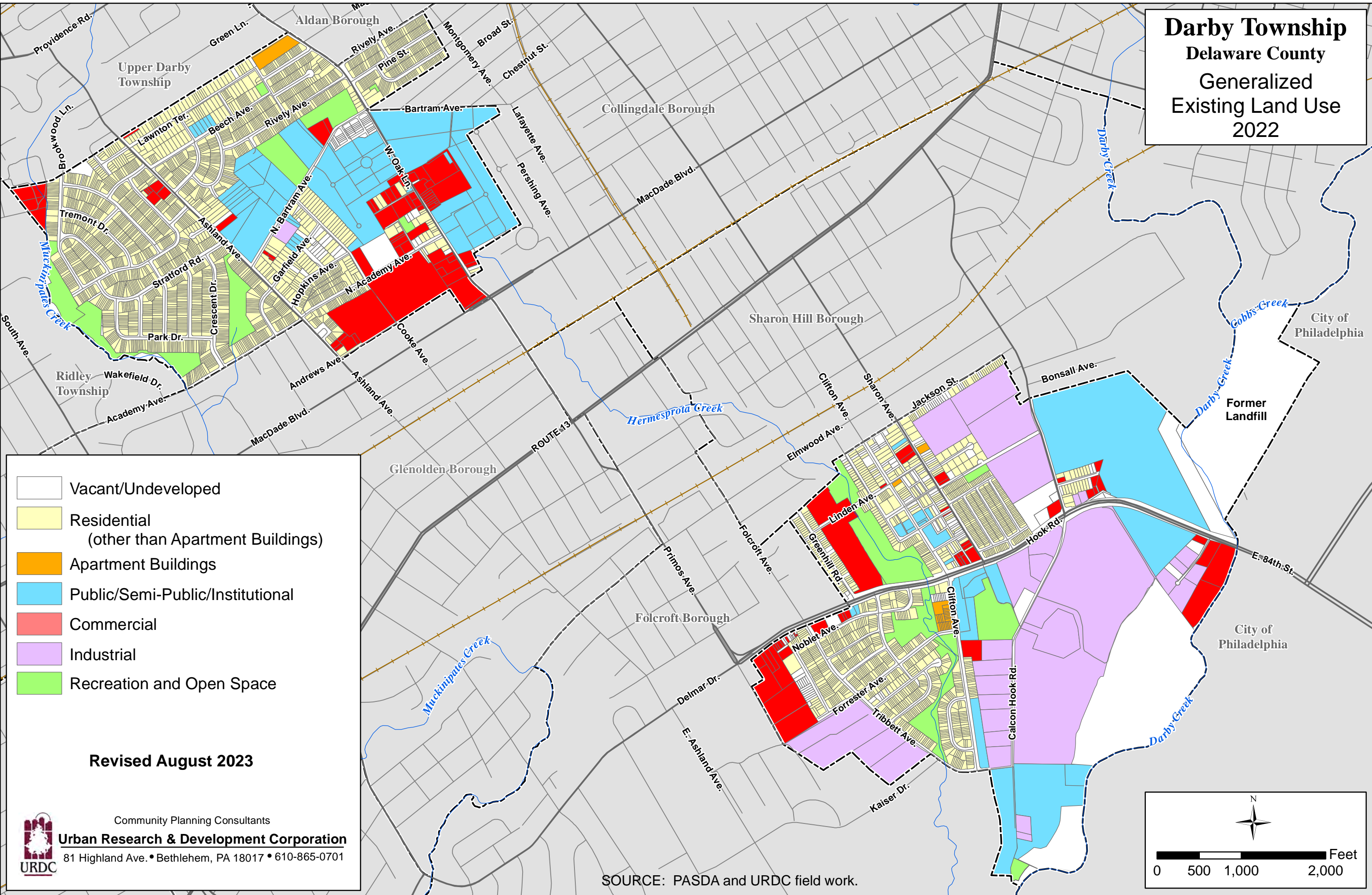


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Source: Esri, Maxar, Earthstar Geographics, and the GIS User Community

Darby Township Delaware County Generalized Existing Land Use 2022

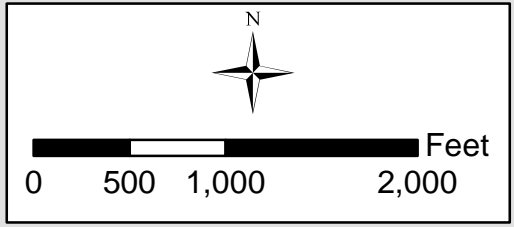


- Vacant/Undeveloped
- Residential
(other than Apartment Buildings)
- Apartment Buildings
- Public/Semi-Public/Institutional
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Recreation and Open Space

Revised August 2023

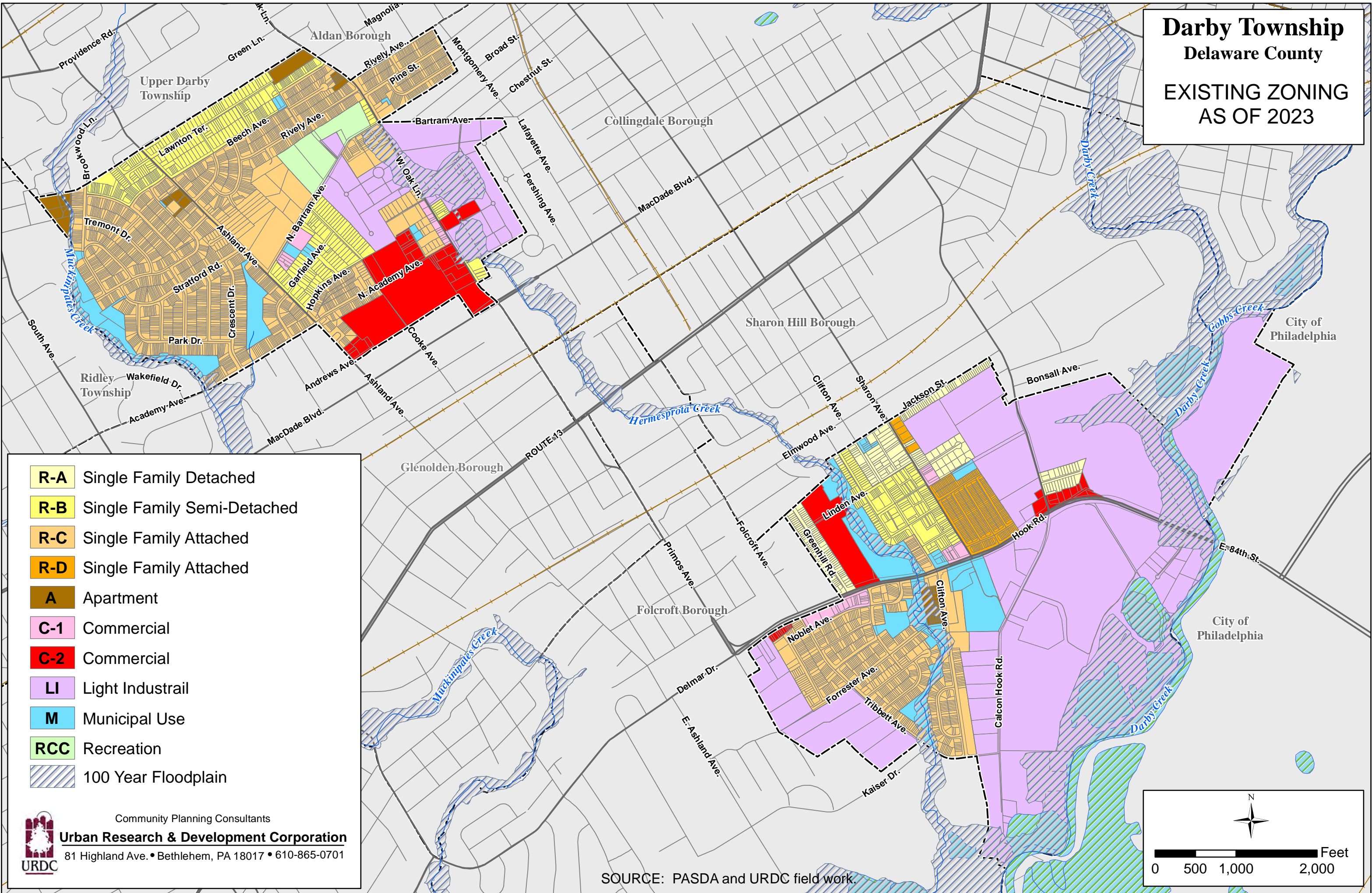
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URDC



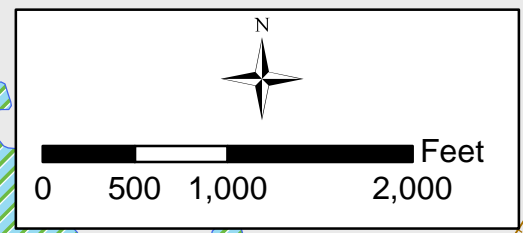
SOURCE: PASDA and URDC field work.

Darby Township
 Delaware County
EXISTING ZONING
AS OF 2023



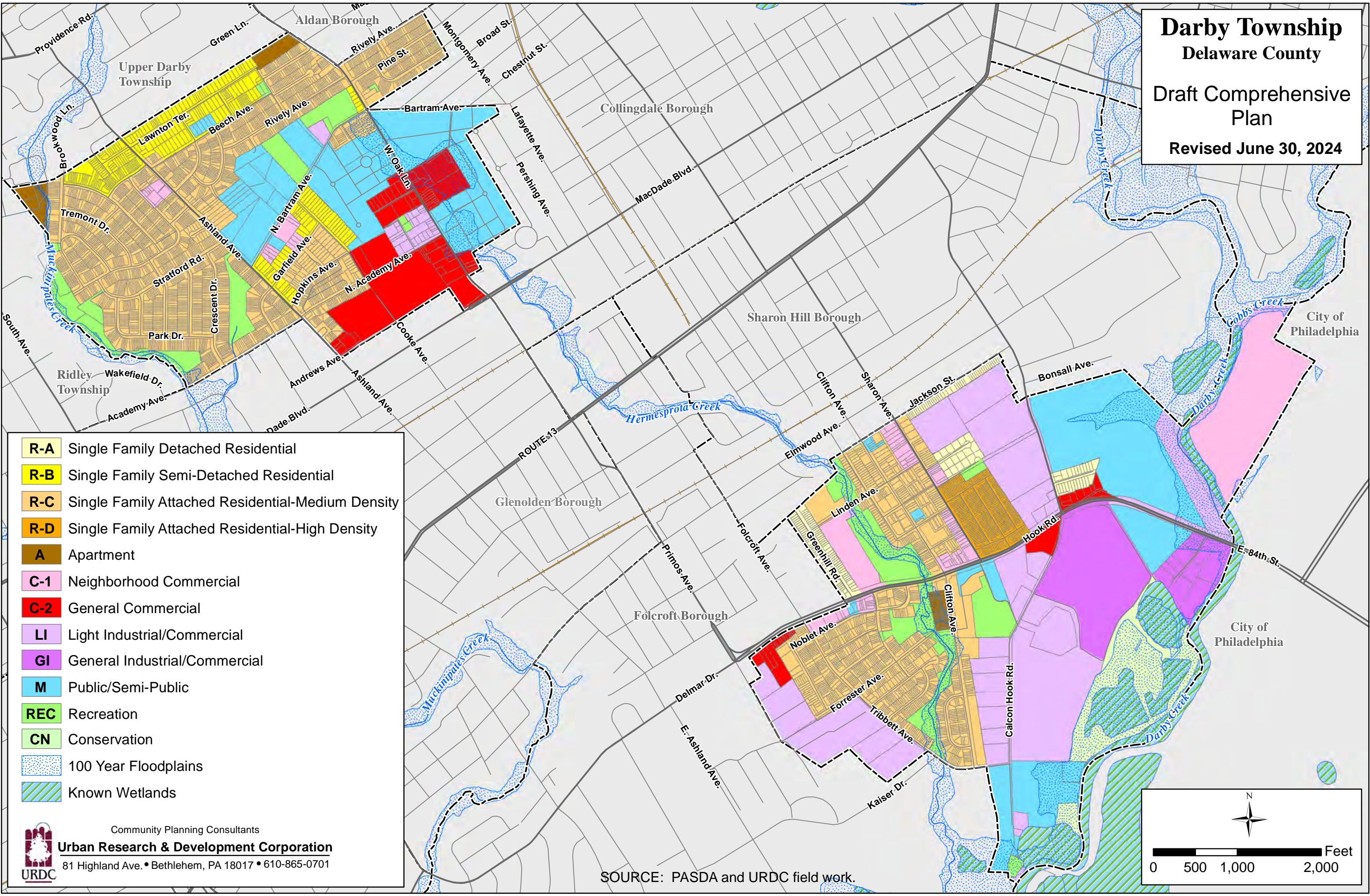
	R-A Single Family Detached
	R-B Single Family Semi-Detached
	R-C Single Family Attached
	R-D Single Family Attached
	A Apartment
	C-1 Commercial
	C-2 Commercial
	LI Light Industrail
	M Municipal Use
	RCC Recreation
	100 Year Floodplain

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 URDC



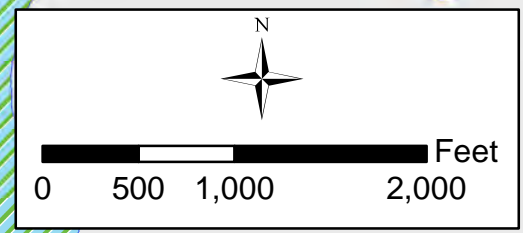
SOURCE: PASDA and URDC field work.

Darby Township
 Delaware County
 Draft Comprehensive
 Plan
 Revised June 30, 2024



R-A	Single Family Detached Residential
R-B	Single Family Semi-Detached Residential
R-C	Single Family Attached Residential-Medium Density
R-D	Single Family Attached Residential-High Density
A	Apartment
C-1	Neighborhood Commercial
C-2	General Commercial
LI	Light Industrial/Commercial
GI	General Industrial/Commercial
M	Public/Semi-Public
REC	Recreation
CN	Conservation
	100 Year Floodplains
	Known Wetlands

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SOURCE: PASDA and URDC field work.

Single Family Attached Residential (relates to the R-C zoning district) - These areas should mainly allow townhouses (single family attached houses) on 2,200 sq. ft. minimum lots (such as 22 by 100 feet), and side-by-side twin homes on 2,500 sq. feet minimum lots (such as 25 by 100 feet). To make it easier to invest in older homes and to build new homes, certain dimensional requirements should be relaxed. For example, the minimum front yard and the minimum rear yard could be each reduced from 30 to 20 feet.

This category should continue to include most residential areas of the Township, including along Rively Av., Tremont Dr., Stratford Rd., Pine St., Forrester Av. and areas south of Norblet Av. On a lot of over 1/4 acre, it would be desirable to also allow personal care homes, assisted living centers and day care centers. These areas could also be suitable for apartments, provided the developer restricts them to occupancy by persons age 55 or older.

Single Family Attached Residential District (relates to the R-D district) - These areas should mainly provide for townhouses on 1,100 sq. ft. lots. This district includes a neighborhood of townhouses that are east of Sharon Av. and north of Hook Rd., which is known as "Lincoln Park." The lots are very tightly developed, and the homes do not have their own driveways or parking areas. The existing homes are relatively small, while the current zoning strictly limits permanent building additions and enclosed front porches to avoid stormwater problems.

If residents seek more living space, they should be encouraged to add a second floor bedroom or a loft. It also should be possible to add decks to the front or rear of the homes, provided the decks include open areas between the boards in a manner that does not increase impervious coverage.

Apartment (relates to the A district) - This district should provide for a mix of housing types, including apartment buildings at an average of 12 to 14 homes per acre, with a three story maximum height. It mainly includes a couple existing apartment complexes along the northern border of the Township.

Neighborhood Commercial (relates to the C-1 district) - These areas should provide for common types of commercial uses, such as retail stores, day care centers, banks, funeral homes, exercise clubs, personal services, car washes, self-storage developments and offices. The intent in these areas is to not allow intensive commercial uses, such as vehicle sales, vehicle repair, restaurant drive-through service, 24-hour businesses, and gas stations, which often are not appropriate neighbors for nearby homes. This category is mainly intended to apply to existing commercial areas that are adjacent to residential neighborhoods, such as portions of Oak Lane and portions of Hook Road. A three story maximum height is proposed.

The Neighborhood Commercial areas could also provide the option of apartments above commercial uses, or the development of new apartment buildings.

The former Clearview landfill along the Darby Creek adjacent to the Eastwick section of Philadelphia is proposed to be changed from Industrial zoning to Neighborhood Commercial. The uses of the land will be severely limited because of the environmental cleanup that is occurring and the current re-vegetation of the site with federal dollars. With a site that was capped to address contamination, there are strict limits on disturbance of the soil, which limits the construction of buildings. A flood control dike is being considered to protect homes in the Eastwick section of Philadelphia.

It might be possible to use portions of the site for a solar farm or a similar tax-paying low-intensity use that will protect the Darby Creek. Solar panels can be constructed with weighted anchors that do not require deep foundations, which is important to avoid interference with the underground capping of the contamination.

General Commercial (relates to the C-2 district) - These areas are intended to provide for all types of commercial uses, including gas stations, restaurants with drive-through service, vehicle repair and vehicle sales. This category is mainly appropriate in commercial areas that are not near many existing homes. This district should continue to include most commercial areas of the Township, including the Walmart, areas along Academy Av., and portions of Hook Road. The Township currently requires excessive

parking for many commercial uses. If the parking requirements are reduced, it could make room to construct additional businesses, such as within the large parking lot in front of the Shop Rite.

These areas could also allow for assisted living and personal care housing for seniors. For example, a site north of Academy Avenue north of Forman Mills may be suitable for that purpose. These types of facilities provide dining services and limited health care services for older persons and persons with disabilities so they can live mostly independently.

