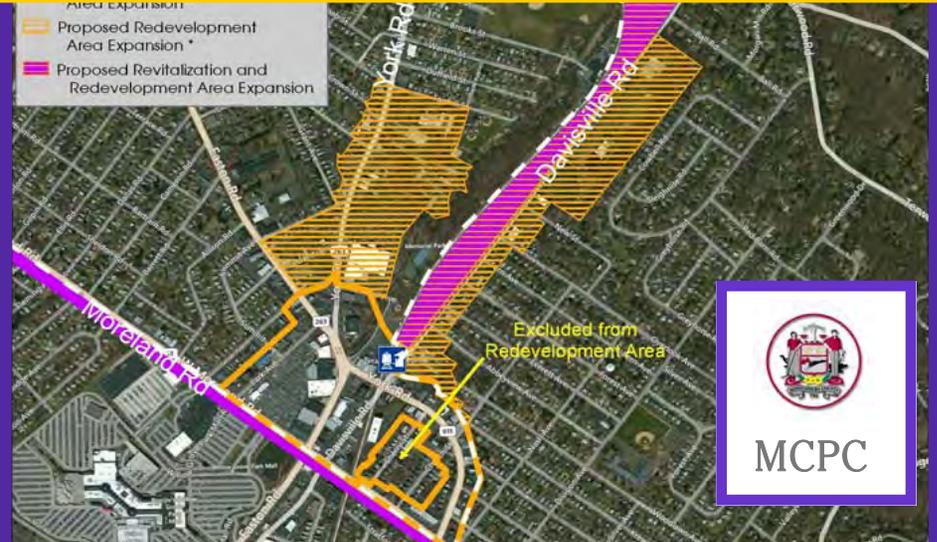




UPPER MORELAND REVITALIZATION PLAN (2012)



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Upper Moreland Township

Revitalization Committee:

Karen M. Houck, Chairperson

Marian Hull, AICP/PP, URS Corporation,
Township Revitalization Coordinator

Robert B. Crippen

Jonathan de Jonge

Jerry DiMarzio

Charles Gallub

Lance Ginsburg

David T. Joss

Joseph Lavallo

Dennis Sakelson

Brian Shannon

Dick Sayer

Ralph Storti

Jack Tarman

Thomas M. Winterberg

Upper Moreland Township

Board of Commissioners:

R. Samuel Valenza, President—Ward 6

Joseph A. Lavallo, Vice President—Ward 4

Lisa Romaniello—Ward 1

Kevin C. Spearing—Ward 2

Donna D. Parsell—Ward 3

Clifton (Kip) McFatrige—Ward 5

Donald G. Warner—Ward 7

Upper Moreland Township Staff:

David A. Dodies, Manager

John Crawford Jr., Assistant Manager

Paul E. Purtell, Director of Code Enforcement,
Staff Planner

Planner

Mike Narcowich, AICP, M.C.P.C.



UPPER MORELAND REVITALIZATION PLAN 2012

UPPER MORELAND TOWNSHIP
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

This plan was written by the Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC) for Upper Moreland Township, under the auspices of a Community Planning Assistance contract. The Upper Moreland Revitalization Task Force significantly contributed to the preparation of the plan. The plan replaces and expands upon the “Willow Grove Revitalization Plan” (2003).



Montgomery County Planning Commission

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary

The Upper Moreland Township Revitalization Plan of 2012 updates, and expands the scope of, the Township's first Revitalization Plan, written in 2003. This plan builds on the revitalization accomplishments of the past nine years, such as the improvements to Veterans' Memorial Park, adoption of new zoning for Downtown Willow Grove and the Interchange area, streetscape improvements, transportation improvements and studies, and the adoption of Tax Increment Financing guidelines. The plan is a prerequisite for the Montgomery County Community Revitalization Program and certain other economic development funding programs of Montgomery County. It will also serve as the basis for funding requests from for other economic development funding programs, and will generally guide the Township's revitalization and economic development planning in the years to come.

Following is a brief description of each of the major parts of this document:

Introduction

The introduction provides general background information on the Township, and provides an explanation of the revitalization planning which occurred in the Township in the recent past (which sets the stage for this plan).

Background Summary

This section, structured to comply with the requirements of the Community Revitalization Program, provides a background analysis of the Township's demographics, housing, economic development, infrastructure, and public safety.

Findings include:

- Upper Moreland has demographic-economic characteristics which are typical of an established suburban community.
- The economic analysis shows there is a demand for full-service restaurants, which is interesting in part due to the community's expressed desire for such businesses. It also provides more detail on the large concentration of health care jobs in the Township.
- The infrastructure analysis includes a summary of the (simple) parking demand analysis that verifies and helps quantify the extent of the downtown parking shortage.
- The section on public safety reviews and discusses the highway and pedestrian safety challenges that exist in the Township.

