

**OUR COMMUNITY TODAY**

**OUR COMMUNITY TOMORROW**

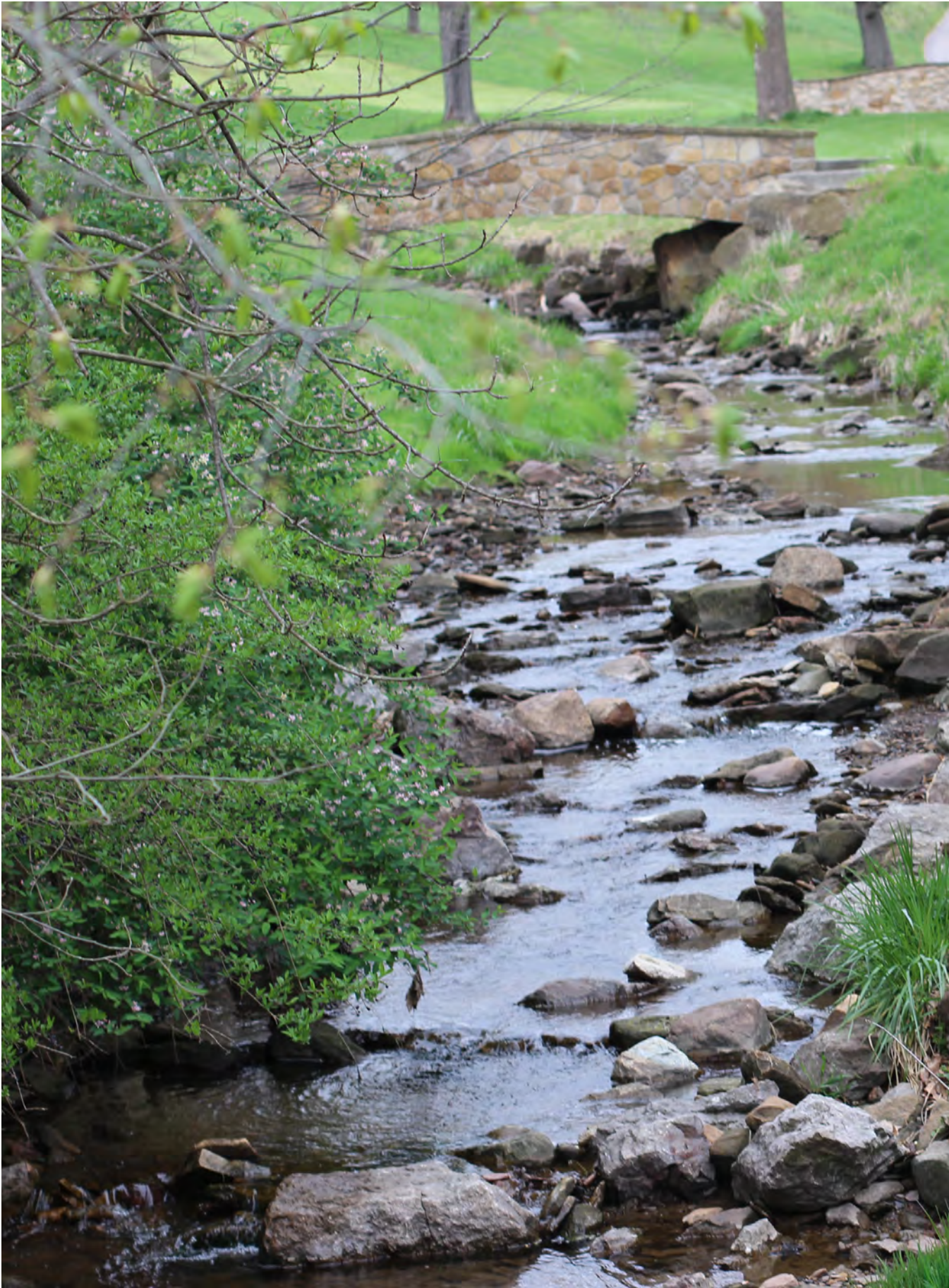
**OUR COMMUNITY WORKING TOGETHER**

# Our Community's Plan for the Future

Neshannock Township Comprehensive Plan

ADOPTED: MARCH 2017

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# Neshannock Township

## Community Comprehensive Plan

Acknowledgements

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Adopted:  
March 29, 2017

Resolution #2017-11

Neshannock Township  
3131 Mercer Road  
New Castle, PA 16105

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# Introduction to Our Plan



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## Introduction to Our Plan

***What happens to agricultural and undeveloped land will have a significant impact on Our Community's future. Our Community is growing and land use patterns continue to transition from rural to suburban. The current mix of local retail, light industrial, office, and residential uses provides a diverse tax base that will be important to Our Community as it grows. This plan sets forth our vision for that growth.***

A comprehensive plan is more than just a document detailing past and present land use trends with a proposed course of action. It is a process of organizing for the future. It creates a blueprint for our land use patterns of tomorrow. Community planning is an organized way of thinking about the future. Land is one of our most valuable resources and the way it is used or developed creates a significant part of our physical surroundings. Any change in land use becomes a permanent part of our daily lives and influences the financial stability of Our Community, builds or detracts from Our Community character, and promotes or inhibits future growth.

A comprehensive plan identifies, assesses, and integrates a wide range of socioeconomic, demographic, environmental, and other issues that impact community development and growth. The overarching intent of a comprehensive plan is to provide a framework from which policy makers can act to manage, enhance, and preserve the natural and man-made environments within a municipality. Comprehensive plans serve numerous functions. Their two primary functions are as:

- *An expression of what a community wants for its future, i.e., a statement of community goals, objectives, and vision.*
- *A guide to public sector and private sector decision-making.*

Comprehensive plans are not cast in stone. Rather they must be reviewed and revised to reflect changing conditions, resources, priorities, and other circumstances. In fact, the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) requires that comprehensive plans be updated at least every 10 years to ensure that they address a community's current and future needs. Once this plan is adopted, it will be referred to regularly to aid in decision-making and updated periodically to reflect changes in community priorities and influences.



Pennsylvania's MPC enables communities to plan for and control land use and development. Section 301(a) requires each municipal, multi-municipal, and county comprehensive plan to have nine elements. Collectively these basic elements should present a composite vision of private and public development for the future based on a statement of community development goals and objectives. Each and every basic element is linked, interrelated, or connected. For example, resident population data equates to housing needs, while demographics, such as age cohorts, can relate to housing types and educational needs, both present and future. There are a multitude of interrelationships among and between the required comprehensive plan elements. A summary of the required plan elements derived from MPC section 301 (a) follows:

- A statement of **community development goals and objectives** that chart the location, character and timing of future development.
- A **plan for land use** identifying the amount, intensity, character, and timing of land use.
- A plan to meet **housing needs** of present residents and those families anticipated to live in the municipality, as well as accommodating new housing in different dwelling types and at appropriate densities for households of all income levels.
- A **transportation plan**.
- A **community facilities plan**.
- A statement of the **interrelationships among the various plan components** which estimates the environmental, energy conservation, fiscal, economic development, and social consequences on the municipality.
- A discussion of **short- and long-range plan** implementation strategies.
- A statement indicating that existing and proposed development is compatible with plans and development in **contiguous municipalities**. This statement should indicate that existing and proposed development is generally consistent with the objectives and plans of the county comprehensive plan.
- A plan for the protection of **natural and historic resources** to the extent the municipalities are not limited by other federal or state statutes, these resources include, wetlands, aquifer recharge zones, woodlands, steep slopes, prime agricultural land, floodplain, unique natural areas and historic sites.

Prior to this comprehensive plan update, Our Community most recently completed a comprehensive plan in 1994. At that time, the population was 8,373 people. As of the 2010 census, Our Community's population was 9,609 people. In addition to understanding past and present population trends, this plan considers possible future population growth. Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission projects Our Community's population to reach over 13,000 residents by the year 2040. In addition to this residential growth, Our Community can accommodate future growth of commercial, light industrial, and office land uses. This future growth will be guided by the principles set forth in this plan.

*Our Community is a bit overdue for a comprehensive plan update, but that's okay, we're on it now. The MPC advises that our plan should be updated every ten years and our last one was in 1994. More important than just the passing years, Our Community continues to see residential and business growth and we want to help foster and guide that growth toward a healthy future as Our Community continues to evolve.*



## 1. Introduction to our Plan

This section describes the planning process, the basis for planning and the overall project.

## 2. Our Community Today

This section includes background studies, analysis of the physical environment and forecasts or projections of future population and market forces. We have to know where we are today before we plan for tomorrow and tackle the top priorities.

## How to Read Our Plan

Planning is an ongoing process intended to identify and evaluate community development issues, formulate alternative solutions to those issues, and select a best alternative on which to base a course of action. The comprehensive plan document consists of several interrelated parts that will guide the community's future.

## 3. Our Community Tomorrow

This section describes the community's vision, community development goals, and objectives.

## 4. Our Community Working Together

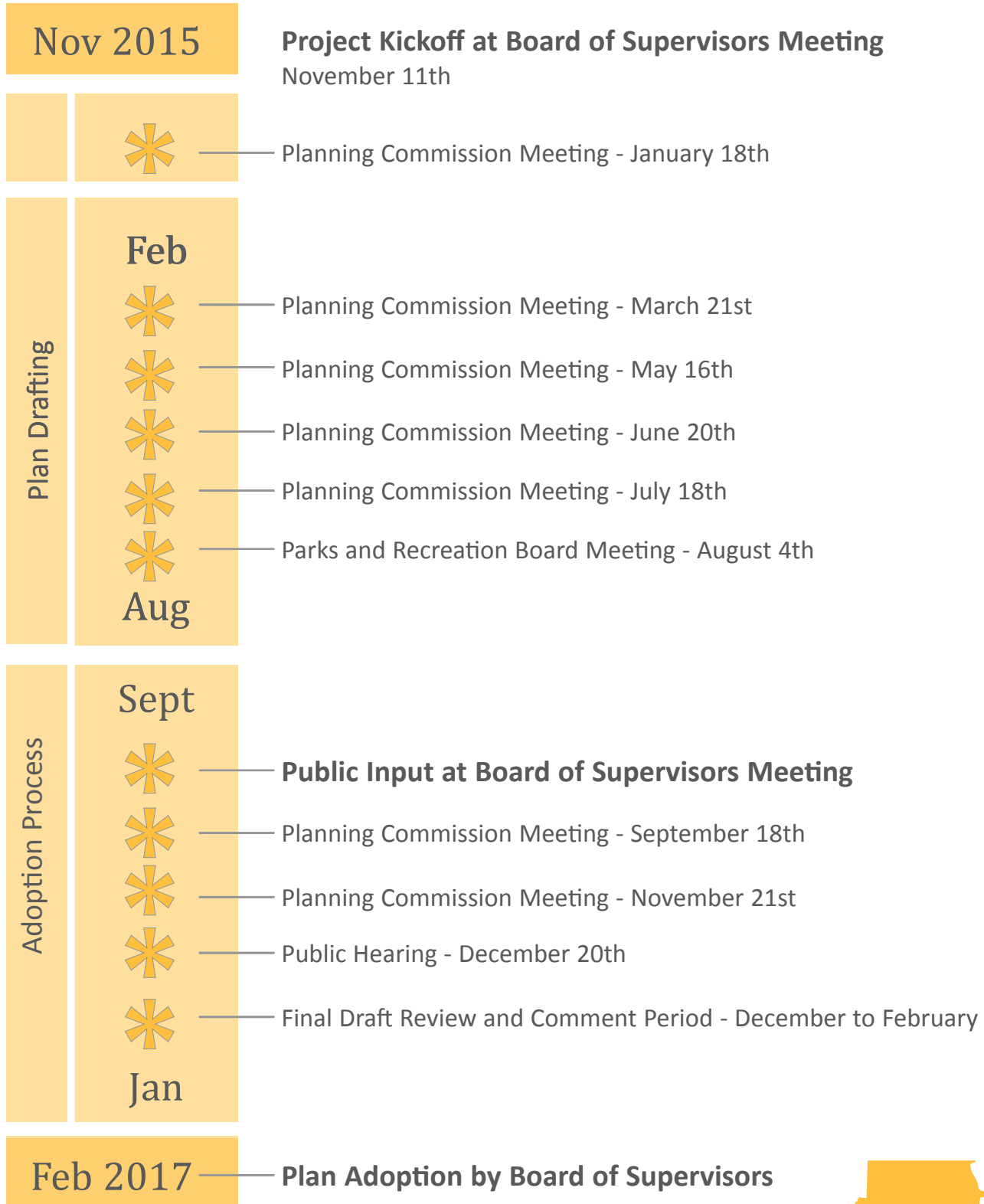
This section describes the specific plans for future actions regarding various components such as land use, housing, transportation, and community facilities.

We will work together to implement this plan to guide our Our Community's future.



# The Planning Process and Context

The preparation of this comprehensive plan began in January 2016. It was guided by Our Community’s Planning Commission whose members represent various sectors and interests in Our Community. The plan development followed the following process and included seven Planning Commission meetings between February and August to draft the plan.







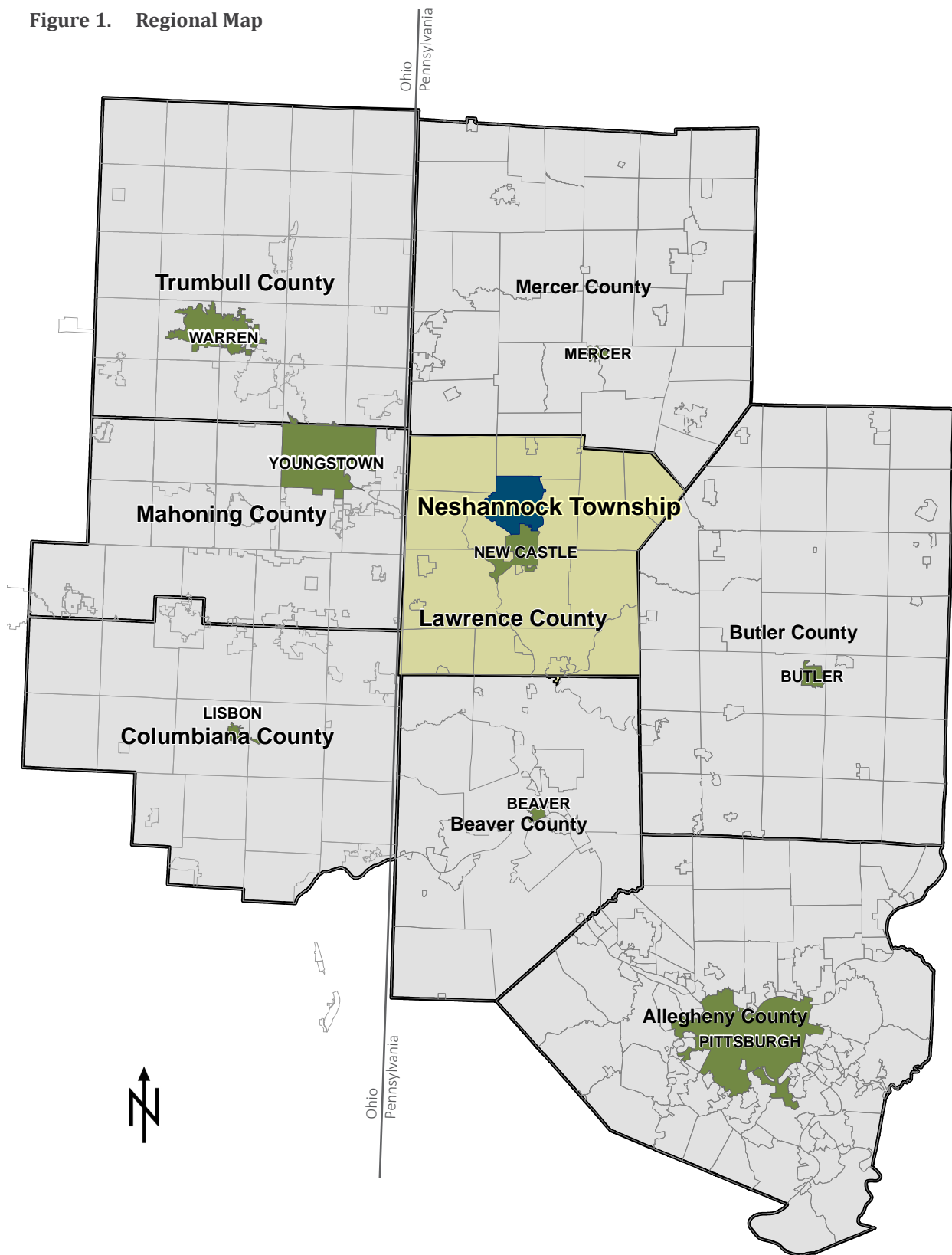
# Our Community Today



**Existing assets are the foundation for the future**

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Figure 1. Regional Map



Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission  
Ohio County GIS



# Our Community Today

In the early 20th Century, Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., renowned designer/planner of several communities in Pennsylvania including the first planned industrial town designed to be sold to its workers, urged municipalities to

*“...Create or acquire statistical databases on the physical, social, economic and financial environment; compile information on relevant legal and administrative matters and draw up accurate topographical maps.”*

A comprehensive plan entails such an inventory and makes recommendations to guide future development. Olmsted also noted that “prevention is cheaper than the cure.”

The background studies reviewed and performed during this planning process analyze the community from a number of different perspectives. These studies describe the natural and man-made conditions, community facilities and socioeconomic trends that affect patterns of development. They help determine which uses are best suited to given areas of the community. In addition to mapping data about natural features such as terrain and existing man-made improvements, these studies also shed light on the possible magnitude, direction, and characteristics of future development pressures.

From these reports, surveys and documents, facts and trends were analyzed to develop the basic assumptions and projections necessary for the development of the comprehensive plan.

## Regional Influences

Located in Lawrence County, Our Community is bordered by Wilmington Township in the north. The border with Hickory Township in the east is formed by Neshannock Creek. New Castle City and Union Township form the southern border along the Shenango River. Mahoning and Pulaski Townships form the western boundary. Lawrence County is along the border of Pennsylvania and Ohio. While Our Community is not on this border, it is near the state border.

Regional transportation corridors influenced development of the Our Community in the past and will continue to do so in the future. The primary connector between major population and economic centers to the north and south is Route 18, which runs north-south through Neshannock and provides access to Routes 422 and 224. Also, I-376 provides easy access to destinations in the Pittsburgh region.

***The area known today as Neshannock Township was called “place of two rivers” by the local Native Americans. Today, Our Community is a place where people live and work in a suburban and rural setting.***

***I-376 permits fast, direct connection from Our Community to the Pittsburgh International Airport, the City of Pittsburgh, and the Pennsylvania Turnpike.***

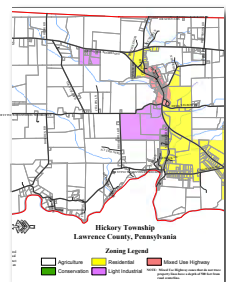
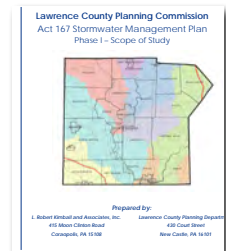
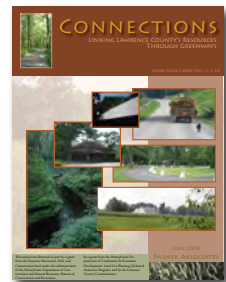


## Related Planning Efforts

In addition to understanding the trends within the community, external forces were also considered as part of this planning process. Land use and planning policy documents for the surrounding communities were evaluated to understand future development patterns in the areas adjacent to Our Community's borders. Regional planning documents were reviewed to understand how current initiatives and future plans could impact development within Our Community. The following reports, studies and documents were utilized in this review and are discussed in more detail later in this plan:

*No community is an island so when planning for Our Community we looked at the plans and studies done by other regional partners to see if, and how, they may inform and influence Our Community's planning effort.*

- 1994 Neshannock Township Comprehensive Plan
- 2010 and 2016 Lawrence County Comprehensive Plan Updates
- Neshannock Township School District Level Plan, 2014-2016
- Union Township Three Year Community Development Plan
- Wilmington Area Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan
- Connections: Linking Lawrence County's Resources Through Greenways
- Lawrence County Act 167 Stormwater Management Plan Phase 1
- Shenango River Watershed Conservation Plan
- Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission's 2035 Long Range Transportation and Development Plan/Project Region
- Mapping the Future: The Southwestern PA Plan
- Northwest Pennsylvania Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, 2014
- Lawrence County Economic Development Strategic Plan
- Hickory Township Zoning Ordinance
- Mahoning Township Zoning Ordinance
- City of New Castle Zoning Ordinance
- Pulaski Township Zoning Ordinance
- Union Township Zoning Ordinance
- Wilmington Township Zoning Ordinance



Regional planning efforts can impact planning and development in Our Community. If these efforts are considered, we may find opportunities for collaboration and cooperation. The following summary of regional planning efforts can be used as a starting point to identify areas where Our Community can build on work that is underway in the region.

## Northwest Pennsylvania Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

The Northwest Pennsylvania Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) was created and updated in 2014 to guide economic growth for the Northwest Pennsylvania Commission, which consists of eight counties: Clarion, Crawford, Erie, Forest, Warren, Lawrence, Mercer, and Venango. None of the specific projects listed are in Neshannock Township but many of the regional initiatives could impact residential and non-residential development in Our Community. Further, the plan identifies concentrations of economic clusters or economic strongholds by county. Lawrence County's economic strongholds include primary metal manufacturing, non-metallic mineral product manufacturing, fabricated metal product manufacturing, electrical equipment and component manufacturing, plastics and rubber products manufacturing, and food manufacturing.

*Our Community is an important part of Lawrence County and the larger region when it comes to opportunities for economic development and job growth; as well as the ability to accommodate continued residential growth. Strong ties to the Northwest Pennsylvania Commission will be important to make sure Our Community contributes to Lawrence County's development attraction efforts.*

Figure 2. Northwest Pennsylvania Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Area Map

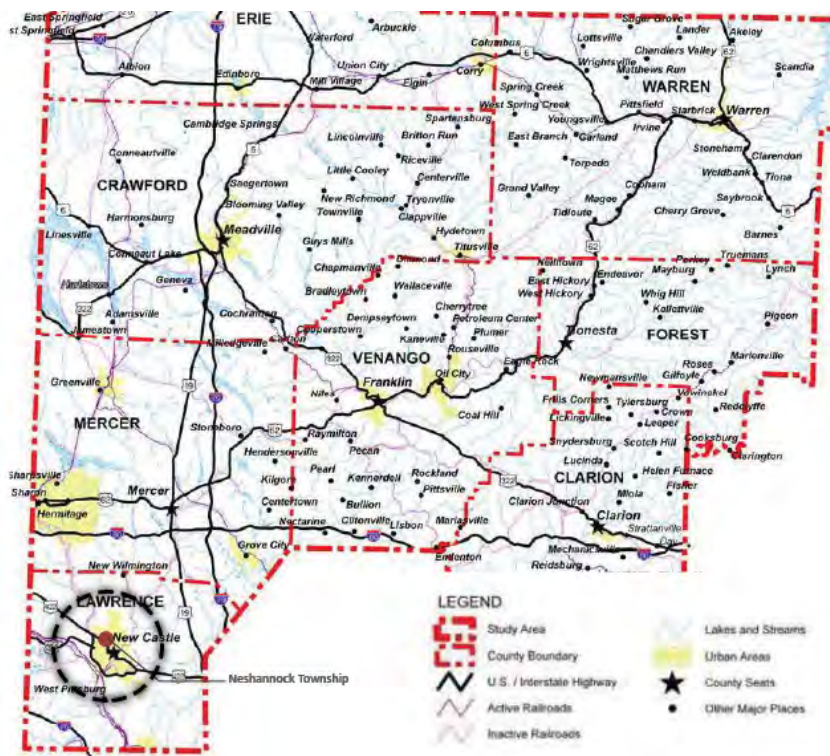
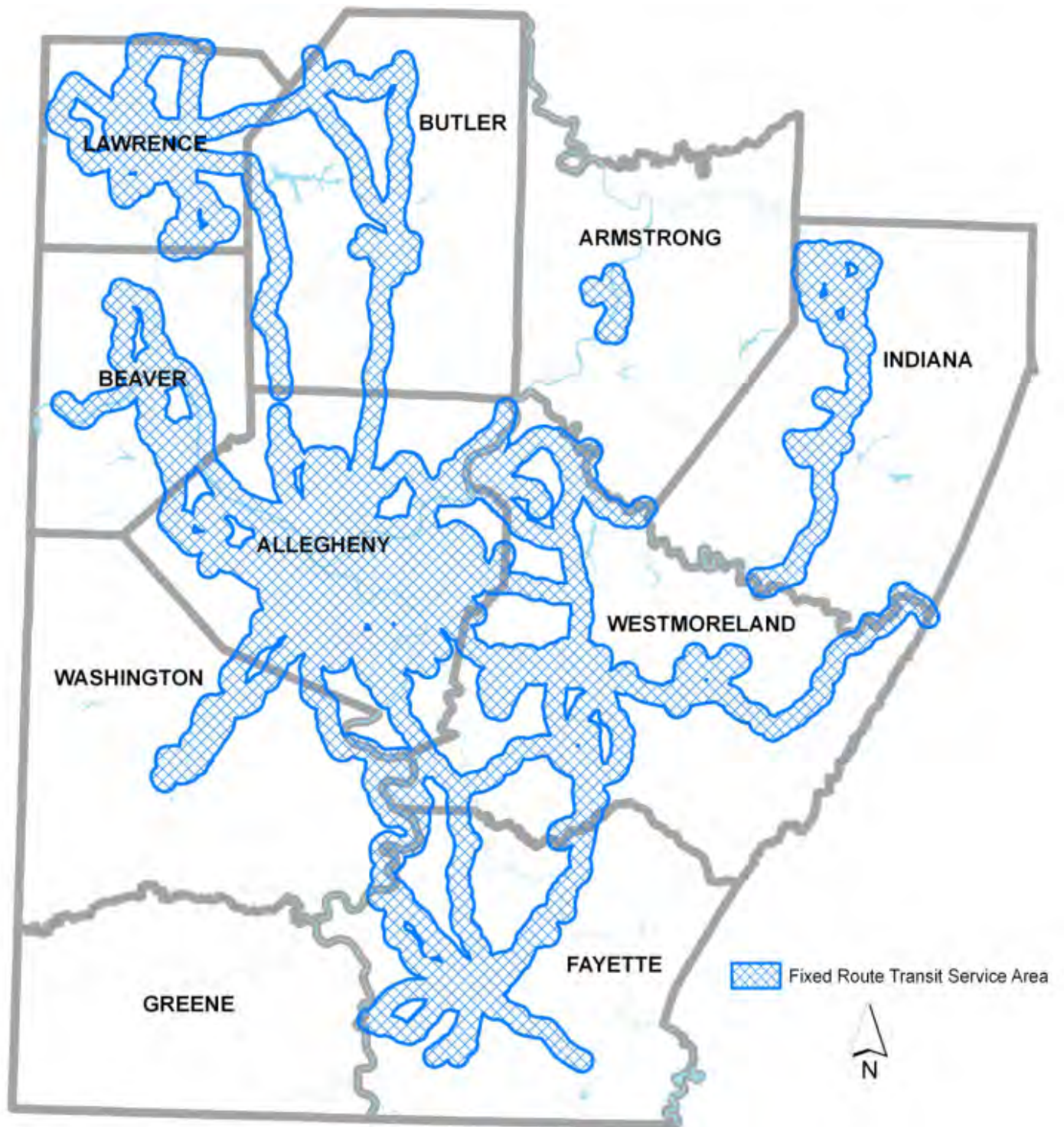


Figure 3. Pennsylvania Southwestern Region with Fixed Route Transit Service



Source: SPC



# Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission's Long Range Transportation Plan

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC) is the federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for ten counties in Southwestern Pennsylvania, including Lawrence County.

SPC developed the 2040 Long Range Plan called Mapping the Future: The Southwestern PA Plan. The plan addresses counties' individual needs, guided by the plan's regional goals and objectives, and provides a list of proposed investments for each county. Some initiatives that may impact Neshannock Township include the following:

- State Route 18 Resurfacing in Lawrence County (Mid-term project 2019-2026). Total project cost estimate: \$3.15 million.
- State Route 422 Reconstruction in Lawrence County (Long-term project 2027-2040). Total project cost estimate: \$2 million.
- Neshannock Creek Trail North Street Bridge Extension Project (Short-term project 2015-2018). Total project cost estimate: \$3.5 million.

These are important infrastructure improvements that will support future growth and development in Our Community.

*As Our Community's MPO, the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission has an important role in prioritizing future upgrades to Our Community's transportation infrastructure, which is why it is important to work closely with SPC to identify and prioritize needed regional road improvements within Our Community and the larger region.*

Figure 4. Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission's Long Range Transportation Plan - Maintenance Projects

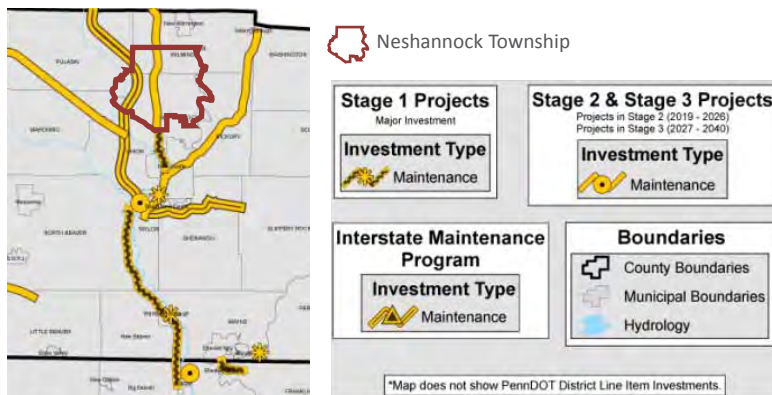


Figure 5. Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission's Long Range Transportation Plan - Multimodal Community and Economic Development Projects

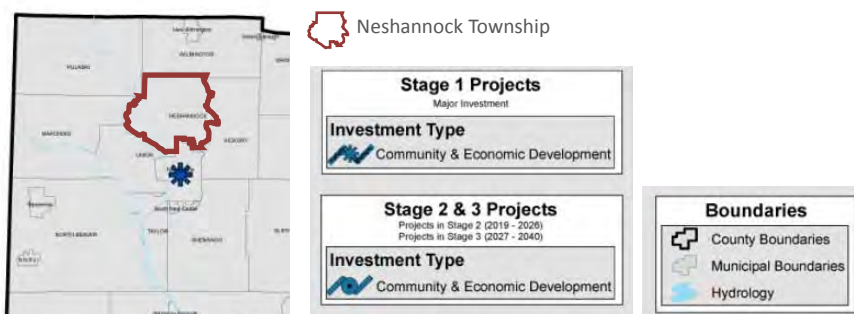
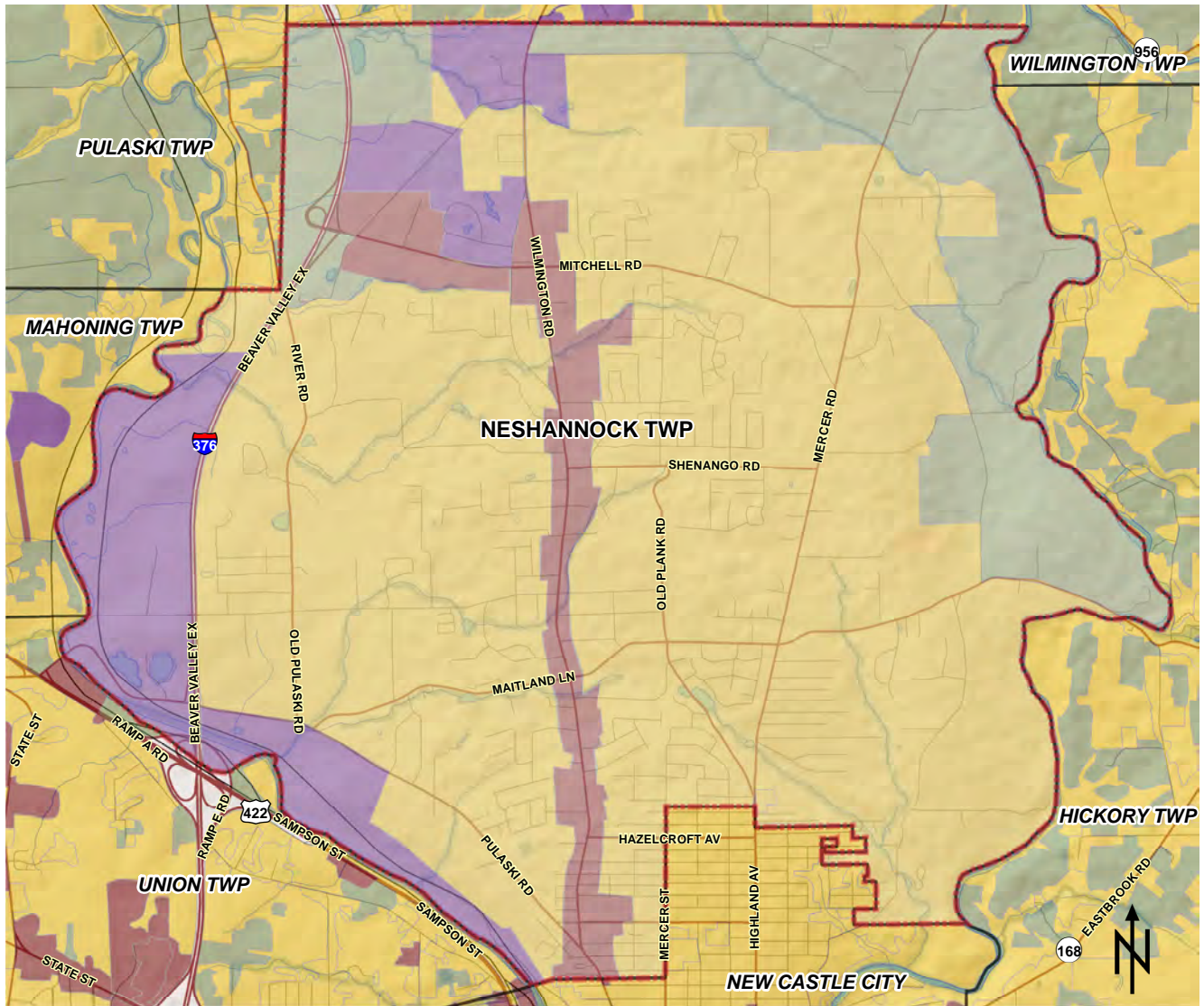








Figure 6. Adjacent Land Use Patterns



**Legend**

-  Neshannock Township Boundary
-  Surrounding Municipality Boundary
-  Major Road
-  Local Road
-  Pond
-  Stream

**Land Use**

-  Commercial
-  Agriculture
-  Industrial
-  Residential

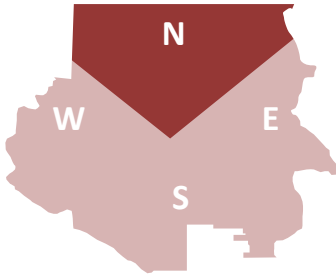
Source: Data provided by Lawrence County



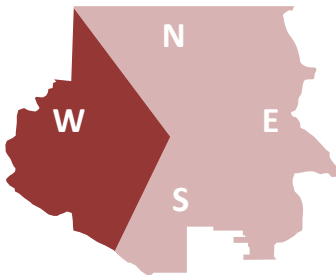


## Surrounding Land Uses

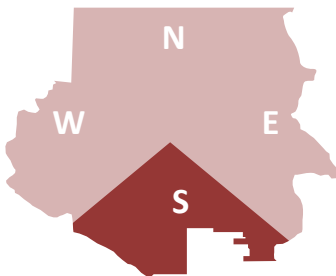
Land use and planning efforts in neighboring communities impact development and planning in Neshannock Township. The Shenango River divides Neshannock and municipalities to the west, while Neshannock Creek divides Neshannock and Hickory Township in the east. These natural boundaries create a floodplain in each community where similar low-intensity land uses provide a buffer between Neshannock and the adjoining municipalities.