Generally, new commercial development and new signs are usually more attractive than older commercial uses and old signs, so as redevelopment occurs, the appearance should improve. Junked vehicles and other junk storage can be required to be fenced in, and to be buffered by plantings. Under State law, unlicensed vehicles cannot be parked along the curb of a street.

Light Industrial/Commercial (relates to the current LI district) - This Plan recommends that the Township split the existing industrial zoning district into two different zoning districts. These Light Industrial/Commercial areas are intended to provide for a range of industrial uses, but to not allow heavier industrial uses that are more likely to create nuisances or hazards. These areas are also proposed to allow a wide range of commercial uses, such as building contractor's headquarters and vehicle repair.

Because of the proximity of the International Airport and I-95, there is expected to be a strong demand for new warehouse/distribution centers and package delivery centers, which may occur on the former tank farm and adjacent industrial lands. This type of development would generate much more tax revenue to the Township and the School District than the current uses along Hook Road and areas to the south. Although warehouse uses often generate significant tractor-trailer traffic, almost all of that traffic would be expected to travel from the tank farm area to the east to reach I-95 and Airport, without impacting other areas of Darby Township. Most of the modern industrial development in Darby Township involves flex space buildings. Additional flex space buildings should also be encouraged, which typically involve an office or sales component in the front, and a light industrial or warehousing component in the back of the building.

Portions of these areas could also be appropriate for hotels, medical offices and other health care uses. To promote redevelopment for hotels, medical uses and distribution centers, the maximum building height should be at least 50 feet and a relatively high building coverage should be allowed. A taller height will also encourage a larger amount of tax revenue to be generated per acre.

This category should include most the eastern third of the south-eastern part of Darby Township, including the former tank farm and areas along Calcon Hook Road. This category also includes industrial areas west of Tribbett Avenue.

General Industrial/Commercial (relates to the current LI district) - These areas are intended to allow for almost all types of commercial and industrial uses. These areas would be used to meet the Township's obligations under State law to allow locations that permit heavier industrial uses, such as trash transfer stations, concrete plants, asphalt plants and chemical plants. These areas would also be used to meet the Township's obligations under federal court decisions to allow locations that permit adult uses, but with strict regulations, including large setbacks from homes and parks.

Major Community Facilities- This category includes the municipal building, the two fire stations, the police station and similar public and semi-public buildings. The Township also owns the former municipal building, east of Cedarwood Road, south of Briarcliffe Road. This building is probably best used as community meeting space to supplement the Township's other meeting spaces. The Township also owns a public works complex and a former community center at Clifton Avenue and Hook Road.

Parks and Recreation - These areas include public parks and playgrounds. The larger parks are proposed to become part of a Conservation zoning district.

Conservation - This is proposed to be a new category that would address the larger parks and concentrations of wetlands and floodplains along the Darby Creek. The intent is to limit uses to those types that would be compatible with the Darby Creek, particularly considering the presence of the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge in nearby areas outside of Darby Township. The owners of the wetlands and floodplain areas should be encouraged to consider donating those areas to add to the Wildlife Refuge. The Township could provide flexibility in its zoning ordinance so that a developer can receive credit for land that is preserved, to allow a higher building and impervious coverage on their buildable lands. Potential trail connections are discussed in the Transportation section.

Floodplain - The Comprehensive Plan Map highlights areas within the 100 Year Floodplain. These are areas expected to have a one percent chance of being flooded in an average year. The frequency and severity of storms have been increasing, which means that the 100 year storm has lost some of its meaning. There are often 40 year storms and 50 year storms in consecutive years. The intent is to not allow any buildings within the floodplain. A paving and business storage setback from the creeks should also be considered, because most floodplain regulations do allow paving in the floodplain. There reportedly are some sheds and other structures that never received permits and that intrude into the floodplain or public parkland, and should be required to be moved.

Known Wetlands - These are areas that have been identified by the federal government as having a concentration of wetlands. However, this mapping does not include all wetlands, and more detailed delineations are required as part of new developments.

Buffers Between Businesses and Homes - Attention needs to be focused upon the borders of business and residential development in the Township, to avoid harming the livability of neighborhoods. This includes requiring solid fencing as needed, and evergreen buffer yards where appropriate. Additional setbacks may be appropriate in certain cases, such as between restaurant drive-through lanes and homes, and between tractor-trailer loading docks and homes.

Landscaping and Trees - There needs to be an emphasis upon improving the appearance of business areas of Darby Township, in order to promote new investment and to attract new customers. Landscaping can have a very positive impact upon the appearance of all areas, but particularly can make business areas more attractive. For new improvements, a vegetated strip can be required between the curb and the parking lot.

Species of street trees can be chosen to avoid conflicts with sidewalks and utility lines and trees can also be selected and trimmed to maintain visibility for businesses. Street trees are also valuable to reduce the need for air conditioning along residential streets. Street trees and trees within parking lots are also used to minimize thermal pollution of creeks. Thermal pollution occurs when stormwater is heated along paved surfaces, and creates a shock for aquatic life when it enters a creek.

The Township could seek tree planting grants through the Pennsylvania DCNR Community Partnerships Program. Assistance is also available through the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, including providing training for persons who help to maintain trees and grants for plantings along waterways. In addition to adding plantings along existing developed corridors, the Township's Zoning Ordinance should also be updated to make sure sufficient landscaping is required as part of new development and redevelopment.

Provide incentives for Age-Restricted Housing.

It is desirable to allow density bonuses for housing that is limited to persons age 55 and older, with no residents under age 18. An even higher density bonus could be provided for apartments limited to persons 62 years and older. Age-restricted housing has a very positive financial impact upon the school district. Age-restricted housing bonuses can also be justified because statistically it generates less traffic, less need for parking, less water use, less sewage use and less crime than other types of housing. Many households are paying more in monthly rent than they would pay for a monthly mortgage payment.

Work to address housing affordability.

It is extremely difficult to provide new housing for low income households without large-scale public subsidies or federal tax credit benefits. However, the Township can still work to minimize expenses from unnecessary regulations to promote affordable housing for lower-middle and middle income households. While Darby Township has provided affordable housing opportunities for decades in many areas, rents and for-sale prices in the region have dramatically increased since 2021. As of April 2023, the median listing price for a home in Delaware County was \$290,000. The least expensive for-sale housing in Darby Township involves apartment-style condominiums. The most expensive for-sale housing in Darby Township tends to be single family detached houses in the western and northwestern parts of the Township. As of 2023, many apartments in Darby Township were renting for over \$1,400 a month.

Existing Township development standards should be reviewed to consider whether they could reasonably be revised to lower construction costs. For example, parking requirements should be reviewed against available research to make sure they are not excessive, particularly for new one bedroom or studio apartments. Modest reductions in the minimum lot width can also reduce housing construction costs, because they lower improvement costs per unit.

Link property owners with resources to promote housing rehabilitation.

Delaware County’s Office of Housing and Community Development offers housing rehabilitation funding for low-income homeowners. Up to \$15,000 is available for essential system repairs, such as plumbing, electrical, roofing or heating systems. The funding is secured by a second mortgage, which does not need to be repaid until the house is sold. If the homeowner continues to live in the home for five years, the loan is forgiven. By establishing a maximum funding available to each home, the County is able to serve many more homes than if the County funded complete renovations of a home. Habitat for Humanity’s MontDelco Chapter also offers emergency repairs of homes of veterans, persons with disabilities and older persons, but the total number of persons who can be served is limited. The Community Action Agency of Delaware County provides weatherization assistance for low income homeowners to reduce their energy costs.

Pennsylvania also authorized a new “Whole Home Repair” program in 2022, which is intended to provide State funds for more extensive repairs. This program was in response to findings that many homeowners could not take advantage of weatherization programs because their homes needed a new roof or other major repair that could not be addressed through the weatherization program.

Promote Home Ownership.

Many households are paying more in monthly rent than they would pay for a monthly mortgage payment. However, it can be an extreme challenge for many households to save enough money to pay for the closing costs to buy a property. To assist in this matter, Delaware County sponsors a program to provide up to \$5,000 towards the closing costs for a first time homebuyer with a low or moderate income. The money only needs to be repaid after the home is sold. However, the total available funding is limited. Any similar programs available through financial institutions or other agencies should also be promoted locally.

Use assertive Code Enforcement to address problem properties.

The Township has a Property Maintenance Code that sets minimum standards for the proper repair and maintenance of buildings. Assertive code enforcement is particularly important to make sure that buildings are properly repaired before they reach the point of not being able to be rehabilitated and before the buildings have a negative impact on the surrounding block. Proper code enforcement can cause a property owner to have to choose between repairing a building or selling the building to another owner who will properly repair it. Rental housing inspections can be targeted to emphasize more frequent inspections of the most problematic properties.

The Township should consider a system that allows the code enforcement officer to write tickets for common property code violations, without necessarily needing to involve the District Magisterial Judge. Fines should increase with repeated offenses, or if a violation is not corrected within a reasonable period of time.

A separate memo was provided to the Township to describe alternative approaches to code enforcement, and that included examples of provisions used in other municipalities.

Offer zoning incentives for rehabilitation of important older buildings.

The Township Zoning Ordinance could include zoning incentives for selected important historic buildings. For example, certain uses could be allowed within selected historic buildings that would otherwise not be allowed within that zoning district. There could be provisions allowing alternative uses of older churches and other places of worship, such as conversions into apartments or offices where those uses might not otherwise be allowed. A designated historic building could be allowed to be converted into an office, a bed and breakfast inn, a funeral home or a personal service use, even if those uses were not currently allowed in that zoning district. As a condition, the exterior of the building would need to be rehabilitated in a historically sensitive manner. The Zoning Hearing Board could also be given authority to modify selected zoning requirements by special exception where it is shown to be needed to allow for a reasonable use of an important historic building.

Carry out Township-Wide historic preservation education policies.

There should be an emphasis on public education to increase appreciation of Darby Township's historic resources, and to provide information about proper rehabilitation methods.

Additional historic preservation information and links to informational resources should be added on the Township website. For example, links can be provided to the free online National Park Service "Preservation Briefs" that address various building features and historic rehabilitation methods. Links to existing online webinars could be provided to property owners about historic rehabilitation.

Transportation Plan

Seek funding for a regional corridor plan along Hook Road and Delmar Drive.

There is a need for improvements to the appearance of the Hook Road corridor, to improve pedestrian and bicycling access, to improve traffic safety, to manage parking, and to attract more economic investment. Funding should be sought for a corridor plan, similar to the recently completed Chester Pike Corridor Master Plan in Delaware County. This type of plan could be accomplished in partnership with Folcroft and possibly other municipalities. The main potential funding source would be the Transportation and Community Development Initiatives (TCDI) Program, which is administered by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission.

This type of corridor plan would include transportation analysis and recommendations, including traffic safety improvements. *It would include an analysis of crashes in recent years to determine where improvements are most needed.* The plan also would fully consider pedestrian and bicycling access.

As part of this corridor plan, streetscape improvements should be proposed, including street tree and sidewalk improvements. Highly visible crosswalks using colors should be added. Textured and slightly raised crosswalks can help reduce speeding across crosswalks.

Decorative lighting would provide a more attractive character to the corridor, and improve safety by making pedestrians more visible to motorists. Once a streetscape design is established, any developers of adjacent land should be encouraged to continue those features as part of their project. For example, similar types of decorative street lights could be added in a private parking lot.

Enforce parking restrictions along Hook Road to keep shoulders open for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Along many segments of Hook Road, parking is prohibited along the shoulder, but the restriction is regularly violated by owners of adjacent auto repair businesses. There needs to be continued enforcement so the shoulder is kept open for bicyclists and pedestrians, particularly because there are no sidewalks. The Township could allow 3 hour maximum parking on the north side of Hook Road adjacent to Conway Park, to serve persons visiting the park.

Work with PennDOT, adjacent property-owners and sources of grants to make cost-effective improvements to various streets.

West Oak Lane would benefit from construction of sidewalks on at least one side of the street. Grant funds should be towards some or all of the costs. As an interim step, where there is existing pavement, an area could be painted along the street within the right-of-way to designate that parking is prohibited, so that the width is kept available for pedestrians. Where there is no existing pavement, as an interim step, a relatively flat grass area should be maintained that has few obstructions for pedestrians.

The intersection of Academy Avenue and West Oak Lane is an unsignalized intersection that experiences moderate volumes of traffic.

The intersection of West Oak Lane and McDade Boulevard is on the border with Collingwood. It is a high volume and wide intersection. There are pedestrian crossing signals, but it is not a convenient intersection to cross.

There should be improvements to make it easier for pedestrians and bicyclists to cross the intersection of Sharon Avenue and Hook Road. This could include the addition of "Walk" signals and signal timing that provides more preference to pedestrians. Pedestrian crossing signals could be added, such as flashing lights that are activated automatically when a pedestrian approaches the intersection. Ideally, there would be a pedestrian refuge island in the center of portions of Hook Road, so that pedestrians, persons in wheelchairs and bicyclists only need to cross one direction of traffic at a time. West of Sharon Avenue on Hook Road, there is a flat concrete median that a person could stand on, but it is not wide enough to

provide adequate protection for persons crossing Hook Road and it does not accommodate a wheelchair. It may be possible to slightly narrow one or more lanes to provide space for a refuge island (as described further below). Along Hook Road, east of Sharon Avenue, there is a tall continuous concrete median barrier which would be a hazard for anyone attempting to cross the road along this segment. This concrete median barrier is only open at the Calgon Hook Road intersection.

Sharon Avenue has high amounts of pedestrian traffic because it connects to a SEPTA train station and bus routes, and it is a main route to the High School. Sharon Avenue includes well-marked crosswalks and a 25 mile per hour speed limit. However, there are still problems with speeding, along a corridor with high pedestrian traffic. Additional measures should be studied to slow vehicle traffic. It would be desirable to more clearly designate areas where parking is prohibited near intersections where the parked cars would reduce views of on-coming traffic. Sharon Avenue is a State road. It would be desirable to ask for free professional engineering assistance from PennDOT's PennDOT Connects program to recommend improvements of Sharon Avenue and similar streets.

As part of any nearby development, the Township should require that narrow portions of Calgon Hook Road be widened by the developer to be able to accommodate truck traffic.

There are flooding problems along many roads after severe storms, such as along Academy Avenue at the Muckinpattis Creek. There are stormwater problems throughout the Lincoln Park development, which might be able to be reduced if a nearby upstream developer can be encouraged to build a detention basin with an increased capacity. There is a need to stabilize existing walls along portions of the Hermasprota Creek. The Township has adopted a modern stormwater ordinance, which is intended to make sure that new development does not cause increased stormwater problems. In addition, a number of Township-owned bridges need major work, such as along Linden Avenue adjacent to Conway Park. Some vegetation under and around bridges should be removed.

Traffic congestion can often be reduced through updated traffic signals. The Township should apply for State grants to upgrade existing traffic signals and to coordinate their timing with signals in adjacent municipalities.

Install “Traffic Calming” measures and “Complete Streets” improvements to reduce speeding and to improve pedestrian safety.

The Complete Streets concept involves considering the needs of all modes of transportation and environmental issues as part of any transportation improvement. For example, if an intersection is to be widening, the needs of pedestrians, persons in wheelchairs and bicyclists needs to be fully considered, as opposed to simply encouraging faster movement of traffic. A road improvement can also include measures to reduce stormwater runoff and to improve stormwater quality.

Throughout the region, there is a concern about speeding traffic. PennDOT has published a Traffic Calming Handbook that describes alternative methods to reduce speeding and improve pedestrian and bicycling safety along streets.

Darby Township could consider certain Township streets for the installation of speed humps. Speed humps are usually only considered for streets that have a speed limit of 30 mph or lower. Speed humps (or speed tables with a long flat top) are much less abrupt than speed bumps, and are wider at the top than a speed bump. A speed hump is typically three to four inches above the road surface. The speed humps need to be well-marked with prominent painting of the street and warning signs. Speed humps work best when two or more are placed in succession. On a residential street, there could be a need to show local support by residents signing a petition. Speed humps would be particularly beneficial at major pedestrian crossings, near schools, near parks, and along narrow streets that experience excessive through-traffic.

Because speed humps are not abrupt, they do not cause a significant delay for emergency vehicles. However, they are not recommended on the primary routes used by emergency vehicles. Also, the gentleness of the side slopes reduces traffic noise, compared to an abrupt speed bump. The reduction in

vehicle speed can result in a net reduction in traffic noise.

Extensions of curbs (or “bulb outs”) at a street intersection can be used to reduce the width of the travel lanes that need to be crossed by pedestrians. The curb extensions can be designed to still allow an adequate turning radius for buses and trucks. Initial logical locations for speed humps and bulb-out curbs could be in the vicinity of the Darby Township School, including along Bartram Avenue and Ashland Avenue.

Efforts are needed to make additional crosswalks highly visible. Using colored textured materials can be helpful. Thick white bars are preferable to simple white lines to mark crosswalks. A flashing solar light can be added to a crosswalk sign, or can be placed above a crosswalk. This type of light can be lit all of the time, or can be activated by a button or by a sensor that identifies approaching pedestrians. Some crosswalks have lights embedded into the road surface.

It may be possible to install a pedestrian and bicycling “refuge island” in the center of portions of Hook Road. This type of refuge island allows a pedestrian or bicyclist to only have to cross one direction of traffic at a time, because they have a safe location in the median to wait.



On a wide street, it can be beneficial to bicyclists to add a white strip to separate the travel lanes from the shoulder. To be highly suitable for bicyclists, the shoulders should remain relatively smooth and should be the subject of regular street sweeping, including to avoid a build-up of materials at the end of the winter.

The Township could enter into an agreement with PennDOT to have PennDOT reimburse the Township for the costs of street sweeping along roads where bicycling access is important along shoulders, such as along Hook Road.

Complete a trail system, to improve bicycling and pedestrian access.

It would be desirable to complete a system of pedestrian/bicycle trails along the length of the Hermesprot Creek on public lands or where permission can be obtained from the property owner. A set of trail improvements are planned in the Conway Park Master Plan.

There is a bicycle path system in the Heinz National Wildlife Refuge on the east side (Philadelphia) side, which runs along the east side of the Darby Creek and includes a trailhead off of Lindberg Avenue. There also are bike lanes along most of E. 84th Street. It would be desirable to provide pedestrian and bicycling connections to the bicycle lanes in Philadelphia and the trails in the Heinz National Wildlife Refuge. The Hook Road bridge over the Darby Creek and the approach to the bridge have narrow shoulders on each side. If the travel lanes would each be slightly narrowed along Hook Road and across the Darby Creek bridge, it may be possible to add a wider well-marked shoulder on each side of the road where it does not current exist. Slightly narrower lanes may also help to reduce speeding. There also may be opportunities for cooperative efforts with the owners of cemeteries to encourage use of their pathways during daylight hours for bicyclists and pedestrians, particularly when it is needed to avoid high-traffic roads. Having responsible people using pathways in the cemeteries may deter irresponsible activities, by providing oversight of the lands.

The Township could submit requests to PennDOT to provide wider and smoother shoulders along certain State roads where it would be beneficial to bicyclists and/or pedestrians.

There are extensive wetlands on the Darby Township side of the creek, east of the former tank farm. Over the long-run, it may be possible to build an elevated boardwalk-style trail over a portion of the wetlands, and possibly a modular pedestrian bridge over the Darby Creek to connect to the trails on the east side of the creek. Those types of improvements would likely be funded by grants.

In cooperation with Delaware County and adjacent municipalities, continued efforts are needed to complete the Darby Creek trail and greenway system. The current plans have been to run the trail along the east side of the Darby Creek north of Hook Road, where it would connect to an extensive trail system that is being completed. Once cleanup activities are complete, it may also be possible to run part of a trail along the west side of the Darby Creek in Darby Township, particularly if permission could be used to connect it to existing cemetery paths to connect to Calcon Hook Road.

In the northern part of the Township, the best opportunity for a recreation trail would be on lands owned by the School District, the Briarcliffe Athletic Association and along the edge of lands owned by the Briarcliffe Swim Club.

There also is a need for pedestrian improvements along Oak Lane. These improvements could take the form of wider smooth shoulders, sidewalks, or a bituminous bike path. As an interim measure, it may be possible to paint lines along the public road right-of-way to keep an area along Oak Lane free of vehicles and other obstructions. An alternative would be to work with the owners of one or both adjacent cemeteries to use their existing driveways as an alternative to walking along Oak Lane, and would provide a safer connection to the Darby Township School. This cemetery pathway system could be limited to daylight hours, or could involve addition of night-time security lighting.

Seek grants to repair or replace problem bridges and walls along creeks.

There are a few bridges and large culverts that are the responsibility of the Township and that are not in good condition, including at Conway Park. In addition, there are some walls along creeks that need major repairs, such as along the Hermesprota Creek. It will be important to seek grants to assist with the costs of these projects.

Seek grants to upgrade traffic signals.

Most of the traffic signals are old. State grants are available to upgrade traffic signals and their electronics. These improvements will provide more efficient traffic flows.

Work to provide additional bus passenger shelters.

The Township should cooperate with SEPTA and private companies in the provision of bus passenger shelters at the busiest bus stops. These shelters are important for riders during heavy rain, wind, ice or snow or to provide shade on hot summer days. Clear plexiglass shelters are often installed and maintained at no cost to a municipality by a private company, if the municipality allows the company to lease a lighted advertising sign on the shelter. Where there is not sufficient room within the street right-of-way, a shelter could be placed on an easement if the adjacent property-owner is cooperative. The Township should retain the authority to approve the location of a shelter, in addition to an approval needed by SEPTA, and the sign should be required to be a static image, and not a video display. While an advertising sign may not be appropriate in many residential districts, a sign on a shelter would be appropriate in commercial areas.

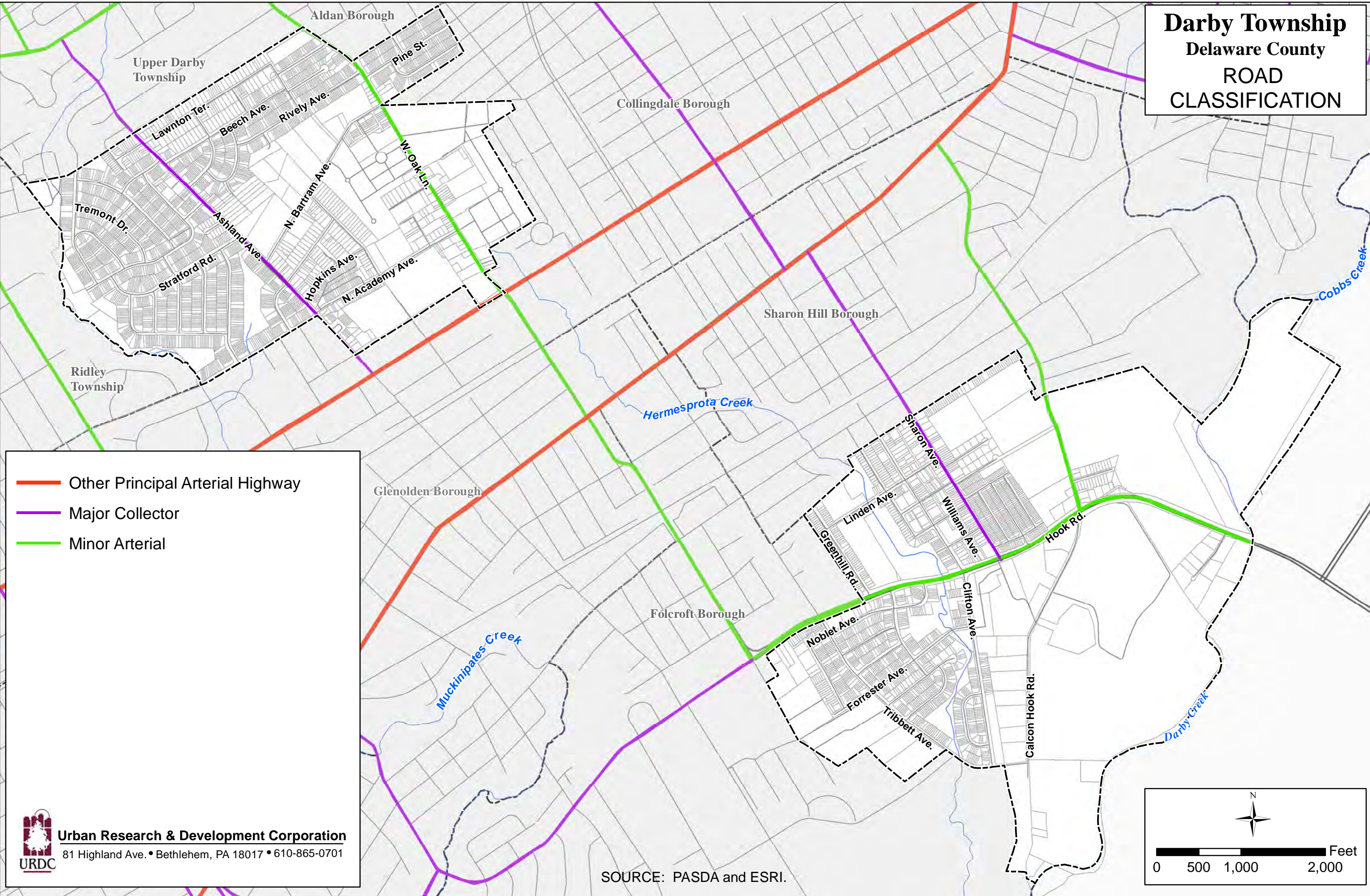
Promote additional use of public transit.




The Township can help to publicize the availability of public transit services and can promote the installation of bus passenger shelters. Promoting new housing construction within a walking distance of transit stations will also promote use of public transit. The Public Transit Map on a following page shows the location of SEPTA commuter rail stations and Subway-Surface lines near Darby Township. The map also shows public bus routes, as of 2023.


As of 2024, SEPTA had completed a redesign of their bus system, which is named “Bus Revolution.” Total SEPTA bus ridership decreased significantly in recent years, which was partly caused by the increase in shared ride services. The intent is to have more frequent and reliable service on main streets, but the changes would reduce the streets served in Darby Township. As of June 2024, the existing bus route that runs south along Oak Lane, then west along Rively and Beech Avenues and then south along Ashland

Avenue would be eliminated. The current bus stops along Calcon Hook Road north of Hook Road would be eliminated, but instead all of the Hook Road would be served.

Darby Township Delaware County ROAD CLASSIFICATION




-  Other Principal Arterial Highway
-  Major Collector
-  Minor Arterial



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SOURCE: PASDA and ESRI.




0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet

Darby Township Delaware County

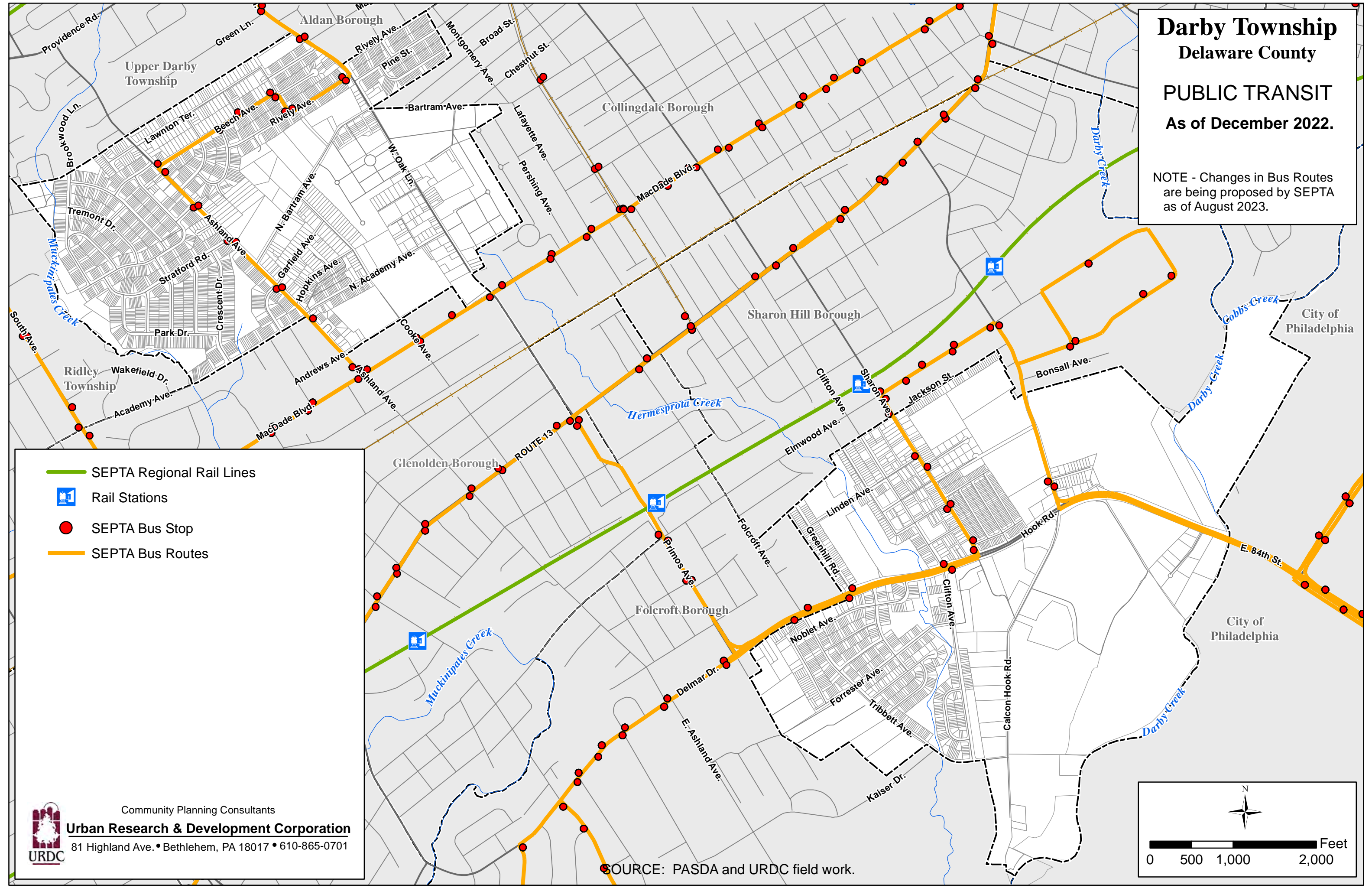
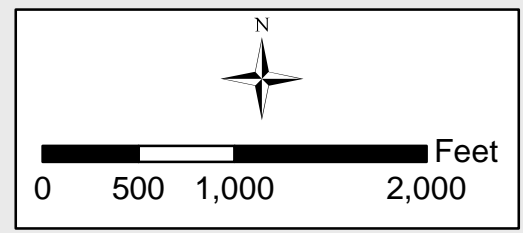
PUBLIC TRANSIT As of December 2022.

NOTE - Changes in Bus Routes are being proposed by SEPTA as of August 2023.

-  SEPTA Regional Rail Lines
-  Rail Stations
-  SEPTA Bus Stop
-  SEPTA Bus Routes

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SOURCE: PASDA and URDC field work.



Natural Features Conservation and Sustainability Plan

The Natural Features Map shows the creeks, known wetlands and topography of the Township. Steep slopes are not a major issue in Darby Township. The most prominent slopes are along creeks, with much of the land in Township ownership. Most of the woodlands in Darby Township are along the creeks. Most of the known wetlands are concentrated along the Darby Creek. Wetlands are critically important lands for recharging groundwater, maintaining the flow of creeks, protecting water quality, and providing valuable habitats.

Carefully manage stormwater runoff.

Stormwater management involves the control of the amounts and velocities of water runoff. As land is additional surfaces are covered with buildings and paving that are impervious to infiltration into the ground, and as thick natural vegetation is removed, runoff volumes and speeds increase. With proper engineering methods, infiltration into the ground can be promoted, velocities can be slowed, soil erosion can be avoided, and stormwater can be detained and released gradually to avoid increased flooding. Darby Township controls stormwater through local regulations.

Where feasible, porous paving materials should be used on residential driveways, walkways and less-used portions of parking lots. Rain gardens with moisture-loving plantings should be installed to absorb stormwater and filter out pollutants. By adding and preserving trees and thick understory plantings to reduce erosion, the amount of sediment entering the creek can be reduced. Streambank stabilization projects typically involve new plantings that reduce erosion. Grants are available for these types of projects.

Darby Township is required to work to improve the water quality of stormwater runoff and to reduce sedimentation of the creeks as part of the Federal MS4 program. The Federal MS4 program also requires that the Township conduct a public education program, and requires the use of pollution prevention measures in municipal public works operations, such as during vehicle maintenance, washing and fueling, as well as in the storage of road salt and other materials. Also, periodic street sweeping helps to meet these requirements.

In the future, the MS4 program may require more expensive measures, such as retrofitting existing stormwater basins to promote groundwater recharge and to add thicker vegetation in basins and near outfalls to trap sediment.

Sump pumps and roof drains should not be allowed to be connected to the sanitary sewage system. The Township has legal obligations to reduce the amount of inflow of runoff and infiltration of groundwater that enters into sewage pipes.

There are problems along portions of the Hermesprot Creek where the existing structural walls along the creek need to be stabilized. There also is reportedly a need to make certain improvements where bridges pass over the creek walls. There also are reportedly stormwater problems along many rear alleys that are privately owned, particularly in the denser older residential areas of the Township, such as Lincoln Park. Many developments built prior to the 1970s did not include provisions for stormwater management.

Carefully manage flood-prone and wetland areas.

The Natural Features Map shows the locations of creeks, known wetlands and flood-prone areas. Darby Township includes portions of four waterways:

- Darby Creek forms part of the southeastern boundary of the Township, before flowing into the Delaware River.
- A short stretch of the Cobbs Creek exists near the northeast corner of Darby Township along the Philadelphia border, before the creek flows into the Darby Creek.
- Muckinpat Creek is along the western border of the northern part of the Township.
- Hermesprot Creek runs parallel to Oak Lane and then passes through the western portion of the southern part of the Township.

The 100-Year Floodplain is the area that has a one percent chance of being flooded every year. It used to be known as the area expected to be flooded during the worst storm in a 100-year period. Throughout the region, the frequency and severity of severe storms have been increasing, and what was thought to be a 40-year storm could occur every year. The Floodplain is comprised of the Floodway (which is the main flood channel) and the Flood-fringe (which typically has more shallow floodwaters).

The Township has existing regulations that strictly regulate development within the Floodplain. Regulation of floodplains helps to reduce the threat to human life and property caused by periodic flooding.

Natural vegetation along the creek valleys helps to trap sediment and absorb excess nutrients from surface runoff, stabilize stream banks, and reduce soil erosion.

Residents should be encouraged to buy flood insurance if they live in a low-lying area, even if it is not within an official floodplain. While a building owner's flood insurance will cover a building, it does not automatically cover the contents owned by tenants. Tenants should be encouraged to buy renter's flood insurance, in addition to regular rental insurance.

The Community Rating System (CRS) encourages community floodplain management activities that exceed the minimum federal floodplain regulation standards. Under the CRS, flood insurance premium rates can be reduced in a municipality to reflect the reduced flood risk resulting from community activities that meet the three goals of the CRS: 1) reduce flood losses, 2) facilitate accurate insurance rating, and 3) promote the awareness of flood insurance. The CRS includes three classes that offer various amounts of floodplain insurance premium reduction. Points are offered in categories such as Public Information, Mapping and Regulations, Flood Damage Reduction, and Flood Preparedness.

Participation in the CRS is voluntary and would involve the Township submitting materials to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), along with documentation that shows the Township is implementing the activities for which credit is requested.

For example, points can be received for requiring that new construction be elevated to a specific height above flood levels, beyond the minimum requirement. Some points can be received for actions the Township is already doing, such as enforcing stormwater regulation.

Wetlands are required to be identified as part of development plans for individual sites. A minimum setback (such as 20 feet) should be required between delineated wetlands and new buildings or parking areas.