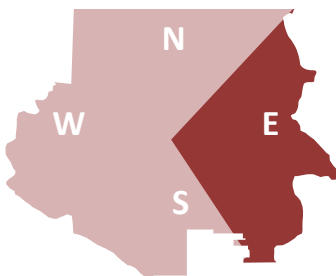
Wilmington Township is immediately north of the Neshannock area and primarily consists of open and agricultural space with single-family land uses. East of Route 18 and immediately north of Neshannock is an industrial land use area that coincides with an industrial land use area in Neshannock Township.



The western border of Neshannock is the Shenango River and the natural border with Pulaski Township, Mahoning Township and Union Township. Pulaski Township land uses adjacent to Neshannock are primarily suburban residential. In Mahoning Township, agricultural land uses dominate with an industrial portion located immediately adjacent to the Shenango River. Union Township is at the southwest corner of Neshannock and is primarily a flood hazard area along its border with Neshannock.



South of Neshannock, the City of New Castle has a dense urban residential pattern and a commercial business district centered on Route 18. A natural progression of the land use pattern of New Castle has spread into Neshannock and the municipal boundary is not readily distinguishable.

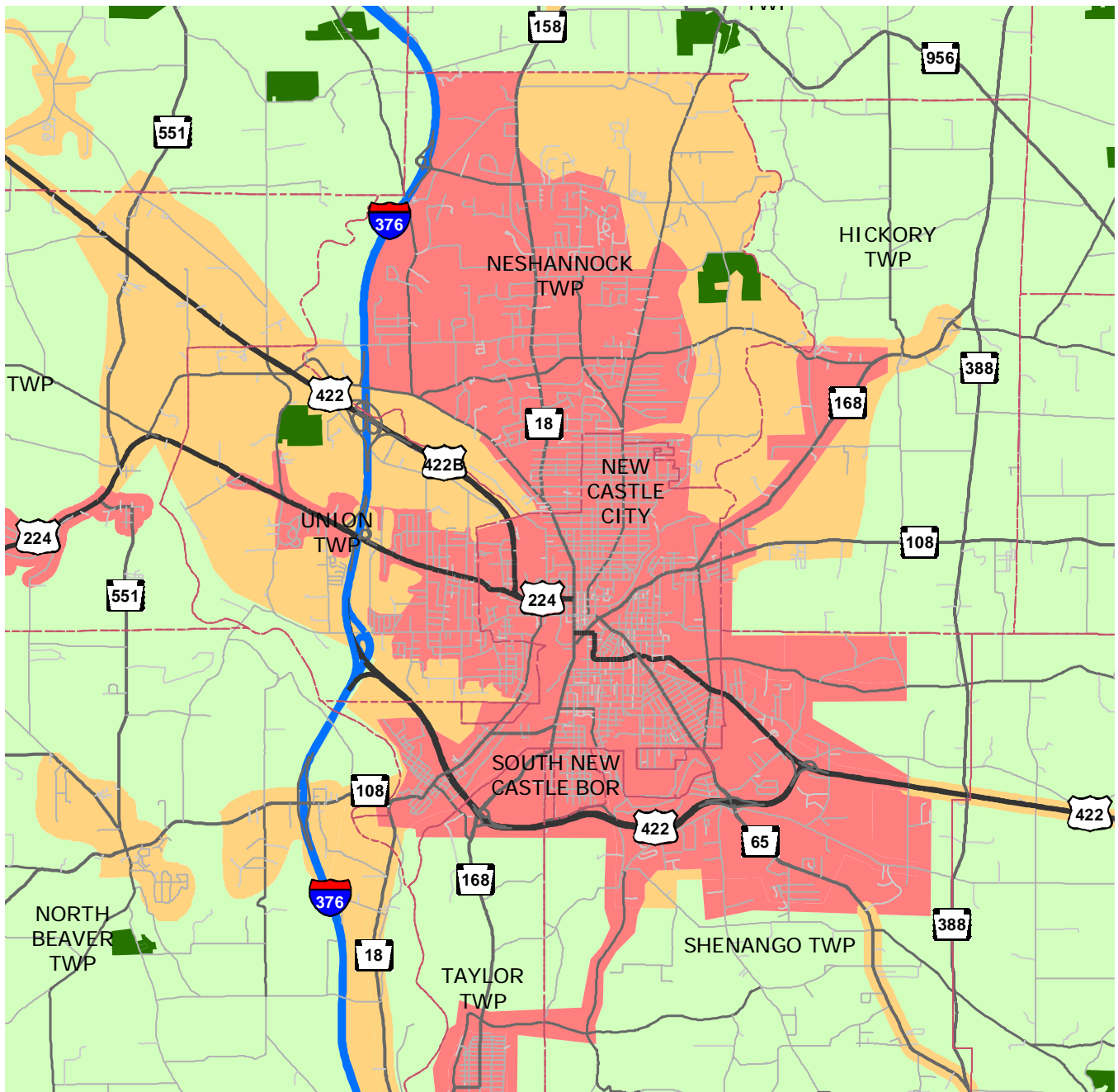


The Neshannock Creek forms the eastern boundary of Neshannock. Along the eastern border, Hickory Township is primarily rural residential; where Maitland Lane enters Hickory Township, industrial and conservation land uses dominate.

***The land use patterns in Our Community are generally compatible with those of the surrounding adjacent municipalities and with the new future land use plan identified in Lawrence County's comprehensive plan.***



Figure 7. Lawrence County Future Growth Areas



**Legend**

- County Boundary
- Interstate
- US Route
- PA Route
- State Maintained Road
- Locally Maintained Road
- Private Drive
- Preservation Areas
- Designated Growth Areas
- Future Growth Areas
- Rural Resource Areas



**Lawrence County, Pennsylvania**

**Department of Planning & Community Development**

Lawrence County accepts no liability or responsibility for errors, omissions, or positional inaccuracies in the content of this map. Reliance on this map is at the risk of the user. This map is for illustration purposes only and should not be used for surveying, engineering, or site-specific analysis.



## Lawrence County Comprehensive Plan

Lawrence County completed a comprehensive plan update called Linking Land Use with Economic Development in 2010. The county is currently undertaking a full update to the overall county comprehensive plan. The timeline of this effort is concurrent with Our Community's comprehensive planning effort. Steps were taken throughout the planning process to share progress and ensure consistency and collaboration. The 2010 county comprehensive plan update included the identification of fifteen sites for potential development/redevelopment. One of the sites is the Glen Road Area in Neshannock Township. This site consists of several different parcels that are zoned Industrial Park and Special Commercial. According to the county's 2010 update, the site is classified as a Greenfield as it is located in a rural area that is actively farmed. The Township and property owners are interested in revitalization and development of this area. The area is easily accessible from I-376 and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) was unaware of any environmental issues. An obstacle to development is the lack of sewer infrastructure, which is a priority issue for the Township to address.

## Lawrence County Greenways Plan

Lawrence County completed a Greenways Plan to inventory and evaluate natural resources, existing recreational assets and historic sites. The goal of the plan is to promote the importance of preserving special places and resources while supporting economic growth. The plan identifies eight conservation greenways and 15 recreation and transportation greenways throughout the county. For purposes of this planning effort, the initiatives that pertain to Our Community are discussed in more detail in Chapter 4: Implementation. The following recommendations were included in the County Greenways Plan:

- Adopt new land use tools in local ordinances that facilitate greenway development. Examples include conservation overlay districts, stream buffer requirements, steep slope restrictions, and developer incentives.
- Develop multi-municipal greenway plans and/or feasibility studies.
- Complete pilot projects to create momentum for the greenways system including the Neshannock Trail beginning segment and the Shenango/Beaver River Water Trail.

The Neshannock Trail segment extends for a mile, beginning at Croton Avenue to Dilworth Avenue in New Castle. Following completion of the trail in October 2015, further discussion considered expanding the trail for more than its one-mile run. The opportunity to extend trail planning and development in Neshannock Township could start with this trail. Regional trails have proven positive impacts on economic development for trail communities and trails are important amenities for attracting new residents. Expanded discussion of trail opportunities is found in the *Our Community Working Together* section of this report.

***Our Community's Plan was last updated in 1994 and this 2016 update is long overdue. Fortunately, Lawrence County is also updating the County Comprehensive Plan in 2016, which allowed for close coordination between the two important planning efforts. Our Community's future land use plan is integrated with the county future land use plan.***



# Physical Environment and Community Assets




An analysis of the built and natural environment sheds light on the interaction between development and the community's natural features.

A ridge runs from north to south dividing Our Community into two regions that slope towards Neshannock Creek in the east and Shenango River in the west. Communities in Neshannock range from city street living on the edge of New Castle to larger country-style houses with several acres.

## The Built Environment

### Existing Land Use and Housing

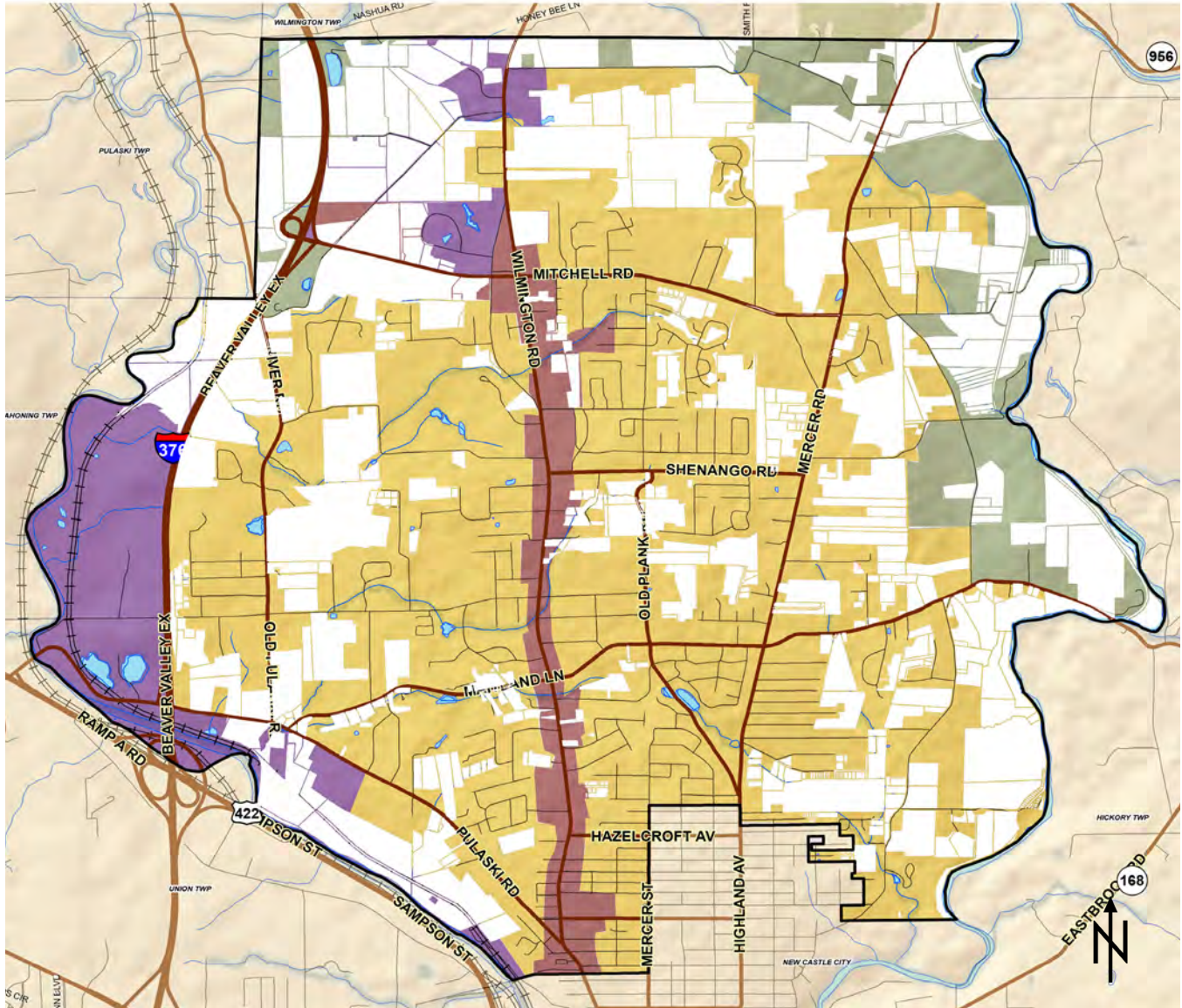
Analysis of existing land use patterns reveals the physical, economic, and political factors that have been functioning to shape the community. This analysis identifies the interrelationship of various residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural activities. They are spatially arranged throughout Our Community to form the fabric of the community.

-  Residential  
The residential land use category consists of single-family and multi-family dwellings. In predominantly rural areas, residential uses are associated with agricultural uses and farmettes.
-  Commercial  
Commercial land use categories include highway commercial and individual sites that are scattered throughout Our Community.
-  Industrial  
Industrial land uses include operations that are focused on producing or manufacturing products, storing or warehousing products, extracting minerals, testing, and other uses that are generally not open to the general public.
-  Agricultural  
This category includes land that is devoted to agricultural uses such as farming.

***Our Community's existing land use pattern influences Our Community's image and future opportunities for growth. Taking stock of trending land use patterns today offers insight into how Our Community's growth is likely to continue. We need to identify what land use strategies are needed to guide future land use decisions in the best interests of Our Community.***



Figure 8. Our Existing Land Use



**Existing Land Use**

- Agricultural
- Industrial
- Commercial
- Residential

<b>Total Neshannock Twp:</b>	<b>Area Acreage</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
<b>Commercial:</b>	11,2013 acres	100%
<b>Agriculture:</b>	679 acres	6.1%
<b>Industrial:</b>	1,751 acres	15.6%
<b>Residential:</b>	1,299 acres	11.6%
	7,474 acres	66.7%

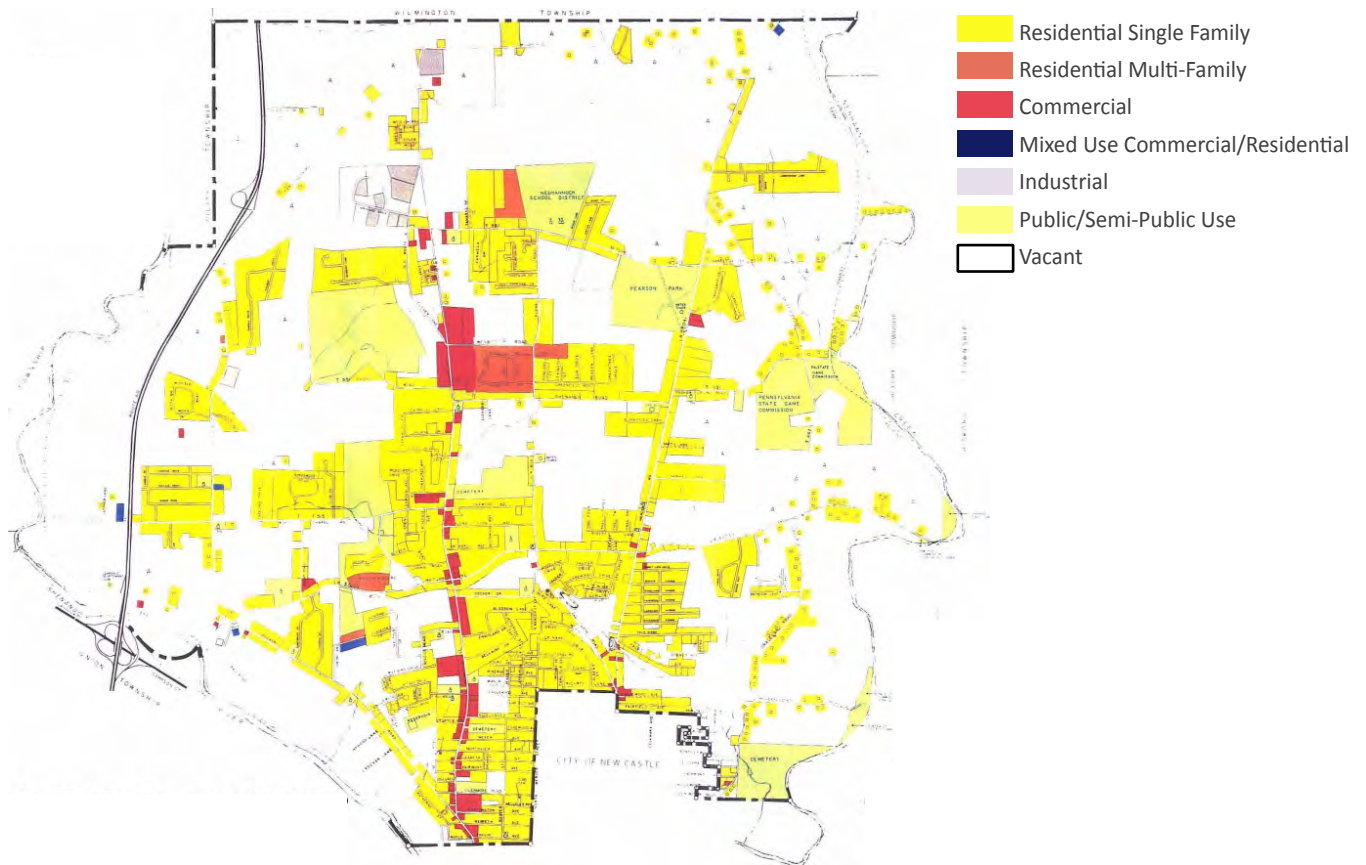


## 1994 Land Use Paves the Way for the Present

From the Neshannock Township, 1991 Comprehensive Plan Update:

A more recent trend is noted in the northern portion of the Township which is, in part, response to the Route 60 exit onto Mitchell Road. It is expected that the northern areas of the Township will develop at a faster pace, with specific attention being paid to light industrial office park development. Future development is expected in the Mitchell Road area due to accessible transportation and expanding utility systems."

Figure 9. 1994 Neshannock Township Land Use Map



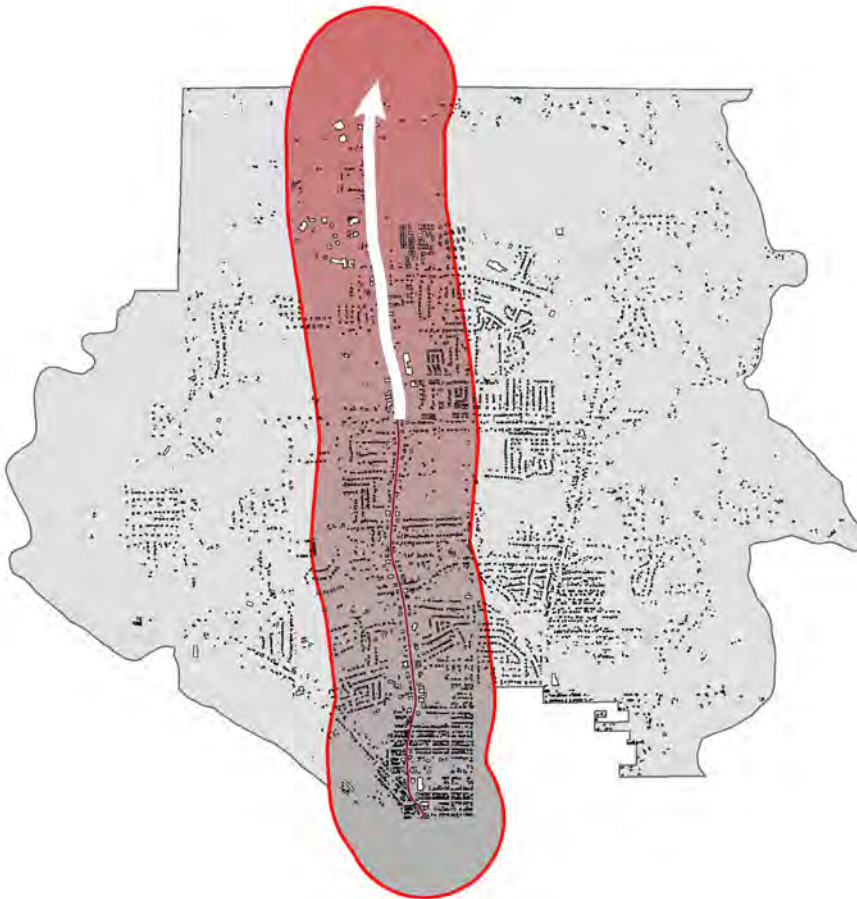
## Land Development Patterns

Growth in Neshannock has historically grown from the border with the City of New Castle and expanded northward along the primary transportation corridor of Route 18, also known as Wilmington Road. Topographic constraints played a part in development, causing population to grow in higher level lands along the ridge top adjacent to Route 18.

Today, development has extended from the concentrations of the south-central core further to the north, east and west throughout Our Community. The I-376 interchange at Mitchell Road has driven development in that northern area of Our Community near the Mitchell Road area due to access to the regional transportation network and expansion of utilities.

The limits of public water and sewer service as well as restrictions for on-lot water and sewer systems have constrained new development and appear to have promoted infill development in some cases.

**Figure 10. Development Patterns Representation**

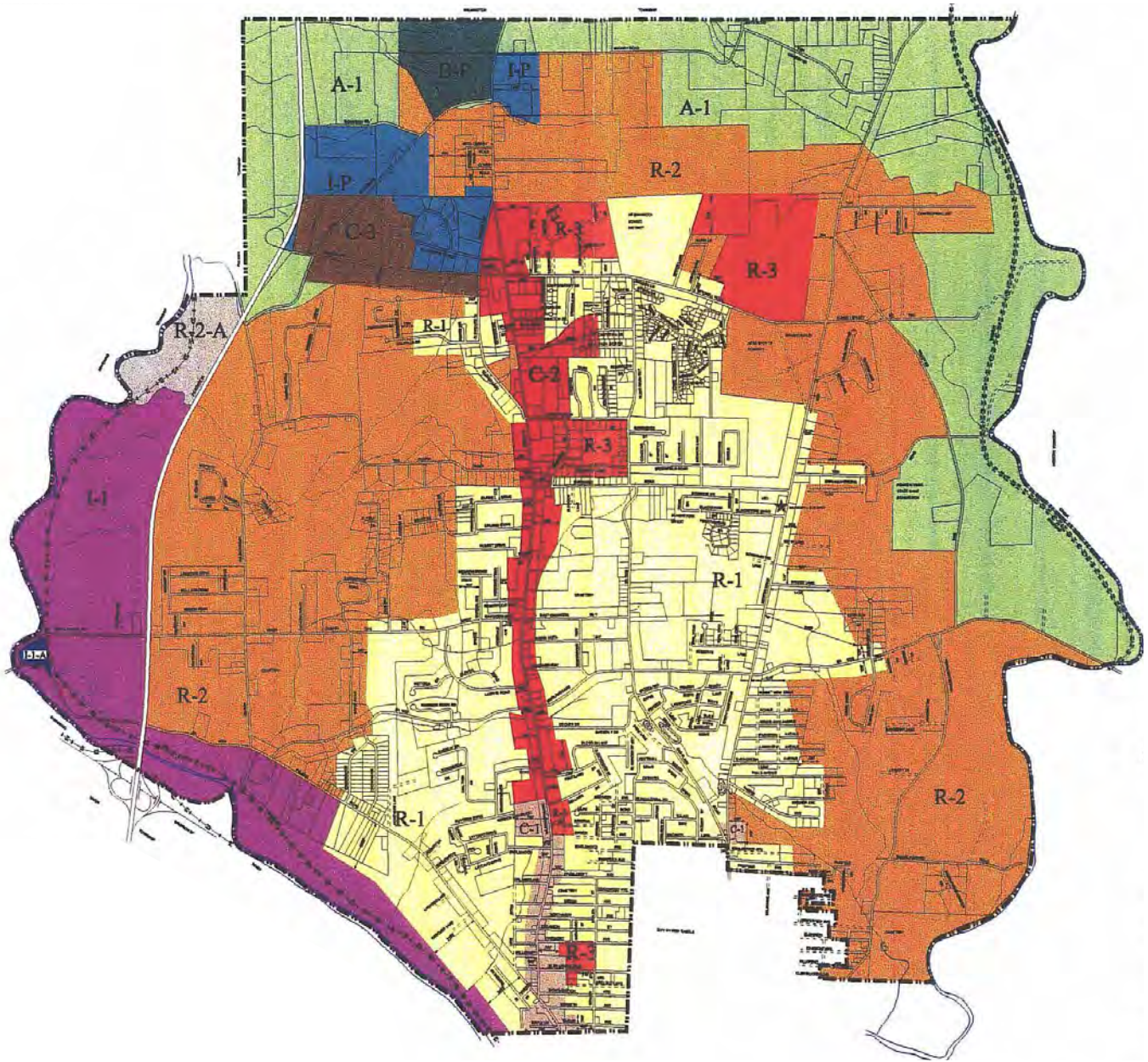


***Availability of public sewer service has and will continue to be a significant influence on whether and where future development occurs in Our Community. There are large areas of developable land that are not currently accessible to the sewer system and significant infrastructure investment would be necessary to make that happen.***













52% of development in Neshannock Township (measured in sq. ft.) is within 1/2 mile of Wilmington Road. Development is continuing to expand north along Wilmington Road.



Figure 11. Existing Zoning Districts



**LEGEND**








	A-1	Agricultural District		C-2	Highway Commercial District
	R-1	Residential Urban District		C-3	Special Commercial District
	R-2	Residential Low-Density District		B-P	Business Park District
	R-2-A	Special Residential Rural District		I-1	General Industrial District
	R-3	Residential High-Density District		I-1-A	Special Industrial District
	C-1	Limited Commercial District		I-P	Industrial Park District





## Current Zoning

Neshannock Township's zoning ordinance regulates and guides land uses within Our Community. Our current ordinance was adopted in 2013. Districts and their purposes are listed below.





-  A-1 Agricultural District: The purpose of this district is to preserve agricultural land and to designate those areas where agricultural activities should be encouraged and only a minimum of other compatible low intensity land uses should be permitted.
-  R-1 Residential Urban District: The purpose of this district is to provide for higher density single-family dwellings in areas that have public water and sewer facilities available; and to authorize compatible public and semi-public uses as conditional uses and special exceptions to complement residential development.
-  R-2 The purpose of this district is to provide for moderate and low density residential development in suburban and rural areas where public sewer and/or water facilities may not be available and to provide for compatible public and semi-public uses as conditional uses and special exceptions.
-  R-2-A Special Residential Rural District: The purpose of this district is to provide for the type of residential development authorized in the R-2 district, as well as providing certain areas suited for mobile home park development and providing for the removal of existing sand and gravel resources in certain areas, while authorizing compatible public and semi-public uses as conditional uses and special exceptions.
-  R-3 Residential High Density District: The purpose of this district is to accommodate multifamily residences in appropriate locations; and to authorize compatible public and semi-public uses as conditional uses and special exceptions.
-  C-1 Limited Commercial District: The purpose of this district is to provide retail shopping and service facilities of a limited type and size appropriate to smaller properties that do not generate large amounts of traffic and do not adversely impact neighboring residential uses.
-  C-2 Highway Commercial District: The purpose of this district is to provide for retail and service facilities that serve the needs of the general community and are located in high-volume traffic corridors to allow convenient access, and to minimize the traffic impact on neighborhoods and local roads.

***Our Community's zoning districts are simple and easy to understand with clear purposes; and the Zoning Map generally follows the existing land use patterns. As Our Community evolves and continues to grow, we may need to think about further simplifying and consolidating the residential districts and how the regulations found in those zoning districts will affect redevelopment and the development that may occur on remaining developable land.***



The RIDC Business Park is a 74-acre business park developed as a means to attract companies to Lawrence County. Running along Green Ridge Road, RIDC has 58 acres remaining for development.

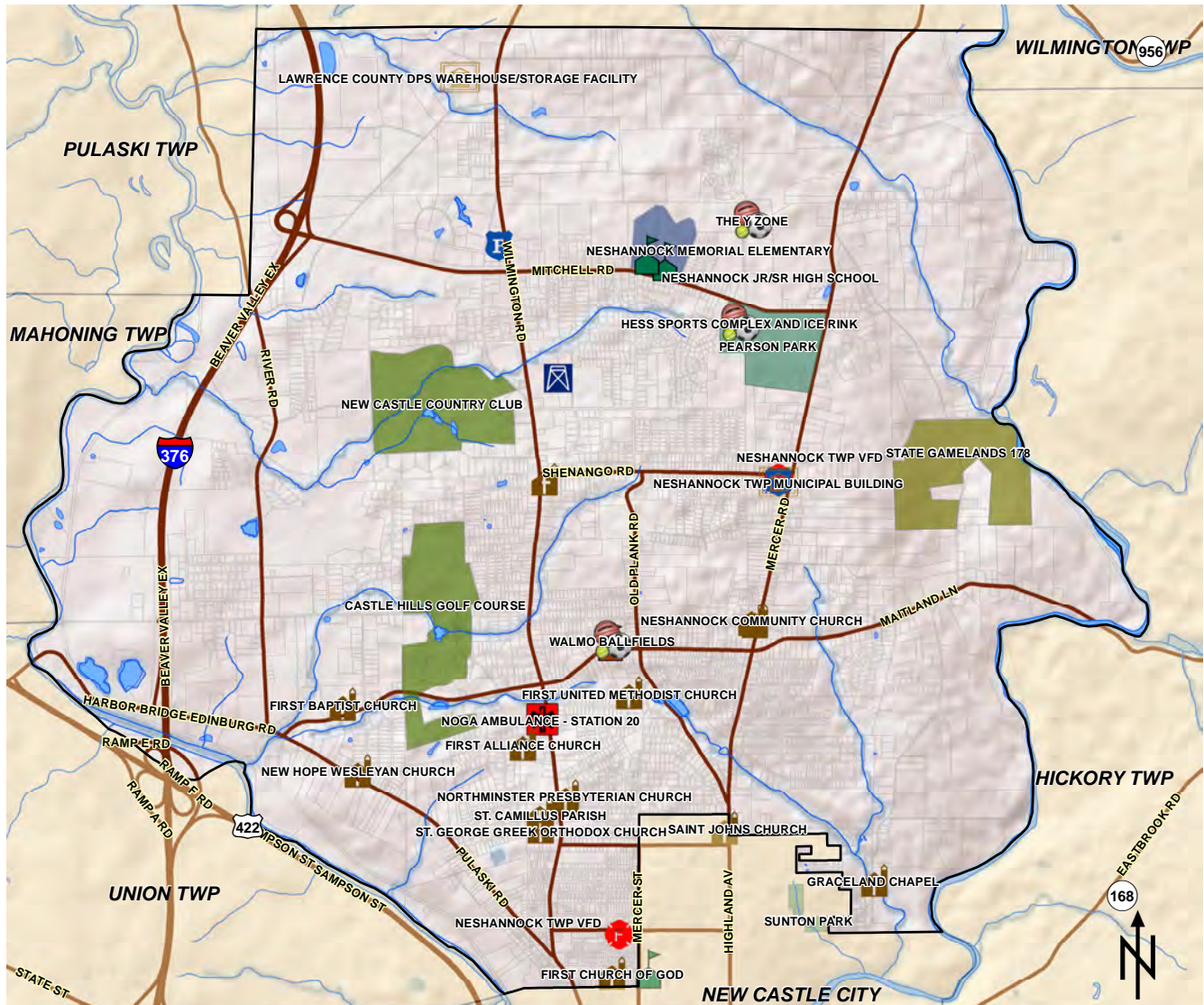


-  C-3 Special Commercial District: The purpose of this district is to provide for retail and service facilities that serve the needs of the transient population in areas located in close proximity to and with direct access to I-376, a limited access arterial road.
-  B-P Business Park District: The purpose of this district is to encourage the development of a planned business park for offices, research and development uses.
-  I-1 General Industrial District: The purpose of this district is to provide for general industrial uses in appropriate locations consistent with sound planning and environmental controls.
-  I-1-A Special Industrial District: The purpose of this district is to provide for general industrial uses and adult businesses in appropriate locations consistent with sound planning and environmental controls in an area in proximity to I-376.
-  I-P Industrial Park District: The purpose of this district is to encourage the development of planned industrial parks to provide for light industrial uses in appropriate locations governed by adequate performance standards.

***Our Community is fortunate to have development opportunities like the available land in the RIDC Business Park and Millennium Business Park and other areas suitable for office and light industrial development. We will make sure the requirements of the applicable zoning districts are clear and appropriate to allow for development consistent with this Comprehensive Plan.***



Figure 12. Our Community Facilities



Legend

- |  |                         |  |                   |  |                                 |
|--|-------------------------|--|-------------------|--|---------------------------------|
|  | Recreational Facilities |  | Church            |  | Park                            |
|  | Municipal Building      |  | EMS               |  | Golf Course                     |
|  | Alternative School      |  | Police Department |  | Gameland                        |
|  | Public School           |  | Fire Department   |  | Neshannock Public School Campus |
|  |                         |  | Cell Tower        |  |                                 |

Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission & Lawrence County



## Our Community Facilities

Community assets provide quality of life for residents while also providing for public health, safety and welfare. Taxes and fees support various community assets as well as the community's transportation and infrastructure systems.

### Municipal Governmental Facilities

The Neshannock municipal building is at the intersection of Mercer Road and Shenango Road in the center of Our Community. It features Township administrative offices.

### Neshannock Volunteer Fire Company

The Neshannock Township Volunteer Fire Company provides fire protection, emergency medical response, and various technical rescue services to Neshannock Township and surrounding communities in Lawrence County, Pennsylvania. Entirely staffed by volunteers, the fire company responds to about 400 incidents each year and receives administrative support from Neshannock Township to assist with reporting, maintenance and fire prevention activities.

### Neshannock Township Police Department

The Neshannock Township Police Department employs seven officers. It responds to emergencies, accidents and mutual aid calls.

### Neshannock Township School District

Neshannock Township School District is the local school district. The school is one building divided into two parts by a set of doors. Neshannock Memorial School serves grades K-6, and Neshannock Junior/Senior High School serves 7th-12th graders. Neshannock Township School District is ranked 92nd out of 500 of the best schools in the state.



***Our Community takes pride in Our Community facilities and the important investments that are made to maintain, improve and expand upon those facilities. As Our Community continues to grow, it will be important to maintain the level of quality facilities and services our residents currently enjoy through continued investment.***

Neshannock High School, home of the Lancers, serves almost 700 students from the area.





## Recreational Facilities

**Pearson Park** is the primary recreational facility in Neshannock Township. Located at the intersection of Mercer and Mitchell Roads in the northeastern portion of Our Community, this 88-acre park provides a swimming pool, tennis courts, ice skating rink, play fields, picnic areas, walking trails, fitness track, volleyball and basketball courts, and playground equipment. Park activities are developed by a full time park director and a five-member park commission. Additional play fields are available at the Neshannock School District property along Mitchell Road.



**The Walmo School and property owned by the Township** also provides play fields and playground equipment in a centrally located area along Maitland Lane. The **Preston-Chambers Y-Zone** is a premier Lawrence County recreational facility that provides an array of recreational activities, including a senior citizen program, Silver Sneakers. Other recreational opportunities in Our Community include **Castle Hills Golf Course**, the **New Castle Country Club**, the **Lawrence County Sportsmen Club**, the **Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission access areas** along Neshannock Creek, and the **Pennsylvania State Game Lands**.

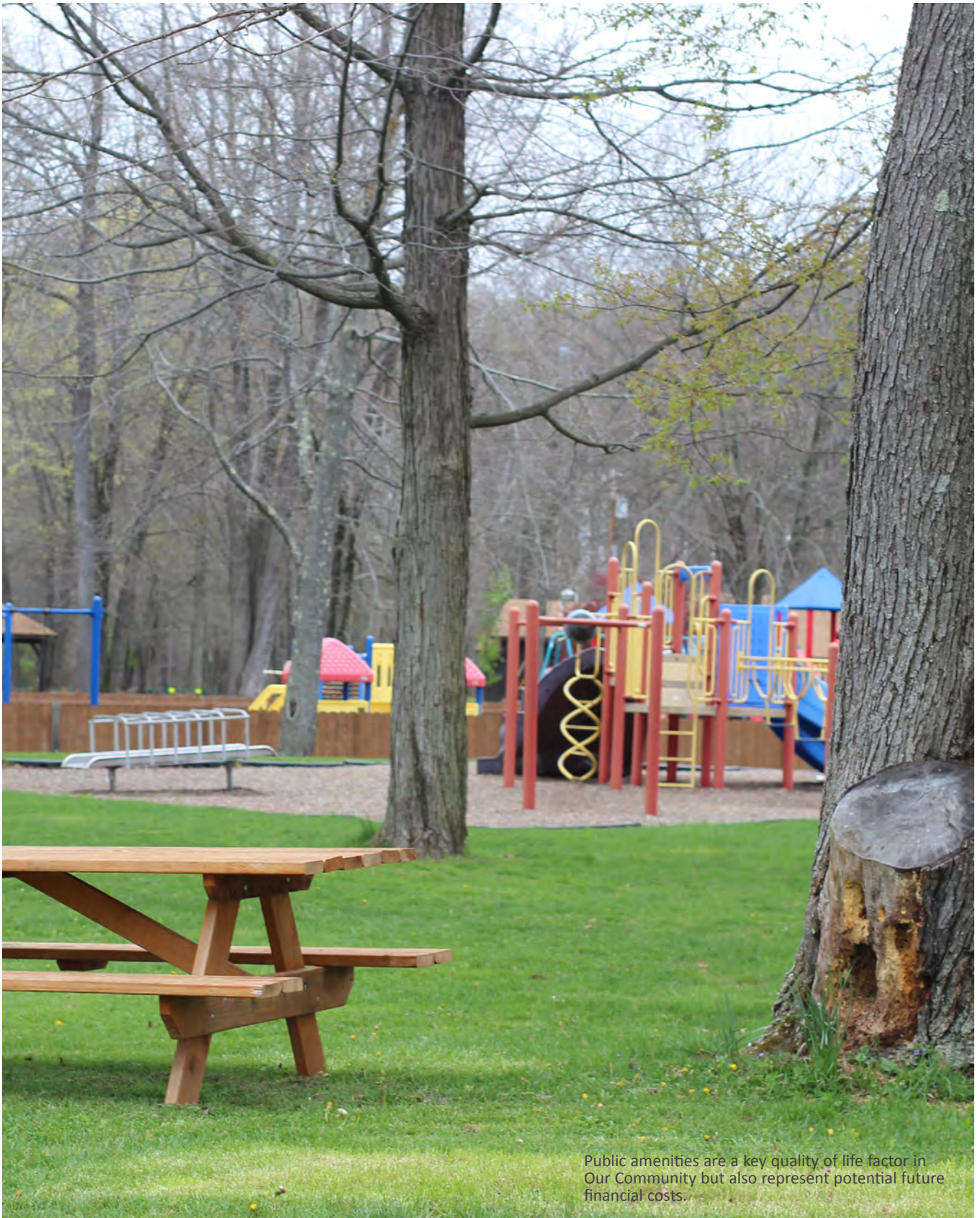


There are several important nearby recreational facilities that also serve Our Community. **McConnells Mills State Park** and **Moraine State Park** provide hiking, picnicking, and fishing areas. In addition, Moraine State Park provides boating, swimming, and group camping activities.



Pictured On This Page: Pearson Park entrance signage; Neighborhood play field; Preston-Chambers Y-Zone; PA bicycle route V signage; New Castle Country Club.





Public amenities are a key quality of life factor in Our Community but also represent potential future financial costs.



***The ease of access to Our Community is an asset that attracts new residents and businesses. I-376 and Route 422 provide excellent regional transportation connections. There are lots of ways to get in and around Our Community, which facilitates the efficient movement of people and goods. Route 18 is the "spine" of our road network, providing north/south access and critical support as our main commercial thoroughfare. Continued ease of traffic flow, as well as safe and easy access to local businesses along the corridor, are critical to future business retention and growth.***

## Our Transportation System

Our Community's transportation and circulation system has impacts on municipal budgets for road maintenance, development potential based on road capacity, economic development for businesses who need to access regional highways, retail customers or other businesses, and quality of life for residents who need to access employment centers, retail goods, services and recreation areas.

### Regional Roadway Transportation

I-79, a north-south highway, cuts through the northeastern tip of Lawrence County and provides direct access to Erie in the north and Pittsburgh in the south. It continues northward to connect to I-80 and southward to connect to the Ohio Turnpike, both of which are east-west highways and provide access to western industry markets of Youngstown, Cleveland and Columbus in Ohio and eastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York. Route 422 provides east-west circulation in this region and connects to I-79. I-376 is about one mile from the corner of Wilmington Road and Mitchell Road. Mitchell Road has a leg that goes from Wilmington Road and merges into I-376. I-376 then leads to I-80, I-76 and other major Western Pennsylvania roads. Mitchell Road provides the only interchange access to I-376 within Neshannock.

### Local Roadway Transportation

Neshannock's main roadway is Route 18, which runs through downtown New Castle and the center of Neshannock in a north-south orientation. It is known as simply 18 or Wilmington Road. Route 18 provides an interchange with I-80 to the north and the Pennsylvania Turnpike to the south. It is an easily accessible arterial and an important part of Neshannock's transportation system. Maitland Lane and the southern portion of Pulaski Road are also major arterials. Mercer Road and Mitchell Road are minor arterials.

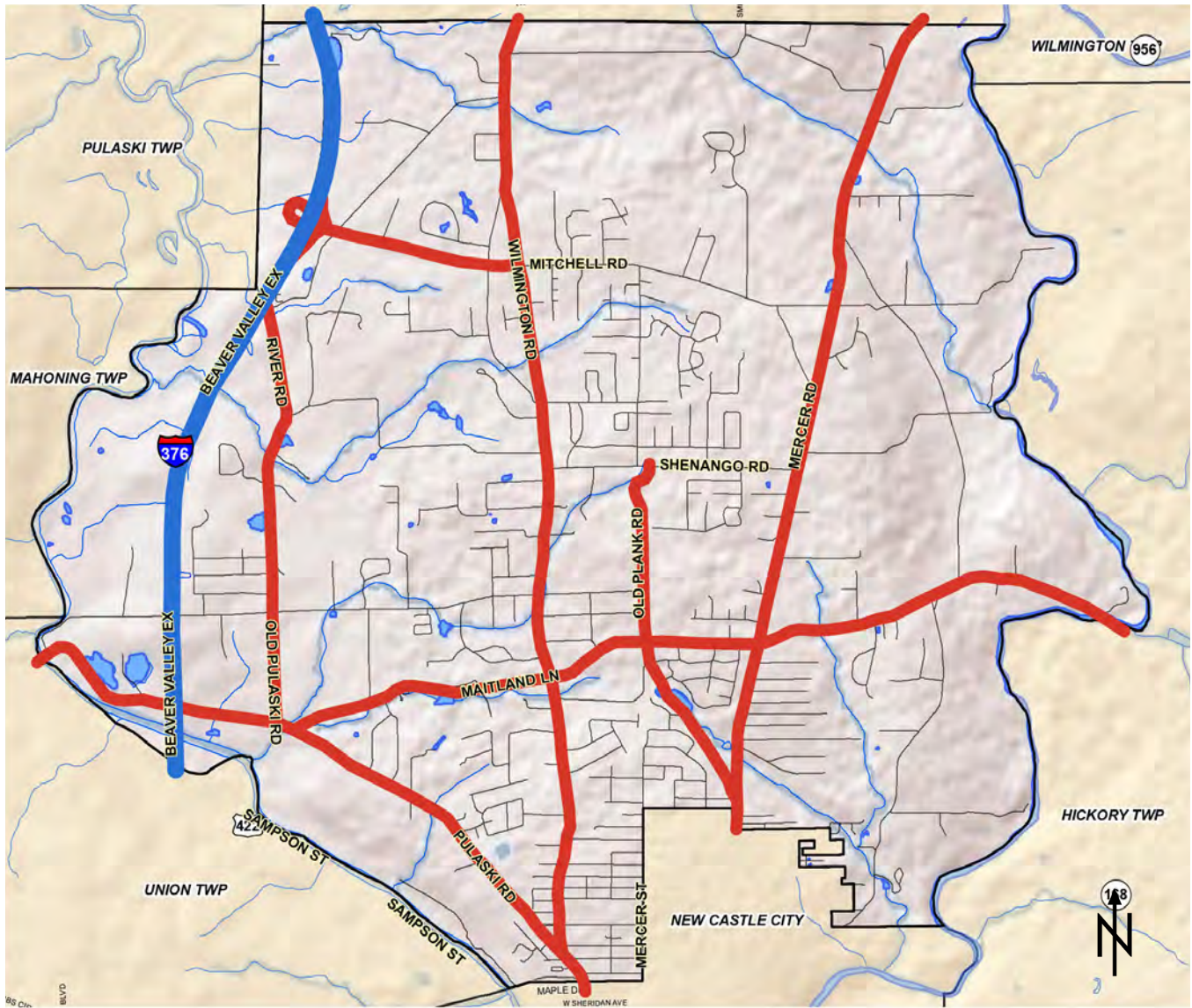
Internal circulation is accomplished by way of the major collectors of Kinds Chapel Road, the northern portion of Pulaski Road, Old Plank Road, Plank Road Extension, and Shenango Road. Minor collectors include Chapin Road, Glen Road, Nesbitt Road, Graceland Road and Valley Drive. These roads provide the collector system that links the local roads to the regional transportation system.

According to PennDOT, Our Community is home to over 90 miles of roadways. The state highway system encompasses 25 miles (indicated in red and blue on the Our Roadway Transportation System map); the Township road system encompasses over 65 miles of roads. This calculation is based on the total length of each roadway and does not account for traffic lanes. Generally, the Township-owned roads are smaller local roads and the state roads are the larger and more major thoroughfares.





Figure 13. Roadway Transportation System

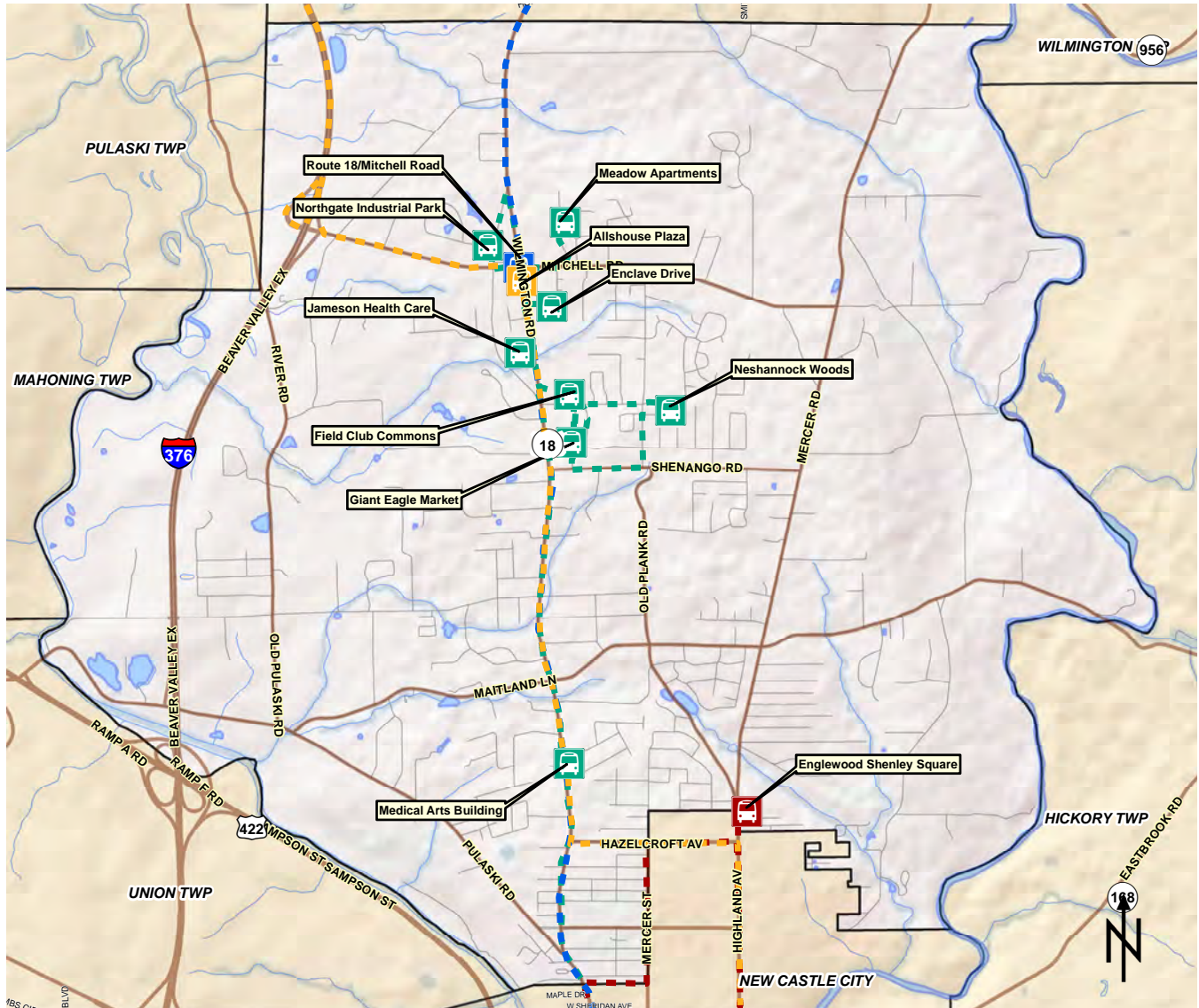


**Legend**






- Township Roads
- State Roads
- I-376



Figure 14. Mass Transit System



**New Castle Transit Route Stops**

-  Transit Route Stops
-  Route 11 - Jefferson St.
-  Route 2 - North City/Neshannock Twp
-  Route 75 - New Wilmington/Volant
-  Route 82 - Hermitage/Kennedy



## Public Transportation

Neshannock's public transportation is served by the New Castle Transit Authority (NCTA). The service makes several stops in Neshannock and goes as far as downtown Pittsburgh. The NCTA strives to provide the residents of New Castle, Shenango Township, Union Township, Neshannock Township and Lawrence County with safe, dependable and affordable public transportation. NCTA has multiple "park n' ride" locations around Southwestern Pennsylvania with two locations serving the immediate Lawrence County area. The service also provides bicycle racks, and bicycle storage at no cost to the user. Neshannock Township is served by three major bus routes: route 91, route 3, and route 7. Surrounding routes in the New Castle area comprise of: route 1, route 91, route 3, route 2, route 75, and route 81.

## Air Transportation

The closest airport to Neshannock is New Castle Municipal Airport in nearby Union Township. The closest airport with commercial service is Youngstown-Warren Regional Airport in Ohio. Most residents use Pittsburgh International Airport, about 40 minutes away, because of the wider variety of national and international destinations.

## Bicycle Transportation

Another form of transportation is the Bicycle PA Route V, a 355-mile trail that traverses Lawrence, Mercer, Venango, Union, and several other counties. The trail runs through Neshannock Township in Western Pennsylvania offering unique transportation, and recreation opportunities. A Neshannock bicycle network would benefit from the established state-wide route.

***Bicycle PA routes are statewide bike routes designed by experienced bicyclists.***

***Biking saves you money on gas, wear and tear on your car and parking fees. It can be as fast or faster than driving: Bicyclists save time avoiding congested car traffic and time wasted looking for a parking spot.***



***Our Community benefits from many natural features that add to the attractive rural character of Our Community. The continued protection and enhancement of the Township park lands, state gamelands, and environmentally-sensitive areas will ensure that these features will continue to be an important part of Our Community's fabric as it continues to grow.***

## Development Constraints

Development can be constrained by factors such as roadway access, availability of public water and sewer services, and zoning. Developable area does not include existing (non-vacant, non-abandoned) developed land, public open space, roads or environmentally sensitive areas that constrain development. The following discussion identifies a variety of development constraints and assets that represent undevelopable area. This information helps to inform decisions and thinking about future development potential and land use.

### Environmental Assets and Sensitive Areas

Recognition of environmentally sensitive areas is necessary for understanding development potential in a community.

#### Slopes

Slope is the rise and fall of land surfaces and is commonly expressed as a percentage with lower percentages being flatter and higher percentages being steeper.

Development on steep slopes is generally expensive and can be hazardous for the developer and the community. Land slide potential increases with development. Land with 0% to 8% slope is essentially level land, and construction of any type of structure has minimal restrictions. Land with 8% to 25% slope can be developed but it becomes more difficult. Slopes over 25% are not considered developable for most planning purposes although single-family development on large parcels could be considered when the slope is less than 40%.

#### Floodplains

A floodplain is an area adjacent to a stream or river that experiences periods of flooding during heavy rain or snow melt. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) designates flood hazard zones. Development within floodplains should be discouraged. Open space and low-intensity recreation uses are appropriate in these areas.

#### Wetlands and Surface Water

Wetland areas include saturated soils like swamps, marshes, bogs and similar areas. Surface water includes rivers, streams, creeks, lakes and ponds. Development in and around these natural features is reviewed and permitted at the state and national level.

#### Watersheds

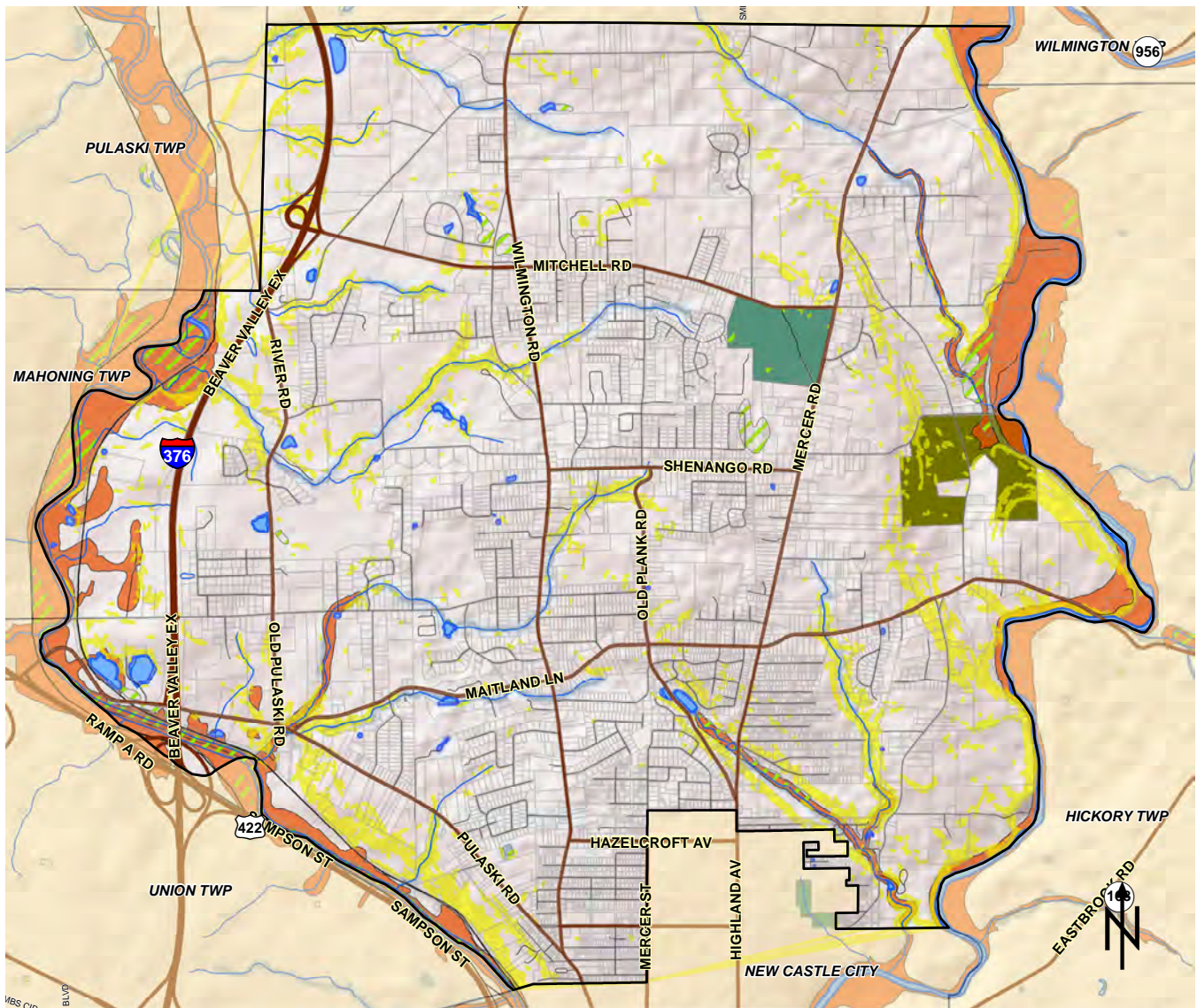
A central ridge running north to south divides Neshannock into two major watersheds: Shenango River and Neshannock Creek. These waterways ultimately lead to the Ohio River.

#### Recreation and Conservation Areas









Our Community is home to a large tract of PA State Gameland and a large Township Park, Pearson Park. Although these are open spaces, they are important to community character and will be preserved.



Figure 15. Environmental Constraints



**Legend**

-  Stream
-  Pond
-  Wetland
-  Severe Slope Greater Than 22%
-  100-Year Flood
-  Park
-  Gamelands
-  Vacant Land

Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission



***Soil is a vital part of the natural environment. It is just as important as plants, animals, rocks, landforms, lochs and rivers.***

### Soils

Soil characteristics have a direct impact on development patterns. This is especially true in areas that rely on on-lot wastewater disposal systems, as is the case in some areas of Neshannock Township. The primary goal of soils evaluation, in this case, is to show where on-lot septic systems are suitable or detrimental to the local community due to an inability of a soil to handle effluent from septic systems.

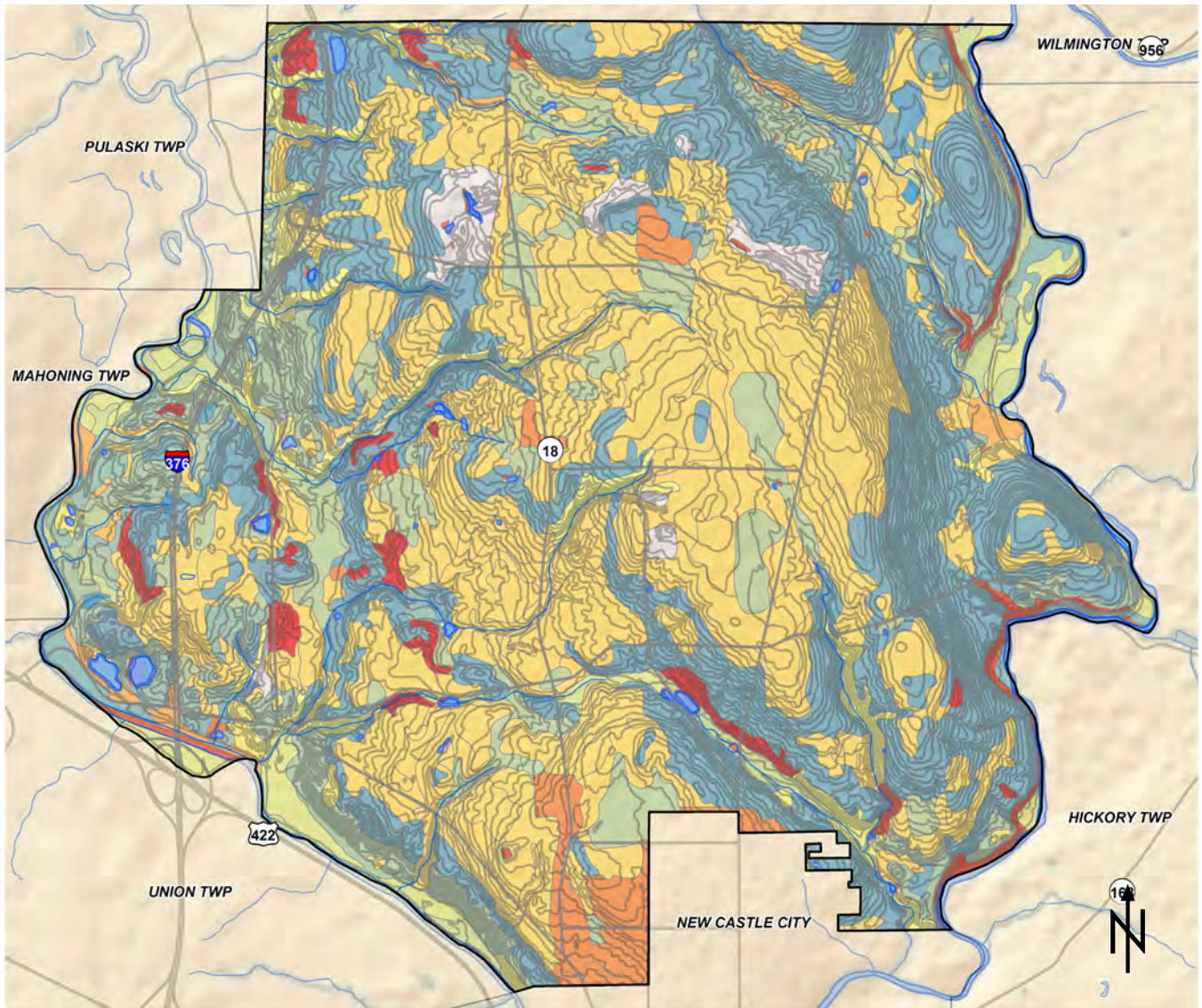
According to the USDA Soil Survey for Neshannock Township, the soils in Our Community are not well suited for standard septic systems. Ideally, suitable soils are typically Sands, Loamy Sands, Sandy Loams, and Loams. However, since the majority of soils in Our Community is Silty Loam, they are generally not ideal for on-lot sewage systems and most are within the 'severe' soils classification for septic systems. The severe classification is defined as having properties that are so unfavorable that major soil reclamation, special design or intense maintenance is required for correction. Alternative on-lot systems can be used in areas that do not have public sewer service.



Tree-lined streetscapes are a prominent feature in the less-densely populated areas of the Township.



Figure 16. Soil Conditions

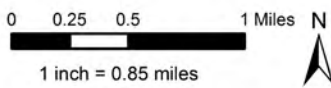


**Legend**

- Neshannock Township Boundary
- Stream
- Pond
- Major Road
- 10 Ft Contour

**Soil Classification**

- |                        |                                |                              |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Braceville loam        | Holly silt loam                | Urban land-Arents complex    |
| Canadice silt loam     | Lobdell silt loam              | Urban land-Canfield complex  |
| Canfield silt loam     | Loudonville gravelly silt loam | Urban land-Conotton complex  |
| Chagrin silt loam      | Pits                           | Water                        |
| Chili silt loam        | Ravenna silt loam              | Weikert-Rock outcrop complex |
| Conotton gravelly loam | Rexford silt loam              | Wooster gravelly silt loam   |
| Frenchtown silt loam   | Sloan silt loam                |                              |



Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission and Lawrence County



***Our Community successfully manages a growing wastewater collection system. Investment in the growth and expansion of this system can help support future growth and development. The return on past investments should be realized in the form of economic development that increases and diversifies Our Community's tax base.***

#### Public Water Service

Pennsylvania American Water provides public water service to New Castle City, New Castle Borough, and Neshannock, Shenango, Taylor, Hickory and Union Townships. The source of water is one surface water intake located on the Shenango River in Neshannock Township.

In the spring of 2015, Pennsylvania American Water began construction to replace small-diameter mains with larger-diameter mains that will improve reliability and flows for fire fighting along Meadowbrook Drive and Mission Meade Road in Neshannock Township.

#### Public Sewer Service

The Neshannock Township Sanitation Department handles sewer service in Our Community. The sewer collection system has a number of drainage systems that use gravity or lift pump stations. Sewage is delivered to the New Castle Wastewater Treatment Plant. Sewer service ranges from north to south, beginning at McGary Road to West Sheridan Avenue and east to west, from Blews Way to Leasure Avenue. The sewer service area covers 3,678 acres, only 33% of the Township.

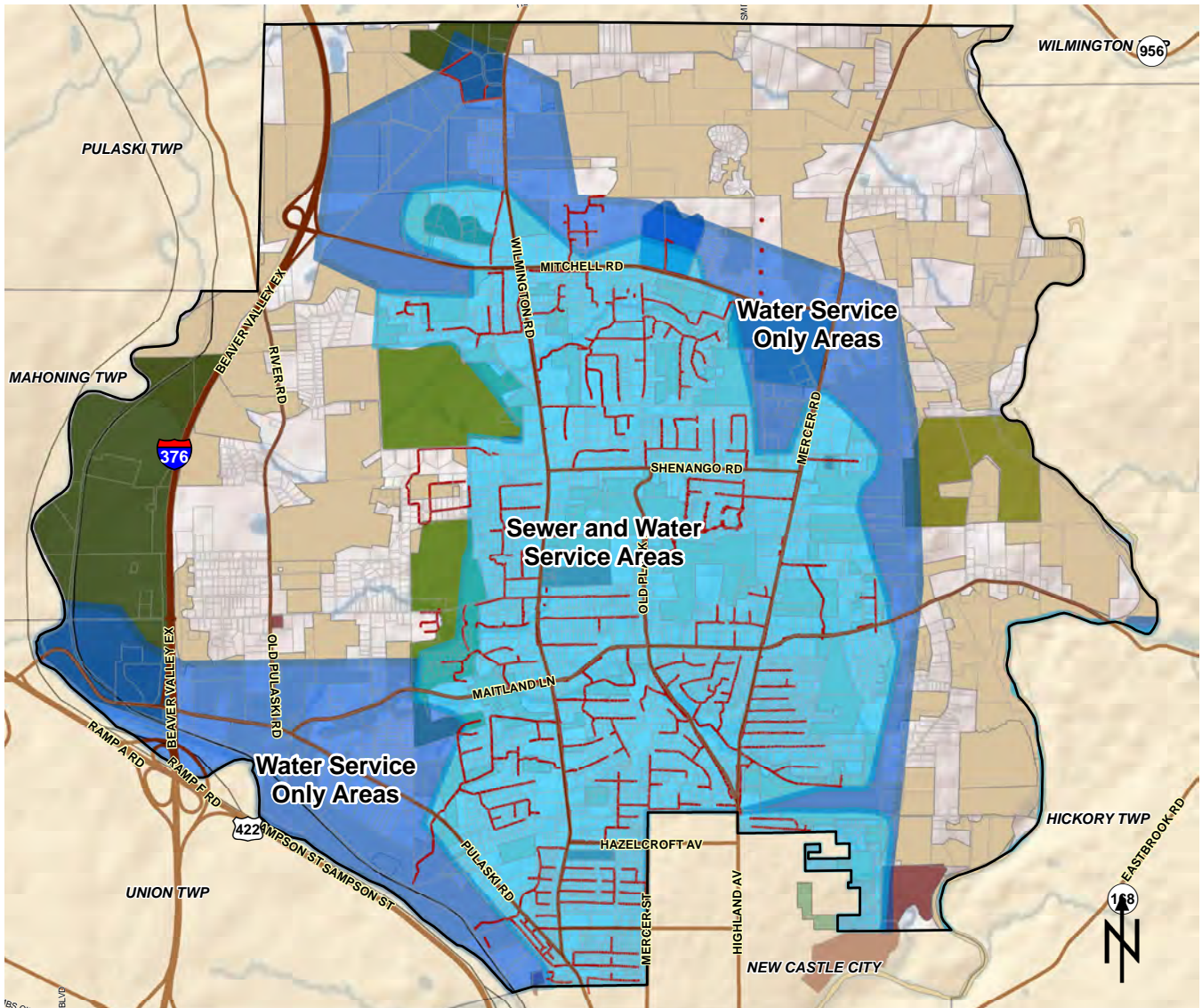


Our Community's natural setting contributes to quality of life and character.





Figure 17. Operational Constraints



**Legend**

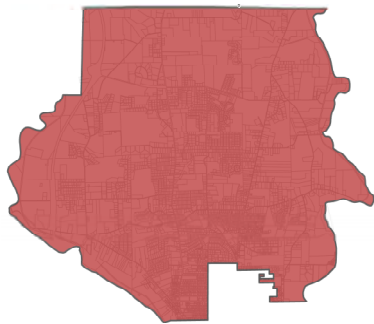
- Major Road
- Sewer Lines
- Sewer Service Areas
- Water Service Only Areas
- Vacant Developable Land
- Industrial Park
- Golf Course
- Gameland
- Cemetery
- Park
- Neshannock Public Schools Campus

The map above identifies the areas of Our Community that have sewer and water services provided. The lighter blue areas display areas of Our Community that have both sewer and water services; however, the dark blue areas are parts of Our Community that only have water service. The availability of these services is compared to important focal points of the community such as the golf course, park, and school campus, which are indicated on the legend.

Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission



**Land is Our  
Community's most  
important resource.  
And it is finite.**



## Developable Area

Developable area refers to the total area of land available for development. It does not include existing (non-vacant, non-abandoned) developed land, public open space, roads or environmentally sensitive areas that constrain development. Developable area can also be constrained by factors such as roadway access, availability of public water and sewer services, and zoning.

Determining a community's developable areas is based on a series of steps and calculations based on various constraints. The following describes the steps used in determining Our Community's developable areas.

### Overall Township

Our Community has a total land area of 11,203 acres. This includes wetlands, waterways, and road networks within the Neshannock Township boundary. However, not all areas of Our Community are available for development. There are several factors that contribute to the vacant developable land considered for future projects in Our Community. Consideration is given to slope percentage, impact of floodplains and wetlands, limitations imposed by privately owned land, existing recreation areas and public facilities, and land that is not vacant or abandoned.

### Slopes

Slopes over 25% are not considered developable for most planning purposes although single-family development on large parcels could be considered when the slope is less than 40%.

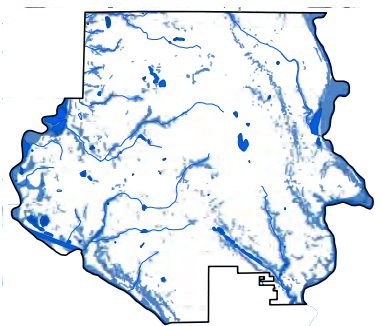
***Slopes over 25% are not considered developable area.***

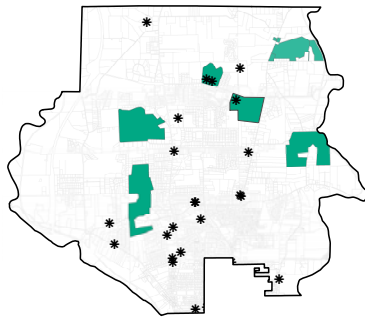


### Floodplains, Wetlands and Surface Water

Floodplains, wetlands and surface water limit development capabilities within Our Community. When planning for project implementation, areas such as the floodplains along the border of the Township, should be limited.

***Floodplains, wetlands, and surface water are not considered developable area.***

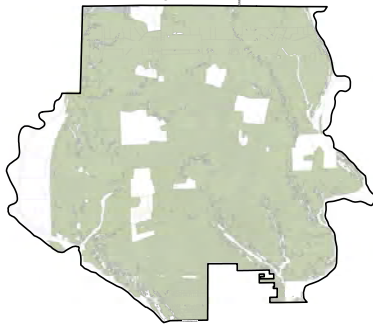




### Conservation, Recreation Areas and Public Facilities

The conservation area, recreation areas, and public facilities are detailed in this diagram. These identified parcels include Township parks, gamelands, and privately owned conservation areas.

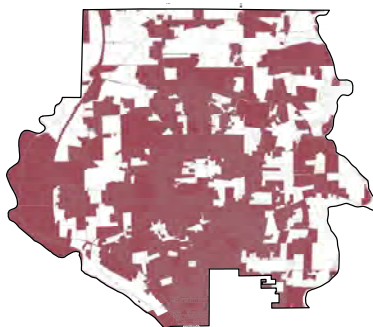
***Conservation, recreation areas, and public facilities are not considered developable area.***



### Total Developable Area

Considering all the contributing factors identified in the diagrams provided previously, Our Community has a total of 8,761 acres of developable land. However, within that developable acreage, only 4,464 acres are vacant. Land that has a fixed use that cannot be further developed is not considered developable land. Among these undevelopable areas are steep slopes, floodplains, wetlands, surface water, cemeteries, parks, golf courses, industrial parks, and the Neshannock Public Schools campus.

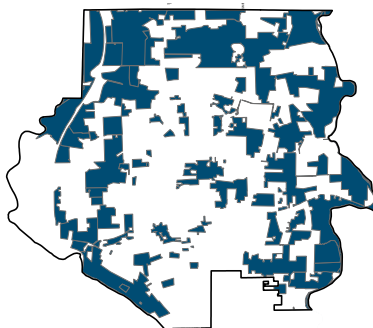
***Total developable area includes all areas of the Township except steep slopes, floodplains, wetlands, surface water, conservation, recreation areas, and public facilities.***



### Currently Developed Land

Our Community has a considerable amount of non-vacant, non-abandoned land (currently developed land), which is identified in red on this diagram. Currently developed land areas have preexisting development and structures, and are not considered developable land. The white areas represent vacant land where future development for Our Community can be considered.

***Currently developed land includes all land that is not vacant or abandoned (areas that have housing, commercial, industrial or municipal development). We assume that the existing development will remain while vacant areas could accommodate future development.***



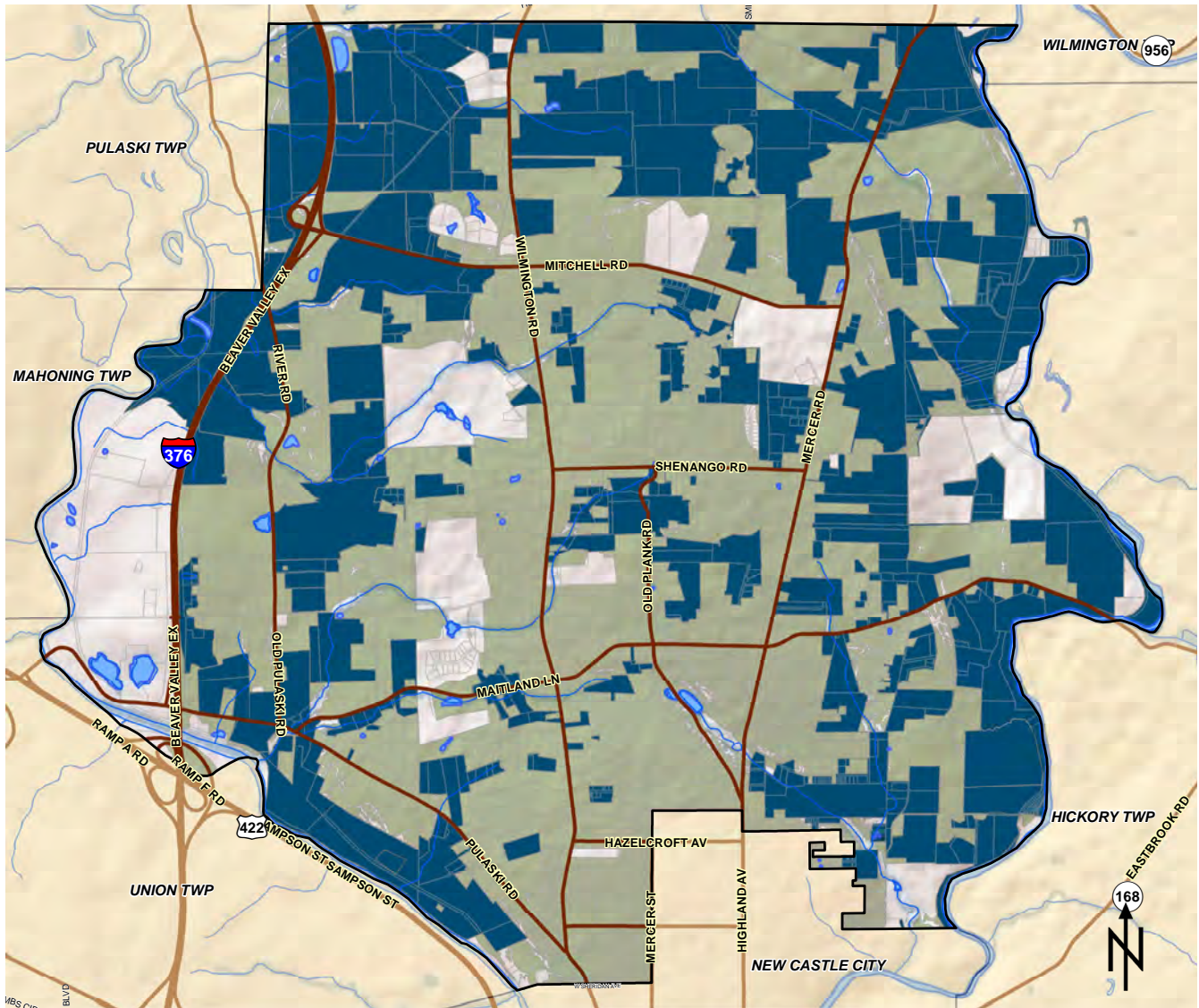
### Vacant Developable Land

Vacant developable land represents areas of Our Community that have vacant, undeveloped, and or abandoned land. These areas may or may not be forested and may or may not be in densely populated parts of Our Community. Understanding where this land is available helps us understand where future development could be likely to occur and what type of use it may be.





***Vacant developable land is the area that is within the total developable area and is not already developed. These are the areas that could be developed in the future.***



Figure 18. Developable Areas



**Legend**

-  Major Road
-  Stream
-  Pond
-  Vacant Developable Land
-  Developable Area

Developable land, shown above in green, represents areas that are not constrained by floodplains or wetlands, are not on steep slopes and are not being utilized by public facilities such as parks or schools. The green areas include areas that are currently developed with residential or non-residential uses.



Vacant developable land, shown above in blue, represents developable areas of Our Community that are also vacant, undeveloped, and or abandoned land. These areas may or may not be forested and may or may not be in densely populated parts of Our Community. Understanding where this land is available helps us understand where future development could be likely to occur and what type of use it may be. Our Community has a total of 8,761 acres of developable land. However, within that developable acreage, only 4,464 acres are vacant.

Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission



Developable area refers to the total area of land available for development. It does not include currently developed land (non-vacant, non-abandoned), public open space, roads, or environmentally sensitive areas that constrain development. Developable area can also be constrained by factors such as roadway access, availability of public water and sewer services, and zoning.

Building on the previously described inventory and analyses, the Developable Areas map identifies the following areas:

-  **Developable Area:** These areas are not constrained by floodplains or wetlands, are not on steep slopes and are not being utilized by public facilities such as parks or schools.
-  **Vacant Developable Land:** There is no existing development in these areas. Functionally speaking, these areas are more likely to be available for development purposes because they would not require the re-purposing or demolition of existing buildings and infrastructure. However, many communities also have key redevelopment sites that are not vacant but are not being utilized to their fullest potential. Those areas are not represented on this map.

Water and sewer service areas also impact potential development. Existing infrastructure such as roadways, water and sewer service can have significant impacts on the level of development that would be possible on a site.

	<b><i>Area Acreage</i></b>
Total Neshannock Twp.:	11,203 acres
Total Developable Areas:	8,761 acres
Vacant Land Within Developable Areas:	4,464 acres
Residential and Non-Residential Land Available for Sale	802 acres



**Figure 19. Developable Areas Without Sewer or Water Service**



**Figure 20. Sewer and Water Service Areas**



**Figure 21. Water Service Areas**



## Utilities and Developable Land

Water and sewer service areas also impact potential development. Existing infrastructure such as roadways, water and sewer service can have significant impacts on the level of development that would be possible on a site.

### Sewer and Water Service

Developable areas with both sewer and water service extend from the western border of Our Community at Bansberry Lane to the eastern border at Blews Way. From north to south, the water service extends from Cover Road to West Sheridan Ave.

### Water Service

Developable areas with only water service are divided into two distinct areas. The northern cluster extends from the western border of Our Community along I-376 to the east at the intersection of Valley Road and Mitchell Road. From north to south, this cluster extends from McGary Road to the border between Our Community and New Castle. The southern cluster extends from the western border along the Shenango River eastward to Wilmington Road. From north to south, the cluster extends from Kings Chapel Road to W. Sheridan Ave. Water service is provided by a private company and would likely be expanded to follow new development.

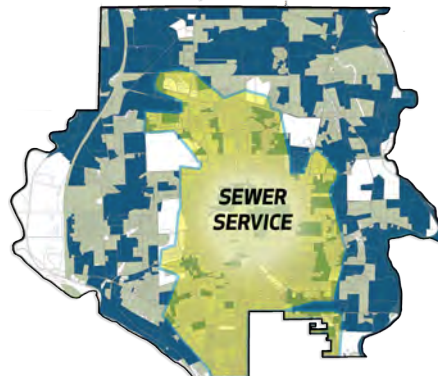
### Developable Areas Without Sewer or Water Service

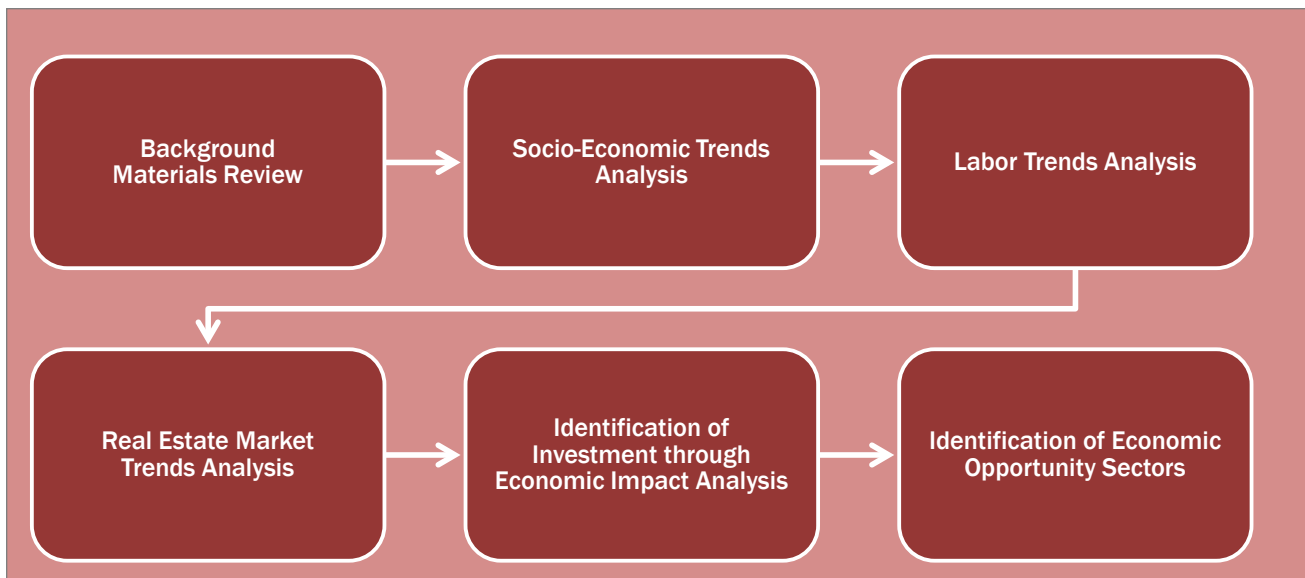
Developable areas that lack sewer and water service are concentrated to the eastern border and northwestern corner of Our Community. Major projects have been proposed following the implementation of the Act 537 Plan for expanding sewage service throughout Neshannock Township. The following section discusses market analysis trends that can further impact the need for expanding these services throughout Our Community and ensuring that the need of future population growth is met.

### Developable Land Conclusion

Our Community has some large areas of vacant developable land, however most of that area is outside of the existing sewer service areas.

**Figure 22. Sewer Service Area**

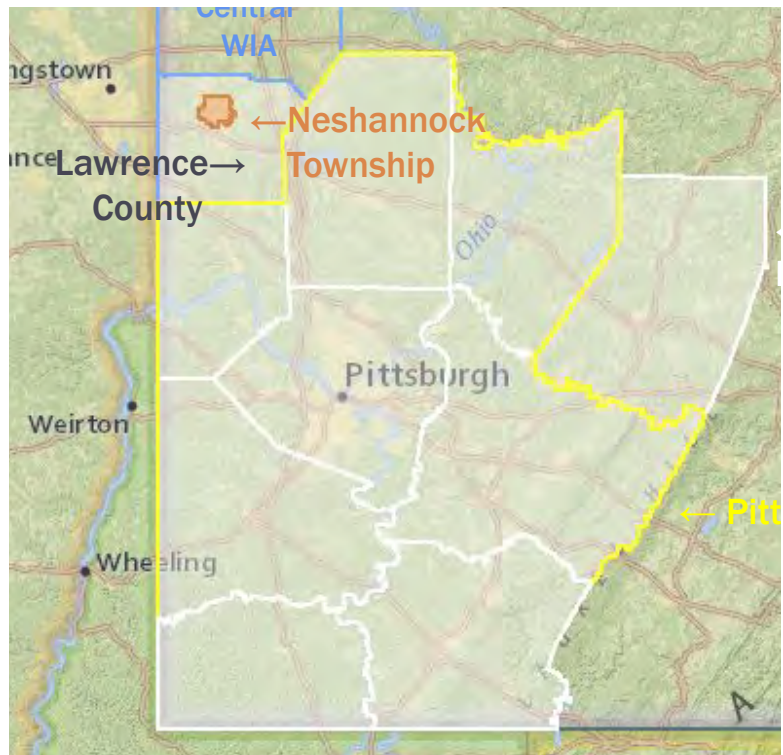




## Market Analysis

A detailed market analysis of the Township's local economy was conducted to help inform our plan for the future. The findings of this market analysis will help identify regional market and real estate trends, and potential new development, investment, and business opportunities within Neshannock Township. The map highlights the different areas of study:

- Neshannock Township;
- Lawrence County;
- Southwestern Pennsylvania (includes Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Indiana, Lawrence, Washington, Westmoreland Counties and the City Of Pittsburgh);
- West Central Workforce Investment Area or WIA (includes Lawrence and Mercer counties);
- Pittsburgh Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) or Metro area; and the
- State of Pennsylvania.



**STRENGTHS**

**Demographics**

- Strong growth in older empty nesters and young graduates
- High median household incomes in the Township (\$57,913)
- High educational attainment levels (36 percent of adult residents have a bachelor's degree or higher)
- High rates of owner-occupancy (74 percent of total housing stock)

**Development Potential**

- Available space for sale and lease within the Township, including 475,980 square feet of non-residential square footage for lease

**WEAKNESSES**

**Demographics**

- Flat household growth throughout region

**Development Potential**

- Beyond the development of convenience retail centers, average retail household expenditures suggest that large-scale retail development may not be attracted to the area

**OPPORTUNITIES**

**Labor**

- New jobs in health care and social services sector in the County will attract new residents and workers to the County

**Development Potential**

- New jobs will likely increase near-term demand for housing and medical office space
- Relatively low vacancy rates in the Township (5 percent) are indicative of a healthy but somewhat tight housing market. New housing development could potentially attract new residents
- Extremely low industrial and office vacancy rates within Butler and Beaver Counties suggest there may be unmet industrial and office demand within the immediate Southwestern PA region

**THREATS**

**Labor**

- The Southwestern PA region has higher wage employment opportunities (e.g., PSTS), which may entice recent graduates and portions of the younger workforce to leave the Township

**Demographics**

- A diversity of employment, housing, and transportation options will be required to retain young graduates

POSITIVE

NEGATIVE

***New jobs in healthcare and the social services sector will attract new residents and workers.***

**Market Study SWOT Findings**

A Strengths, Weakness, Opportunity, and Threat (SWOT) analysis is a key part of understanding present challenges and opportunities facing the local economy. Comparing the Township strengths with Regional opportunities provides insight into where Our Community can benefit from surrounding development. The growing health and social services sectors throughout the County present a opportunity for investment and development potential that Our Community can tap into. While the flat growth in housing throughout the region can be a weakness, zoning conditions can attract newer residents to move to the county, by providing a diverse housing stock.





## ***Market Study Socioeconomic Analysis Conclusions***

### **Flat Household Growth Throughout Region**

Although projections indicate household formation across all geographies will remain relatively flat (between -0.75 and 0.75 per year), overall, growth in non-family households in Neshannock Township will exceed that of family households, consistent with regional trends.



### **Strong Growth in Older Empty Nesters and Young Graduates**

While all geographies are expected to experience increases in the empty nester and mostly retired age cohorts (ages 65 and up) over the next five years, Neshannock Township is expected to experience slightly less growth in these older age cohorts and stronger growth in the young workforce and grads age cohort.



### **Higher Educational Attainment and Incomes**

The share of adults ages 25 years or older who have a bachelor's degree or higher is significantly greater in Neshannock Township (36 percent) than within Lawrence County (21 percent) – and this is correlated, to a significant extent, with higher household income levels within the Township (\$57,913).



### **Average Consumer Spending**

Average household expenditures within Neshannock Township are slightly higher than that of the region, but relatively comparable with the national average. Given observed average household expenditures, beyond the development of convenience retail centers, it is not likely that large-scale retail development would be attracted to the local area.



***Our Community's population continues to grow. New residents are attracted by the strong housing stock, job opportunities, and good School District. Population growth is expected to continue. Our Community can benefit from this opportunity by guiding new development to provide a variety of housing types that will capture multiple segments of the projected population growth that will build stability in the local housing market and make positive contributions to Our Community's tax base.***

## Population Characteristics and Trends

Population statistics characterize size, density, and distribution data. This statistical inventory of people is utilized to project population trends and conditions into the future. Future community needs, including police and fire protection, road maintenance, recreational and educational facilities, and water and sewage facilities are influenced by the current and projected population.

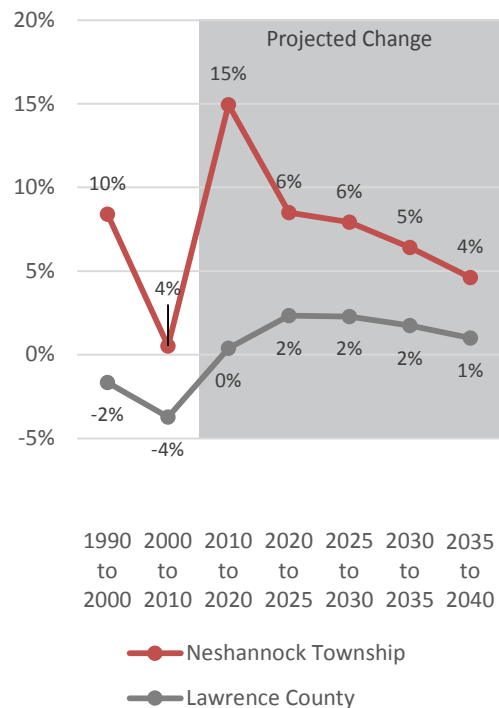
Our Community's change in population has followed the patterns of Lawrence County although Neshannock's population grew between 1990 and 2010 and the county's population continued to decline. Lawrence County's population is projected to stop declining in 2020. Neshannock's population is projected to grow rapidly through 2020 and then continue to grow at slower rates through 2040. Neshannock's population is projected to grow by nearly 40% between 2010 and 2040. Neighboring Townships are also projected to experience growth - although at slower rates. New Castle City's population is projected to decline by 5% in the same time period.

Neshannock Township's population is largely native-born Americans (98%) and white (97%). The median age is high (49.1 years) in comparison to Lawrence County (43.6 years) and the 10-county region (42.5 years). 20% of Neshannock's population is age 65 or over; 20% is under age 18.

### Education

95% of Neshannock's population age 25 and over graduated from high school; 33% of the same population has a bachelor's degree.

Table 1. Percent Population Change, 2000 to 2040



Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission Cycle 10 forecast.





**Significant portions of Our Community have potential for increased development.**

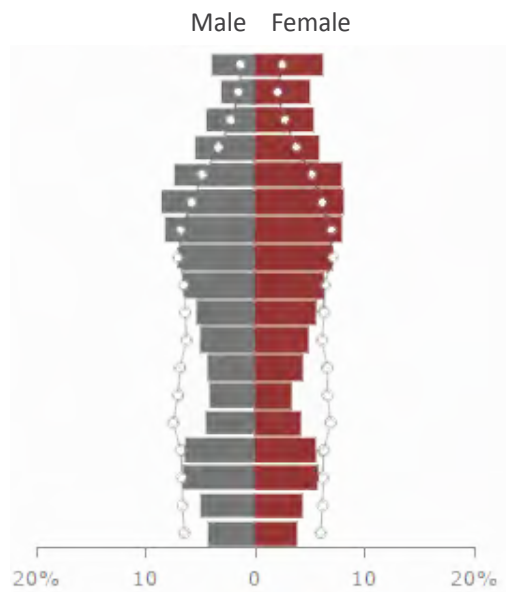


***Our Community's population is relatively stable; residents who move here, stay here and are less transient than resident populations in many growing communities in the region. Our resident population of over-65 residents is slightly higher than other places and Our Community's services should reflect the needs of this segment of our population.***

## Age Distribution

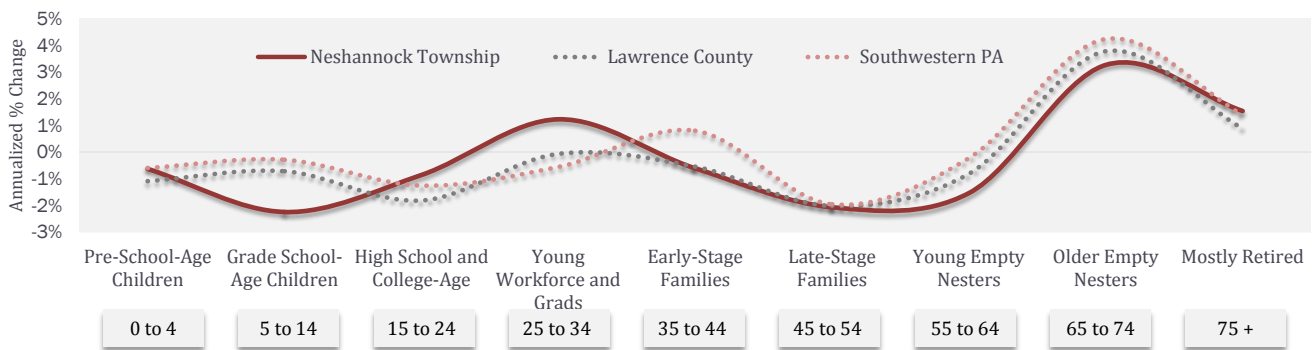
As shown in the age pyramid, compared to the nation, Neshannock Township's population has lower shares of younger age cohorts and higher shares of older age cohorts. As illustrated below, older empty nester and mostly retired age cohorts (ages 65 and up) are expected to increase within Neshannock Township, Lawrence County, and the Southwestern PA region over the next five years. Compared to the County and region, Neshannock Township is expected to experience stronger growth in the young workforce and grads segment, but less growth in the early-stage family segment through 2020.

Table 2. Age Pyramid, 2015



Sources: US Census Bureau; Esri; 4ward Planning Inc., 2016

Table 3. Annualized Population Change Forecasts by Geography: 2015-2020



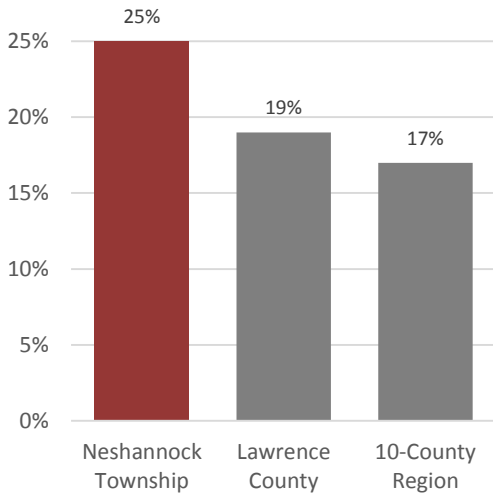
Sources: US Census Bureau; Esri; 4ward Planning Inc., 2016



## Households

93% of Neshannock’s population lived in the same house in the prior year. 67% of the community’s households are families. 25% of households include individuals under 18 years old. 41% of households include individuals age 65 and older. 18% of households are residents age 65 and older living alone.

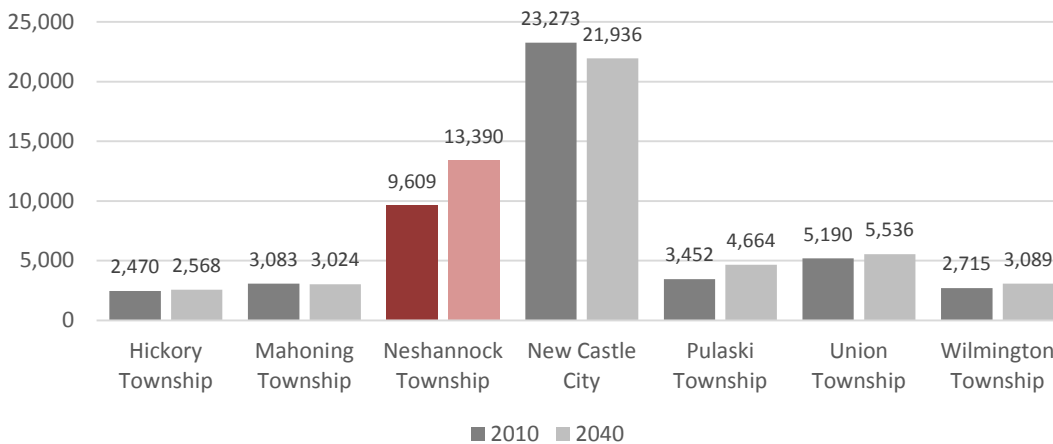
Table 4. Percent of Population Age 65 and Over



Source: 2010 US Census Summary File released June 2011.

***Second only to New Castle, Our Community is home to a large portion of Lawrence County residents. Coordination and cooperation with the County to serve these residents is important to future regional success.***

Table 5. Total 2010 Population and Projected 2040 Population



Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission Cycle 10 forecast.

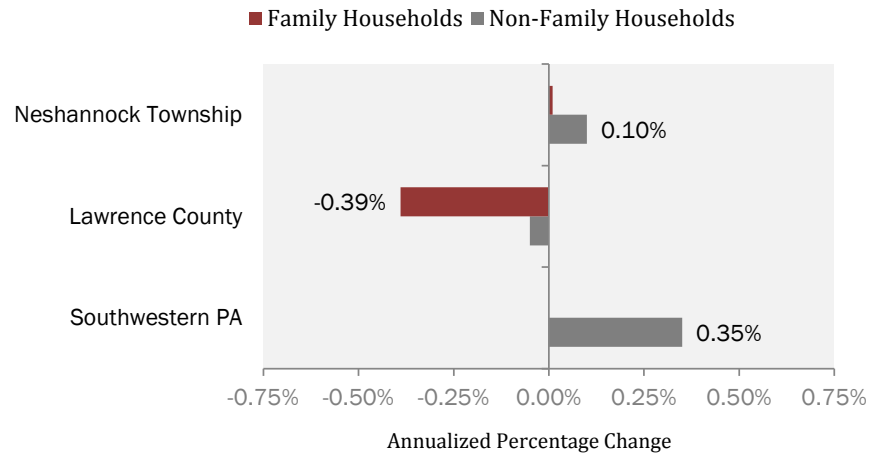


## Household Formation

Research shows that household formation across all geographies will remain relatively flat (between -0.75 and 0.75 per year). Consistent with regional trends, growth in non-family households in Neshannock Township will exceed that of family households. Lawrence County is expected to experience the greatest decline in family households (nearly 0.4 percent per year).

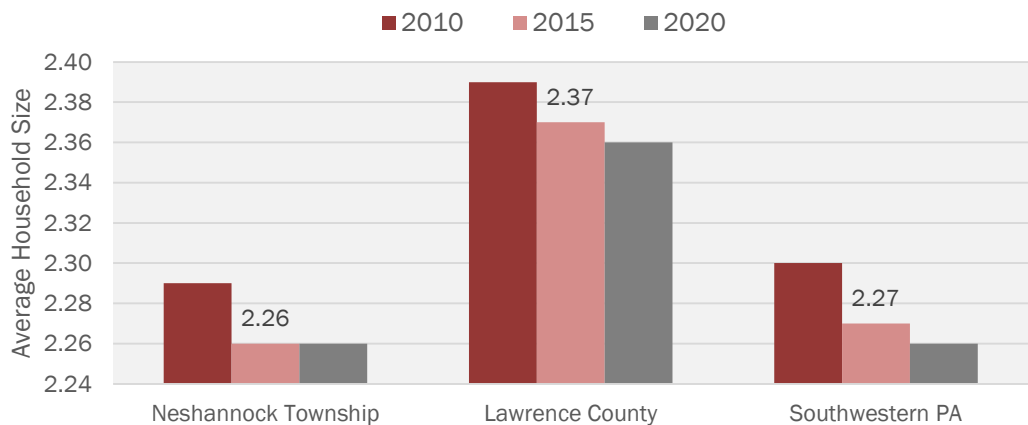
Table 6. Projected Household Formation, 2015-2020

**Although the average household size in Our Community decreased from 2.29 to 2.26 from 2010 to 2015, it is expected to remain stable through 2020.**



Sources: US Census Bureau; Esri; Award Planning Inc., 2016.

Table 7. Projected Household Formation, 2015-2020



Sources: US Census Bureau; Esri; Award Planning Inc., 2016.



## ***Population Characteristics and Trends Conclusions***

Our Community's population continues to grow. New residents are attracted by the strong housing stock, job opportunities, and good School District. Population growth is expected to continue. Our Community can benefit from this opportunity by guiding new development to provide a variety of housing types that will capture multiple segments of the projected population growth that will build stability in the local housing market and make positive contributions to Our Community's tax base.

### **Age Distribution**

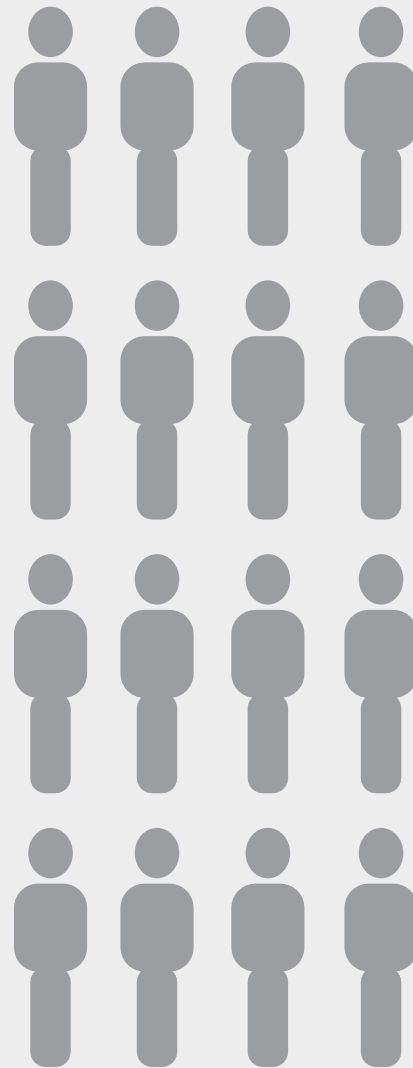
Our Community's population is relatively stable; residents who move here, stay here and are less transient than resident populations in many growing communities in the region. Our resident population of over-65 residents is slightly higher than other places and Our Community's services should reflect the needs of this segment of our population.