Promote a full range of initiatives to improve environmental sustainability and to address climate change.

There is a need to protect and enhance important natural features and ecosystems, to reduce energy consumption, to increase use of renewable energy, and to reduce emissions that contribute to global climate change. The main greenhouse gas emissions are Carbon dioxide, Methane, and Nitrous oxide. Energy consumption has a direct effect on climate change, because the burning of fossil fuels in vehicles or building systems or through use of electricity generated from fossil fuels results in increased gases that cause climate change. The use of more fuel-efficient or electric vehicles can have a dramatic effect in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Energy efficiency can also be accomplished through more efficient indoor and outdoor lighting (such as LED or solar-power lights), as well as increased insulation and more efficient heating and air conditioning systems. Any available State or Federal funding assistance or incentives should be publicized to local building owners to encourage them to use more energy-efficient systems. The Township has converted its outdoor lighting to LED fixtures, which greatly reduces electricity costs.

Sustainability also needs to involve promotion of walking and bicycling, use of public transit, use of renewable energy (such as solar panels), and increased recycling.

There is a current initiative by Delaware County to extend the existing City of Philadelphia bike sharing program into the County. This effort should involve identifying sites where there would be the most demand and where there is sufficient room for the bicycle station. Most stations are placed within the public right-of-way, unless a landowner wishes to volunteer use of their space.

The photo to the right is of a typical bike sharing station.



Solar canopies should be encouraged to be placed over parking lots, which helps to keep vehicles cool on hot summer days. Buildings should also be encouraged to install light colored roofs, which in the aggregate can reduce the overall heat in a neighborhood town on hot summer days.

An example of solar panels installed over a parking area.



The Township should make sure that zoning setback and coverage regulations do not unnecessarily interfere with the installation of solar panels over parking areas. Solar panels should also be allowed to extend five feet above the height limit on top of buildings. Solar canopies attached to buildings should be allowed to extend into building setbacks.

The Township should consider installing solar panels on the roofs of municipal buildings where feasible. Solar panel canopies can also be installed over portions of municipal parking areas, such as over police vehicles. Also, solar-powered outdoor lights can be valuable in parks, particularly if they avoid the need for expensive or unattractive electrical wiring.

The Township could allow some flexibility in the use of suitable porous paving materials are used. However, care is needed that there still are adequate landscaped areas, and that stormwater calculations do not assume that the materials will remain porous over long-term. Some types of porous materials need regular vacuuming to remain porous.

Carpooling is one of the most energy efficient methods of commuting. Carpool matching services are available through the Share-a-Ride program at www.pacarpool.org, which is sponsored by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, and these services should be promoted. Additional carpool parking should be provided in the region.

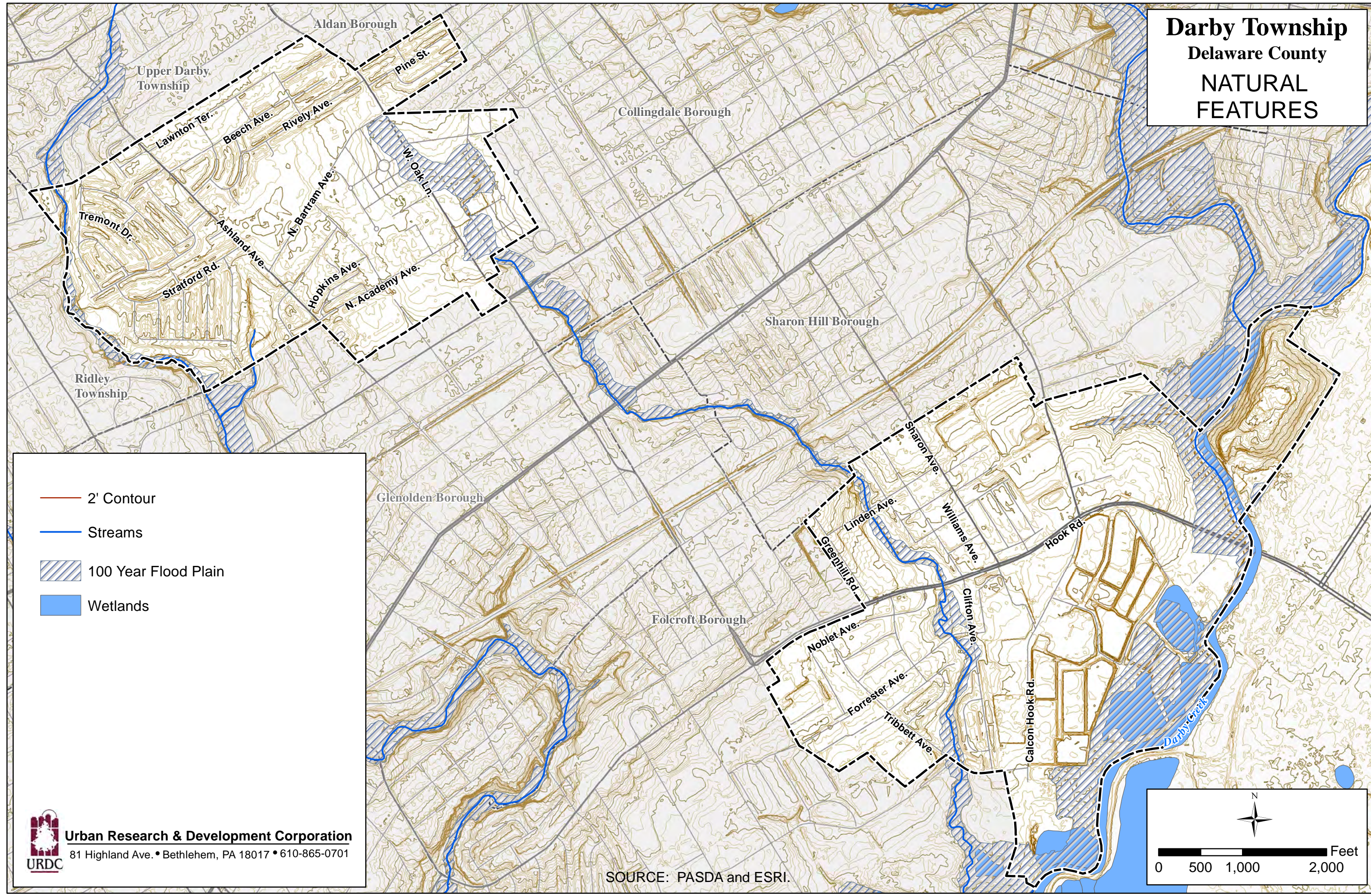
The Township should help advertise the availability of weatherization programs for low-income residents of homes. As of 2023, the program was operated by the Community Action Agency of Delaware County.





Substantial grants are available to install electric vehicle charging stations. As Township vehicles are replaced, hybrid, electric or other alternative fuel vehicles should be considered. A grant should be obtained to install a vehicle charging station at one of the Township's buildings.

Darby Township

Delaware County

NATURAL FEATURES




-  2' Contour
-  Streams
-  100 Year Flood Plain
-  Wetlands



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SOURCE: PASDA and ESRI.



Feet
 0 500 1,000 2,000

Emphasize tree plantings.

Trees are critical to convert Carbon Dioxide into Oxygen, to store carbon, to reduce the need for building and vehicle air conditioning, and to reduce stormwater problems. Tree plantings reduce the “heat effect” from hot sidewalks and streets that increase summer temperatures in urban areas. The goal is to have most streets, parking lots, creeks and parks covered by a tree canopy. Trees improve air quality, add natural beauty, reduce air conditioning costs, and increase property values.

Grants are available for municipal tree planting programs. However, in many communities, street trees are not typically planted unless the adjacent property owner agrees to the planting and agrees to maintain the tree. While this policy is logical, on blocks with many rental or intensive commercial properties, this policy can result in a lack of street trees. One option would be for the Township to plant street trees on the most bare blocks, even if the adjacent property owner does not approve it.

With proper selection of species and proper installation, conflicts between trees and sidewalks and utility lines can be avoided. The more open area that is provided around tree trunks, the less chance there is that the tree roots will damage sidewalks. Un-mortared pervious pavers that resemble brick or tree grates should be used near street trees, where a hard surface is needed. These pavers allow more air and water to reach the tree roots, which reduces the likelihood that the tree roots grow in a manner that heaves the sidewalk. If a tree root heaves these pavers, the pavers can be easily removed, the root can be trimmed, and then the pavers can be laid back into place. Vegetated areas around trees should not be allowed to be paved.

Plan for extreme heat, and other extreme weather events.

It would be desirable to have a public building in the area set aside as a cooling center during exceptionally hot summer afternoons, such as a room in the Darby Township School. The Darby Township School could also be prepared to serve as an emergency shelter in case of a flood, gas leak or severe fire in the community.

It would be desirable to have shade available in major public parks. Where there is not a canopy of trees, seasonal shade structures could be added, particularly if there is a summer playground program. Water fountains should be available in major parks, particularly where there are active facilities. A children’s water spray area would be desirable in one park, particularly for families who do not have access to a pool. A less expensive option that does not require water treatment is to install a water misting station in a park, which is typically activated with a button.

Reduce Darby Township’s waste stream by promoting additional recycling.

Paper is unlikely to be recycled if it is mixed with bottles and cans. The Township should consider establishing a convenient drop off location for paper and flattened cardboard. A container can be provided for these materials with openings that are very narrow in size to make it difficult to use the containers for other materials. A location should be visible that is next to an existing public facility or visible from a street, to allow oversight of the unloading.

Community Facilities and Services Plan

Community facilities are used to provide public services, such as fire stations, schools, parks, and the Township Building. Most of the community facilities are also illustrated on the Existing Land Use Map.

Consider the long-term uses of various Township buildings.

The Darby Township Municipal Building is located at 21 Bartram Avenue. The building houses Township administrative offices and a meeting room, and is next to a District Magistrate's office.

The Township owns a former community building at 1085 Hook Road and an adjacent former police station that are not in good condition, and that are being proposed for demolition. This site could possibly be used for a new library and/or a community center. There have been requests from the public for an indoor recreation building, which preferably would include a gym. However, this site likely would not be large enough to accommodate a gym.

The public works facility is next to the Community Building on Clifton Avenue. The Township also owns a small former Township office building at 1063 Cedarwood Road, which is used for occasional meetings.

The Township Police Department and the Good Neighbor Senior Center (which is owned by the County Housing Authority) are located on Studevan Plaza, which is south of Sharon Avenue and south of Hook Road.

The Township also owns a former commercial building at 601 Clifton Avenue, which is adjacent to two vacant grass lots. The building is not being used and reportedly would need significant work before being suitable for a new use. One option has been discussed would be to move the Senior Center to this property, and then to work with the Housing Authority to allow the expansion of the current Senior Center as an indoor recreation building for all ages. Another option would be to expand the 601 Clifton Avenue building to make it into a recreation center.

Consider alternatives to provide library services to Township residents.

Delaware County Libraries is a federation of 26 public libraries, with membership open to all residents of Delaware County. Any County resident can use any of the affiliated libraries. The nearest public libraries include:

- Collingdale Public Library
823 MacDade Blvd.
Collingdale
- Folcroft Public Library
1725 Delmar Drive, Folcroft
- Glenolden Library
211 S. Llanwellyn Ave.
Glenolden
- Ridley Township Public Library & Resource Center
100 East MacDade Blvd., Folsom
- Sharon Hill Public Library
246 Sharon Ave., Sharon Hill
- Upper Darby Twp./Sellers Library – Primos Branch
409 Ashland Avenue, Secane
- Darby Borough Library
Main Street, Darby

There have been public requests to establish a library within Darby Township. It would be difficult to establish a new library unless a construction grant would be obtained as well as annual operating funding could be obtained from the State and the County.

The Township Building on Bartram Avenue includes a room that was originally intended to serve as a small library. The intent is to use this room as an interim library, such as for occasional children's story times and similar events, if volunteers can be recruited. It could be valuable even if it is only open a few

hours a week. If a better site becomes available for a library, then this room could be opened up for use by local recreation activities, such as crafts groups.

Another option would be to construct a library where the former Police Station and Community Center building exists at Clifton Avenue and Hook Road.

Continue to provide excellent police protection services.

The Darby Township Police Department is comprised of 19 sworn officers and one secretary. The Department is divided into three divisions:

- Administration, composed of the Chief, the Deputy Chief, and the Lieutenant,
- Investigation, composed of three officers, and
- Patrol, currently comprised of 13 officers.

Several officers also participate in specialized county-wide units, which include the Emergency Response Team, the Major Incident Response Team, the County Drug Task Force, and the County Child Abuse Task Force.

As of 2023, the Department fleet was comprised of 13 vehicles, which mainly include sport utility vehicles, a pick-up, and sedans. Most vehicles were less than 5 years old.

The current police station is reported to be “moderately adequate” to meet Department needs. The Police Department reports that the following upgrades would be desirable, if funding would become available:

- a dedicated secure interview area, and
- a renovated juvenile holding area.
- additional surveillance for the exterior of the facility,
- controlled access to the emergency vehicle parking lot, and
- digital, controlled access to the facility interior via key fob or similar device.

The Department reports that the location in Darby Township with the greatest number of accidents is the Hook Road corridor. Speed timing signs have been strategically placed throughout the Township.

In the 2023 survey of Darby Township residents, one of the most frequent complaints was about speeding on local roads and motorists who do not stop for stop signs. It would be particularly beneficial for targeted police enforcement of traffic laws to occur near schools and parks where there is the most pedestrian activity.

Continue to provide high-quality fire protection, ambulance, and rescue services, with coordinated training with neighboring companies.

The Darby Township Fire Marshal works to oversee fire prevention, safety education, code enforcement, and fire investigation activities, as well as preparation to address natural or man-made disasters.

Darby Township is served by two fire companies:

Darby Township Fire Co. #4 Station #76
Hook & Green Hill Road
Sharon Hill, PA 19079

Goodwill Fire Co. #1, Station #77
719 W Cooke Avenue, at Hopkins Avenue
Glenolden, PA 19036

Darby Township asked the State Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) to perform a study assessing fire protection services in the Township. The subsequent Fire Study for Darby Township was released in 2021.

The firehouse of the Darby Township Fire Company #4 on Hook Road was constructed in 1968 and includes three bays. The station houses the following apparatus:

- Engine 76, 2003 pumper
- Engine 76-1, 1986 pumper
- Engine 76-2, 1997 pumper

- Utility 76. 2007 utility truck

The Firehouse on Hook Road needs major repairs, including to the roof.

The firehouse of the Goodwill Fire Company #1 on Cooke Avenue was built in 1994 and includes three bays. Goodwill currently houses the following apparatus:

- Quint 77 – 1997 75ft aerial pumper
- Engine 75 – 2005 pumper

The Briarcliffe Fire Company at 767 Beech Avenue was disbanded in 2022. Delaware County is planning to reuse the building.

The Fire Chief also reports the following information:

- The Department plans to replace the 1986 pumper at Station 76 within two years.
- The Department has approximately 25 active volunteers between the two stations.
- Both stations need physical improvements. The Chief reports Station 76 (Darby Township) is in poor to fair condition, and the Township received a grant to make improvements. Station 77 (Goodwill) is in fair to good condition but is running out of room. Neither station has facilities for firefighters to stay overnight.
- Water pressure is sufficient throughout the Township.
- In addition to firefighting, both stations provide emergency response and rescue services, with backup from other stations, depending on the type and location of the call.

The Fire Chief reports that staffing is difficult from approximately 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. because many volunteers work during those hours, and many work outside of the area. Other companies are often called to assist during prime hours, but they have the same staffing problems. The Township should consider ways to assist in recruiting and retaining volunteer emergency service workers. For example, the Township can offer certain tax credits to local volunteers under a State law. Township employees could be encouraged to be trained and serve as firefighters, which can be particularly valuable during weekday mornings and afternoons.

One of the most fair ways to fund emergency services is through a dedicated real estate mileage for emergency services. A dedicated tax can allow fire companies and EMS companies to prepare realistic multi-year budgets. A dedicated tax can also reduce the need for volunteers to spend much of their time on fundraising activities, so they have more time free for training and their families.

As of 2023, Mercy Fitzgerald's Emergency Medical Services provides paramedic services to Darby Township. However, emergency medical services throughout the State are undergoing financial strain. In response, Delaware County is completing a study of emergency medical services to recommend long-term solutions.

A portion of the Delaware County Emergency Services Training Center property is in Darby Township, south of Tribbett Avenue.

Coordinate services with the School District.

The Southeast Delco School District serves Darby Township and the Boroughs of Collingdale, Folcroft, and Sharon Hill. As of 2020, the District included 30,363 residents.

Darby Township students mainly attend the following schools:

- Kindergarten Center (in Darby Township on Bartram Avenue)
- Darby Township School (grades 1–8, in Darby Township on Bartram Avenue)

- Academy Park High School (grades 9–12, in Sharon Hill Borough)

Other schools in the District are:

- Delcroft School in Folcroft,
- Harris School in Collingdale, and
- Sharon Hill School in Sharon Hill.

Total enrollment in the District in the 2022-2023 school year was 4,127, including the following:

Name	2022-3 Enrollment
Kindergarten Center	295
Darby Township School	614
Delcroft School	630
Harris School	658
Sharon Hill School	573
Academy Park High School	1,357
TOTAL	4,127

The Township and School District should examine opportunities to jointly provide for public recreation services.

Continue to provide high-quality parks and recreation services.

Darby Township includes ten public recreation areas, three in the south part of the Township (Sharon Hill zip code) and seven in the north part of the Township (Glenolden zip code):

- Arnold Covert Park
(Hermesprota Creek Park)
1536 Roosevelt Drive, Sharon Hill
— playground equipment
— open space
- Lincoln Park Playground
1032 Orange Avenue, Sharon Hill
— playground equipment
- Conway Park
1301 Hook Road, Sharon Hill
— playground equipment
— basketball courts
— picnic area and trails
- Oakeola Park Playground
513 Groves Street, Glenolden
— playground equipment
— basketball court
— pavilion
- Westbridge Park Playground
521 Westbridge Avenue, Glenolden
— playground equipment
— basketball half court
- Brookwood Park
1085 Brookwood Lane, Glenolden
— playground equipment

- Lawrence Patterson Tot Lot (Park Drive Tot Lot)
235 Park Drive, Glenolden
— playground equipment
- James J. Sandone Park
742 South Garfield Avenue, Glenolden
— basketball court
— open space
- Spruce Street Tot Lot
803 West Oak Lane, Glenolden
— playground equipment
- Madison & Beech Playground
719 Beech Avenue, Glenolden
— playground equipment

In 2022, Darby Township completed the Conway Park Master Plan. The Plan proposes a series of improvements, including: 1) completing a multi-use loop trail, while moving some trail segments further from the creek, 2) improving access for persons with disabilities, 3) relocating the 2 basketball courts and adding an adjacent game table and shade pavilion, 4) removing the tennis courts and adding pickleball courts, 5) adding 2 new picnic pavilions, 6) adding a new restroom and storage building, 7) adding a new playground for ages 2 to 5 and a new playground for ages 5 to 12, 8) adding a fitness area, 9) adding plantings along the creek to form a riparian conservation buffer, 10) providing a lawn amphitheater for events, and 11) adding a water splash pad.

The Spruce Street Totlot is prone to regular flooding. Consideration should be given to relocating the playground, and having the property serve as a planted stormwater area.

The Oakeola Playground is in an industrial area on an alley (Groves Street), west of Oak Lane. On the one hand it is not easily accessible from homes, and is difficult to oversee for security. On the other hand, it provides a location for noisy basketball games that do not bother residential neighborhoods.

Most of the Township parks do not include off-street parking. In most cases that is not a problem, but it would be desirable to add one or two paved spaces for persons with disabilities at the edges of parks where feasible.

The Studevan Field is operated by the Chris Arnold Athletic Association and includes a football field and baseball field west of Sharon Avenue and Calcon Hook Road. A grant was received to update the fields. The Briarcliffe Athletic Association operates a fieldhouse and 2 baseball fields along Bartram Avenue. Programs are also operated by the Darby Township Athletic Association.

In addition, the Darby Township School includes 2 baseball/softball fields and a playground. The Briarcliffe Swim Club is a membership-based swim club. The Ridley Branch of the YMCA is west of the northern part of Darby Township, along South Avenue.

In 2023, the Township conducted an online survey of residents. More information from the survey is provided in the Appendix. Residents were asked to choose the three types of recreation facilities that should be emphasized in new improvements. The following were the responses in order of preference:

1. Children's playground
2. Walking, running and off-road bicycle paths and trails
3. Place for outdoor concerts and events (note - the Conway Park Master Plan proposes a location for this activity)
4. Picnic pavilion (note - the Conway Park Master Plan proposes 2 new pavilions)
5. Restroom building in a park
6. Woods, natural areas and creek access (tie)
6. Dog park
8. Children's water spray area
9. Tennis or pickleball court (note - many communities are adding pickleball)
10. Soccer/football/lacrosse field (tie)
10. Basketball court
12. Baseball softball field

The increasing number of hot days is creating a demand for more ways to cool off while outside. The Briarcliffe Swim Club operates a pool on Bartram Avenue. Many households cannot afford the membership fees of a swim club, and there are almost no public pools in the area. Ideally, Delaware County would develop one or more large public pools in a County Park, because municipalities often find building and maintaining a pool to be financially burdensome on their own.

A children's water spray pad is proposed as part of the Conway Park Master Plan. This type of facility can be a cost-efficient way to provide recreation for young people, in a manner that requires little land and modest expenses. A spray pad requires a staffperson to periodically conduct a safety check of the surface and to complete water quality checks, particularly if the water will be recycled on-site, which requires a filtration process. With recycled water, there is a risk of bacteria contamination. An alternative would involve a misting system at a park. Misting systems are widely used to cool off persons at amusement parks. A misting system is designed with a fine spray that uses much less water than a spray pad. As a result, there is no need to treat or recycle the water, which mostly evaporates on a hot day. A third alternative on a hot summer day is to arrange a public schedule for a fire truck to visit a few parks in different areas to spray water into the air for children.

The Township should consider the pros and cons of providing a dog park within Darby Township. Unfortunately, there are few suitable areas within existing Township parks because of the proximity of homes. A dog park typically involves one fenced area for smaller dogs and a second fenced area for larger dogs.

Darby Township should seek opportunities to jointly provide recreation programs with neighboring municipalities. For example, Darby Township may allow residents of another municipality to attend dance classes in Darby Township at the same cost as residents, while the other municipality could allow Darby Township residents to attend art classes at the same cost as their residents. This type of coordination could eventually lead to a multi-municipal recreation commission that would offer a range of recreation programs to the residents of two or more municipalities.

The Township should continue to provide facilities for recreational programs, in coordination with the School District. The Township should work with the School District to provide opportunities for youth recreation within the Darby Township School outside of school hours, such as for youth basketball.

It would be desirable to find a location for a community garden, where residents can rent a plot to grow fresh vegetables. The garden should be a sunny location where a central water supply can be provided, in a location that can be fenced to avoid vandalism, theft and problems with wildlife. Typically, in an urban location, clean soil is trucked in, with raised beds, to avoid contamination issues from previous uses of the property.

The Briarcliffe Recreation Association operates a fieldhouse, which is used for recreation programs and fundraising events. There have been public requests for a new indoor recreation building that would be open to all recreation groups in the Township. This type of facility would likely include a gym, and would be particularly useful for youth recreation activities during the winter and hot summer days. Another option would be for the Township to work with the School District to allow greater use of the indoor facilities in the Elementary School for additional community recreation. Reportedly, the Elementary School's main gym is already rented during many evenings by outside groups. Often, a School District will require a Township to cover the additional costs to the School District, such as for an additional maintenance staff-person to be on-site during events and utility costs.

Continue to work to reduce infiltration into the sewage system.

Central sewer service in Darby Township is provided through the Delaware County Regional Water Quality Control Authority (DELCORA). The northwest part of the Township is served through the Muckinipates Authority, while the southeast portion of Darby Township is served through the Darby Creek Joint Authority.

The Township needs to continue to work with DELCORA, the authorities, adjacent municipalities and property owners to reduce the amount of authorized inflow and infiltration into the system. This includes replacing old pipes, sealing manhole covers and making sure that building roof drains and sump pumps do not direct water into the sanitary sewage system. DELCORA is installing a large new facility near the County Public Safety Training Facility to store wastewater during major storms.

All of Darby Township is served with central water, as part of Aqua Pennsylvania's Southeast Division Service Area. There are multiple water sources for the system, including from the Delaware River.

PUTTING THIS PLAN INTO ACTION

This section describes methods that should be considered to implement this Plan. This Plan will need to be reviewed periodically and, if necessary, updated to reflect changing trends. The intent is to continually work to put this Plan into action—through a program of updated planning and many short-term actions within a long-range perspective.

Darby Township has been actively working to maximize use of the internet, email and social media to regularly update residents with information that will help spur public interest, enthusiasm and involvement. Opportunities for citizen involvement should also be highlighted through newspapers, social media, email lists, continued newsletters, posters and other media. The intent is to promote substantial citizen input, including making sure residents are well-informed about community issues and have plentiful opportunities to provide their opinions on Township matters.

Update the Zoning Ordinance to carry out this Plan.

The Zoning Ordinance is the primary legal tool to regulate the uses of land and buildings. The Zoning Ordinance and Map should be updated to be generally consistent with this Comprehensive Plan, to modernize standards and to address public concerns. The Zoning Ordinance includes a Zoning Map that divides the Township into different zoning districts. Each district permits a set of activities and establishes a maximum density of development. Zoning also controls the following:

- the heights of buildings,
- the percentage of a lot that may be covered by buildings and paving,
- the minimum distances that buildings may be placed from streets and property lines,
- the minimum size of lots,
- the maximum sizes and heights of signs, and
- the protection of important natural features, such as setbacks from creeks.

Consider the pros and cons of adopting the Township’s own Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO).

The SALDO mainly regulates the creation of new lots, the construction of new streets by developers, and the site engineering of new multi-family, commercial, industrial and institutional buildings. It includes procedures, application requirements and engineering standards. Like many Townships in Delaware County, Darby Township is under the jurisdiction of the County SALDO. If the Township would decide to enact its own SALDO, the Township would have greater control over the standards, and Township Commissioners could approve waivers and modifications to the SALDO requirements. Most of the expenses resulting from having a Township SALDO (including reviews by the Township Engineer) could be recaptured through fees on applications, in the same manner as the County currently charges fees to applicants. The Township would have the option of using the existing County SALDO as the basis for its own SALDO, which would minimize the cost of preparation of a new ordinance.

Continue to emphasize the Property Maintenance Code and Rental Inspection Program.

The Township’s Property Maintenance Code is a valuable tool to make sure that buildings are maintained to a minimum level and to address problem properties before they become blighted. The system of fees and fines for property maintenance and nuisance violations should be written to increase penalties for repeat offenses, violations that are not corrected within a reasonable time limit, or situations that require more than two inspections of a property. The Township uses its own Property Maintenance Code, as opposed to using the standard International Code.

A number of communities have shifted to a simple ticket system to address many types of nuisance-related and “quality of life” violations. For example, this type of ticket system can be used for improper handling of trash. This approach avoids use of the Magisterial District Judge system, and thereby reduces the fees to persons who are cited and the administrative burden to the Township. The initial fine for a violation is typically kept low if the fine is paid within a certain period of time, in order to reduce the number of appeals. The main goal is to seek compliance, with the fines designed to cover administrative costs. However, the fines typically increase with repeat offenses.

Consider adopting an Official Map.

The State Municipalities Planning Code grants each municipality with the authority to adopt an “Official Map.” An Official Map can designate proposed intersection improvements, trail links or other public improvements. The Map may cover the entire Township or only certain areas.

Once an Official Map may be officially adopted by the Township Commissioners, then the Township is provided with a limited amount of authority to reserve land for the projects on the Map. If the land affected by a project shown on the Official Map is proposed for development, then the Township would have up to one year to either purchase the land for its fair market value or decide not to go forward with the project. This one year period is intended to provide time to raise funds to acquire the land, and avoid lost opportunities. If this one year period is not in effect, a person could obtain a building permit almost immediately in many cases and construct a building that could obstruct an important project. In some cases, a developer could be encouraged to include the improvement within a new development, without a need for the Township to purchase the land.

An Official Map also serves to provide notice to property owners about the Township’s future plans, which increases the likelihood that a proposed project, such as a trail link, can be incorporated into a developer’s site design, with limited Township expense.

Plan for major needed capital improvements.

“Capital” improvements are projects involving a substantial expense for the construction or improvement of major public facilities that have a long life span and that are not annual operating expenses. Examples of capital projects include major street improvements, major park improvements, and the expansion or major renovation of buildings. Darby Township maintains a Capital Fund as part of its Budget, which includes fire apparatus. The Township’s Comprehensive Financial Management Plan recommended that the Township establish a longer-term Capital Improvements Program, with a list of anticipated capital projects.

A multi-year Capital Improvements Program (CIP) can allow efficient scheduling and prioritization of projects. The CIP can be tied into borrowing plans and grant application deadlines. By establishing a schedule of major street, streetscape, and stormwater projects, the Township and utility providers will be able to improve coordination with underground construction projects. This coordination minimizes the need to cut into a street after it has been recently re-paved, and reduces costs for each entity.

Through a CIP, many different projects can be combined into a single bond issue, which avoids the high administrative costs of multiple bond issues. A CIP also can allow the Township to carefully time any bond issues to take advantage of the lowest interest rates.

Continue to seek additional grants to meet community needs.

The Township should continue to identify Federal, State and County grant opportunities to address community needs. This should include highlighting grant deadlines for major programs a few months in advance, so that there is time to prepare a quality grant application. An Appendix of this Plan lists a large number of federal, state and county funding programs for community and economic development purposes. However, small grants may not be worth the time required for an application and for administration, particularly if they result in increased total costs for an entire project.

Increase inter-governmental cooperation efforts.

Inter-governmental cooperation can decrease the costs of many services, while also improving the quality of services. The Pennsylvania Inter-governmental Cooperation Act provides broad and flexible authority to organize joint efforts, as municipalities deem appropriate. In general, the Act allows two or more municipalities to jointly accomplish anything that an individual municipality is allowed to do. In most cases, this grant of authority is carried out through the adoption of an ordinance by each municipality to formalize an agreement. One option involves one municipality providing a service to a second municipality through a contract. These same concepts can also apply between a municipality and a school district. For example, a Township may agree to plow snow from school parking lots and driveways in return for free municipal use of some school facilities.

Darby Township participates in the Delaware County Consortium of Governments (COG). A COG could offer joint purchasing among municipalities, which decreases bidding and purchase costs. The COG provide the foundation for expanded discussion and cooperation among the municipalities on planning, financing and transportation matters. Darby Township also participates in the Eastern Delaware County Stormwater Collaborative, which has been assisting the municipalities in compliance with federal stormwater requirements.

The toughest issue in joint municipal services is determining a fair allocation of costs. The State Department of Community and Economic Development has several publications that can assist in these issues.

The following types of inter-governmental cooperation efforts should be considered:

- **Shared Services and Shared Staff-persons** – Shared staff-persons can be particular beneficial for specialized staff, such as different types of construction inspectors. Two or more municipalities could hire the same person to do the same job, with certain hours assigned to each municipality. This allows each municipality to hire a highly qualified person who is working full-time, as opposed to each trying to find a part-time person. This can reduce turnover, which reduces training costs and reduces the potential for mistakes being made by inexperienced staff. In addition, sharing staff makes staff-persons available during more hours of the day, which is beneficial to residents and business-persons. It also provides greater coverage during periods of illness or vacation.
- **Shared Recreation Programs** – When municipalities share and coordinate recreation programs, it greatly increases the types of programs that can be offered. For example, one municipality may offer a gymnastics program, while another municipality offers basketball programs. Residents of each municipality could be allowed to participate in each of those programs at the same cost per person as a municipal resident. There has been great success in parts of Pennsylvania with multi-municipal recreation programs, where each municipality contributes funds towards one set of programs. These programs are often organized in partnership with a school district.
- **Joint Yard Waste Collection and Composting** – This is a very cost-effective way of handling the disposal of yard waste, which requires significant land and expensive equipment.
- **Joint Purchasing** – Joint purchasing can reduce the costs to each municipality of preparing bid documents and legal ads. It also can result in lower costs because larger volumes are being purchased, or a larger service area is being bid. The State also has arrangements that allow municipalities to "piggyback" upon State purchases. State law allows a similar process of "piggyback" bids between municipalities and a county. The State Intergovernmental Cooperation Act includes rules for joint municipal purchasing. Under State law, one municipality can be the lead municipality in purchases, without requiring multiple municipalities to seek bids.
- **Sharing of Equipment** – This method of sharing is most beneficial for expensive equipment that is needed by each municipality for only portions of the year. The equipment could be jointly owned, or be owned by one municipality and leased to other municipalities. Alternatively, an arrangement could allow trading of equipment.
- **Incentives for Intergovernmental Cooperation in Grants** – Many competitive State grant programs provide preference to projects that involve cooperation between more than one municipality. Therefore, if two similar projects are in competition for a grant, and one involves cooperation between two municipalities, the two municipality project is most likely to be funded.

ACTION PROGRAM

The following table summarizes the major recommendations of this Plan, along with recommended priorities. The timing of each recommendation is listed, as well which agencies should have the primary responsibility to carry out the recommendation. Additional information for each strategy is included in the main body of this Plan. Abbreviations for the prime responsibilities for each recommended action are listed as follows:

Abbreviations of Responsible Agencies/Groups:

Adj. Mun.	=	Adjacent Municipalities
Commissioners	=	Darby Township Commissioners
Con. Dis.	=	Delaware County Conservation District
DCNR	=	Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
DCPD	=	Delaware County Planning Department
DVRPC	=	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
OHCD	=	Delaware County Office of Housing and Community Development
PC	=	Township Planning Commission
PennDOT	=	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
SEPTA	=	Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority
Staff	=	Township Staff

In the right-hand column of the following table lists entities that should carry out a recommendation, the entity that is proposed to have the lead responsibility is boldfaced. High priority strategies are ones that are recommended for the most attention and that should be considered first. Medium priority strategies are moderately important, while low priority strategies are commended to be completed as time and resources become available.

In the “Timing” column, short-range is intended to refer to actions that should be completed within the next two years. Medium-range strategies are intended to be completed within the three to six years, and long-range strategies are envisioned to be completed in seven or more years. Most strategies are listed as continuous, because they should involve many smaller actions that are completed over many different years.

It is recommended that the Township annually review steps that have been undertaken to implement the Comprehensive Plan. This Action Program table can be a useful guide for that type of review. Even if the Comprehensive Plan is not officially updated, a copy of this Action Program table could be updated as needed as a working document.