### **Households**

Second only to New Castle, Our Community is home to a large portion of Lawrence County residents. Coordination and cooperation with the County to serve these residents is important to future regional success.

### **Household Formation**

Although the average household size in Our Community decreased from 2.29 to 2.26 from 2010 to 2015, it is expected to remain stable through 2020.



# Economic Trends

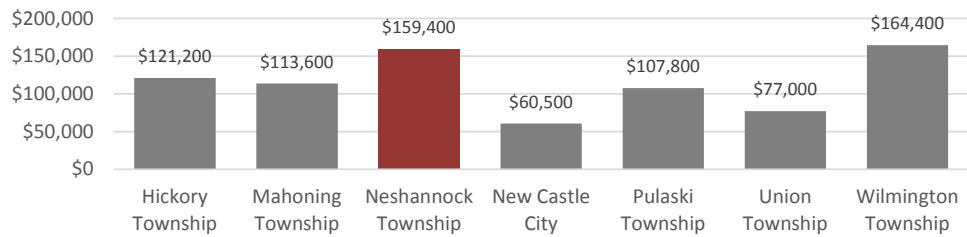
## Housing

Only 6% of Neshannock’s housing stock is vacant and a significant portion of that housing stock was for rent, for sale or for recreational/seasonal use. 53% of Neshannock’s housing units were constructed before 1970. Neshannock has more multifamily housing than the neighboring Townships but less than New Castle City. However, the median value of owner-occupied housing units is second only to Wilmington Township, which has newer housing stock (40% built before 1970).

***Our Community has a 94% housing occupancy rate.***

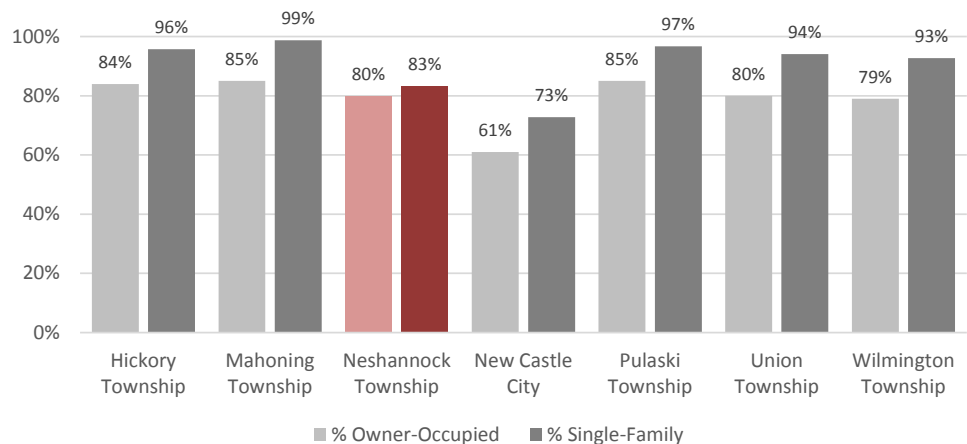
Neshannock Township features relatively high rates of owner-occupancy, at 74 percent of their total housing stock, respectively. Lawrence County and the Southwestern PA region, in comparison, had an estimated 2015 owner-occupancy rate of 66 and 61 percent, respectively – which is reflective of state owner-occupancy averages (63 percent). Further, the relatively low 2015 vacancy rates in Neshannock Township (five percent) are indicative of a healthy but somewhat tight housing market.

Table 8. Median Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units



Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Table 9. Percentage of Owner-Occupied and Single-Family Housing Units



Source: 2010 US Census Summary File released June 2011 and the 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.





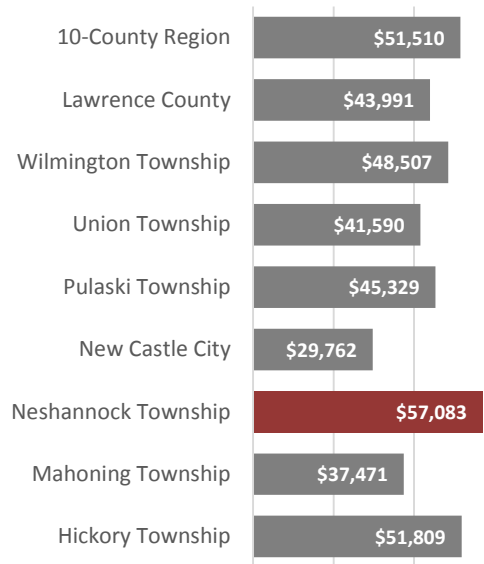
## Household Income

Neshannock’s median household income (\$57,000 per year in 2014) is higher than all neighboring communities, Lawrence County (\$44, 000) and the 10-county region (\$52,000). 48% of Neshannock’s households received social security income in 2014; 30% of households received retirement income and 70% received other types of earnings. Only 6% of Neshannock’s population are below the poverty line, which is the same percentage as Hickory Township and lower than all other neighboring communities, Lawrence County and the 10-county region.

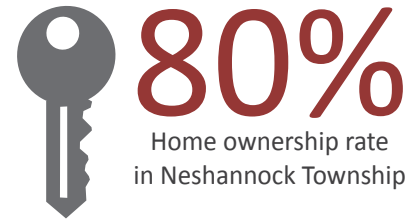
## Employment

Neshannock, Pulaski and Wilmington Townships all have low civilian unemployment rates (4%). At the time of comparison (2014), Lawrence County had an unemployment rate of 7%, Pennsylvania had an unemployment rate of 12% and the country had an unemployment rate of 9%.

Table 10. 2014 Median Household Income



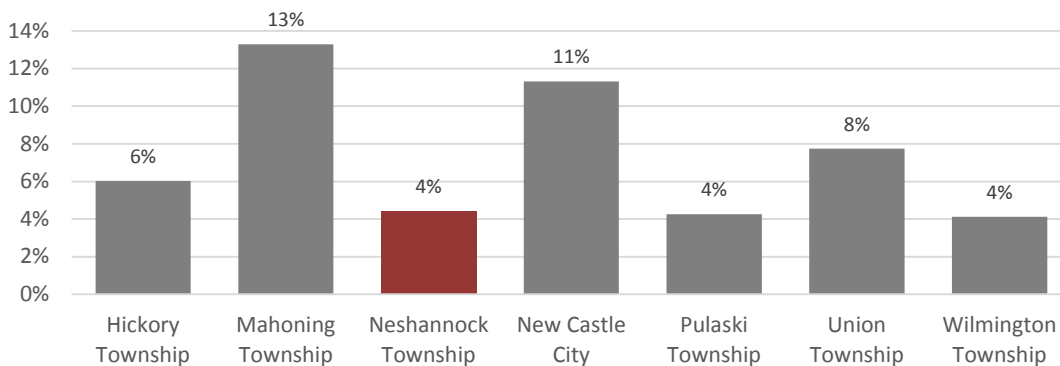
Source: 2010 US Census Summary File released June 2011 and the 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.



**The home ownership rate in Our Community is 80%.**

**Our Community has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the County.**

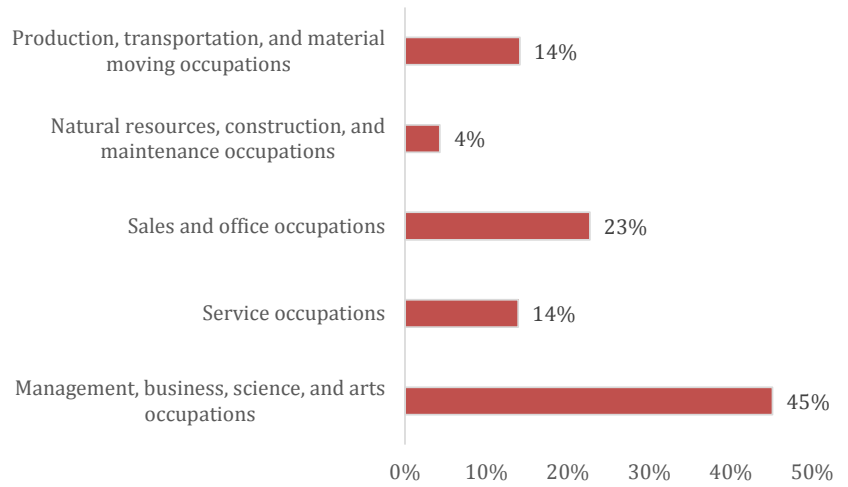
Table 11. 2014 Civilian Unemployment Rate



Source: 2010 US Census Summary File released June 2011 and the 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.



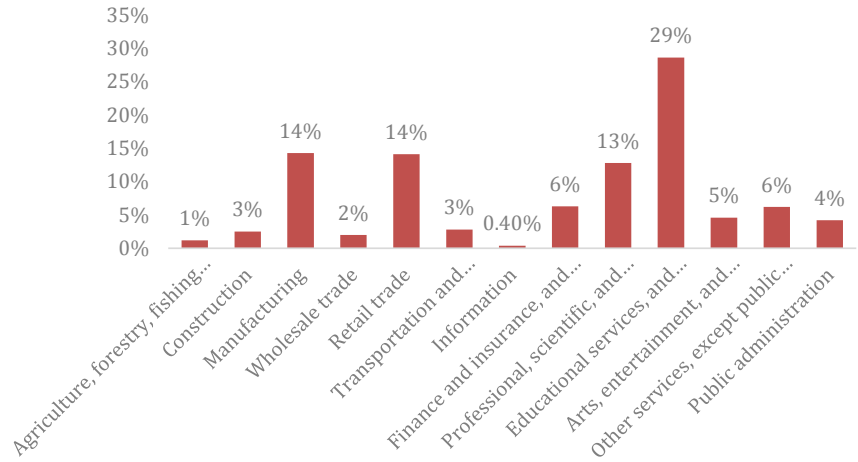
Table 12. 2014 Neshannock Township Occupation Statistics



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

**The majority of Neshannock Township residents (29% of our workforce) work in the education, healthcare, and social assistance industries.**

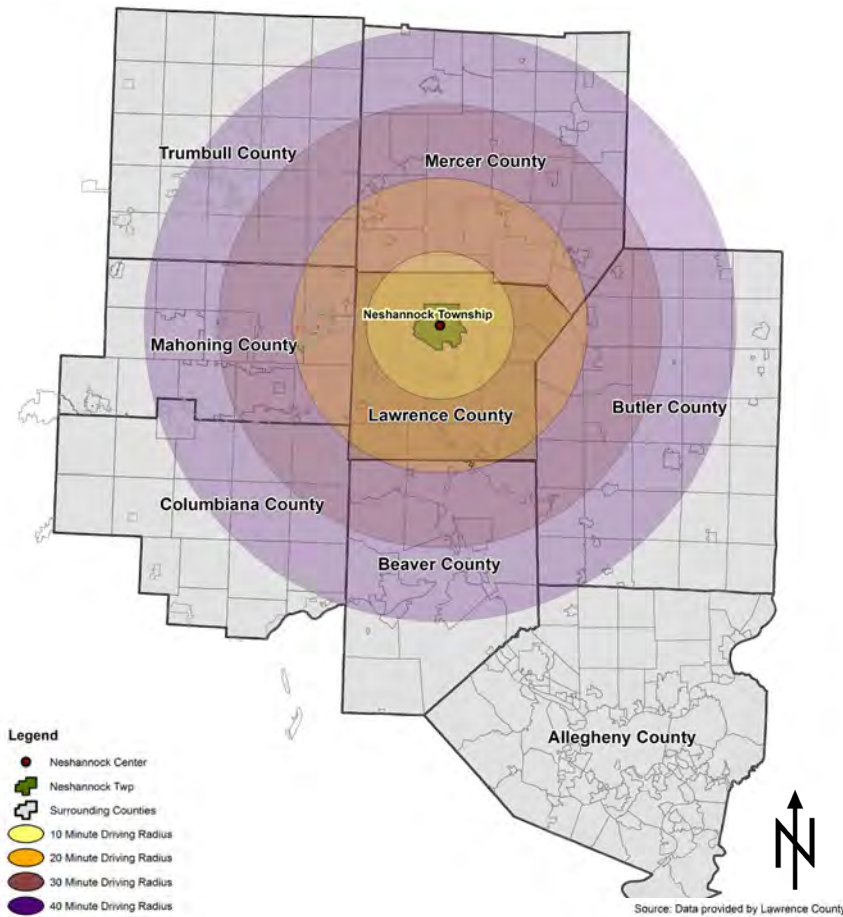
Table 13. 2014 Neshannock Township Employment by Industry



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



Figure 23. Regional Travel Times from Neshannock Township



*Our Community is easily accessible to many regional job markets, which creates a wealth of employment opportunities for our residents. This also creates opportunities for new businesses who provide supporting services to the regional business community; these supporting businesses can locate in Our Community and be only minutes away from businesses located in the larger seven-County region!*

The average travel time to work for Neshannock residents was 19 minutes and nearly all households have vehicles available (98%). Most workers drove alone to work (94%). For employed residents of Neshannock Township (regardless of the location where they worked), 29% were employed in educational services, health care and social assistance. This is similar to Lawrence County, where 26% of the employed population works in the same industries.

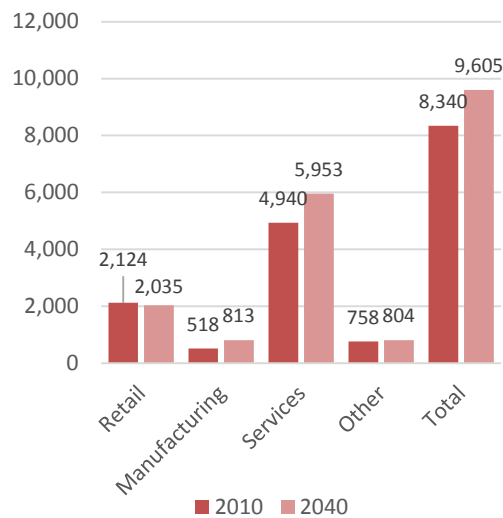


***Our Community is projected to gain almost 10,000 new jobs in the coming decades. With the recent announcement of the construction of the Shell Cracker Facility in Beaver County, this number is now probably conservative. Our Community must be prepared for accommodating this regional job growth by creating an environment that will attract and retain new businesses.***

## Employment Projections

Employment opportunities in Neshannock, Lawrence County and the neighboring communities are projected to change between 2010 and 2040. Lawrence County is projected to gain about 3,600 jobs between 2010 and 2040. 35% of those jobs (1,265 jobs) are projected to be in Neshannock Township and most are projected to be in services. Services, as defined by Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission for this projection is a broad category. It includes utilities, transportation, finance and insurance, real estate, scientific, management, administrative and support services, educational services, health care and social assistance, arts, entertainment, recreation, and public administration.

Table 14. Neshannock Township Workplace Employment 2010 and 2040 Projection by Category



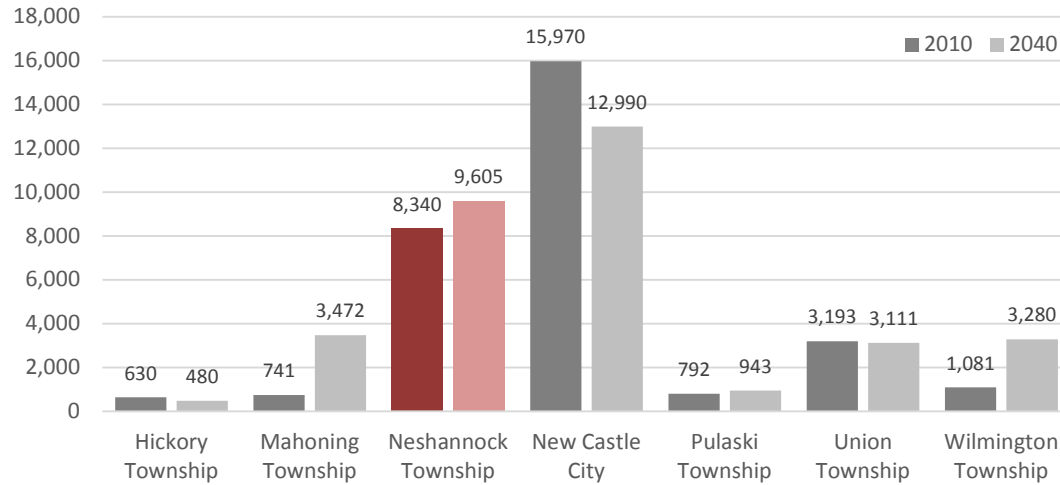
Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission Cycle 10 forecast.



# Household Expenditures

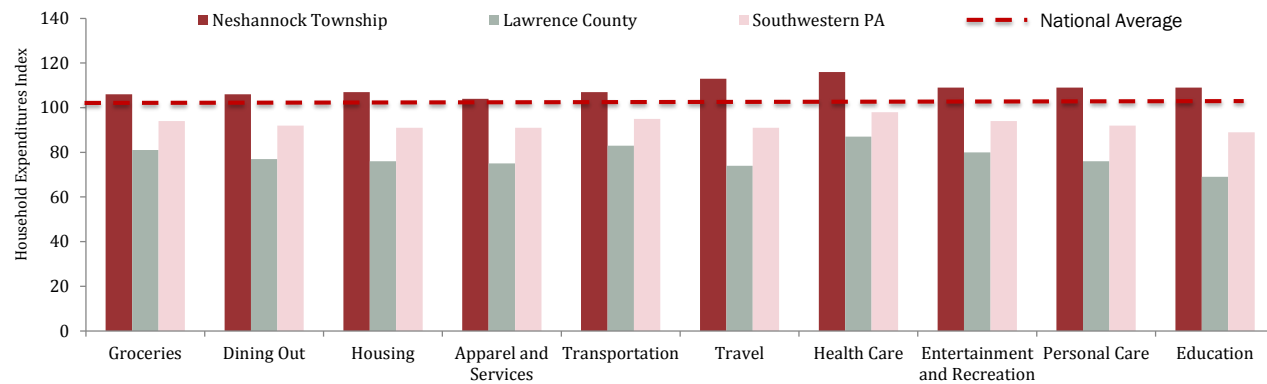
As illustrated in the graphic below, 2015 average household expenditures within Neshannock Township are slightly higher, but relatively comparable, with the 2015 national average household expenditures on a range of goods and services. Households within Southwestern PA, and to a greater extent, within Lawrence County, demonstrate household spending lower than the national average – reflective of their lower median household income, relative to that of households within Neshannock Township. Given observed average household expenditures, beyond the development of convenience retail centers, it is not likely that large-scale retail development would be attracted to the local area.

Table 15. Total Workplace Employment 2010 and 2040 Projection



Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission Cycle 10 forecast. Note: The workplace employment and workplace employment projections compiled by Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission count each part-time and full-time job. They do not calculate full-time equivalent or weight part-time jobs and full-time jobs differently.

Table 16. Household Expenditures by Geography, 2015



Source: US Census Bureau; Esri; 4ward Planning Inc., 2016

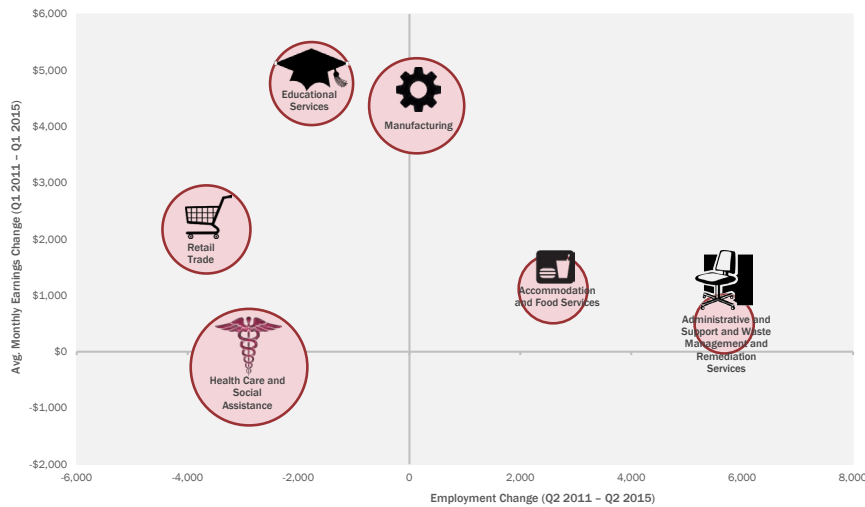


## Top Six Sectors by Total Employment

In second-quarter 2015, the health care and social assistance, manufacturing, and retail trade sectors composed approximately 45 percent total employment within Lawrence County. From second-quarter 2011 to second-quarter 2015, administrative support services (5,676 new jobs), accommodation and food services (2,592 new jobs), and manufacturing (132 new jobs) were the only top six industry sectors to experience net new job growth.

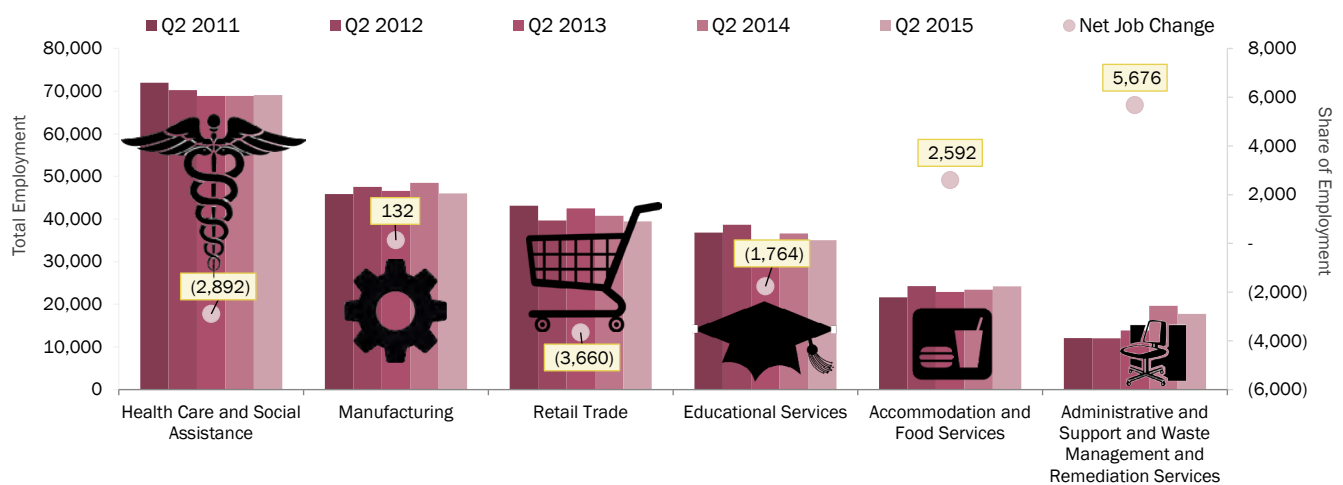
***In Lawrence County, the health care sector was the only sector to not experience either positive job or wage growth from 2011 to 2015. However, future trends are likely to show growth given UPMC's recent investment in Jameson Hospital.***

Table 17. Industry Growth Trends: Lawrence County



Source: U.S. Census, Quarterly Workforce Indicators

Table 18. Top Six Industries in Lawrence County by Employment and Wage, 2015

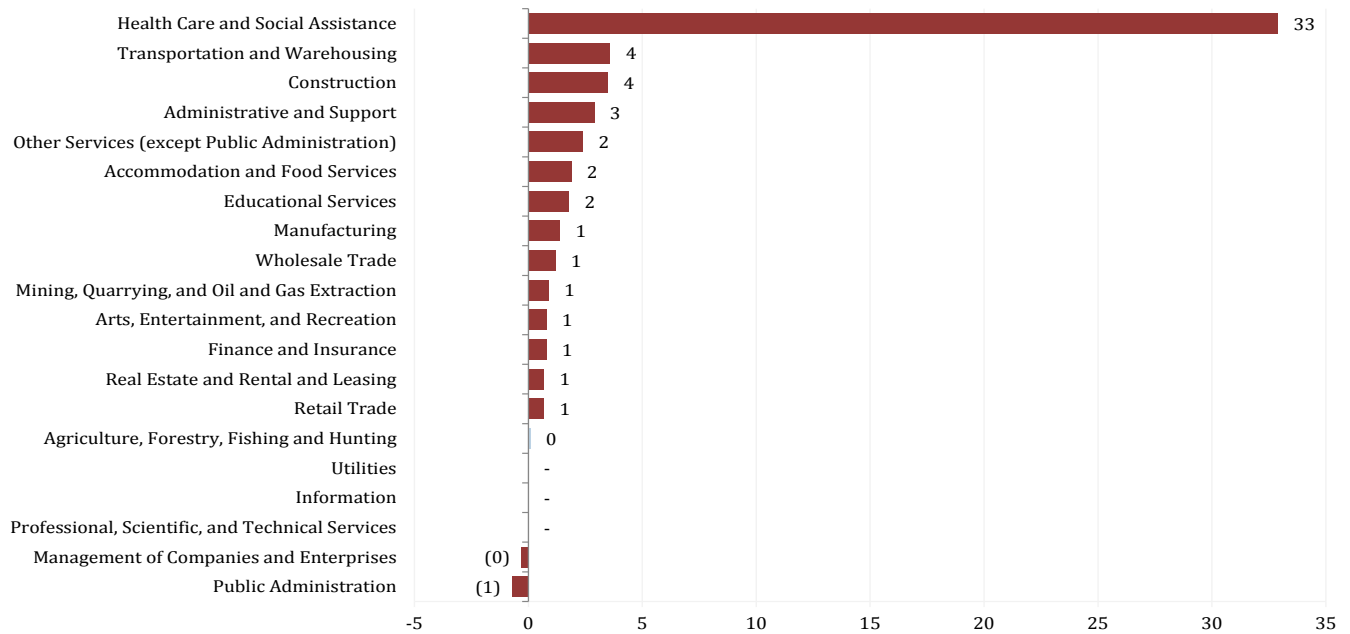


Source: U.S. Census, Quarterly Workforce Indicators



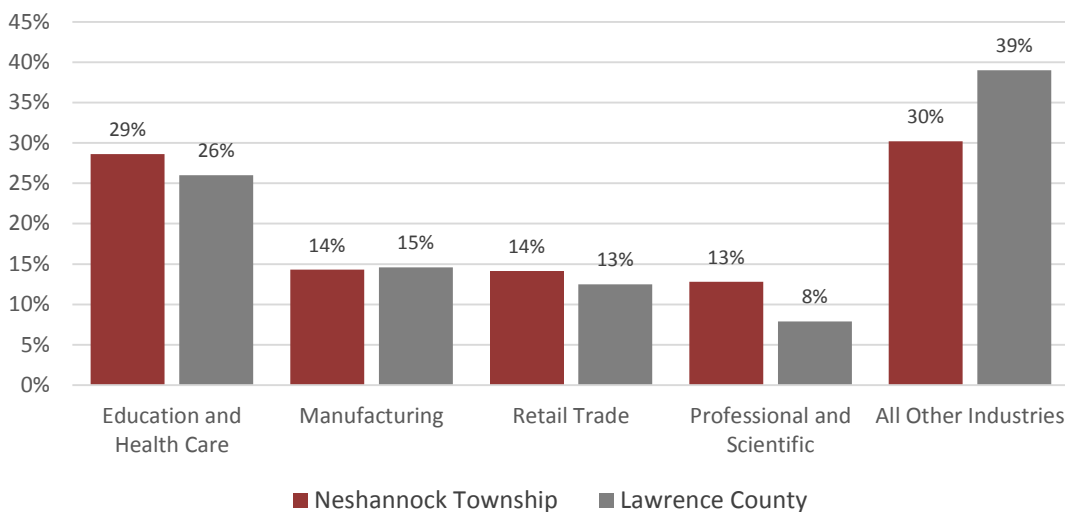
According to average annual employment change projections provided by the Pennsylvania Center for Workforce Information and Analysis, the health care and social assistance sector (currently the largest industry by employment in Lawrence County) is expected to maintain its employment primacy through 2022, adding approximately 33 new jobs within the West Central WIA (includes Lawrence and Mercer county) each year. This employment growth will influence near-term demand for housing and medical office space in Lawrence County.

Table 19. Average Annual Employment Change by Industry, 2012-2022



Source: U.S. Census, Quarterly Workforce Indicators; PA Center for Workforce Information & Analysis, Industry Employment, 2012-2022 Long-Term Projections, West Central WIA

Table 20. 2010 Top Industry of Employment



Source: 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.



## Economic Trends Conclusions

### Health care and manufacturing employment dominate

According to the U.S. Census, Quarterly Workforce Indicators, as of second-quarter 2015, the health care and social assistance, manufacturing, and retail trade sectors composed approximately 45 percent total employment within Lawrence County.

### Highest recent job growth in administrative support services

From second-quarter 2011 to second-quarter 2015, the administrative support services sector added 5,676 net new jobs within Lawrence County. The accommodation and food services, and manufacturing sectors were the only other top six industry sectors in Lawrence County to experience net new job growth within this same period, adding another 2,592 and 132 new jobs, respectively.

### Health care and social services sector to lead near-term job growth

Despite no net job and wage growth in recent years, according to average annual growth rate projections provided by the Pennsylvania Center for Workforce Information and Analysis, the health care and social assistance sector (currently the largest industry by employment in Lawrence County) is expected to maintain its employment primacy through 2022, adding approximately 33 new jobs per year within West Central WIA (includes Lawrence and Mercer county). This employment growth will likely increase the near-term demand for housing and medical office space in Lawrence County.

Table 21. Employment Trends by Top Six Industries

#### Lawrence County

	Employment			Earnings	
	Number (2015)	Share of Total (2015)	Job Change (Q2 2011 - 2015)	Average Annual Earnings (2015)	Average Wage Changes (Q1 2011 - 2015)
Health Care and Social Assistance	69,096	20%	(2,892)	\$31,704	-\$276
Manufacturing	46,008	14%	132	\$55,500	\$4,368
Retail Trade	39,444	12%	(3,660)	\$27,240	\$2,172
Educational Services	35,052	10%	(1,764)	\$43,752	\$4,764
Accommodation and Food Services	24,216	7%	2,592	\$12,564	\$1,116
Administrative and Support and Waste Management	17,749	5%	5,676	\$23,832	\$492
	340,748	100%	648	\$37,835	\$116,844

#### Southwestern PA

	Employment			Earnings	
	Number (2015)	Share of Total (2015)	Job Change (Q2 2011 - 2015)	Average Annual Earnings (2015)	Average Wage Changes (Q1 2011 - 2015)
Health Care and Social Assistance	2,446,908	17%	45,132	\$45,516	\$5,952
Manufacturing	1,611,672	11%	(38,592)	\$27,840	\$2,604
Retail Trade	1,216,248	9%	(135,780)	\$50,904	\$5,304
Educational Services	1,208,208	8%	83,808	\$16,632	\$1,524
Accommodation and Food Services	1,141,500	8%	14,184	\$60,408	\$6,468
Administrative and Support and Waste Management	1,025,700	7%	99,276	\$76,332	\$9,408
	14,217,276	100%	654,312	\$50,143	\$137,016

#### Pennsylvania

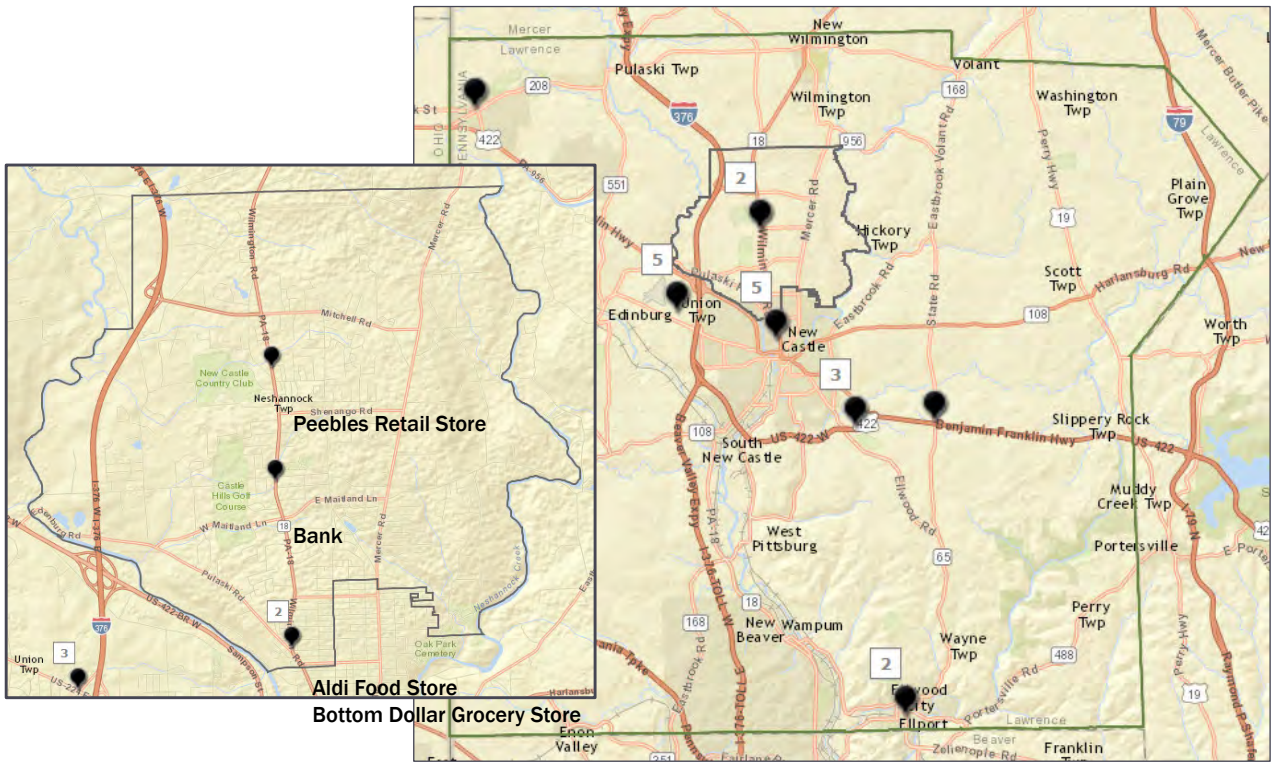
	Employment			Earnings	
	Number (2015)	Share of Total (2015)	Job Change (Q2 2011 - 2015)	Average Annual Earnings (2015)	Average Wage Changes (Q1 2011 - 2015)
Health Care and Social Assistance	11,711,952	18%	592,860	\$44,988	\$4,476
Manufacturing	7,439,004	11%	(12,132)	\$28,212	\$2,448
Retail Trade	6,867,852	10%	9,528	\$58,656	\$4,320
Educational Services	6,000,084	9%	454,632	\$49,116	\$5,556
Accommodation and Food Services	5,361,420	8%	454,152	\$17,220	\$1,740
Administrative and Support and Waste Management	4,130,832	6%	255,900	\$82,068	\$8,388
	66,807,084	100%	1,716,660	\$49,087	\$129,036





# Real Estate Trends

There is approximately 483,190 square feet of planned or current development projects, with just 33,780 square feet (small retail and food stores) located within Neshannock Township. These projects are presented in more detail below.



Source: LoopNet; Esri, Award Planning Inc. 2016

Table 22. Planned or Current Development Projects

Project Title	City	SubCategory	Work Type	Project Value	Floor Area SF
Peebles Store	New Castle	Retail Stores	Alteration	\$900,000	15,080
Aldi Food Store	New Castle	Food Stores	Alteration	\$1,000,000	NA
Bottom Dollar Grocery Store	New Castle	Food Stores	New	\$2,500,000	18,700
Neshannock Subtotal				\$4,400,000	33,780
Lawrence Downs Casino & Racing Resort	New Castle	Entertainment, Hotel, Restaurants	New	\$225,000,000	NA
Upstate Shredding	New Castle	Offices	New	\$26,000,000	NA
Family Dollar Store	New Bedford	Retail Stores	New	\$958,000	8,320
Harbor Freight Tools	New Castle	Retail Stores	Alteration	\$900,000	13,303
Pep Boys Automotive Service & Tires	New Castle	Automotive, Retail Stores	New	\$785,500	6,281
2907 Wilmington Road Operations Office	New Castle	Bank	Alteration	\$500,000	NA
Giant Eagle Fried Chicken	New Castle	Food Stores, Restaurants	Alteration	\$500,000	NA
Walmart Supercenter	New Castle	Automotive, Food Stores, Retail Stores	Alteration	\$479,506	198,444
First Merit Bank (Tenant Improvement)	New Castle	Bank	Alteration	\$400,000	NA
Dollar Tree Store	New Castle	Retail Stores	Alteration	\$125,000	10,809
Cedars Restaurant	New Castle	Restaurants	Addition	\$50,000	NA
Walmart Store (Special Project)	New Castle	Retail Stores	Alteration	\$24,900	199,026
CVS Pharmacy Store	New Castle	Retail Stores	New	\$20,125	13,225
Lawrence County Total				\$260,143,031	483,188

Source: CMD Group; Award Planning Inc. 2016



## Land and Property For Sale and Lease

There is approximately 802 acres of retail, industrial, and residential land available for sale within Lawrence County, with none of this space specifically located within Neshannock Township. The asking price per acre was highest for land zoned for retail uses located in New Castle. There is approximately 287,430 square feet of office, retail, and flex square footage space available for sale within Lawrence County, with only 1,900 square feet of office space located within Neshannock Township. The one office property for sale in Neshannock Township is asking approximately \$210 per square foot, much higher than other office properties located within Lawrence County (from \$12 to \$90 per square foot).

There is approximately 475,980 square feet of office, retail, and flex square footage space available for lease within Lawrence County, with 330,390 square feet of this space located within Neshannock Township (70 percent). The asking price for all properties for sale within the Township are currently negotiable, suggesting a “buyers market.”

Table 23. Land For Sale

Street	City	Land Type	Size (Acres)	Asking Price	Price per Acre
4596/4636	New Castle	Retail	1.4	\$535,000	\$371,528
4247/4255	New Castle	Retail	1.5	\$349,900	\$238,027
2878/2898	New Castle	Retail	5.4	\$495,000	\$91,497
Harbor Road and Scotland Lane	New Castle	Residential	58.0	\$459,000	\$7,914
Nye Road and Mountville Road	Portersville	Industrial	50.0	\$299,000	\$5,980
Rte. 168 and Rte. 422	New Castle	Industrial	108.3	\$433,160	\$4,000
300 Careywood Road	Wampum	Retail	124.0	Not Disclosed	NA
732 Darlington Road	Wampum	Retail	454.0	Not Disclosed	NA
			802.6		

Source: LoopNet; 4ward Planning Inc. 2016

Table 24. Lawrence County Total Acreage For Sale (Land)

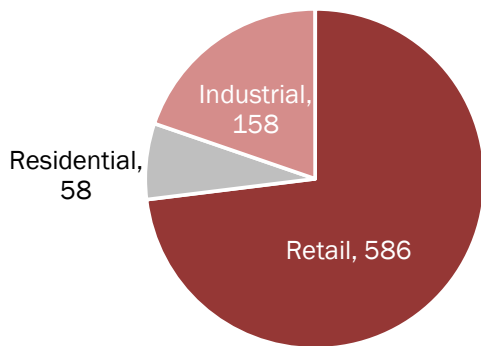


Table 25. Lawrence County Total SF For Sale (Properties)

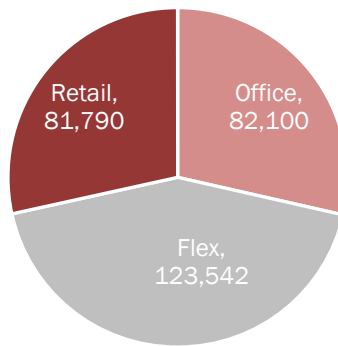


Table 26. Lawrence County Total Square Feet For Lease

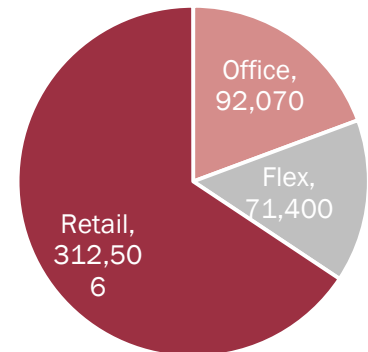


Table 27. Properties For Lease

Street	City	Type	Space Available (SF)	Price per SF/Year
209 Green Ridge Road	New Castle	Flex Space	45,700	Negotiable
26 Nesbit Road	New Castle	Medical Office	6,080	Negotiable
2710 Mercer Road	New Castle	Neighborhood Center	12,666	Negotiable
27 Nesbit Road	New Castle	Office Building	30,000	Negotiable
3135 Wilmington Road	New Castle	Office Building	2,900	Negotiable
3300 Wilmington Road	New Castle	Strip Center	233,045	Negotiable
Neshannock Subtotal			330,391	
101 E. Washington Street	New Castle	Office Building	26,000	\$7.00
916 Croton Ave	New Castle	Other Retail	1,100	\$4.30
20 East South Street	New Castle	Flex Space	25,700	\$4.00
825 N. Croton Ave	New Castle	Office Showroom	18,000	\$4.00
2516 New Butler Road	New Castle	Office Building	9,090	Negotiable
2650 Ellwood Road	New Castle	Strip Center	65,695	Negotiable
Lawrence County Total			475,976	

Source: LoopNet; 4ward Planning Inc. 2016

Table 28. Properties For Sale

Street	City	Type	Size (SF Bldg)	Asking Price	Price per SF Bldg
3309 Wilmington Road	New Castle	Office Building	1,900	\$399,900	\$210
Neshannock Subtotal			1,900		
700 S. Scotland Lane	New Castle	Office Building	20,000	\$1,800,000	\$90
1665 Route 65	Ellwood City	Outlet Center	69,000	\$6,200,000	\$90
2737 West State Street	New Castle	Flex Space	6,300	\$499,000	\$79
126-128 E. Washington Street	New Castle	Restaurant	12,790	\$395,000	\$31
15/20/28 S. Mercer Street	New Castle	Office Building	19,000	\$499,000	\$26
520 Jamison Ave.	Ellport	Flex Space	71,542	\$990,000	\$14
125 E. North Street	New Castle	Office Building	41,200	\$499,000	\$12
209 Green Ridge Road	New Castle	Flex Space	45,700	Not Disclosed	NA
Lawrence County Total			287,432		

Source: LoopNet; 4ward Planning Inc. 2016



# Real Estate Trends Conclusions

## Extremely Low Industrial and Office Vacancy Rates

According to first-quarter 2016 data provided by Cushman & Wakefield for the Pittsburgh metro (does not include Lawrence County), overall industrial vacancy rates (2.5 and 3.3 percent, respectively) and office vacancy rates (6.1 and 4.5 percent, respectively) within neighboring Butler and Beaver Counties are extremely low - suggesting there may be unmet industrial and office demand within the immediate Southwestern PA region.

## Little Planned Development Lawrence County

According to data provided by CMD Group, while there are approximately 12,840 residential units proposed or currently being developed within Southwestern PA (95.5 percent include multi-family residential), none of these are located within Lawrence County. Lawrence County has approximately 483,190 square feet of non-residential projects that are proposed or currently being developed, with just 33,780 square feet (small retail and food stores) located within Neshannock Township.

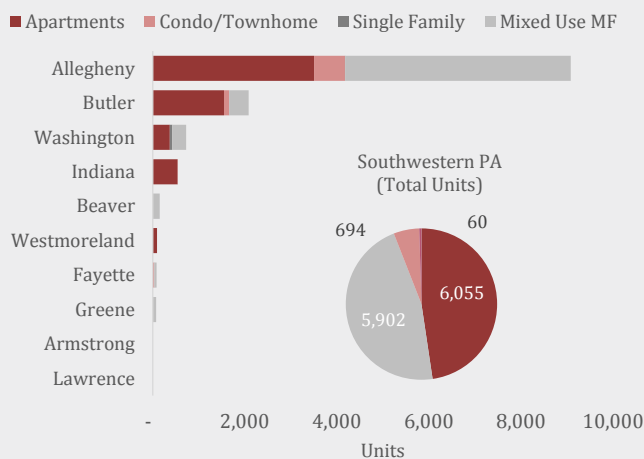
## Available Space for Sale and Lease

According to data provided by LoopNet, within Lawrence County, there is approximately 802 acres of residential and non-residential land available for sale (none within Neshannock Township), 287,430 square feet of non-residential square footage space available for sale (less than one percent within the Township), and 475,980 square feet of non-residential square footage space available for lease (69 percent within the Township).

## Planned Development: Southwestern PA

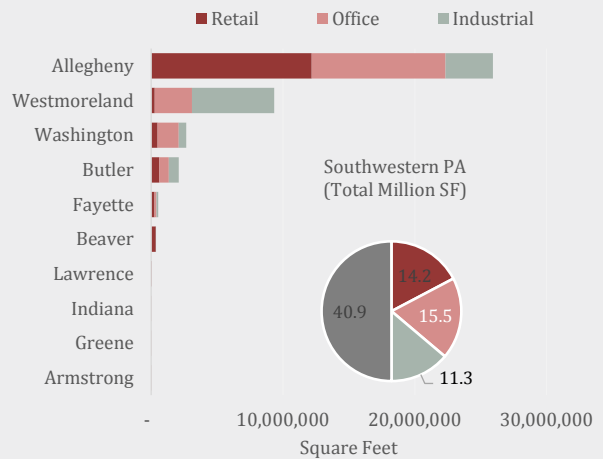
According to 2016 data provided by CMD Group, while there are approximately 12,840 residential units proposed or currently being developed within Southwestern PA (95.5 percent include mixed-use multi-family residential), none of these residential units are located within Lawrence County. As for non-residential square footage, there is approximately 15.5 million square feet of office space, 14.2 million square feet of retail space, and 11.5 million square feet of industrial space proposed or currently being developed within Southwestern PA.

Table 29. Planned or Current Residential Projects



Source: CMD Group; Award Planning Inc. 2016

Table 30. Planned or Current Non-Residential Projects



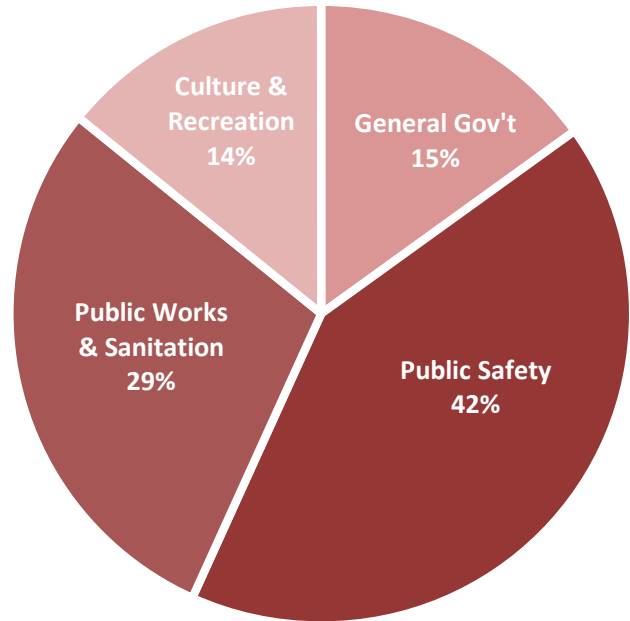
# Municipal Fiscal Trends

In terms of understanding community spending, the Planning Commission identified several regional benchmark communities during the planning process. While there will never be a perfect comparison due to the unique circumstances of each community, understanding benchmark communities can be helpful in understanding spending and fiscal trends. Comparisons were made using information compiled by the PA Department of Community and Economic Development for 2014. Categories are standardized but Neshannock and Peters did not show spending in the categories of Community Development or Other, while Cranberry and Peters Townships showed spending in those categories.

## Municipal Fiscal Trends Conclusions

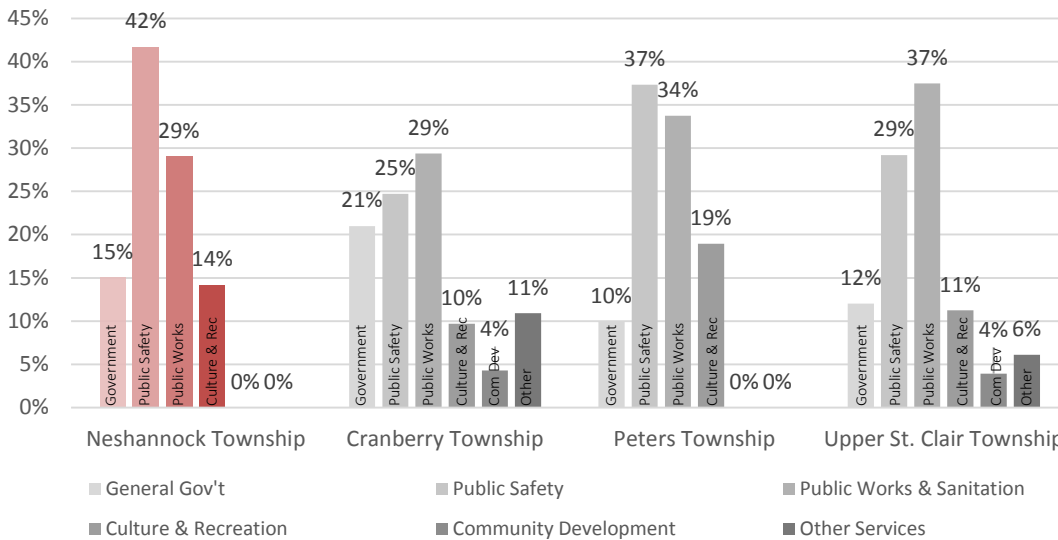
Despite those variations listed above, Our Community's spending in culture and recreation is generally aligned with the benchmark communities. Public safety spending is slightly higher in Our Community than the other benchmark communities - more in line with spending in Peters Township. In terms of development and population, Our Community is more similar to Peters Township than Cranberry or Upper St. Clair.

Table 31. Neshannock Township Community Expenditure, 2014



Source: Neshannock Township 2014 municipal budget

Table 32. Community Expenditure, 2014



Source: Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development Municipal Statistics, 2014





# Our Community's Plan For Tomorrow



## A vision for the future

- Our Community's Plan For Tomorrow . . . . . 70
  - Our Community's Priority Topics and Areas of Opportunity . . . . . 76
  - Key Focus Location A: Millennium Technology Park Opportunity . . . . . 78
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  - Our Community's Plan for Infrastructure and Utilities . . . . . 89
  - Our Community's Plan for Recreation Resources . . . . . 92
  - Our Community's Plan to Enhance Identity . . . . . 96



**Clear community identity is crucial to attract new business and residents.**

## Our Community's Plan For Tomorrow



Building upon a strong foundation, Our Community has a clear vision for the future. Neshannock Township will build on its local economy creating job growth, and instill a sense of pride in the community by establishing a clear sense of identity. The growing economy, and sense of positive identity will allow The Township to establishing strong relationships between regional partners such as PennDOT and the Lawrence County Economic Development Corporation.

**Public amenities like Pearson Park are important parts of Our Community's character.**





## SWOT Analysis

To develop a future vision for Our Community, the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors took part in a brainstorming exercise to gain a common understanding of the community's current and future state. They responded to a series of questions regarding their opinion of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to Neshannock Township.

Strengths and weaknesses are defined as the positive and negative aspects of the community as it exists today. Opportunities are possibilities for future benefits to the community if planning and development are carried out effectively; threats are things that could keep planning and community development from being carried out effectively.

By identifying and focusing on key issues and opportunities, Our Community's plan will be focused and implementable:

- The plan will focus on relevant, real community issues
- The plan will be organized uniquely for Our Community
- Recommendations will be practical and workable
- Partners for implementation will be identified
- Local commitment and ownership will be built



*A comprehensive plan is a record memorializing decisions made and actions committed to and initiated during the planning process. It can also be a guide to decisions to be made and actions to be taken after the plan is completed.*



Quality of Life

Parks  
Ideal Traffic Patterns  
Quality School District *RIDC Business Park*

Golf Course

# STRENGTHS

Recreation Opportunities

Demographics

Fiscal Stability

Access to I-376

Development

Ice Rink

Student & Youth Population

Affordable

Medical Facilities

Living

Professional Population

**Ideal Traffic Patterns.** Access to I-376 and the connected road network capitalizes Our Community's place in the region.

**Professional Population.** There are a number of professionals living and working in Neshannock Township, which supplemented by the number of students and families, makes Neshannock Township a diverse community.

**Quality of Life.** The number of recreation opportunities, quality school district, low taxes, and low cost of living makes the quality of life within in Our Community on of the most significant strengths.

**Affordable Living.** The community's fiscal strength is not only demonstrated through revenue earned in wage tax, but also in development opportunities that support local economy, such as the RIDC Business Park.

**Quality School District.** Neshannock Township School District is ranked 92nd out of 500 of the best schools in the state.





**Lack of Retail Opportunities.** *Lack of retail opportunities limit the opportunity to attract visitors to the area.*

**Traffic Impact.** *Our Community does not require a traffic impact analysis for any type of development, this poses a challenge to planning potential.*

**Lack of Industrial Opportunities.** *A lack of industrial development can be attributed in part to market forces as well as an inability to attract quality developers.*

**Disconnected Pedestrian Network.** *There are significant safety concerns, especially considering lack of sidewalks in some areas, which limit pedestrian activity.*

**Development.** *Some areas lack public sewer, water, and roadway infrastructure that limits development potential.*



Fiscal Concerns

Poland Township Development

Transportation and Connectivity

Future Debt

Transit Planning Limitations

# THREATS

Cranberry Township Development

## Route 18 Safety

### Competition in Development

**Route 18 Safety.** Although PennDOT has an improvement project planned, it is difficult to control issues related to Route 18 because it is a state road.

**Transportation and Connectivity.** Transportation and connectivity concerns include safety, especially along Route 18, a major community corridor.

**Competition in Development.** In nearby Cranberry and other Townships, existing retail development attracts more residents and poses a potential threat to Our Community if retail development is not considered in conjunction with residential development.

**Fiscal Concerns.** Fiscal threats pose a concern when considering future debt for public amenities and infrastructure.

**Transit Planning Limitations.** Our Community does not require a traffic impact analysis for any type of development, this poses a challenge to planning potential.



Industry

# Medical Growth Corridor

Residential Growth

Capture New Residents

# OPPORTUNITIES

Millennium Park Development

Development Potential Student and Youth Population Demographics

Development

# Mitchell Road Corridor

Low Crime

Bedroom Community

Quality School District

Quality of Life

Agricultural Zoning District

**Mitchell Road Corridor.** Extensive development potential presents itself in the Mitchell Road corridor and along Route 18, north of Mitchell Road.

**Medical Growth Corridor.** The residential growth and potential for expanding healthcare opportunities are not only development opportunities but significant factors in the quality of life for Neshannock residents.

**Quality School District.** Neshannock Township School District is ranked 92nd out of 500 of the best schools in the state.

**Millennium Park Development.** There are significant development opportunities for industrial uses in Millennium Park.

**Agricultural Zoning District.** Preservation of environmental and agricultural assets could be accomplished through zoning.



# Our Community's Priority Topics and Areas of Opportunity

Building upon a strong foundation, Our Community has a clear vision for the future. That future includes:

*Our Community's Plan for the future is comprehensive, but doesn't bog down under its own weight. There are three strategic priority topics and focus areas of the Township that are given particular focus because of their importance to the future of Our Community.*

- Strong local economy with consistent job growth that is an important part of the region's economy.
- Unique community character that instills a sense of pride in residents and welcomes visitors.
- Clear community identity that is communicated in a way that attracts new businesses and residents.
- Cooperative working relationships with regional partners such as PennDOT and Lawrence County Economic Development Corporation.

Throughout the planning process, key topics and focus areas emerged that formed important considerations impacting all components of this plan.

## Priority Topics



### Economic Development

The medical corridor provides jobs and serves the community's older population. This economic driver has the potential to grow. Likewise, business and industrial park development has potential. The Millennium and RIDC parks, the Shell Cracker Plant in nearby Beaver County will have a positive influence on economic development opportunities.



### Community Infrastructure

Water service is limited which impacts potential residential and non-residential development. Sewer service is limited and is not aligned with potentially developable areas. Roadways need improved maintenance, stormwater management and safety upgrades.



### Community Character

Neshannock is a bedroom community for several regional locations. The residential neighborhoods need to be protected and supported while Our Community encourages new residential development.





*Our Community's landscape and complimentary land use mix contribute to its unique character. Focusing on key geographic areas within Our Community will encourage the efficiency and effectiveness of this Plan's implementation.*

## Priority Areas of Development Opportunity

**A**

### Millennium Technology Park Opportunity

This area of Our Community has the potential for industrial and light industrial development. The Millennium Technology Park was formed in early 2000 in an effort to introduce further economic opportunities to the region. Occupying a total of 413 acres at Keystone Drive, the property is owned by the Lawrence County Economic Development Corporation (LCEDC).

**B**

### Chapin Road/Residential Growth Opportunities

This area of Our Community has the potential for future residential development.

**C**

### Business Growth Opportunities

This area of Our Community has the potential for business and light industrial development. RIDC is a business park that offers 58 acres in developable parcel for business growth.





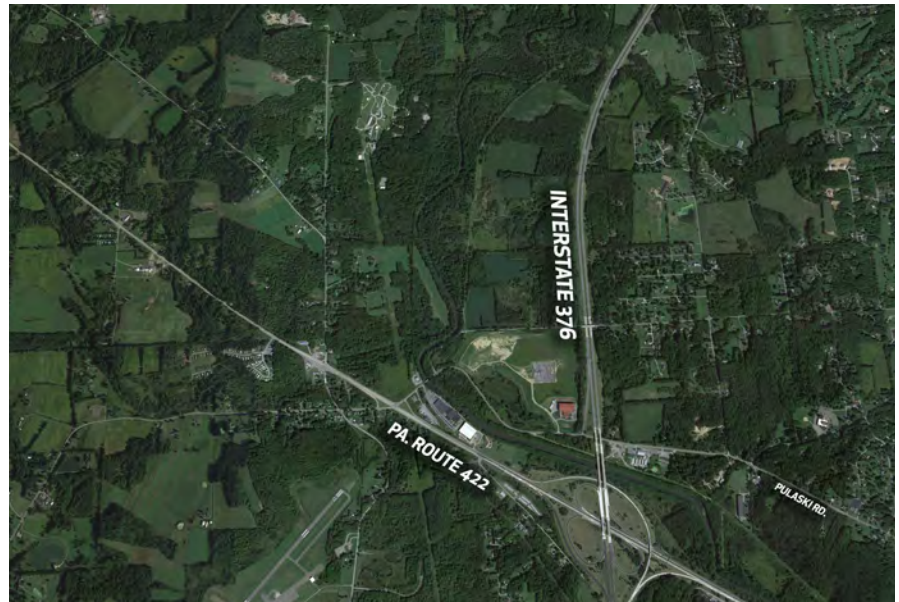
## Key Focus Location A: Millennium Technology Park Opportunity

Bordered by PA. Route 60 and Harbor Road, this 413-acre business park was approved by the Lawrence County Planning Commission and enables the Lawrence County Economic Development Corporation to offer opportunities to varied-scaled businesses. Although there is currently one tenant occupying the property, there is much opportunity for introducing diverse industries into Our Community.

***Our Community's top priority is to build and maintain a partnership with Lawrence County and Lawrence County Economic Development to cooperatively attract and retain new office and light industrial tenants to Millennium Office Park.***

### Recommendations

Work with Lawrence County Economic Development to target smaller-scale development opportunities in Millennium Park. Small-scale office and light industrial development projects will be more feasible due to the park's site constraints and will also contribute to a diverse and sustainable local economy.





## Key Focus Location B: Chapin Road/Residential Growth Opportunities

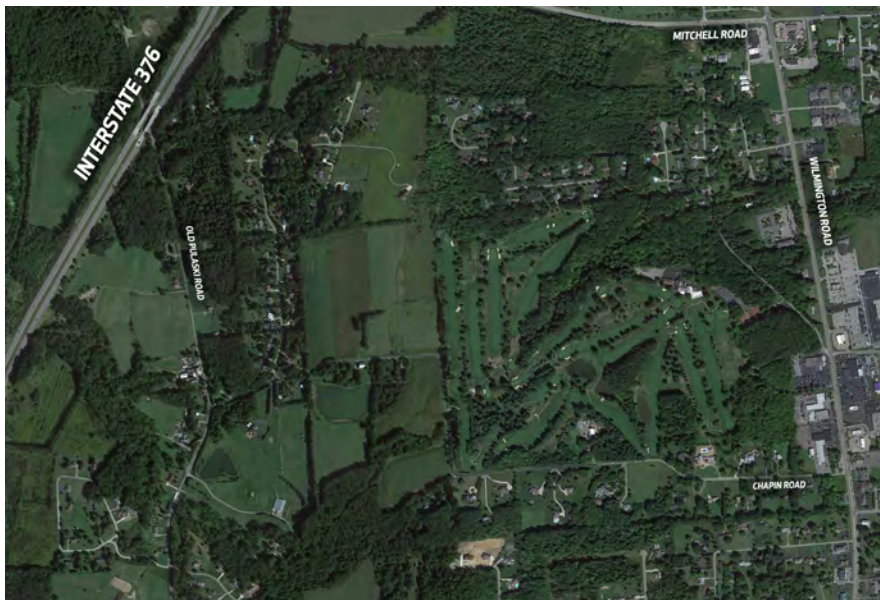


Bordering the western and northern boundary of the New Castle County Club, Chapin Road occupies the medium-density residential future land use. With a considerable amount of vacant developable land, these area presents opportunities for residential growth that can attract new residents to Our Community. Chapin Road is connected to Old Pulaski Road and one of the major roads, Wilmington Road. This connection provides any new residential projects with access to commercial amenities as well as close access to I-376.

### Recommendations

This area along Chapin Road is just outside the boundaries of existing water and sewer service. In order to accommodate development within the area, Our Community will need to expand the sewer and water service to the western border of the Township.

*I-376 is an important corridor and can be used as a driver for future development.*





## Key Focus Location C: Business Growth Opportunities

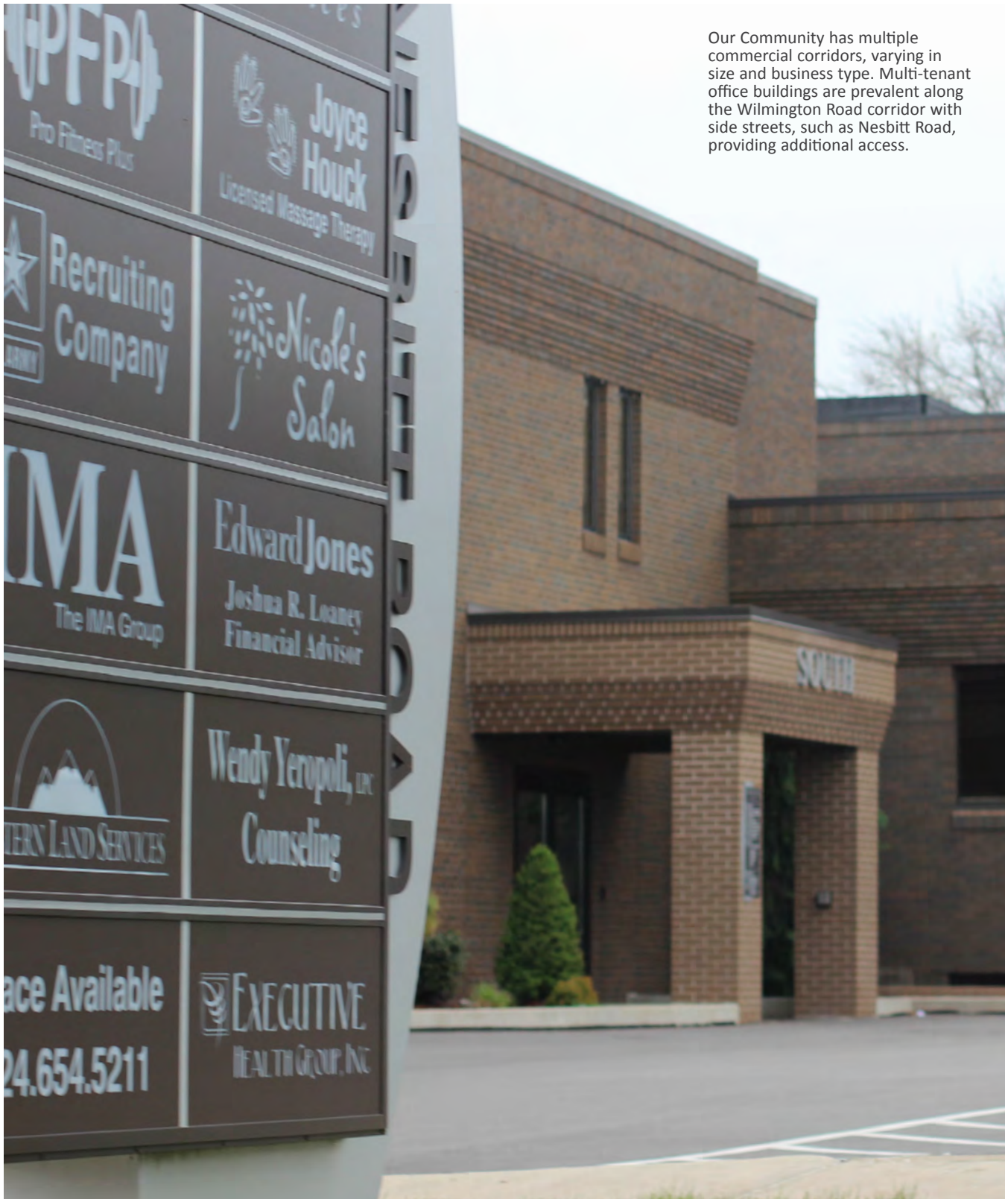
Building upon the existing commercial corridor that runs along Wilmington Road would not only increase the options available in Local Commercial amenities, but significant opportunities for growth are also present in designating an area for regional commercial land use. With the close proximity of major roadways such as I-376, the regional commercial area can connect Our Community with the surrounding area, attracting economic investment not only from residents within Our Community, but also throughout the region. Light industrial land use coupled with business park development also contribute to business growth development. The potential to expand in these areas would not also diversify the industries that would reside within the Township but would also contribute to employment opportunities for residents.

***The 74-acre RIDC Neshannock Business Park offers prime development opportunities in the Northwest quadrant of Our Community.***

### Recommendations

This area has the potential for regional commercial or light industrial development. Additional sewer infrastructure would need to be expanded into this area to support commercial or industrial development.





Our Community has multiple commercial corridors, varying in size and business type. Multi-tenant office buildings are prevalent along the Wilmington Road corridor with side streets, such as Nesbitt Road, providing additional access.



# Our Community's Future Land Use Plan

Our Community's Plan for future land use is building upon the existing land use patterns and capitalizes on development trends and opportunities for future economic development.

Key Issues include sewer and water infrastructure, transportation infrastructure, economic development, and residential communities.

Community Development Objectives:

- Strong and vibrant commercial corridor along Route 18.
- New medical, business, and light industrial development in Millennium Park.
- Continued residential growth to provide a variety of housing types to accommodate a growing population.