LAND USE AND HOUSING PLAN

Recommended Strategy	Priority: H = High M = Medium L = Low	Timing	Prime Responsibilities (see abbreviations)
Work to make sure that new development is compatible with nearby residential neighborhoods. Seek that most business parking be placed to the rear or side of a building. Seek to streamline procedures to promote desirable types of investment in appropriate areas.	H	Continuous	Commissioners, PC, Staff
Adopt a new Zoning Ordinance and follow other recommendations in the Land Use and Housing Plan. The Land Use and Housing Plan works to protect residential neighborhoods and to direct the right types of businesses to the most appropriate locations.	H	Short-term	Commissioners, PC, Staff

Recommended Strategy	Priority: H = High M = Medium L = Low	Timing	Prime Responsibilities (see abbreviations)
Work to improve the economic vitality and appearance of the Hook Road corridor. Seek grant funding to complete a corridor plan. Design and install streetscape improvements, including adding more street trees, pedestrian and bicycling improvements, and highly visible well-lit crosswalks. Work to identify and address safety hazards. Seek funding to install decorative street lights, and encourage private property-owners to continue a similar design.	M	Continuous	Commissioners, Staff, DVRPC, DCPC, Property-owners and Businesses
Use assertive code enforcement to address problem properties.	M	Continuous	Staff
Connect lower income property-owners with resources to assist them in repairs and upgrades, including the County OHCD, Habitat for Humanity and the Community Action Agency weatherization program.	M	Continuous	Staff, OHCD

NATURAL FEATURES CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

Recommended Strategy	Priority. H = High M = Medium L = Low	Timing	Prime Responsibilities
Carry out a full range of sustainability initiatives, in cooperation with area businesses and other entities, including: a) installing additional bicycle racks in public locations and requiring a bike rack for larger new developments, b) promoting composting and increasing recycling rates (such as installing a paper drop off collection box), c) encouraging carpooling and use of public transit, d) increasing use of solar energy, which could include solar canopies over parking areas, e) making sure Township ordinances are streamlined in allowing solar energy use, f) providing public electric vehicle charging stations in business areas (using grants), g) participating in a regional bike share program once it expands to Del. Co., h) providing zoning incentives for the use of green roofs and green-certified building practices, and i) promoting use of rain gardens and other measures that encourage stormwater to infiltrate into the ground.	M	Continuous	Staff, Commissioners, PC, Property owners
Carefully manage stormwater and other water resources to improve water quality, promote groundwater recharge, and comply with Federal MS4 requirements. Work to reduce sedimentation and erosion along creeks, including by planting vegetation to stabilize creek banks and repairing walls along creeks.	H	Continuous	Staff, Commissioners, PC, Con. Dis., Twp. Engineer, property owners

Recommended Strategy	Priority. H = High M = Medium L = Low	Timing	Prime Responsibilities
Improve the creeks as scenic and recreational assets. Maintain building and paving setbacks from streams to protect water quality. The Township and other landowners should continue to plant and maintain native vegetation and native trees along creeks. Prohibit all new buildings within the 100 year floodplain.	M	Short-range	Staff, Commissioners, PC
Promote additional tree plantings, particularly to extend the tree canopy over streets, parking lots and parks. Continue to use State TreeVitalize grants to provide more trees along streets and in parks and State Watershed Protection grants for plantings along creeks. Minimize unnecessary removal of trees during construction through regulations, plan reviews and site inspections.	M	Continuous	PC, Commissioners, Staff

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES PLAN

Recommended Strategy	Priority. H = High M = Medium L = Low	Timing	Prime Responsibilities (see abbreviations)
Continue to provide excellent parks and recreation facilities. Complete a Borough-wide Parks and Recreation Plan. Carry out the Conway Park Master Plan. Seek improvements that will allow the most efficient use of the limited amount of available parkland, such as by adding a children’s spray pool or misting stations to help people stay cool on hot days. Encourage Delaware County to develop one or two large public swimming pools and additional athletic fields, in recognition of the difficulties for municipalities in financing public pools and in providing land for additional athletic fields.	H	Continuous	Commissioners, School District, Donors, DCNR, County Commissioners
Seek to provide joint recreation program offerings with one or more nearby municipalities and area recreation providers. Seek to develop a new indoor recreation building and to make full use of the indoor facilities at the Elementary School.	M	Continuous	Commissioners, Adj. Mun.
Provide a location for a community garden , where residents can rent a plot to grow their own vegetables.	M	Continuous	Commissioners
Work to complete the Darby Creek Trail system, in cooperation with adjacent municipalities. Work to improve bicycling and pedestrian access from neighborhoods to parks, schools, transit stations, the Darby Creek Trail and the Heinz Wildlife Preserve Trail and bikeways in Philadelphia.	M	Continuous	Commissioners, School District

Recommended Strategy	Priority. H = High M = Medium L = Low	Timing	Prime Responsibilities (see abbreviations)
Continue to provide high-quality police, fire protection and emergency medical services, with coordinated training with neighboring companies. Seek a regional entity to serve EMS needs, with a fair distribution of costs.	H	Continuous	Police, Fire, EMS, Commissioners, Staff, Delaware Co., adj. municipalities.
Study the buildings and properties owned by the Township to consider their best uses, and whether each older building should be demolished or rehabilitated. There is a desire to have a library that would be a branch of the County system. There are public requests for an indoor recreation building. There is a plan to demolish the former police station and former community center on Hook Road. There is a need to replace the roof on the fire station on Hook Road.	M	Mid-range	Commissioners, Staff, Recreation Associations, Fire, Twp. Eng.

TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Recommended Strategy	Priority. H = High M = Medium L = Low	Timing	Prime Responsibilities (see abbreviations)
Carry out “Complete Streets” and “Traffic Calming” concepts when planning circulation improvements. Consider installing speed humps in a few selected Township road segments where there is local support, such as near the Darby Township Elementary School, roads that are experiencing high levels of through-traffic and speeding, or roads near parks.	M	Continuous	Staff, Twp. Engineer, PC, Commissioners, PennDOT, DCPC, DVRPC
Work with DVRPC, DCPD, PennDOT and adjacent property owners to seek funding and rights-of-way to complete cost-effective road improvements that reduce congestion and improve safety. A Hook Road Corridor Study is discussed in the Land Use and Housing table above. Consider traffic and pedestrian safety improvements, such as along Sharon Avenue and Hook Road. Seek to have sidewalks constructed along at least one side of W. Oak Lane. Apply for grants to update traffic signals and coordinate traffic signal timing.	H	Continuous	Staff, Twp. Engineer, Commissioners, PennDOT, DCPC, DVRPC
Enforce parking restrictions along Hook Road to keep shoulders open for pedestrians and bicyclists.	H	Continuous	Police, Staff
Work to improve bicycling access, including connections to the Heinz Wildlife Refuge Trail in Philadelphia.	M	Short-term	Staff, Twp. Engineer, PennDOT, DCPC, DVRPC

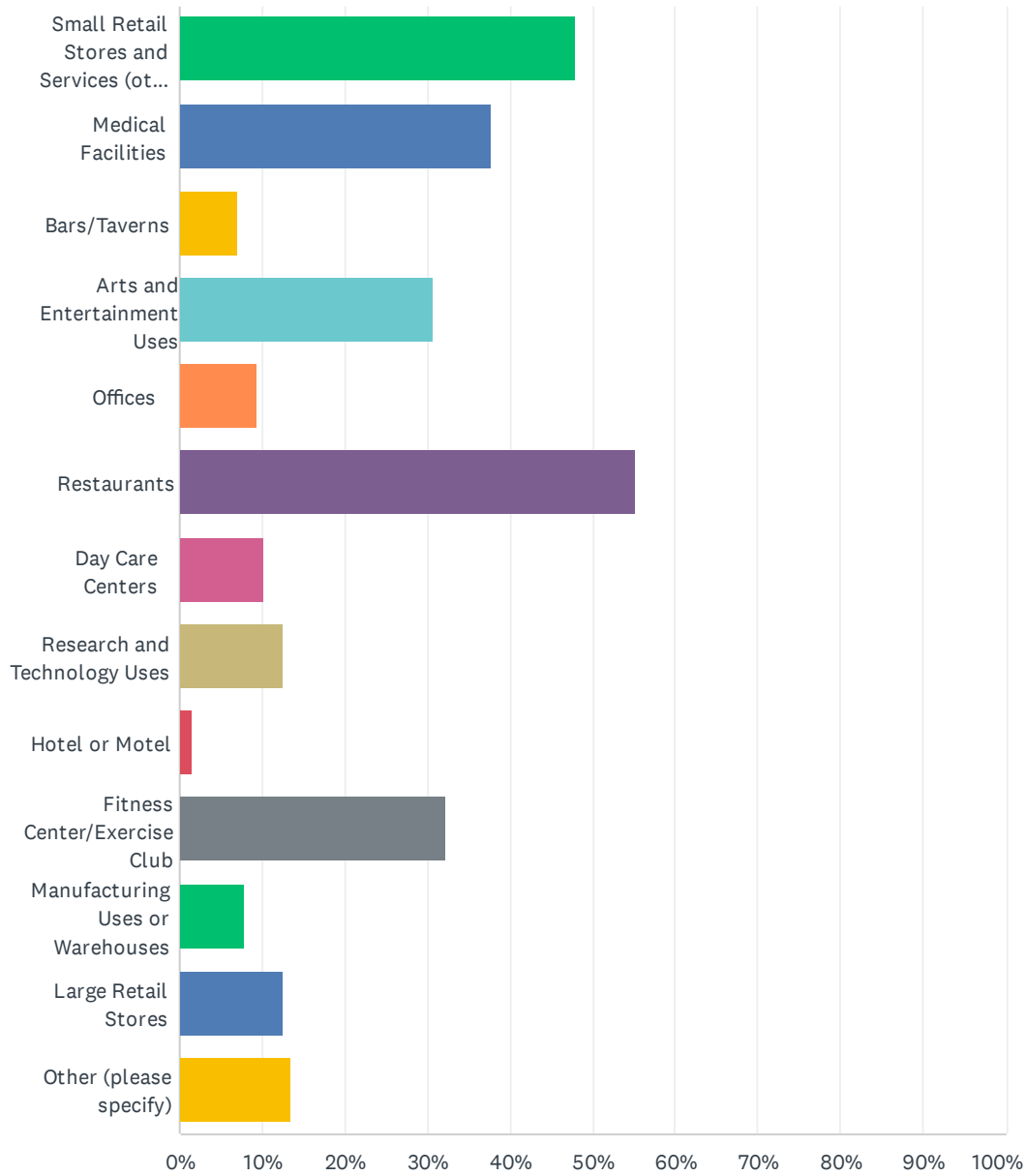
Recommended Strategy	Priority. H = High M = Medium L = Low	Timing	Prime Responsibilities (see abbreviations)
Promote greater use of public transit, including the two train stations and the bus routes. Provide weblinks to current transit information. Allow for additional bus passenger shelters, which can be funded by a sign company in a business area or which can be funded through SEPTA.	M	Continuous	Staff, Commissioners, SEPTA, DCPC, DVRPC

PUTTING THIS PLAN INTO ACTION

Recommended Strategy	Priority. H = High M = Medium L = Low	Timing	Prime Responsibilities (see abbreviations)
Update the Zoning Ordinance to carry out this Plan. A draft Zoning Ordinance has been prepared that is consistent with the "Land Use and Housing Plan" section of this Plan.	H	Short-range	PC, Commissioners, Staff, Twp. Engineer
Consider adopting an "Official Map" to seek to reserve land that is expected to be needed for future improvements to intersections, trails, parks or other public improvements. The Official Map could start with a couple projects in a portion of the Township.	M	Short-range	PC, Commissioners, Staff
Seek additional grants to meet community needs, while paying close attention to upcoming submission deadlines for h grant.	M	Continuous	Staff, DCPC, OHCD, State agencies
Increase inter-governmental cooperation efforts, including holding periodic joint meetings with other municipalities and working through the Council of Governments.	M	Continuous	Staff, Commissioners, PC, Adj. Mun.

Q1 Development: Please check the top three types of businesses you would most like to see encouraged in Darby Township

Answered: 127 Skipped: 0



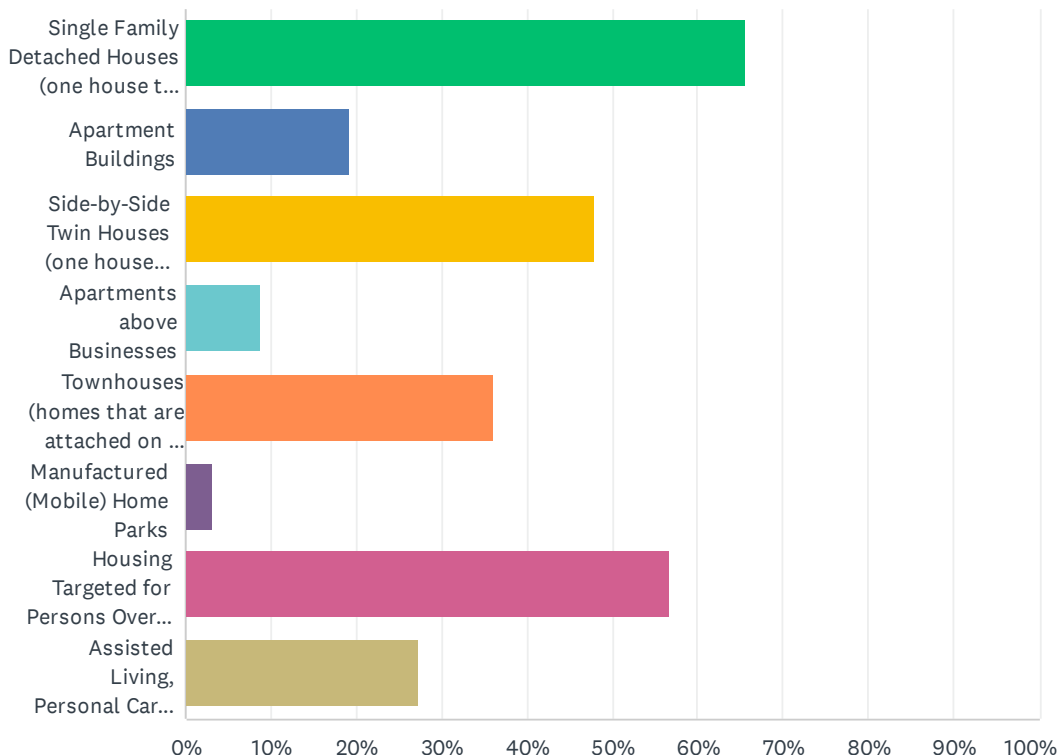
Darby Township Community Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Small Retail Stores and Services (other than grocery stores)	48.03%	61
Medical Facilities	37.80%	48
Bars/Taverns	7.09%	9
Arts and Entertainment Uses	30.71%	39
Offices	9.45%	12
Restaurants	55.12%	70
Day Care Centers	10.24%	13
Research and Technology Uses	12.60%	16
Hotel or Motel	1.57%	2
Fitness Center/Exercise Club	32.28%	41
Manufacturing Uses or Warehouses	7.87%	10
Large Retail Stores	12.60%	16
Other (please specify)	13.39%	17
Total Respondents: 127		

Q2 Please check the top three types of new housing that you believe are most needed in Darby Township.

Answered: 125 Skipped: 2

Darby Township Community Survey

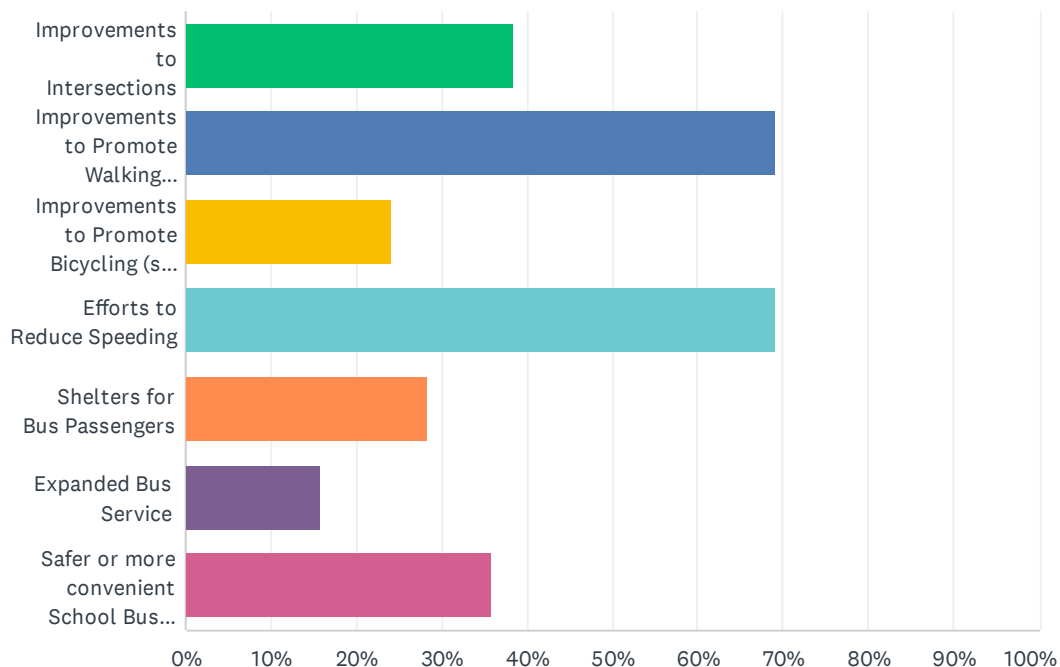


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Single Family Detached Houses (one house that is not attached to any other houses)	65.60%	82
Apartment Buildings	19.20%	24
Side-by-Side Twin Houses (one house attached to the side of one other house)	48.00%	60
Apartments above Businesses	8.80%	11
Townhouses (homes that are attached on the side, also known as rowhouses)	36.00%	45
Manufactured (Mobile) Home Parks	3.20%	4
Housing Targeted for Persons Over Age 55	56.80%	71
Assisted Living, Personal Care or Nursing Homes for Seniors	27.20%	34
Total Respondents: 125		

Q3 Transportation: Please check the top three types of transportation improvements you believe are most needed in Darby Township.