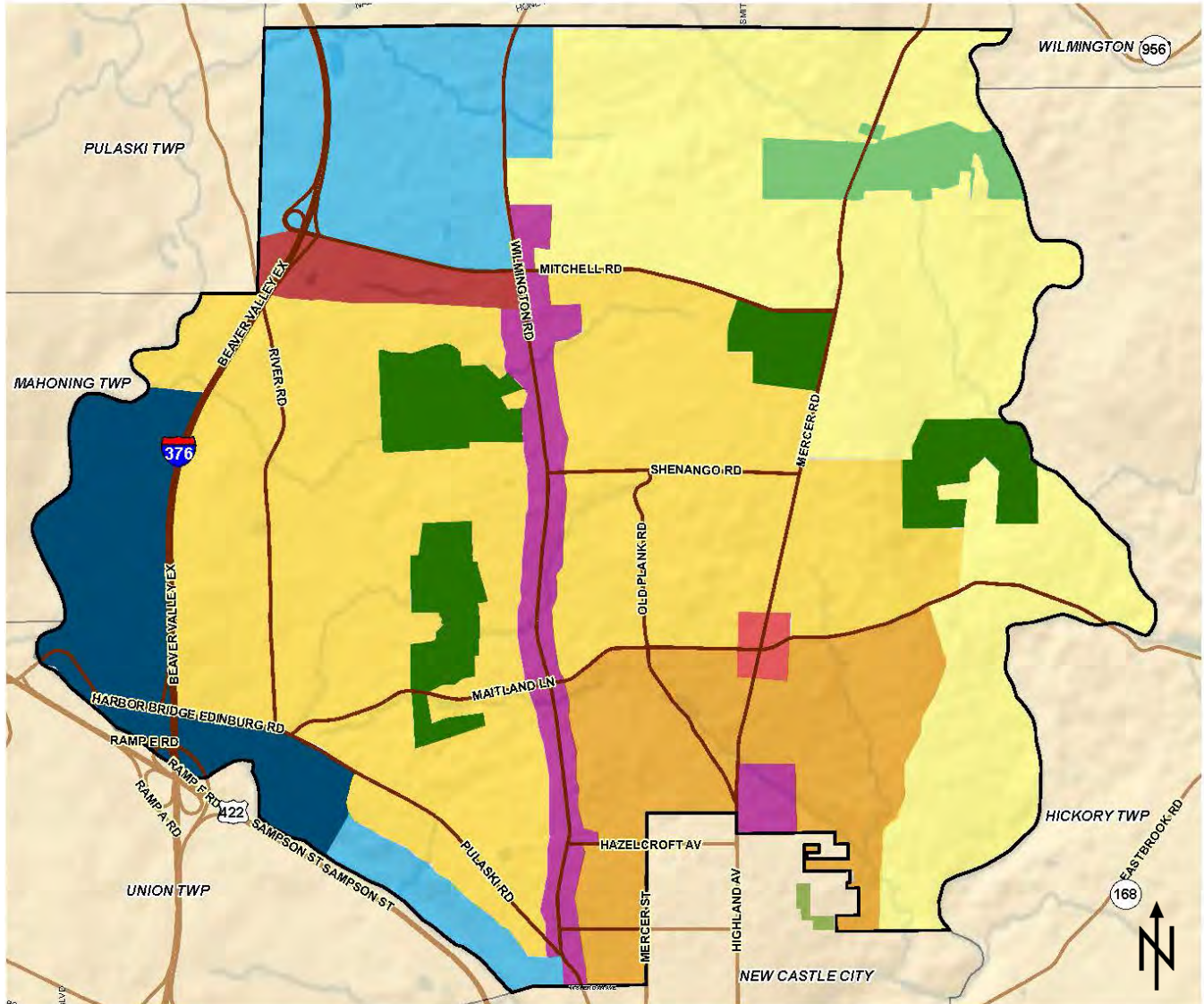
Building on the previously described inventory and analyses, the Future Land Use map identifies the following areas:

***Our Community's Plan for future land use is building upon the existing land use patterns and capitalizes on development trends and opportunities for future economic development.***

-  Privately-Owned Conservancy Land: This area has limited development potential due to its private ownership.
-  Industrial: This area is designated for industrial uses and industrial parks. Based on the current zoning, industrial areas provide the second largest vacant, developable acreage for development.
-  Light Industrial/Business Park: These areas are designated for light industrial, office space, or business park uses.
-  Regional Commercial: This area has potential for larger scale retail development that can connect to the surrounding area due to the close access of 376. Potential development can include hotels and major retailers.
-  Local Commercial: This area has potential for medium scale retail development along a major corridor within the Township. Route 18 is a heavily trafficked area that provides an ideal environment for highly visible retail and mixed-use development.
-  Neighborhood Commercial: This area is designated for small scale retail development that can also serve as a major node or connectivity point between New Castle and the Township.
-  Low Density Residential: This area is designated for low density residential development that allows for larger and widely dispersed parcel development that is more ideal for single-family homes.
-  Medium Density Residential: This area is designated for a more diverse range of housing types that can be ideal for single- or multi- family residences.
-  Medium-High Density Residential: This area is designated for smaller, closely placed parcel development for single- and multi-family residences. Higher density areas are to be placed towards the center of the Township.
-  Public/Semi-Public Open Space: This area is for parks, gamelands, or other recreational open space.



Figure 24. Our Community's Future Land Use Plan



**Legend**

-  Privately-Owned Conservancy
-  Light Industrial/Business Park
-  Industrial
-  Local Commercial
-  Regional Commercial
-  Neighborhood Commercial
-  Low Density Residential
-  Medium Density Residential
-  Medium - High Density Residential
-  Public/Semi-Public Open Space

- Privately-Owned Conservancy Land** 206 acres
- Industrial** 771 acres
- Light Industrial/Business Park** 1,078 acres
- Regional Commercial** 200 acres
- Local Commercial** 496 acres
- Neighborhood Commercial** 49 acre
- Low Density Residential** 2,856 acres
- Medium Density Residential** 3,834 acres
- Medium-High Density Residential** 1,072 acres
- Public/Semi-Public Open Space** 622 acres

**Land Use Acreage**

- 206 acres
- 771 acres
- 1,078 acres
- 200 acres
- 496 acres
- 49 acre
- 2,856 acres
- 3,834 acres
- 1,072 acres
- 622 acres

Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission



## School District Implications

As of the 2010 census, the average household size in Our Community was 2.29 people per household (2015 data indicates that it is decreasing slightly). 67% of the community's households are families and 25% of those households include individuals under 18 years old.

If this trend continues and the community develops as shown on the map titled Our Community's Future Land Use and Developable Areas, the school district will likely experience an increase in student body population.

The current residential areas of Our Community are developed at a rate of about one household for every two acres. At current densities, future development could result in as many as 1,650 new households in the community.

Building on the previously described inventory and analyses, the Developable Areas by Land Use map identifies the following areas:










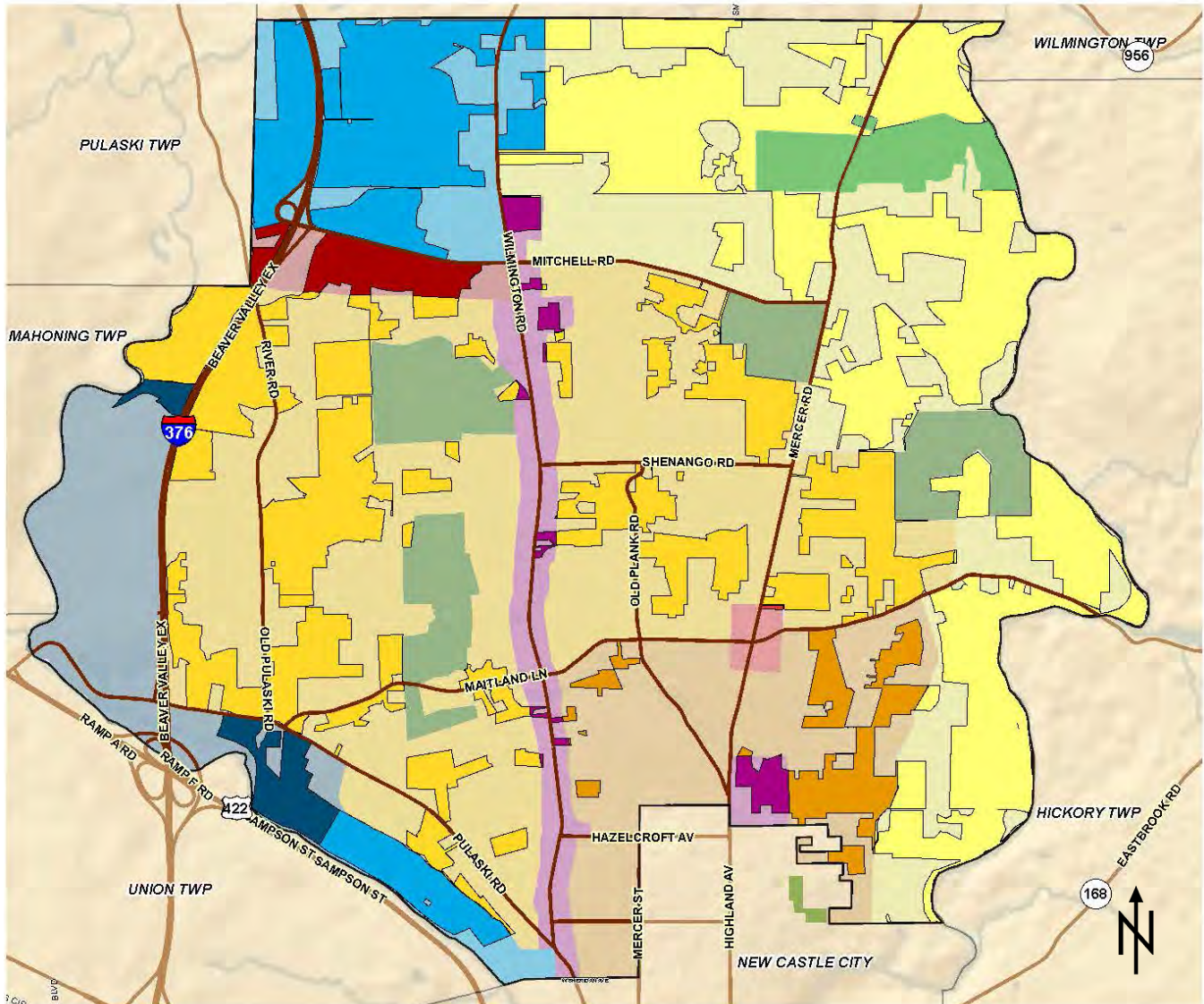
-  Privately-Owned Conservancy Land: This area has limited development potential due to its private ownership.
-  Industrial: With 115 acres of vacant developable land, this area's potential for development is concentrated in the northern and southern points of the area.
-  Light Industrial/Business Park: This area has significant potential for development. With 719 acres, the available vacant developable land makes up 92 percent of this designated land use.
-  Regional Commercial: This area has 123 acres of vacant developable land, representing 62 percent of this designated land use.
-  Local Commercial: With 74 acres out of a total 496 acres, this area has limited vacant developable land. However, while developing in areas that are vacant, investment could be made into the existing infrastructure to ensure future development and the existing uses have a cohesive character and thriving environment.
-  Neighborhood Commercial: Although this area does not have significant acres available in vacant developable land, the acre available can add to the existing environment. There is also potential in upgrading any existing facilities or further investing in the character of the area.
-  Low Density Residential: This area presents the largest opportunity for development, with 1,741 acres of vacant developable land within this land use.
-  Medium Density Residential: This area has the second largest potential for development, with 1,359 acres of vacant developable land available.
-  Medium-High Density Residential: With 216 acres available in vacant developable land, this area has only 35 percent of the designated land use available for future development.
-  Public/Semi-Public Open Space: This area is for parks, gamelands, or other recreational open space.



Figure 25. Our Community's Future Land Use and Developable Areas



**Legend**

-  Privately-Owned Conservancy Land
-  Industrial
-  Light Industrial/Business Park
-  Regional Commercial
-  Local Commercial
-  Neighborhood Commercial
-  Low Density Residential
-  Medium Density Residential
-  Medium - High Density Residential
-  Public/Semi-Public Open Space

- Industrial**
- Light Industrial/Business Park**
- Regional Commercial**
- Local Commercial**
- Neighborhood Commercial**
- Low Density Residential**
- Medium Density Residential**
- Medium-High Density Residential**

**Vacant Developable Land Within Designated Land Use**

- 115 acres
- 719 acres
- 123 acres
- 74 acres
- 1 acre
- 1,741 acres
- 1,359 acres
- 216 acres

The map above details the Vacant Developable Land that is available within each of the identified land use areas. Although the colors for the land use categories are slightly faded, their vacant developable areas are highlighted with a brighter shade of the category's color and outlined with a black line. This emphasizes the areas where future development may occur and what type of future land use was identified.

Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission



## Economic Impact Analysis

Building on an understanding of the Future Land Use Plan and the developable land in Our Community, we completed an analysis of potential economic impacts that could result from future development in our Township.

*Development build-out was projected over the next twenty years.*

Because development can take many forms, we made assumptions about the potential types of development in each future land use category. We based these assumptions on recent, planned and current developments in Our Community as well as typical regulations (such as floor area ratio) for various development types.

We estimated costs per square foot/unit assumptions for new land use to estimate total construction cost inputs (75% hard costs and 25% soft costs). For modeling purposes, land use buildout and associated construction costs were evenly allocated over a 20-year period (2017-2036).

Table 33. Development Buildout Assumptions

Future Land Use	Buildout Assumptions			Potential Development	
	Vacant Developable Land (Acres)	Development Density		Dwelling Units	Square Feet
Industrial	115	17,000	SF/Acre		1,955,000
Light Industrial/Business Park	719	8,500	SF/Acre		6,111,500
Regional Commercial	123	5,00	SF/Acre		615,000
Local Commercial	74	3,000	SF/Acre		222,000
Neighborhood Commercial	1	2,000	SF/Acre		2,000
Low Density Residential	1,784	0.25	Units/Acre	446	
Medium Density Residential	1,359	1	Units/Acre	1,359	
Medium-High Density Residential	216	3	Units/Acre	648	
	4,316			2,453	





If full buildout were to occur in the 20-year timeframe based on the Future Land Use Plan and our assumptions, the following results could be expected:

**516 to 600 total jobs per year:** Proposed land use buildout is expected to generate between 516 and 595 total (direct, indirect and induced) full and part time jobs (construction, design and retail jobs) each year, over the 2017 to 2036 time period.

**600 new jobs per year.**

**Over \$1.3 billion in total economic output:** In year one (2017), the propose land use buildout is expected to create over \$89.8 million in direct, indirect, and induced economic output as a result of new development. Over the 20-year time period, proposed new development is estimated to generate over \$1.3 billion (adjusted for inflation) in total economic output.

**\$1.3 billion in economic output.**

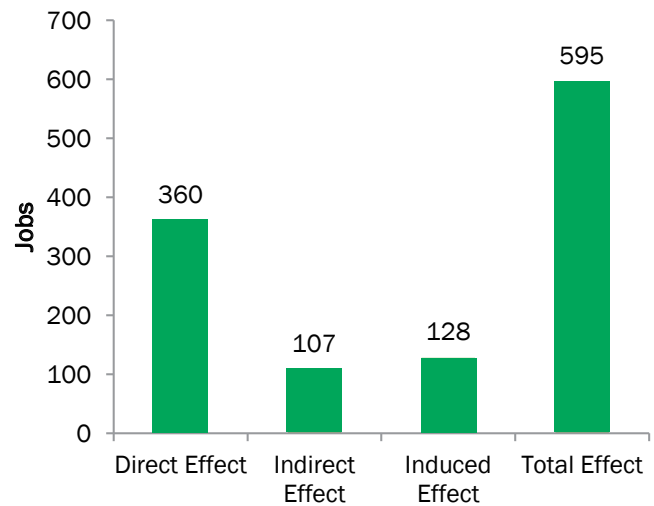
**Between \$37.2 and \$45.5 million in taxes:** In year one (2017), proposed land use buildout is expected to generate between \$663,900 and \$811,400 in state and local taxes, largely from indirect business taxes. Over the 2017 to 2036 time period, proposed new development is estimated to generate between \$37.2 and \$45.5 million (adjusted for inflation) in total taxes.

**\$45.5 million in new taxes.**

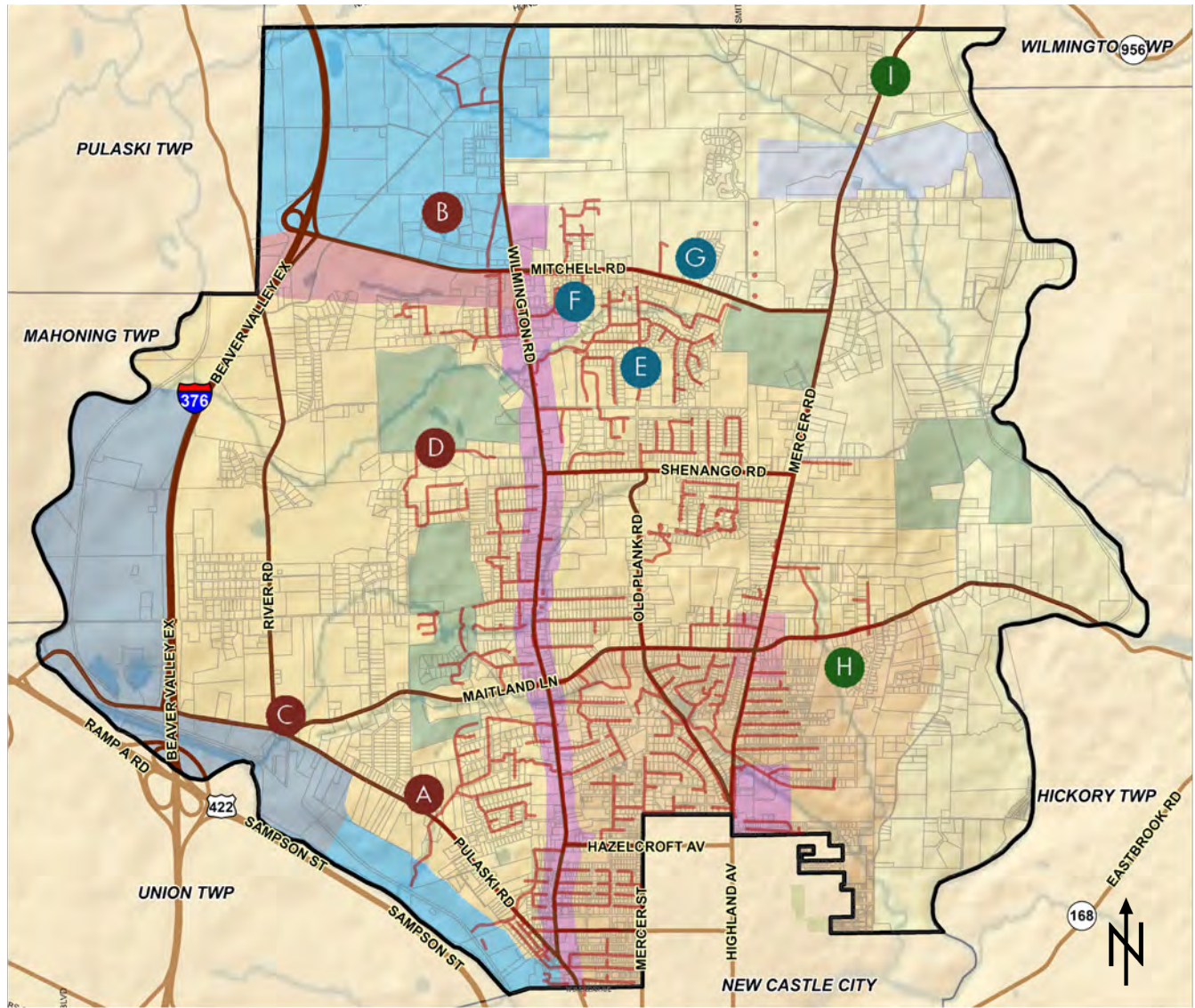
Table 34. Impact Analysis Development Construction Cost

Construction Cost		
Cost per Sq. Ft.	Cost per Unit	Total Cost*
\$90		\$175,950,000
\$75		\$458,362,500
\$110		\$67,650,000
\$90		\$19,980,000
\$90		\$180,000
	\$362,500	\$161,675,000
	\$362,500	\$492,637,500
	\$290,000	\$187,920,000
		<b>1,564,355,000</b>

Table 35. Impact Analysis Employment Per Year



**Figure 26. Our Community's Planned Infrastructure Projects**



**Short Range Projects**

- A** Cochran Acres Area
- B** Northgate Industrial Park
- C** Kings Manor Area
- D** Orchard Acres Area

**Individual Projects**

- E** Old Plank Road Area
- F** Camela Drive Area
- G** Justice Lane/ Mitchell Road Area

**Long Range Projects**

- H** Highland Park/ Blews Acres Area
- I** Brookside Farms Area



# Our Community's Plan for Infrastructure and Utilities

Our Community's most recent Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan Update (Act 537 Plan) was adopted in 1996. The Act 537 Plan provides an estimation of future housing and commercial development and proposes how to meet the sewage needs of this potential growth within the next 10 years. A new Act 537 Plan was prepared in 2008. That plan has not yet been adopted but many of the concepts in the plan are incorporated into this Comprehensive Plan to support future development and growth. The areas discussed below highlight proposed projects that expand the sewage system in Our Community.

## Cochran Acres Area

This project will be west of the existing system that runs along Pulaski Road. Estimated to cost around \$985,000, this sewer system will provide services to about 84 residents in Our Community. This is a priority sewer expansion area associated with business growth opportunities in Key Focus Location C.

## Northgate Industrial Park

This project will be on a now defunct strip mine that is north of Mitchell Road. The proposed area contains six industrial companies, with room for additional industrial development. The existing sewer system in the area consists of grinder pumps and pressure sewer systems. By building upon the existing system, the proposed project would provide services to an additional four customers, and cost an estimated \$447,831.

## Kings Manor Area

This project will proceed north of Maitland Avenue, along Pulaski Road. This project will connect to the proposed Cochran Acres Area project and pumped by the Shenango Lift Station. Estimated at \$607, 224, this proposed sewer system will provide services to 77 customers in Our Community.

## Orchard Acres Area

This project will be located east of Pulaski Road, along Chapin Road. Following this route, the system will connect to the Pulaski Road Pump Station, prior to connecting to the proposed Kings Manor Area system. There are two proposed schemes that vary in cost and service location. Alternate 1A would primarily provide service to the western areas of Our Community; however, Alternate 1B will only provide service up to Randall Road. Although both alternative will serve 56 customers, Alternate 1A is estimated to cost \$893,362 and Alternate B is estimated to cost \$627,785.

***To support current and future development, significant sewer investments are underway or planned. Future economic growth will require continued investment in supporting infrastructure.***





Expanding sewer service will help to protect natural resources like groundwater and surface water - resources that contribute to the quality of Neshannock's natural and recreational resources.



### Old Plank Road Area

This project is located along Plank road and set to connect to the Parkside Village Plan development before connecting to the Valhalla Drive Lift Station and finally the Pulaski Road Pump or a proposed Shenango River trunk sewer. Potentially serving 12 customers, the project is estimated to cost \$84, 784.

### Camela Drive Area

This project will service a cul-de-sac located off of Mitchell Road. A pressure sewer system has been identified as the best method implementing a sewer system in this area. The pressure sewer would run along Mitchell Road and connect to the Valhalla Drive Lift Station before redirecting to the Pulaski Road Pump Station or a proposed Shenango River trunk sewer. Potentially serving 10 customers, this project is estimated to cost \$89,174.

### Justice Lane/ Mitchell Road Area

This project is located to the east of Neshannock High School, along Mitchell Road. This proposed project can potentially provide service to homes located along Mitchell Road and the Justice Plan area. They would then connect to the existing sewer network on Mitchell Road before connecting to the Valhalla Drive Lift Station and Pulaski Road Pump Station. There are two proposed schemes that vary in cost and service location. Alternate 1 would utilize a conventional gravity collector sewer with a pump station; whereas, Alternate 2 considers a pressure sewer system. Alternate 1 is estimated to cost \$460,294 and Alternate 2 is estimated to cost \$354,914. Alternate 1 was chosen for completion of the sewer system update because it would not limit the future growth of the area the way Alternative 2 would, and ultimately can serve 33 customers.

### Highland Park/ Blews Acres Area

This project is located off Maitland Drive, with the proposed sewer system to be placed behind Carol Drive before connecting to the Maitland Lane Lift Station. There are two proposed schemes that vary in cost and service location. Alternate 1 would cost \$886,338 and utilize a conventional gravity collector sewer with two pump stations; whereas, Alternate 2 costs \$795,259 and considers a pressure sewer system. The proposed sewer system would service 86 customers in the area.

### Brookside Farms Area

The proposed sewer system would connect to the existing Mercer Road system before flowing into the Maitland Lane Lift Station. There are two proposed schemes that vary in cost and method. Alternate 1A would cost \$955,034 and utilize a conventional gravity collector sewer with a pump station; whereas, Alternate 1B costs \$1,069,074 and considers a conventional gravity collector sewer with two pump stations. The proposed sewer system would service 86 customers in the area.

***Expanding the sewage service throughout Our Community is a paramount element of development. Not only would these efforts impact areas where residents of the Township inhabit, but would also enable residential or commercial development in areas that are vacant and void of any utility resources.***



## Our Community's Plan for Recreation Resources

Our Community is rich in resources. A significant part of our plan includes supporting and preserving our resources. Future projects include the following:

### Potential Connection Area with Existing and Proposed Neshannock Trail

New Castle has been working to create and extend the planned Neshannock Trail near the border with Our Community. This represents an opportunity with work with New Castle to create a shared amenity, that could potentially link Our Community's residents with downtown New Castle and the natural areas on the eastern edge of the Township.

### Proposed Shenango River Water Trail Access Point

As part of the Shenango River Water Trail, an access point is proposed in Our Community, presenting a different kind of amenity and an opportunity to showcase Our Community to visitors.

### Shenango/Beaver River Water Trail

The Shenango/Beaver River Water Trail runs along the western border of Our Community. While the trail already exists, we can work with regional organizations and our neighboring communities to promote this asset for residents and visitors.

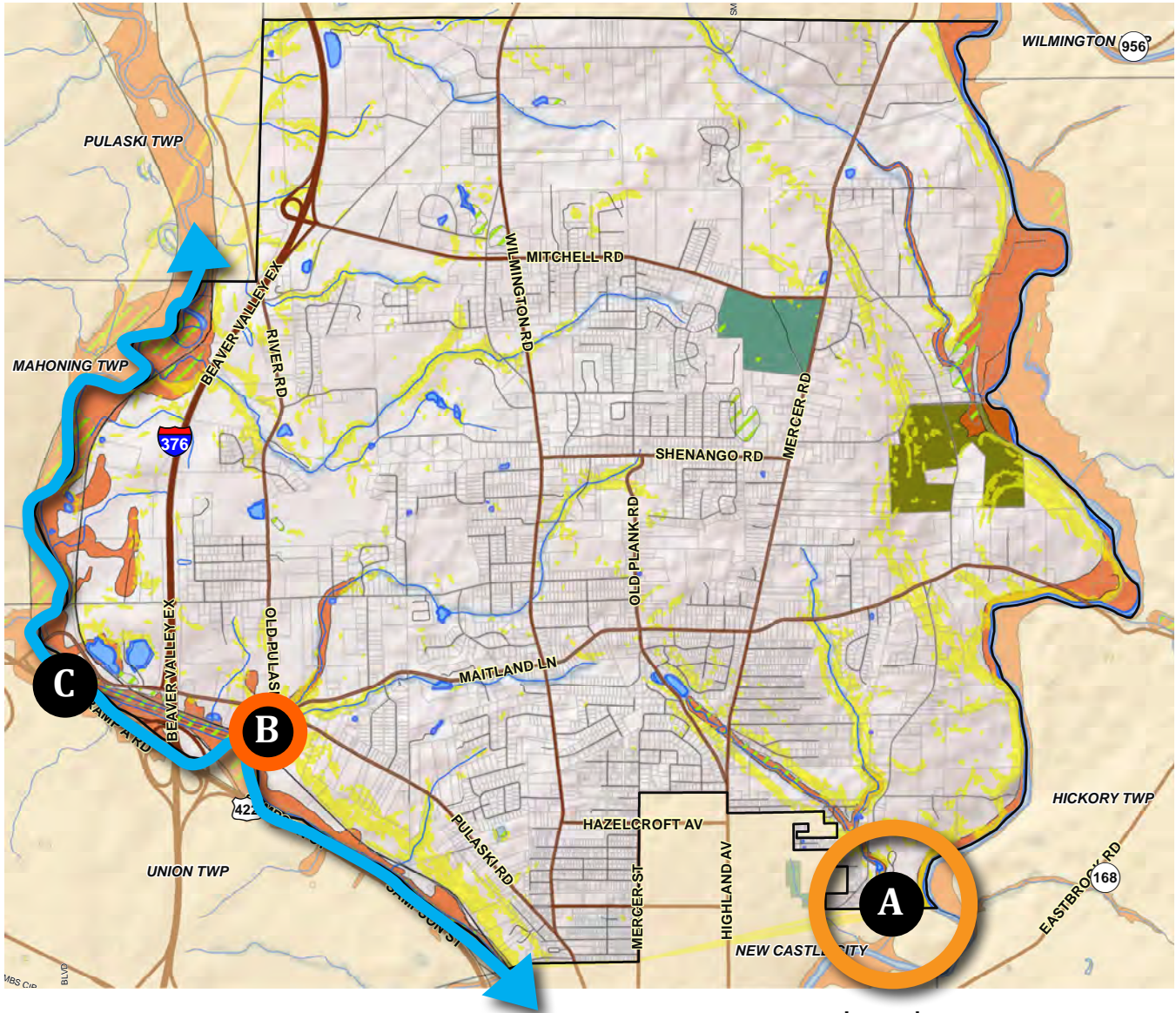
The Lawrence County Greenways Plan identifies the Shenango/Beaver River Water Trail as an important project. The proposed Harbor Access Point will be near the intersection of Kings Chapel Road and Pulaski Road in the western reaches of Neshannock Township, near the small community of Harbor. The Greenways Plan also recommends that the County approach the Lawrence County Corporation for Economic Development to inquire about constructing the public boat launch and river access on their Millennium Park property.

Our Community can support the County in the effort to develop a river access point outlined above. Our Community can also support efforts to develop an access point at the confluence of the Neshannock Creek and Shenango River. This support will further enhance the amenities around the Neshannock Trail and any proposed extensions into Our Community.

***Our Community is rich in recreation resources. We can enhance those resources with strategic actions that will enhance community amenities for existing residents and also serve to attract future residents and businesses looking for a place to locate where their workforce has a great place to live and work.***











Figure 27. Existing & Proposed Trails & Natural Resources

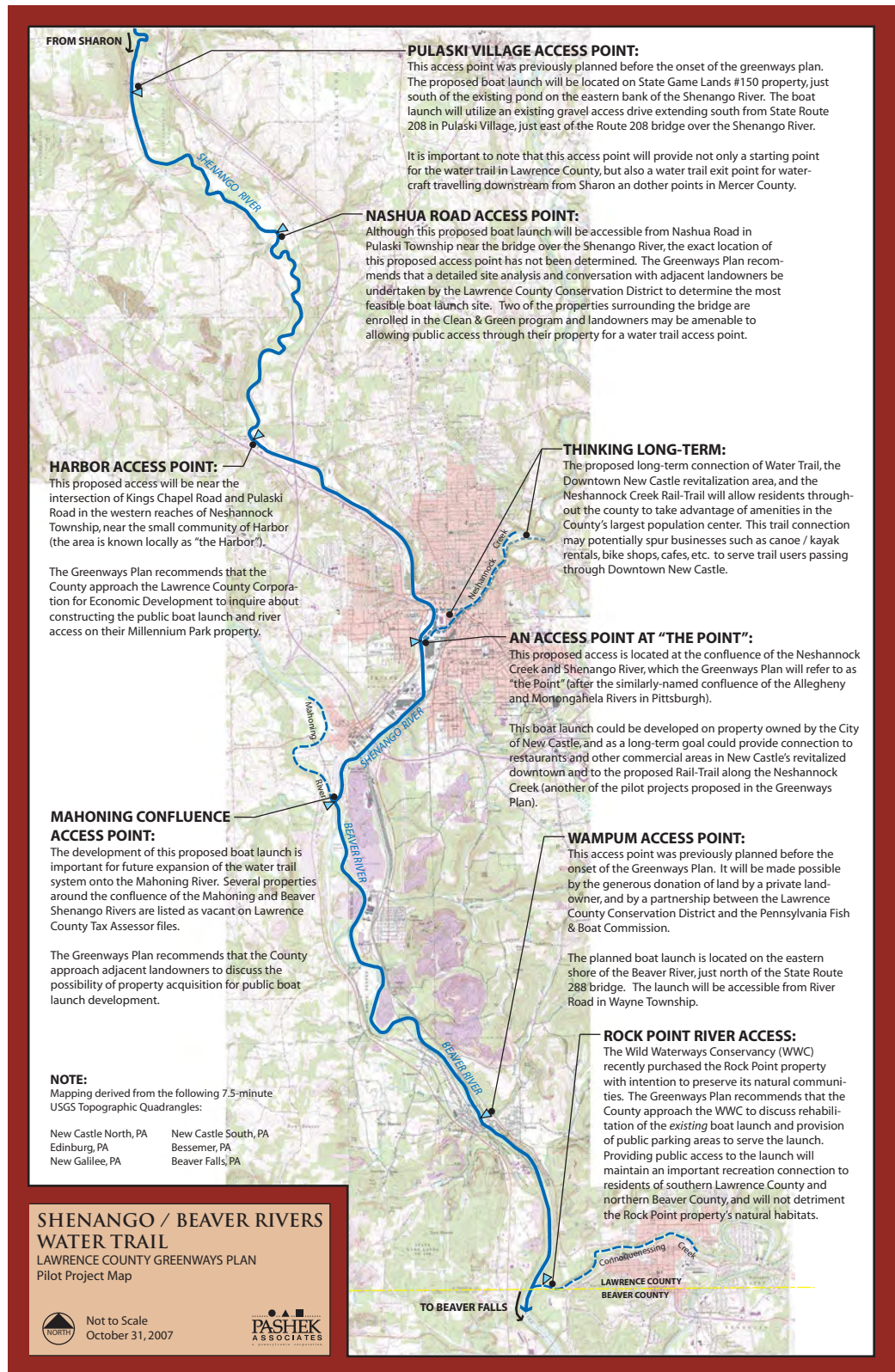


- A** Potential Connection Area with Existing and Proposed Neshannock Trail
- B** Proposed Shenango River Water Trail Access Point
- C** Shenango River Water Trail

**Legend**

-  Stream
-  Pond
-  NWI Wetland
-  Severe Slope Greater Than 22%
-  100-Year Flood
-  Park
-  Gamelands
-  Vacant Land







## Neshannock Trail

The Neshannock Trail trailhead is located at 525 Croton Avenue, New Castle, PA, 16101. The Neshannock Trail project was completed in October of 2015. This trail was identified as a priority pilot project in the 2008 Lawrence County Greenways Plan, and the County worked diligently with PennDOT District 11 and many property owners to clear the right-of-way and make this trail a reality for residents and visitors to the area. Right-of-way was cleared in 2012 with final design and plan elements finalized, and in the fall of 2015, the trail was constructed and opened to the public. The trail begins at Croton Avenue and runs approximately one mile along the Neshannock Creek to Dilworth Avenue in the City of New Castle.

In 2014, the City of New Castle created a Riverwalk plan that recommended a connection from the proposed Neshannock Trail to the City's Riverwalk Park. Lawrence County has applied for funding to improve the connection from Riverwalk Park across the North Street Bridge to the New Castle Transit Station, to the trailhead of the newly-constructed Neshannock Trail. Below is the concept drawing – the final design is still in the finishing stages. The project is anticipated to be completed in 2017.

Our Community has an opportunity to work with New Castle to create additional connections from the Neshannock Trail at Dilworth Avenue into Our Community. This effort could help to enhance connections between the communities, create a recreation amenity in Our Community and connect residents to the New Castle Business District.

*New Castle has been working to develop the Neshannock Trail, which is planned to run along the border of Our Community and could become an important part of our recreation network.*



**N. CROTON AVE. (SR108):** ADT - 8,100; POSTED SPEED - 30MPH  
 ROADWAY WIDTH, CURB TO CURB - 30'; 6' WIDE CONCRETE SIDEWALKS (BOTH SIDES OF ROAD)  
 8' DISTANCE FROM STONE WALL TO FACE OF CURB, SOUTHBOUND

**New Castle Riverwalk Project**   
**Connection to Neshannock Trail**



## Community Identity Examples

Identifying priority areas and corridors can inform the type of development that occurs at these focal points. Community gateways like the ones pictured can increase the activity that occurs in these areas by implementing aesthetic elements and providing spaces for both pedestrian and vehicular activity.