Answered: 120 Skipped: 7

Darby Township Community Survey



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Improvements to Intersections	38.33%	46
Improvements to Promote Walking (Sidewalks, Crosswalks, Pedestrian Signals at Intersections)	69.17%	83
Improvements to Promote Bicycling (such as bike lanes)	24.17%	29
Efforts to Reduce Speeding	69.17%	83
Shelters for Bus Passengers	28.33%	34
Expanded Bus Service	15.83%	19
Safer or more convenient School Bus Stops	35.83%	43
Total Respondents: 120		

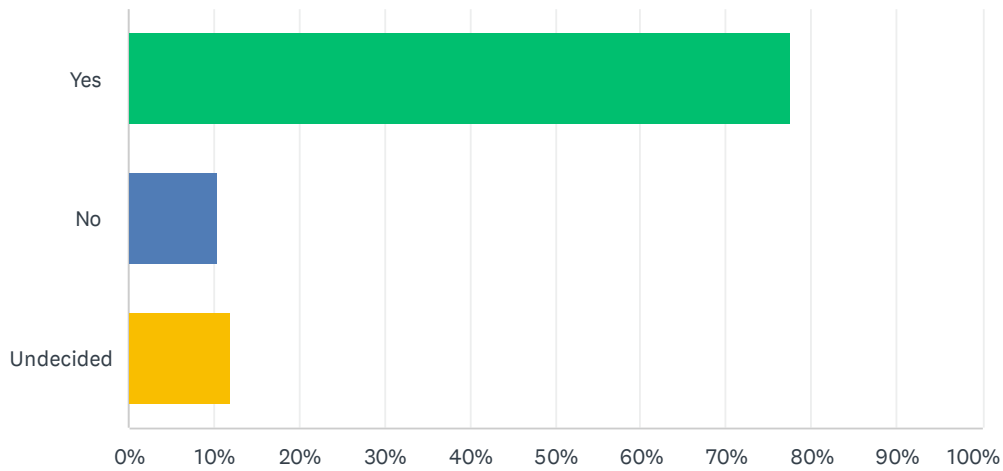
Q4 Do you wish to describe a street or transportation problem that you would like to see addressed? (such as improvements to a hazardous intersection or a difficult pedestrian crossing)

Answered: 52 Skipped: 75

Q5 Do you believe that additional parks and recreation improvements are needed?

Answered: 125 Skipped: 2

Darby Township Community Survey

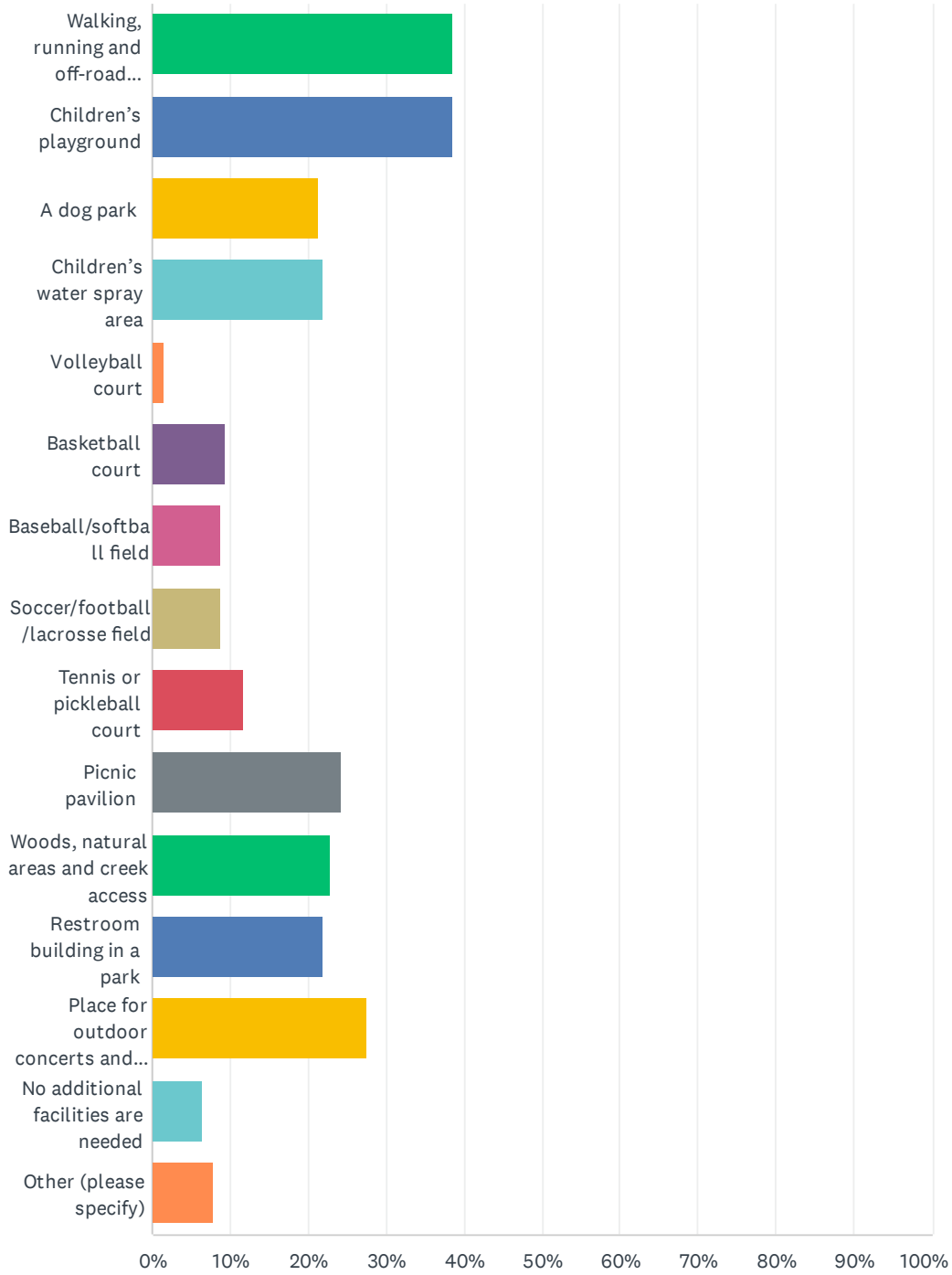


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	77.60%	97
No	10.40%	13
Undecided	12.00%	15
Total Respondents: 125		

Q6 Recreation: Please check which three types of new parks and recreation improvements you believe should be provided in Darby Township, if any?

Answered: 127 Skipped: 0

Darby Township Community Survey



Darby Township Community Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Walking, running and off-road bicycle paths and trails	38.58%	49
Children's playground	38.58%	49
A dog park	21.26%	27
Children's water spray area	22.05%	28
Volleyball court	1.57%	2
Basketball court	9.45%	12
Baseball/softball field	8.66%	11
Soccer/football/lacrosse field	8.66%	11
Tennis or pickleball court	11.81%	15
Picnic pavilion	24.41%	31
Woods, natural areas and creek access	22.83%	29
Restroom building in a park	22.05%	28
Place for outdoor concerts and events	27.56%	35
No additional facilities are needed	6.30%	8
Other (please specify)	7.87%	10
Total Respondents: 127		

Q7 What do you like most about Darby Township (other than presence of friends and family)?

Answered: 80 Skipped: 47

See summary of results on the next page

Q8 What do you like least about Darby Township?

Answered: 89 Skipped: 38

See summary of results on the next page

Q7 What do you like most about Darby Township (other than presence of friends and family)?

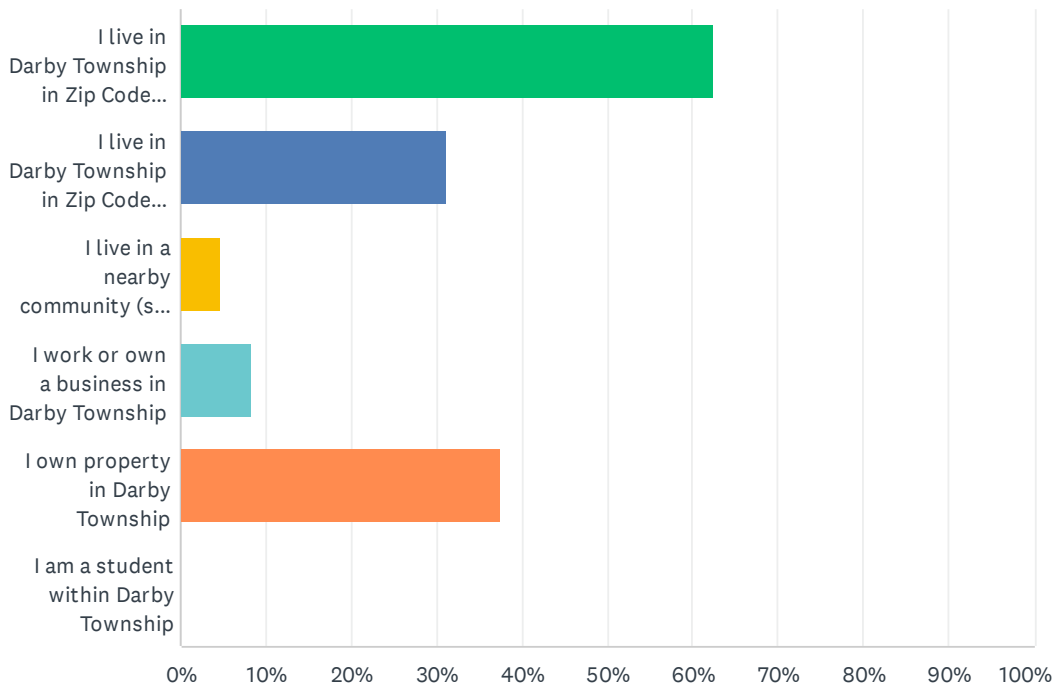
access neighborhood proximity town services feel city police homes Township
highways airport neighbors safe close stores
community great Location places S text people look
quiet lot area Friendly live Close knit community still

Q8 What do you like least about Darby Township?

especially people take care looks high taxes community renting streets high
needs children Town litter parks Darby Township
township taxes lack Speeding people don t trash lot
property activities take care property homes houses increase
neighborhood road school Lack resources kept

Darby Township Community Survey

Q9 Please check all that apply. (optional question)

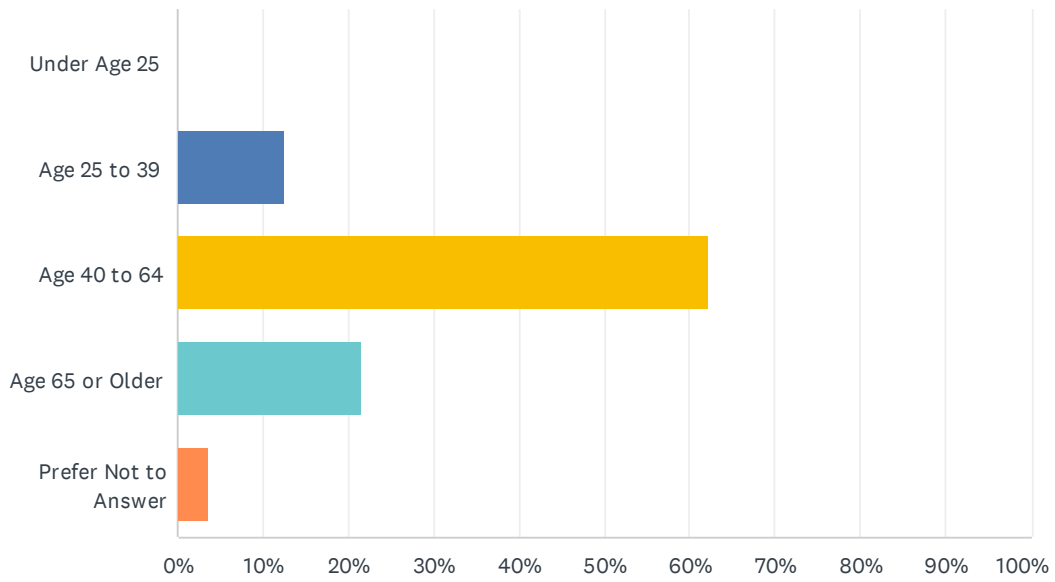


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I live in Darby Township in Zip Code 19036	62.39%	68
I live in Darby Township in Zip Code 19079	31.19%	34
I live in a nearby community (such as Folcroft or Darby Borough)	4.59%	5
I work or own a business in Darby Township	8.26%	9
I own property in Darby Township	37.61%	41
I am a student within Darby Township	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 109		

Q10 Are you:

Answered: 111 Skipped: 16

Darby Township Community Survey



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under Age 25	0.00%	0
Age 25 to 39	12.61%	14
Age 40 to 64	62.16%	69
Age 65 or Older	21.62%	24
Prefer Not to Answer	3.60%	4
TOTAL		111

B. POPULATION, HOUSING AND ECONOMICS DATA

The following section contains data regarding population, housing, income, education, and selected economic data for Darby Township residents. In many cases, data for Darby Township is compared to Delaware County and Pennsylvania. Complete data from the 2020 census are not yet available. Unless otherwise indicated, 2000, 2010, and 2020 data are from the U.S. Census decennial census, and 2019 data are 5-year estimates (2015-2019) from the Census’ American Community Survey (ACS).

Total Population

The 2020 US Census redistricting data showed a population of 9,219 for Darby Township, an decrease of 45 residents (0.5%) from the 2010 decennial census (Table A-1). During the same period, Delaware County’s population increased by 3.2 percent, while population in the entire state grew by 2.4 percent.

Table A-1
Total Population, 2010–2020
Darby Township, Delaware County, and Pennsylvania

	Total Population		Change, 2010-2020	
	2010	2020	Number	Percent
Darby Township	9,264	9,219	(45)	(0.5)%
Delaware County	558,979	576,830	17,851	3.2%
Pennsylvania	12,702,379	13,002,700	300,321	2.4%

Source: U. S. decennial census

Age

The U.S. Census reported that the population of Darby Township age 65 and over increased by 8.3 percent from 2010 to 2020 (Table A–2). The “median” is the number at which 50.0 percent of persons or households are above and 50.0 percent are below. According to the 2010 and 2020 ACS, Darby Township’s population age 65 and older grew faster than both Delaware County and Pennsylvania. Using the median age data, Darby Township’s population is younger than in both Delaware County and Pennsylvania.

Race / Ethnicity

The Census Bureau reported that the population of white residents in Darby Township, Delaware County, and Pennsylvania all declined from 2010 to 2020, while minority populations increased (Table A-3). Regarding ethnicity, the Hispanic or Latino population of the Township, County, and Commonwealth all increased during the same period.

Table A-2
Population Age 65+ and Median Age, 2010–2020
Darby Township, Delaware County, and Pennsylvania

	Population, Age 65+		Change, 2010–2019		Median Age (Years)		Change, 2010–2019	
	2010	2020	Number	Percent	2010	2020	Number	Percent
Darby Township	1,343	1,614	271	16.8%	33.9	36.7	2.8	8.3%
Delaware County	79,364	96,907	17,543	18.1%	38.5	39.0	0.5	1.3%
Pennsylvania	1,959,307	2,281,720	322,413	14.1%	39.8	40.8	1.0	2.5%

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Table A-3
Population by Race and Ethnicity, 2010-2020
Darby Township, Delaware County, and Pennsylvania

	Race								Hispanic or Latino			
	White				Non-White and Mixed				Number		Change, 2010–2020	
	Number		Change, 2010–2020		Number		Change, 2010–2020					
	2010	2020	No.	Pct.	2010	2020	No.	Pct.	2010	2020	No.	Pct.
Darby Township	5,343	4,511	(832)	(15.6)	3,921	4,708	787	20.1	89	157	68	76.4
Delaware County	405,233	367,718	(37,515)	(0.1)	153,446	209,112	55,666	0.4	16,537	26,772	10,235	61.9
Pennsylvania	10,406,288	9,750,687	(655,601)	(0.1)	2,296,091	3,252,013	955,922	0.4	719,660	1,049,613	329,953	45.8

Source: U. S. decennial census, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Housing

The U. S. Census reported increases in the number of housing units in Darby Township, Delaware County, and Pennsylvania from 2010 to 2020 (Table A-4). The housing stock in the Township increased slightly (1.1 percent) during the decade.

The U. S. Census Bureau reported that, from 2010 to 2020, the number of households (occupied housing units) decreased in Darby Township but increased in Delaware County and Pennsylvania (Table A-5). Households In the Township decreased during the decade by an average of 3.5 households per year.

Table A-4
Total Housing Units, 2010–2020
Darby Township, Delaware County, and Pennsylvania

	Total Housing Units		Change, 2010–2020	
	2010	2020	Number	Percent
Darby Township	3,926	3,891	(35)	(0.9)%
Delaware County	222,902	229,208	6,306	2.8%
Pennsylvania	5,567,315	5,742,828	175,513	3.2%

Source: U. S. decennial census

Table A-5
Households (Occupied Housing Units), 2010–2020
Darby Township, Delaware County, and Pennsylvania

	Households		Change, 2010–2020	
	2010	2020	Number	Percent
Darby Township	3,731	3,698	(33)	(0.9)%
Delaware County	208,700	215,498	6,798	3.3%
Pennsylvania	4,940,581	5,210,598	270,017	5.5%

Sources: U. S. decennial census

From 2010 to 2020, household size (the number of persons per occupied housing unit) did not change in Delaware County, and decreased in both Darby Township and Pennsylvania (Table A-6). Decreases in household size are often the result of adult children moving out of their parents' home.

Table A-6
Average Household Size, 2010–2020
Darby Township, Delaware County, and Pennsylvania

	Persons per Household		Change, 2010–2020	
	2010	2020	Number	Percent
Darby Township	2.65	2.48	(0.17)	(6.4)%
Delaware County	2.68	2.68	0.00	0.0%
Pennsylvania	2.57	2.50	(0.07)	(2.7)%

Sources: ACS 5-Year Estimates

As reported in the 2020 ACS 5-year estimates, more than 90% of housing units in Darby Township are single-family structures (Table A-7), the vast majority of which are attached (row homes). Correspondingly, the Township has a much lower share of single-family detached homes than in Delaware County or Pennsylvania.

Table A-7
Units in Structure, 2020
Darby Township, Delaware County, and Pennsylvania

Units in Structure	Darby Township		Delaware County		Pennsylvania	
	Structures	Percent	Structures	Percent	Structures	Percent
1, detached	356	8.8%	99,818	44.4%	3,264,031	57.1%
1, attached	3,291	81.4%	69,980	31.1%	1,060,733	18.6%
2	218	5.4%	11,090	4.9%	248,422	4.3%
3–4	64	1.6%	9,636	4.3%	228,942	4.0%
5–9	0	0.0%	6,427	2.9%	182,004	3.2%
10–19	46	1.1%	7,848	3.5%	146,248	2.6%
20 or more	68	1.7%	19,216	8.6%	363,501	6.4%
Mobile home	0	0.0%	712	0.3%	217,645	3.8%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0	0.0%	19	0.0%	1,819	0.0%
TOTAL	4,043	100.0%	224,746	100.0%	5,713,345	100.0%

Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates

According to the 2021 ACS 5-year estimates, Darby Township has a higher percentage of home ownership than either Delaware County or Pennsylvania (Table A-8). However, in the years from 2010 to 2021, home ownership decreased slightly, while Delaware County and Pennsylvania also saw a decrease in homeownership rates.

Table A-8
Housing Tenure (Owner/Renter), 2010 and 2021
Darby Township, Delaware County, and Pennsylvania

	Households (Occupied Housing Units)							
	2010				2021			
	Number		Percent		Number		Percent	
	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied	Owner-Occupied	Renter-Occupied
Darby Township	2,557	952	72.9%	27.1%	2,518	1,045	70.7%	29.3%
Delaware County	148,298	58,244	71.8%	28.2%	150,753	67,527	69.1%	30.9%
Pennsylvania	3,508,612	1,431,969	71.0%	29.0%	3,657,478	1,571,478	69.9%	30.1%

Source: 2010 Decennial Census, 2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Education

Measuring the percent of population age 25 and older, Darby Township has higher levels of high school graduates and population with some college but no degree than in either Delaware County and Pennsylvania (Table A-9). Correspondingly, Darby Township has lower shares of residents with Bachelor’s, graduate, or professional degrees than either Delaware County or Pennsylvania

Table A-9
Percent of Population, Age 25 and Older, by Educational Attainment, 2020
Darby Township, Delaware County, Pennsylvania

	Darby Township	Delaware County	Pennsylvania
Population, 25 years and older			
Less than 9 th grade	3.8%	2.2%	3.1%
9 th to 12 th grade, no diploma	3.7%	4.6%	5.9%
High school graduate (incl. equivalency)	42.9%	29.3%	34.2%
Some college, no degree	26.1%	16.7%	15.9%
Associate’s degree	7.9%	7.7%	8.6%
Bachelor’s degree	9.4%	22.7%	19.5%
Graduate or professional degree	6.3%	16.8%	12.8%

Source: ACS 2020 5-Year Estimates

Income

The most common measure of income is the median. By definition, half of residents or households have incomes above the median, and half have incomes below the median.

The 2010 Census did not ask any questions about income. The American Community Survey (ACS) has data on income, but the data is based on sampling. Nevertheless, 2020 ACS data is the most recent available, and Table A-10 compares incomes reported in the 2010 and 2020 ACS.

From 2010 to 2020, income levels in Darby Township, Delaware County, and Pennsylvania all increased. However, in 2020, the income level in Darby Township was noticeably lower than in both Delaware County and Pennsylvania (Table A-10). In 2020, median household income in Darby Township was estimated to be \$23,721 lower than in the County and \$11,110 lower than in the Commonwealth.

Travel to Work

The 2020 American Community Survey 5-year estimates (Table S801) report that there were 5,056 workers age 16 and over in Darby Township. A total of 70.5 percent of Township workers drove to work alone. In comparison, 71.4 percent of workers drove alone in Delaware County, and 74.4 percent of workers age 16 and over in Pennsylvania drove to work alone. The mean (average) travel time to work in 2020 was 32.5 minutes in Darby Township was longer than in both Delaware County (29.4 minutes) and Pennsylvania (27.1 minutes).

Table A-10
Median Household Income, 2010–2020
Darby Township, Delaware County, Pennsylvania

	Median Household Income		Change, 2010–2019	
	2010	2020	Number	Percent
Darby Township	\$49,258	\$52,517	\$3,259	6.2%
Delaware County	\$61,876	\$76,238	\$14,362	18.8%
Pennsylvania	\$50,398	\$63,627	\$13,229	20.8%

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

C. A BRIEF HISTORY OF DARBY TOWNSHIP

Darby Township was settled in 1683 by English and Swedish immigrants who became friendly with Indians who lived along the Muckinapates Creek. Darby Township became then, and is now, an important link in the line of transportation from Philadelphia to Chester and points south. The Township’s farms and mills provided meat, vegetables, and meal to immediate neighbors to the north and Philadelphia, and, over the past 300 years, has left a mark in the historical records of the United States.

The territory now constituting the townships of Upper and Lower Darby continued under one municipal government until 1747, when, for the convenience of the inhabitants, at a town meeting, it was decided to separate the upper part from the lower in all matters save the levies made for the support of the poor. The lines agreed upon are not the current township lines, but Upper Darby, being less densely populated, extended farther south. The unofficial division was so inconvenient that, 40 years later, a petition was presented to the court. The following is an excerpt from the petition:

“Beginning at Cobb's Greek on the Northwest side of a tract of land belonging to the heirs of Joshua Ashand in the line of said land, thence along said line and the line of land late Enoch Bonsall's & Joshua Bonsall's to Darby Creek thence down the said Creek to the northwest line of John Ash's land, thence along said line and the line of Samuel Ash and Nathaniel Smith to the line of Ridley Township, and that the lower part may be called Darby and the other part Upper Darby.”

D. COMPATIBILITY WITH ZONING IN ADJACENT MUNICIPALITIES

The following information compares the zoning in Darby Township to the zoning immediately adjacent to each portion of the Township. From its northern border, the northwestern portion of Darby Township shares borders with five municipalities, moving clockwise:

- Aldan Borough,
- Collingdale Borough,
- Glenolden Borough,
- Ridley Township, and
- Upper Darby Township.

Aldan Borough

From the northern tip of Darby Township with Aldan Borough moving clockwise, zoning in Darby is:

- Apartments (3,000 square-foot minimum lot size per dwelling unit) and R - C (2,200 square-foot minimum lot) to Brookwood Lane, then
- R-B (2,500 square-foot minimum per dwelling unit) to Madison Ave. (extended) and Apartments to the Township line at Oak Lane.
- Zoning in Aldan is R-3 (4,000 square feet minimum lot) to Magnolia Lane and R-2 (6,000 square feet minimum lot size) to the Borough line along Rively Avenue. There is no conflict between Darby and Aldan adjacent zoning.

Collingdale Borough

Continuing clockwise, zoning in Collingdale Borough is Zone A - Residence (minimum lot size: 5,000 square feet), which permits single-family detached dwellings. The corresponding zoning in Darby Township is R-C Residence (minimum lot size: 2,200 square feet) to Bartram Avenue.

Continuing clockwise, zoning in Darby Township is L-I Light Industry, and zoning in Collingdale is Zone A to MacDade Boulevard and Zone LI-A Light Industrial south of MacDade Boulevard. The residential zoning in Collingdale north of MacDade Boulevard may cause some conflicts with the L-I zoning in Darby Township, but, otherwise, there is no conflict between zones in the two municipalities.

Glenolden Borough

Continuing clockwise from Collingdale, zoning in the Borough of Glenolden is B-1 Neighborhood Business to West Oak Lane, then B-2 Shopping Center to West Ashland Avenue. Minimum lot sizes are 5,000 square feet in the B-1 district and 2 acres in the B-2 district. Sample permitted uses are neighborhood grocery store, bakery, hotel/motel, and nurseries in the B-1 district. Sample uses in the B-2 district include any use permitted in the B-1 district, places of amusement, supermarkets, and department stores.

Corresponding zoning in Darby Township is C-2 General Commercial, with a minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet. Samples of permitted uses in the C-2 district include retail store, office, bank, personal service shops, indoor theater, and funeral parlor. There are no significant conflicts in the adjacent zoning between Darby Township and Glenolden.

Ridley Township

The Darby Creek separates Darby Township from Ridley Township. Continuing the adjacent zoning analysis clockwise across Darby Creek, land in Ridley Township is within the floodplain. Corresponding zoning in Darby Township is M Municipal. Municipal uses include parks, public buildings and community centers, which is not a conflict.

Upper Darby Township

From the border moving clockwise, along the rear lot lines along Brookwood Lane, land in Upper Darby is zoned R-3 Residential. The R-3 zone permits single-family detached dwellings, semidetached dwellings and two-family dwellings at an average of 3,000 square feet or more per housing unit.

Corresponding zoning in Darby Township is C-2 General Commercial, with a minimum lot size of 10,000 square feet. Examples of permitted uses in the C-2 district include retail stores, offices, banks, and personal service uses. While zoning in the area does not necessarily pose a conflict, caution should be used in the area to avoid potential future conflicts.

Moving further clockwise, lots along Brookwood Lane in Upper Darby are zoned R-2 Residential, which permits the same residential types as the R-3 zone. Adjacent zoning in Darby Township is R-C Residence, which permits a variety of residential uses with minimum lot sizes of 2,200 square feet to 2,500 square feet. No conflict is indicated.

Continuing further in a clockwise direction, Upper Darby zoning from Brookwood Lane to Ashland Avenue is R-2 and R-3. Both zones permit the uses listed above for the R-3 zone. Corresponding Darby Township zoning is R-B Residential, which permits singles, twins and two family dwellings at 2,500 square feet per housing unit or more. No conflict is indicated.

Moving clockwise to Madison Avenue, zoning in Upper Darby is RC Residential Conservation, which permits single-family detached homes with a minimum lot size of 15,000 square feet with public sewer service and 20,000 square feet without public sewer service. Corresponding zoning in Darby Township is R-B, as described above. No conflict is indicated.

Continuing to the Aldan Borough line, Upper Darby zoning is RC Residential Conservation, as noted above. Corresponding Darby Township zoning is C1 Neighborhood Commercial. Permitted uses include retail stores, day care, offices and banks. The minimum lot size in the C1 district is 5,000 square feet. While a mix of commercial and residential uses are allowed, all land in the segment is already developed.

Clockwise from the north-easternmost point, the southeastern portion of Darby Township is bounded by:

- Sharon Hill Borough,
- Colwyn Borough,
- Philadelphia, and

- Folcroft Borough.

Sharon Hill Borough

From the northern point of the Sharon Hill/Darby Township border, moving clockwise, zoning in Sharon Hill is R-1 Residential to Bonsall Avenue. Uses permitted by right in the R-1 district include single-family dwellings, recreation uses, and municipal/public uses. Minimum lot size is 5,500 square feet.

The parcel at the corner with Bonsall Avenue is zoned LI Limited Industrial. Selected uses permitted by right in the LI district include:

- light manufacturing uses,
- warehouses,
- plumbing, heating, carpentry, and electrical uses,
- laboratory, and
- rental storage facility.

Most of the corresponding zoning in Darby Township is LI Light Industrial. The minimum lot size in the LI district is ½ acre. Samples of uses permitted in the LI district include:

- scientific and industrial research,
- offices,
- indoor storage,
- printing and publishing,
- monument establishment,
- uses permitted in commercial districts,
- auto repair,
- cinema studios, radio, and TV stations, and
- uses permitted in commercial districts.

The portion of the Sharon Hill/Darby Township border north of Bonsall Avenue poses a potential conflict of light industrial uses adjacent to residential uses. However, the section of the border south of Bonsall Avenue is industrial bordering industrial and poses no conflict.

Turning eastward to the point where the border turns southeast, zoning in Sharon Hill is R-1 Residential (except for the corner parcel noted above, which is LI). Adjacent zoning in Darby Township is LI Light Industrial, which poses a potential conflict.

Continuing clockwise to the Colwyn Borough border, Sharon Hill zoning is LI Limited Industrial. Corresponding zoning in Darby Township is LI Light Industrial, which poses no conflict.

Colwyn Borough

Continuing clockwise to the Darby Creek, a small section of Darby Township borders Cobbs Creek, on the other side of which is Colwyn Borough. The zoning in Colwyn bordering Cobbs Creek across from Darby Township is RC Recreation Conservation. Uses permitted by right include active and passive recreation, conservation, tilling, ornamental gardens, and temporary structures for temporary events. The minimum lot size in the RC district is five acres.

Adjacent zoning in Darby Township is LI Light Industrial, as discussed above. The juxtaposition of a conservation and light industrial district would usually pose a conflict. However, in the case of Colwyn Borough and Darby Township, the municipalities are separated by the Darby Creek, which minimizes any potential conflict.

Philadelphia

Continuing clockwise, Darby Township is bordered by Darby Creek, on the far side of which is the City of Philadelphia. The base district adjacent to Darby Township is SP-PO-A Special Purpose - Parks and Open Space - Active. Specifically permitted uses include:

- adult and child care,
- wireless service facility,
- selected consumer goods,
- eating and drinking establishments, except for take-out restaurants and smoking establishments, and
- personal services.

The Open Space and Natural Resources Overlay District addresses flood protection, creek setbacks and protection of parks.

Folcroft Borough

Moving southward along the Darby Creek, the final municipality bordering the southeastern portion of Darby Township is the Borough of Folcroft. From the Darby Creek to Tribett Avenue, zoning in Folcroft is LIB-A Light Industrial/Business Park - A. Minimum lot size in the LIB-A district is two acres. Uses permitted by right in the LIB-A district include:

- offices,
- light industrial use,
- laboratory,
- warehouse, distribution, and similar uses,
- financial establishment,
- business/trade school,
- cellular communications facilities, and
- health club or spa.

Corresponding zoning in Darby Township is LI Light Industrial, which is discussed above. No conflict is noted.

Moving northwest along Tribbett Avenue to Kaiser Drive, zoning in Folcroft is also LIB-A. Adjacent zoning in Darby Township is R-C Residence, which is discussed above. From Tribett Avenue to Kaiser Drive, the adjacent zoning does pose a potential conflict of uses.

Continuing clockwise to the northwest along Tribett Avenue to Primos Avenue, zoning in Folcroft is LIB Light Industrial / Business Park. Uses in the LIB district are similar to the LIB-A district discussed above. The minimum lot size in the LIB district is two acres.

Corresponding zoning in Darby Township is M Municipal, which allows the following major uses: single-family detached dwelling, schools, parks, and municipal buildings and uses. Municipal uses are also permitted in all zoning districts by right.

Moving northwest along Primos Avenue to Forrester Avenue, zoning in Folcroft is MC Municipal Center. This district mainly allows public uses, day care and libraries.

Corresponding zoning in Darby Township is LI Light Industrial, as discussed above. No conflict is indicated.

Continuing along the Folcroft Borough border to the Sharon Hill Borough border, Folcroft Borough zoning is LIB Light Industrial / Business Park, as discussed above. Adjacent zoning in Darby Township is LI Light Industrial, as discussed above. No conflict is noted.

E. EXISTING LAND USES BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Existing Land Use Map is found on a following page. Recreation and open space uses are described in the Parks and Recreation section. Key observations regarding existing land use in the northwestern portion of Darby Township include:

- The dominant land use in the areas near the Township borders with Ridley Township, Upper Darby Township, and Aldan Borough is residential. The predominant residential type includes rowhomes/townhomes in the Briarcliffe neighborhood.
- Oak Tree Apartments is located in the northwest section of the Township in the area of Lawton Terrace.
- Scattered commercial and public / semi-public uses are located along Lawnton Terrace, Ashland Avenue, Beech Avenue, and the Muckinipattis Creek.
- A large concentration of public/semi-public uses is located on the north side of North Bartram Avenue, including a school, a kindergarten center, and the Briarcliffe Swim Club. Scattered public/semi-public uses are located along the south side of North Bartram Avenue, including the Township Building, an American Legion post, and a magisterial judge office. There are three cemeteries: Har Zion Cemetery, Mt. Jacob Cemetery, and Mt. Lebanon Cemetery.
- The commercial area south of North Academy Avenue includes several large footprint stores: Forman Mills, ShopRite, and Walmart.
- Industrial uses in the northwestern part of Darby Township are scattered throughout the area south of North Bartram Avenue and east of Ashland Avenue.

The following notable points regard existing land use in the southeastern portion of Darby Township:

- Residential uses are predominantly row homes that are clustered:

- along both sides of Sharon Avenue north of Hook Road,
- in the area between Forrester Avenue and Nobel Avenue,
- in the southeast quadrant of Forrester Avenue and Tribbett Avenue, and
- along the western side of Clifton Avenue north of Tribbett Avenue.

Slightly less dense residential development is found along both sides of Sharon Avenue north of Linden Avenue.

- Industrial uses include:
 - a large tank farm from Hook Road southeast to Darby Creek, which is being removed to allow for redevelopment,
 - a complex of modern flex space located along the west side of Calcon Hook Road north of Hook Road,
 - another complex of modern flex space on the southwest corner of Forrester Avenue and Tribbett Avenue, and
 - various trucking and logistics operations are located between Calcon Hook Road, Hook Road, Jackson Street, and Sharon Avenue
- Commercial uses are scattered throughout the southeastern part of the Township, particularly in the areas around Hook Road. Larger footprint commercial uses include:
 - a large self-storage facility between Linden Avenue and Hook Road east of Greenhill Road.
 - a trash collection company and an auto body shop along the Philadelphia city line, and
 - an auto repair shop and logistics company between Hook Road and Forrester Avenue.
- A new Wawa convenience store is currently being developed on a portion of the parcel at the southwest corner of Hook Road and Calcon Hook Road.
- A former landfill site between Darby Creek and the Township border with Philadelphia is undergoing an environmental cleanup process.

Affordable housing — The Delaware County Housing Authority (DCHA) owns and operates 156 public housing units in the Darby area, located in four complexes::

- Calcon Gardens – 50 units of townhouses
- Calcon Hook Annex – 37 units of townhouses
- Greenhill Court Apartments – 34 units of apartments
- Lincoln Park – 35 units of townhouses

In addition, the DCHA administers 264 Housing Choice Vouchers in the Darby Township area. There are 3,000 housing choice vouchers in Delaware County. The Voucher system is designed to allow eligible households to choose their own rental unit, provided the landlord is willing to accept the Voucher. The Voucher subsidizes the difference between a federally-determined fair market rate and the amount that the federal government determines that the household can afford to pay.

The Studevan School Apartments includes 36 apartments for persons age 55 and older of low or moderate income. It is located on 1101 Hook road, and is operated by a private organization.