# Our Community's Plan to Enhance Identity

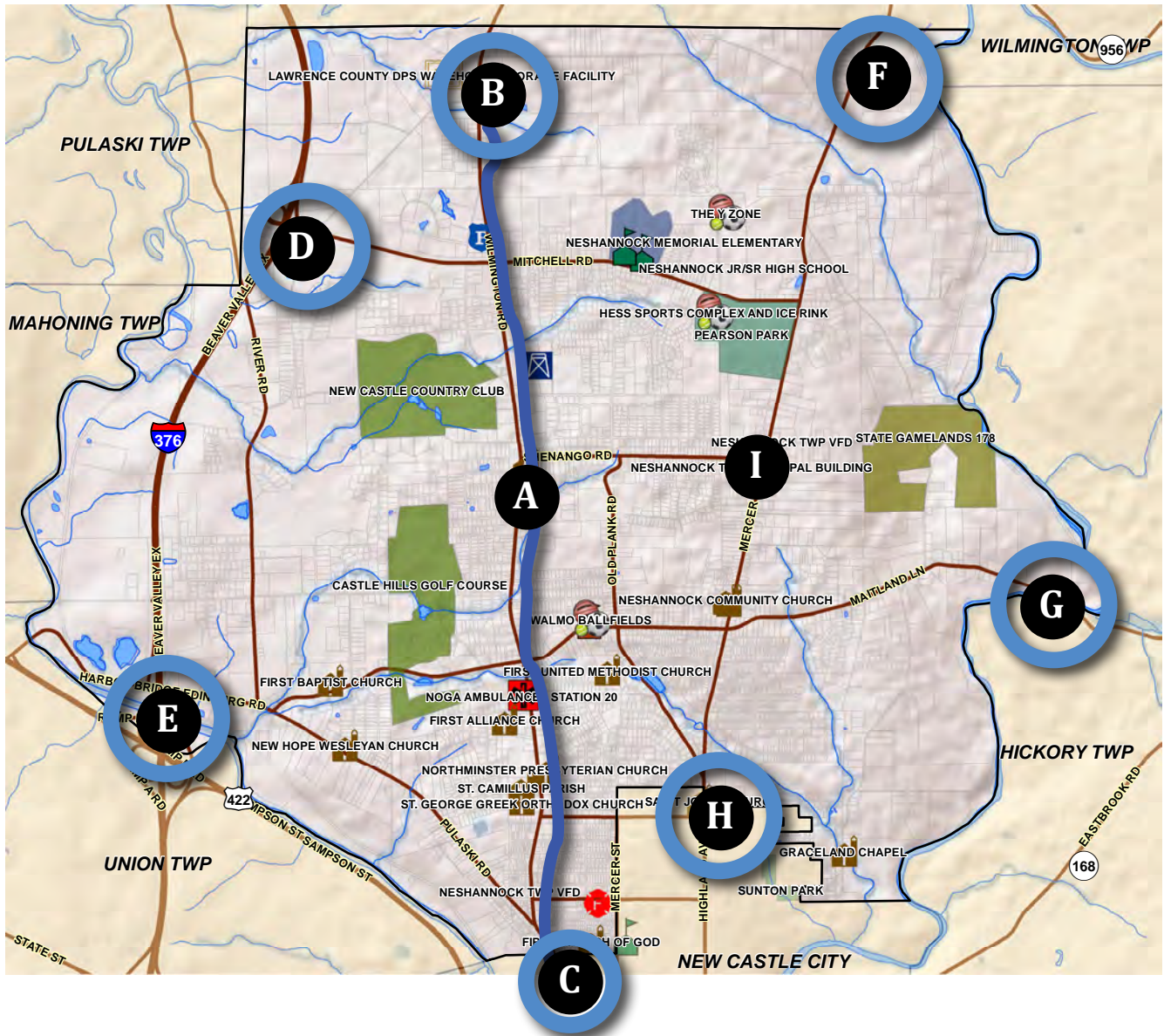
Community identity can be communicated through the built environment - buildings, streets and infrastructure - as well as through things like logos, signs, banners and other elements. Our Community can focus community identity-related actions in key areas of the Township in order to maximize investment and create the largest impact.

The areas shown on the following map indicate areas where community identity improvements can make a big impact for those within Our Community as well as visitors or those who are passing through our major thoroughfares.

- A** Route 18 Corridor
- B** Route 18 Northern Community Gateway
- C** Route 18 Southern Community Gateway
- D** 376/Mitchell Road Community Gateway
- E** 376/Pulaski Road Community Gateway
- F** Mercer Road Northern Community Gateway
- G** Maitland Road/Hickory Township Community Gateway
- H** Highland Avenue/New Castle Community Gateway
- I** Neshannock Township Municipal Building



Figure 28. Priority Areas and Community Gateways



**Legend**

- |  |                         |  |                   |  |                                 |
|--|-------------------------|--|-------------------|--|---------------------------------|
|  | Recreational Facilities |  | Church            |  | Park                            |
|  | Municipal Building      |  | EMS               |  | Golf Course                     |
|  | Alternative School      |  | Police Department |  | Gameland                        |
|  | Public School           |  | Fire Department   |  | Neshannock Public School Campus |
|  |                         |  | Cell Tower        |  |                                 |

Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission & Lawrence County





# Our Community Working Together



## Implementing Our Community's plan

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Change is Good . . . . .	117



Neshannock Township School District provides transportation for over 1,300 students.

# Our Community Working Together

*Creating a plan is only the first step. Plan implementation will be an ongoing effort in the coming years.*

Our Community continues to see residential and business growth and we want to help foster and guide that growth - first through this planning process and through plan implementation in the coming years.

## Implementation Topics

The future success of Our Community will require us to work together toward achieving Our Community's vision for tomorrow. To implement that vision, we will take the following actions, with a particular focus on the Priority Topics previously discussed including economic development, community infrastructure and community identity. Implementation of our plans for Our Community Tomorrow will be accomplished by focusing on the following Implementation Topics.

## Future Land Use

Our Community is growing and land use patterns continue to transition from rural to suburban. The current mix of local retail, light industrial, office and residential provides a diverse tax base that will be important to Our Community as it grows. Adopting a Future Land Use Plan will create a consistent, coordinated message about the future growth and development of Our Community. The Future Land Use Plan will be implemented through an update to our Zoning Map.



## Economic Development

Our Community is fortunate to have development opportunities like the available land in the RIDC business park and Millennium Business Park and other areas suitable for office and light industrial development. Our success will result from focusing on the key development areas identified in Our Community's Plan.

## Resources, Parks and Recreation

We take pride in Our Community facilities and the important investments that are made to maintain, improve and expand upon those facilities. As Our Community continues to grow, it will be important to maintain the level of quality facilities and services our residents currently enjoy through continued investment.

## Community Character

We benefit from many natural features that add to the attractive rural character of Our Community. We also have an opportunity to enhance the character of our community for visitors and residents by elevating the aesthetics along Route 18 and at the primary community gateways.

## Community Infrastructure

Availability of public sewer service has and will continue to be a significant influence on whether and where future development occurs in Our Community. There are large areas of developable land that are not currently accessible to the sewer system and significant infrastructure investment would be necessary to make that happen.

The ease of access to Our Community is an asset that attracts new residents and businesses. There are lots of ways to get in and around Our Community, which facilitates the efficient movement of people and goods. Route 18 is the "spine" of our road network, providing north/south access and critical support as our main commercial thoroughfare. Continued ease of traffic flow, as well as safe and easy access to local businesses along the corridor, are critical to future business retention and growth. I-376 and Route 422 provide excellent regional transportation connections.

## Regional Cooperation

There are many ways that we can work with the larger region and the surrounding communities to promote coordination and cooperation. This includes working with regional development organizations, promoting regional public transit and ensuring that the land uses along Our Community's borders are compatible with those in neighboring communities.

### *How to Read This Implementation Plan*

The following pages include a series of actions that make up the implementation plan for this effort. Each item includes an action. The action is followed by a indication of the timeframe and the stakeholders who would need to be involved with the action.

The timeframe categories include the following:

- Short: 1 to 5 years
- Medium: 5 to 10 years
- Long: 10 to 20 years
- Ongoing: These actions are recurring and will continue on a regular basis on an as-needed basis.

Some actions also include additional steps to complete the action. These are sub-steps that will build up to completion of the overall action.



***Future Land Use  
Goal: Update and  
use Our Community's  
tools to actively  
guide future land  
use in a manner  
consistent with  
our plan for the  
future to encourage  
sustainable growth.***

## Future Land Use

One of Our Community's greatest resources is its land area. We are fortunate to have a vibrant mix of park land, open land, residential land, commercial land, and land for industry and business. How we plan for future use of undeveloped land will forever impact Our Community's character, fiscal health, and local economy. That is why we developed a future land use plan to guide growth and development.

### *Here is what we are doing now to guide land use decisions in Our Community:*

**A.1 Updating** the Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance to update the Township's land development approval process, requirements for construction of infrastructure such as roads and stormwater systems.

**Timeframe:** Short (1 to 5 years)

**Stakeholders:** Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors

**A.2 Developing** master plans for Township parks that will take into consideration surrounding land uses and opportunities for park expansion.

**Timeframe:** Short (1 to 5 years)

**Stakeholders:** Parks and Recreation Board, Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors, Lawrence County, PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Township Staff

### *Here is what we are going to do to guide future land use decisions in Our Community:*

**B.1 Adopt** the future land use map included in this Comprehensive Plan as the blueprint for future growth and development.

**Timeframe:** Short (1 to 5 years)

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission





**B.2 Update** the Township Zoning Map to guide incremental development towards land use patterns identified in the new Future Land Use Plan while continuing to support existing land uses. This will also include revisiting to the Township’s Zoning Districts and District purposes to ensure that they are consistent with the recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan and the Future Land Use Plan.

**Timeframe:** Short (1 to 5 years)

**Stakeholders:** Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors

**Additional Steps to Complete This Action:**

- B.2A - Conduct a thorough review of the existing residential zoning districts and revise them to reduce the number of residential districts and simplify the zoning regulations.
- B.2B - Eliminate the agricultural zoning district and rezone properties to a residential zoning district except in the NW quadrant/Key Focus Area C, where zoning changes should facilitate economic development while continuing to support existing land uses. Ensure that existing agricultural uses can continue in the residential district(s) in a manner compatible with new residential development.

**B.3 Increase** the Township's capacity to enforce zoning, building, and property codes.

**Timeframe:** Short (1 to 5 years)

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Township Staff

**B.4 Allow** a diversity of housing types in medium/high density residential areas including townhouses, apartments and small-lot single family homes to help address the gap in housing stock for young professionals.

**Timeframe:** Short (1 to 5 years)

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission

**B.5 Promote** regional commercial/light industrial development in the Northwest Quadrant of Our Community (Key Focus Location C).

**Timeframe:** Ongoing

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Lawrence County, Township Staff



# Economic Development

Our Community possesses great potential for continued growth and development. Excellent location, available land, and a strong local economic are a few of the positive forces that are moving the Township toward a bright future. Supporting economic development to encourage local job growth is a high priority. Our Community is committed to enhancing its community identity as a place for business growth.

**Economic Development Goal: Take a more proactive role in promoting Our Community's development opportunities and community assets to the regional development community and facilitating development and job growth through sharing of information and ideas with regional partners such as RIDC, LCEDC, and others to promote opportunities for development.**

*Here is what we are doing now to support economic development in Our Community and will continue to do:*

**C.1 Upgrading** the Township website to include information about the community's assets, which will help attract businesses and employees.

**Timeframe:** Short (1 to 5 years), Ongoing

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Township Staff

*Here is what we are going to do to support future economic development in Our Community:*

**D.1 Create** the Neshannock Township Economic Development Committee and appoint the Township Planning Commission members plus three additional community stakeholders as members of this new Committee. The Committee will meet regularly and work to promote economic development in the community.

**Timeframe:** Short (1-5 years), Ongoing

**Stakeholders:** Community Volunteers/Stakeholders, Township Staff (supporting role for the committee)

**D.2 Work** with Township officials to review the land development and zoning approval processes to ensure that they are clear, consistent and predictable so that the development community can easily navigate the process while implementing the Community's vision through construction of development projects.

**Timeframe:** Short (1 to 5 years)

**Stakeholders:** Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors



**D.3 Hold** a focus group meeting with the owners of large commercially developable properties in the Township to share information regarding economic development efforts.

**Timeframe:** Short (1 to 5 years)

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Township Staff, Property Owners/Stakeholders

**D.4 Engage** with the Lawrence County Economic Development Corporation to represent Neshannock Township to the development community in a manner that helps to attract new businesses to Our Community.

**Timeframe:** Medium (5 to 10 years)

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Township Staff, Economic Development Committee

**D.5 Publish** informational materials about Our Community's assets and opportunities for development.

**Timeframe:** Medium (5 to 10 years)

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Township Staff, Economic Development Committee

**D.6 Seek** an economic development expert to review the developable light industrial/regional commercial opportunities in the Township and make recommendations on how to better market them to attract quality tenants.

**Timeframe:** Medium (5 to 10 years)

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Township Staff, Economic Development Committee

**D.7 Explore** the creation of a Township Economic Development Authority to provide assistance with implementing recommendations of the Economic Development Committee and explore possible local development incentives that the Township can offer.

**Timeframe:** Medium (5 to 10 years)

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Township Staff, Economic Development Committee

**D.8 Build** relationships with large employers in the Township such as Jameson Hospital.

**Timeframe:** Ongoing

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Township Staff, Economic Development Committee

**D.9 Promote** Our Community's recreation amenities as an economic development draw for new and prospective businesses. For example, the ice rink is a unique feature that attracts regional interests.

**Timeframe:** Ongoing

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Township Staff, Economic Development Committee



**D.10 Facilitate** agritourism by updating zoning ordinances to facilitate this type of use while reasonably mitigating possible impacts to surrounding property owners. Consider limitations of the soils where sewer/water service is not available.

**Timeframe:** Short (1 to 5 years)

**Stakeholders:** Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors

**D.11 Attend** economic development training (Township officers) offered by the Pennsylvania Economic Development Association.

**Timeframe:** Short (1 to 5 years)

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors

**D.12 Work** with Lawrence County Economic Development to develop and implement strategies to attract businesses to that will be part of the related industry growth associated with the Shell Cracker Plant in Beaver County.

**Timeframe:** Short (1 to 5 years)

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Township Staff, Economic Development Committee, Planning Commission

**D.13 Support** and collaborate with the unified business and development agency being created to attract new development and redevelopment in Neshannock Township and Lawrence County. This will involve the sharing of information about Neshannock Township development opportunities and community assets, as well as close coordination regarding regional economic development prospects.

**Timeframe:** Ongoing

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Township Staff, Economic Development Committee, Planning Commission

**D.14 Request** that Neshannock Township have a designated representative on the board of the county's proposed new economic development association.

**Timeframe:** Short (1 to 5 years)

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Township Staff



*Here is what we are going to do to promote development in our Priority Areas of Development Opportunity:*

**Priority 1. Key Focus Location A: Millennium Technology Park Opportunity.**

**E.1 Work** with Lawrence County Economic Development to target smaller-scale development opportunities in Millennium Park. Small-scale office and light industrial development projects will be more feasible due to the park's site constraints and will also contribute to a diverse and sustainable local economy. Our Community has already made significant investment in the supporting infrastructure for this Park and it is therefore our top priority to actively market its development opportunities in partnership with LCECD.

**Timeframe:** Short (1 to 5 years)

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Township Staff, Economic Development Committee

**Priority 2. Key Focus Location B: Chapin Road/Residential Growth Opportunities.**

**E.2 Expand** water and sewer service. This area along Chapin Road is just outside the boundaries of existing water and sewer service. In order to accommodate development within the area, Our Community will need to expand the sewer and water service to the western border of the Township.

**Timeframe:** Medium (5 to 10 years)

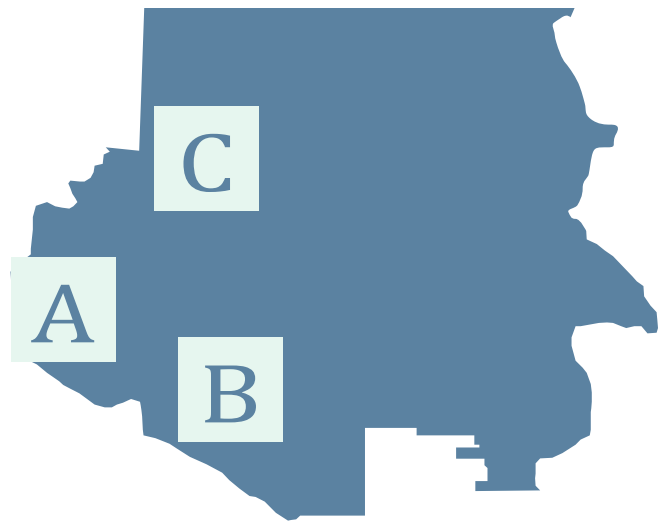
**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Township Staff, Economic Development Committee

**Priority 3. Key Focus Location C: Business Growth Opportunities.**

**E.3 Continue** to expand sewer service. This area has the potential for regional commercial or light industrial development. Additional sewer infrastructure would need to be expanded into this area to support commercial or industrial development. Expansion of sewer service in this area is a high priority to support business growth. This growth is important to the future economic sustainability of Our Community and also results in a greater return on Our Community's investment in infrastructure, through the creation of jobs and increase/diversification of Our Community's tax base. While residential growth opportunities exist in Our Community and are an important part of the future, expansion of sewer and water infrastructure by Our Community to new residential development would be a lower priority. However, existing residential development will continue to be supported.

**Timeframe:** Medium (5 to 10 years)

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Township Staff, Economic Development Committee



## Resources, Parks and Recreation

Our Community's resources, such as natural areas, parks, and recreation opportunities are important for quality of life and community character. The park and recreation system should provide opportunities for all ages to engage in active and passive recreation.

### *Here is what we are going to do to support future park and recreation opportunities in Our Community:*

**Resources, Parks and Recreation Goal: Plan for upgrades and facility expansion to accommodate future residential growth and increased service demand for recreation facilities and services.**

**F.1 Connecting** the parks and schools with sidewalks, trails, and/or bike lanes.

**Timeframe:** Medium (5 to 10 years)

**Stakeholders:** Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors, Parks and Recreation Board, School District, PennDOT

**F.2 Better Utilize** Our Community's park to offer more programming. Consider whether contractors or small businesses can be partners in expanding park and recreation programming.

**Timeframe:** Short (1 to 5 years)

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Parks and Recreation Board, Township Staff

**F.3 Capitalize** on the regional recreation opportunities presented by the Neshannock Creek, Shenango River, and nearby Neshannock Trail.

**Timeframe:** Medium (5 to 10 years)

**Stakeholders:** Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors, Parks and Recreation Board, Regional Organizations/Nonprofits, Lawrence County, PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

**F.4 Coordinate** efforts with Lawrence County and New Castle to develop trails, river access points and other amenities.

**Timeframe:** Medium (5 to 10 years), Ongoing

**Stakeholders:** Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors, Parks and Recreation Board, Regional Organizations/Nonprofits, Lawrence County, PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

**F.5 Complete** master plans for the existing Township park lands to identify opportunities for facility expansion and upgrades.

**Timeframe:** Short (1 to 5 years)

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Parks and Recreation Board, Township Staff



**F.6 Complete** a Township or multi-municipal greenway plan. Possible considerations and outcomes of the greenway plan include the following:

- Conservation overlay districts
- Stream buffer requirements
- Steep slope restrictions
- Developer incentives that encourage the preservation of contiguous open space in new residential subdivisions and other land developments
- Proposed trail alignments
- Land ownership information
- Known obstacles and proposed solutions
- Estimated costs

**Timeframe:** Short (1 to 5 years)

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Parks and Recreation Board, Township Staff

**F.7 Upgrade** and modernize existing facilities. Increase recreation opportunities, and create a regional recreation draw to infuse new revenue streams into the local economy.

**Timeframe:** Short (1 to 5 years)

**Stakeholders:** Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors

**Additional Steps to Complete This Action:**

- Construct new baseball fields (at least two)
- Upgrade and expand the ice rink including locker rooms, seating and mechanicals.
- Consider the possibility of an alternative golf facility for youth, and family recreation including both mini golf and driving ranges.
- Construct picnic shelters.
- Renovate the Hutchinson Community Center built in 1974.

**F.8 Capitalize** on the regional recreation opportunities presented by the Neshannock Creek and Shenango River. River access, trails, and other efforts should be coordinated with the County to maximize advantages.

**Timeframe:** Short (1 to 5 years), Ongoing

**Stakeholders:** Park and Recreation Board, Planning Commission, Board of Supervisors, Regional and Local Organizations/Nonprofits, Volunteers

**Additional Steps to Complete This Action:**

- Coordinate timber/woodland clean-up.
- Provide plant/animal interpretation signage along existing and proposed trails.

*We are both owners and caretakers of our property in Our Community. Trees, wetlands, stream beds and the like are part of the natural resources that must be saved to the maximum extent possible. Setting aside interconnected greenbelts and open spaces serves as a resource to be maintained in a natural state for the protection of native vegetation and wildlife, as well as for community enjoyment.*



**F.9 Establish** a directional signage program through the Township to assist with identifying community assets.

**Timeframe:** Short (1 to 5 years)

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Parks and Recreation Board, Township Staff

**Additional Steps to Complete This Action:**

- Place welcoming signage at all major park entrances.
- Make park facilities easily identifiable. Popular park segments should be easily found through wayfinding.

**F.10 Tie** parks together through physical linkages. Connect parks and schools with sidewalks, trails, and/or bike lanes.

**Timeframe:** Medium (5 to 10 years) to Long (10 to 20 years), Ongoing

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Parks and Recreation Board, Township Staff

**Additional Steps to Complete This Action:**

- Create a connected bike trail throughout the park system.
- Work with local/state bicycle advocacy organizations to pave bike lanes on roads or road shoulders.
- Crosswalks and sidewalks should be located on major thoroughfares for connectivity and safety.
- Make certain that ADA/ABA upgrades are applied to park facilities.
- Construct a clear connection from the ice rink to the park so that pedestrians can access both facilities year round.

**F.11 Ensure** that the park system provides opportunities for all ages, both active and passive. If necessary, existing facilities should be redesigned to cater to both families and retirees.

**Timeframe:** Short (1 to 5 years) to Medium (5 to 10 years), Ongoing

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Parks and Recreation Board, Township Staff

**Additional Steps to Complete This Action:**

- Mine subsidence issue between the park and ice rink.
- Provide programming for the growing senior population.
- Explore "splash pad" opportunities for toddlers and youth.
- Provide youth classes and learning opportunities.
- Establish "art in the park" programming.

**F.12 Utilize** the Township park, state gamelands, and golf courses to market the Township's livability.

**Timeframe:** Short (1 to 5 years), Ongoing

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Parks and Recreation Board, Township Staff, Economic Development Committee

**Additional Steps to Complete This Action:**

- Work with private and non-profit organizations such as the: Neshannock School District, YMCA, Neshannock Athletic Association, Garden Club, Lawrence County Lightning, Greater Youngstown Figure Skating, Cray Youth and Family Services, Lions Club, Rappit Tappetts, Neshannock Pool Association, and the Prime Timers organization to advance recreation efforts.
- Pool resources and create opportunities for community fundraising located within the park system.





# Community Character

Community character is key - especially in our residential neighborhoods. Although we want to experience growth and future development, we don't want to negatively impact Our Community's character. In fact, we want to utilize future development as an opportunity to enhance community character.

## ***Here is what we are going to do to enhance community character in Our Community:***

**G.1 Update** the Township Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance and the Township Zoning Ordinance to include requirements that will create a consistent quality design theme along the Route 18 commercial corridor. Areas of focus may include requirements for signs, landscaping, and building materials.

**Timeframe:** Short (1 to 5 years)

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Township Staff

**G.2 Enhance** the community's character by adoption and proactive enforcement of a property maintenance code.

**Timeframe:** Medium (5 to 10 years)

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Township Staff

**G.3 Market and Promote** Our Community's livability including the park, state gamelands, nearby regional parks and golf courses.

**Timeframe:** Short (1 to 5 years)

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Township Staff, Economic Development Committee, Parks and Recreation Board

**G.4 Develop and Implement** a system of directional and wayfinding signage throughout Our Community to assist with locating community assets.

**Timeframe:** Medium (5 to 10 years)

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Parks and Recreation Board, Township Staff

**G.5 Promote** sustainability in new developments and for Township-owned facilities. This will increase the longevity of new developments and help to attract new residents.

**Timeframe:** Ongoing

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Parks and Recreation Board, Township Staff

***Community Character Goal: Our Community is special and unique to the region and we will work to promote and enhance Our Community's character as an important asset for continued growth.***



*Guidelines are crucial for maintaining the character of an area. Guidelines serve to document values and features so they can be protected and preserved. These design guidelines provide a basic template with which development proposals can be measured. These guidelines can act as a resource for developers to become accustomed to the qualities and characteristics consistent with Neshannock Township lifestyles.*

## Design Guidelines

Our Community is envisioned as a thriving community where families can live, learn, work and play. Our Community will act as a key education hub, recreational center, and place to ignite a number of economic activities that will strengthen the Township and serve the region as a whole. Design guidelines are a constructive way to ensure that community identity is consistent and attractive.

### Guiding Principles:

- Provide more public space for people to enjoy natural features of Neshannock Township while simultaneously building community.
- Incorporate proven design techniques that also reflect available funds, to attract people and increased economic activity.
- Create pedestrian friendly mixed-use environments.
- Encourage compact commercial development and year-round activity.
- Establish a connected system of open spaces that allows the pedestrian to freely move between Township sub-areas.

### *Here is what we are going to do to enhance design in Our Community:*

**H.1 Commercial buildings:** All commercial buildings should have at least one entrance, windows, and signage oriented to the predominant pedestrian direction. Avoid long, blank facades. Use plants, signage, and landscaping to shield unsightly views or enhance consumer entrances. Enhance transparency in newly constructed commercial buildings so that buildings maximize natural light. Focus on consistent materials and finishes to enhance unity.

**Timeframe:** Medium (5 to 10 years) to Long (10 to 20 years), Ongoing  
**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Township Staff, Private Property/Business Owners

**H.2 Building signage:** Signage should represent the unique, cohesive, and energetic identity of Our Community, while allowing occupants freedom and flexibility to exhibit their brand and help maintain a pleasant pedestrian environment. Commercial and institutional signage should serve the primary purpose of directing pedestrians. Automobile-oriented signage should only be used in gateways to the Township as a way to direct traffic.

**Timeframe:** Medium (5 to 10 years) to Long (10 to 20 years), Ongoing  
**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Township Staff, Private Property/Business Owners



**H.3 Building placement:** Cluster nonresidential development. Leverage common parking and automobile oriented infrastructure to mitigate environmental concerns and sprawling land use patterns. Plan newly proposed parking areas to sides/rear of buildings. Create central public spaces that generate critical mass for economic viability.

**Timeframe:** Medium (5 to 10 years) to Long (10 to 20 years), Ongoing

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Township Staff, Private Property/Business Owners

**H.4 Setbacks:** Establish setback standards that will allow development to efficiently use space and facilitate a pleasant walkable experience, maintaining the pedestrian experience, and informed by a combination of pleasant facades and human-scaled signage positioned at the right size and view level for the pedestrian.

**Timeframe:** Medium (5 to 10 years) to Long (10 to 20 years), Ongoing

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Township Staff, Private Property/Business Owners

**H.5 Right-of-Way Treatment:** Limit lanes, roadway widths, and shoulders. Restrict turn lanes where appropriate. Highlight places of interest through roadway design. Utilize impervious surfaces where applicable.

**Timeframe:** Medium (5 to 10 years) to Long (10 to 20 years), Ongoing

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Township Staff, Private Property/Business Owners

**H.6 Lighting:** Place human-level light fixtures with a consistent range of height. Lighting should be more closely placed along major thoroughfares and connections.

**Timeframe:** Medium (5 to 10 years) to Long (10 to 20 years), Ongoing

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Township Staff, Private Property/Business Owners

**H.7 Wayfinding and safety signage:** Township maps and safety signage should be placed throughout Our Community. Diagrams should display hours of operation and directional material. It is encouraged that signs do not include "restrictions" but more "opportunities". Use language that is positive in nature that directs people to what they can do, instead of what they can't. Create a collective visual impression.

**Timeframe:** Medium (5 to 10 years) to Long (10 to 20 years), Ongoing

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Township Staff, Private Property/Business Owners

**H.8 Landscaping:** Maintain existing landscaped areas. Continue to provide scheduled maintenance of attractive landscape features. Identify locations for future gardens, tree-lined streets, and enhanced stream banks. Emphasize harmony with the natural environment. All constructed open/public spaces must use unobtrusive and local fauna/vegetation. Create rural ambience using landscape buffers around nonresidential development. Cluster landscape planting for greater impact.

**Timeframe:** Medium (5 to 10 years) to Long (10 to 20 years), Ongoing

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Township Staff, Private Property/Business Owners



**H.9 Pedestrian Amenities:** Pedestrians needs such as benches and public furniture should be human in scale. A good standard is to provide public furniture at minimum 3 ft. high using similar materials and styles. Benches should be dedicated along existing and proposed connections within the park system. All standalone elements must exhibit lightweight features and must be securely attached to the ground to ensure safety in high wind situations.

**Timeframe:** Medium (5 to 10 years) to Long (10 to 20 years), Ongoing

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Township Staff, Private Property/Business Owners

**H.10 Develop and Implement** a system of directional and wayfinding signage throughout Our Community to assist with locating community assets.

**Timeframe:** Medium (5 to 10 years) to Long (10 to 20 years), Ongoing

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Township Staff, Private Property/Business Owners

**H.11 Waste receptacles:** Ensure that trash and recycling bins are aesthetically appealing and placed in a convenient range within the park system and major pedestrian connections.

**Timeframe:** Medium (5 to 10 years) to Long (10 to 20 years), Ongoing

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Township Staff, Private Property/Business Owners

**H.12 Water features:** Maintain existing, and explore future opportunities for attractive water features. Water components should be permanent and placed in central locations within the Township and park system.

**Timeframe:** Medium (5 to 10 years) to Long (10 to 20 years), Ongoing

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Township Staff, Private Property/Business Owners

**H.12 Water entrapment features:** Utilize natural or install man-made water entrapment features to canalize rainwater within the Township. These features must redirect stormwater in a way that does not result in flooding or swamp like conditions. Community Infrastructure

**Timeframe:** Medium (5 to 10 years) to Long (10 to 20 years), Ongoing

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Township Staff, Private Property/Business Owners

## ***Here is what we are going to do to enhance the transportation infrastructure in Our Community:***

New infrastructure is important for guiding and supporting future development. Maintaining and utilizing existing infrastructure helps to support existing development and maximize past investments.



### **I.1 Enhance** the Route 18 corridor.

**Timeframe:** Short (1 to 5 years) to Long (10 to 20 years), Ongoing  
**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Township Staff, Private Property/Business Owners, PennDOT  
**Additional Steps to Complete This Action:**

- H.1A - Create an access management plan to plan for and implement safe strategies for traffic management along the corridor while providing access to support existing and future development.
- H.1B - Install gateway signs at the north and south ends of the corridor to raise community awareness and build a sense of community identity and character. Coordinate these signs with the overall community wayfinding and signage system.
- H.1C - Develop an overlay zoning district to introduce greater setbacks, landscaping requirements, lighting, and sign regulations.
- H.1D - Maintain and consider increasing the Township's contribution to New Castle Transit to support transit service in the Township.
- H.1E - Work with business owners in strategic locations to construct and maintain new bus stops in strategic locations where existing development and community destinations would benefit from transit service provided by New Castle Transit.
- H.1F - Adopt a requirement in the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance that will result in the construction of new bus stops in strategic locations that are served by New Castle Transit as new development occurs.
- H.1G - Coordinate with Northwest PA Commission & Southwest PA Commission regarding regional transportation priorities for the Township and Region.

**Community Infrastructure**  
**Goal: Plan for and fund systematic investment in infrastructure to support growth in Our Community through partnerships and strategic investments that result in economic, social, or local services benefits to Township residents.**

### **Here is how we plan to leverage sewer infrastructure to enhance Our Community:**

**J.2 Expand** sewer infrastructure in targeted locations to support future development as recommended in the Economic Development section of this Plan.

**Timeframe:** Short (1 to 5 years) to Long (10 to 20 years), Ongoing  
**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Township Staff, Private Property/Business Owners,



## Regional Cooperation

Our Community's success depends on the success of the overall region. By working together regionally, we can enhance the effectiveness of our efforts and work towards a future of shared success.

### ***Here are ways that we can cooperate regionally:***

***Regional Cooperation Goal: Our Community will work with regional partners to share information, collaborate on projects and initiatives, and build alliances that will support that future growth of Our Community by attracting and retaining new residents and businesses with high-quality services and supporting infrastructure.***

#### ***K.1 Opportunities*** for partnership with New Castle.

**Timeframe:** Short (1 to 5 years) to Long (10 to 20 years), Ongoing

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Township Staff, Private Property/Business Owners, PennDOT, Local/Regional Organizations, New Castle Staff/Elected Officials

**Additional Steps to Complete This Action:**

- I.1A - Code Enforcement: Enhance the code enforcement capacity of both communities by hiring staffing to be shared via intergovernmental cooperation agreement.
- I.1B - Economic Development: Share information regarding development sites and development opportunities in both communities - new development in Our Community and infill/redevelopment in New Castle.
- I.1C - Information Sharing: Biannual meetings of elected officials to share community projects of regional significance.
- I.1D - Storytelling: Publicize information from both communities regarding shopping and dining to residents in both communities.
- I.1E - Planning: Provide support for the completion of a New Castle comprehensive Plan.

#### ***K.2 Opportunities*** for partnership with Lawrence County.

**Timeframe:** Short (1 to 5 years) to Long (10 to 20 years), Ongoing

**Stakeholders:** Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, Township Staff, Private Property/Business Owners, PennDOT, Local/Regional Organizations, Lawrence County Staff/Elected Officials

**Additional Steps to Complete This Action:**

- I.2A - Regional Coordination: Work with Lawrence County Planning to facilitate a regional dialogue among municipalities, including Our Community, in the New Castle area to discuss issues of regional significance.



# Keys to Success

**A. Communication:** Among elected and appointed officials, Township residents, business owners, and stakeholders.

**B. Commitment:** To implement the Plan's recommendations.



## Measuring Our Success

Annually, as a part of the Township's budget preparation process, we will take stock of what we've accomplished during the current year and set priorities for the following year that are consistent with Our Community's vision for the future.



## Change is Good

Our Community is growing and evolving. Change is inevitable. This comprehensive plan will service as our guidepost, not an inflexible mandate. We will work diligently to implement the recommendations of this Plan and as unforeseen circumstances arise and circumstances change, we will use the Plan to inform our decision-making.

*Planning is great but doing is better. Our Community is committed to implementing the recommendations of this plan. We will always have the long-term health of Our Community in mind as we make policy decisions that shape the future.*