Goals and Vision

The Goals and Vision section establishes both a broad intent and more specific goals for revitalization planning in the Revitalization Area. The goals are divided by location into two areas: those related to the revitalization of Downtown Willow Grove, and those related to the Interchange Focus Area. In Willow Grove, the top goals include streetscape, façade, parking and train station expansion and improvements, and expansion of the Revitalization and Redevelopment Areas. In the Interchange Focus Area, the top goals include feasibility, fiscal impact, and/or cost-benefit studies, and Redevelopment Area expansion. This section also identifies specific opportunity sites.

Action Plan

This section defines specific revitalization goals by geographic area: goals are first defined for the Willow Grove area, and then for the Interchange Focus Area. An implementation matrix prioritizes the goals, and (where possible) identifies implementation partners, costs, and potential funding sources. High-priority projects include the following in Downtown Willow Grove:

- Aesthetic improvements (streetscape and façade) and infrastructure improvements (train station, parking, water or sewer)
- Expansions of the Revitalization Area and Redevelopment Area (Davisville and York Roads)

High-priority projects in the Interchange Focus Area include :

- Conducting a feasibility, fiscal impact, or cost-benefit analysis; and
- Expansion of the redevelopment area so as to include the Interchange Focus Area.

Appendix

The appendix includes posters and worksheets used to help prepare the plan, including meeting posters used to solicit feedback from the public. It also includes the parking analysis, showing the counts by property and explaining the methodology; and additional sources of funding.

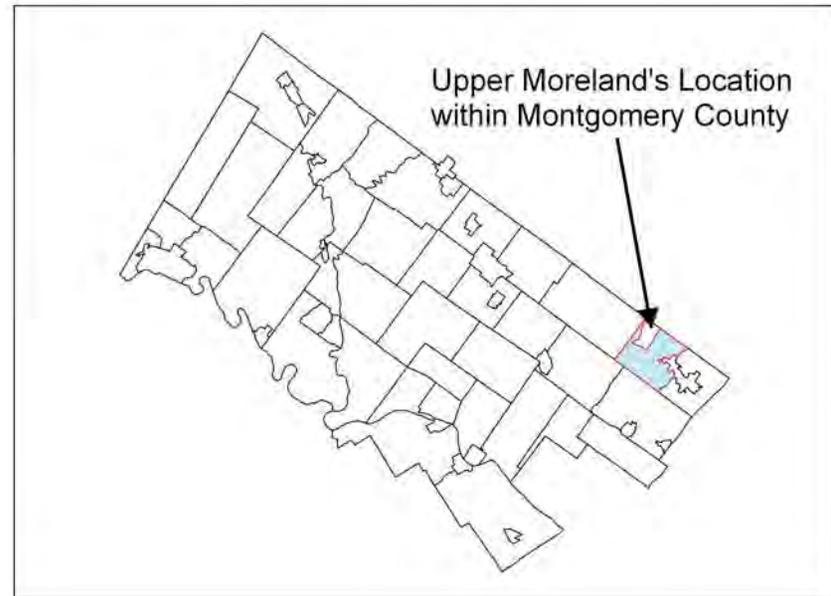
INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Upper Moreland Township is a community of just over 24,000 people (24,015 in 2010, according to the Census) in the eastern corner of Montgomery County, covering an area of 7.5 square miles. The Revitalization Area covers 3.0 square miles of the Township; as of the 2010 Census, it included 12,785 residents. The Township is part of the Philadelphia Metropolitan Area, and is located approximately 15 miles north of downtown Philadelphia. Upper Moreland is bounded on the northwest by Horsham Township, on the west by Upper Dublin Township, on the south by Abington Township, on the east by Lower Moreland Township and Bryn Athyn Borough, and on the north by Bucks County (Warminster and Upper Southampton Townships) [see **Figure 1.1: Regional Context**].

The Township is principally a middle-income residential suburb of Philadelphia, although several commercial districts, shopping centers, and industrial parks are located within its boundaries. In the past ten-to-fifteen years, the area that is now the Revitalization Area has attracted numerous national retail and hotel chains. These include Wal-Mart, Sam's Club, Giant, Home Depot, Best Buy, Courtyard by Marriott, Office Max, and Barnes & Noble. However, as an older, built-out community, it is presented with challenges that other municipalities with more undeveloped land don't have. New development must often occur through redevelopment, which presents its own challenges (e.g., land assembly, transportation, and infrastructure). Existing older business dis-

Figure 1.1: Regional Context

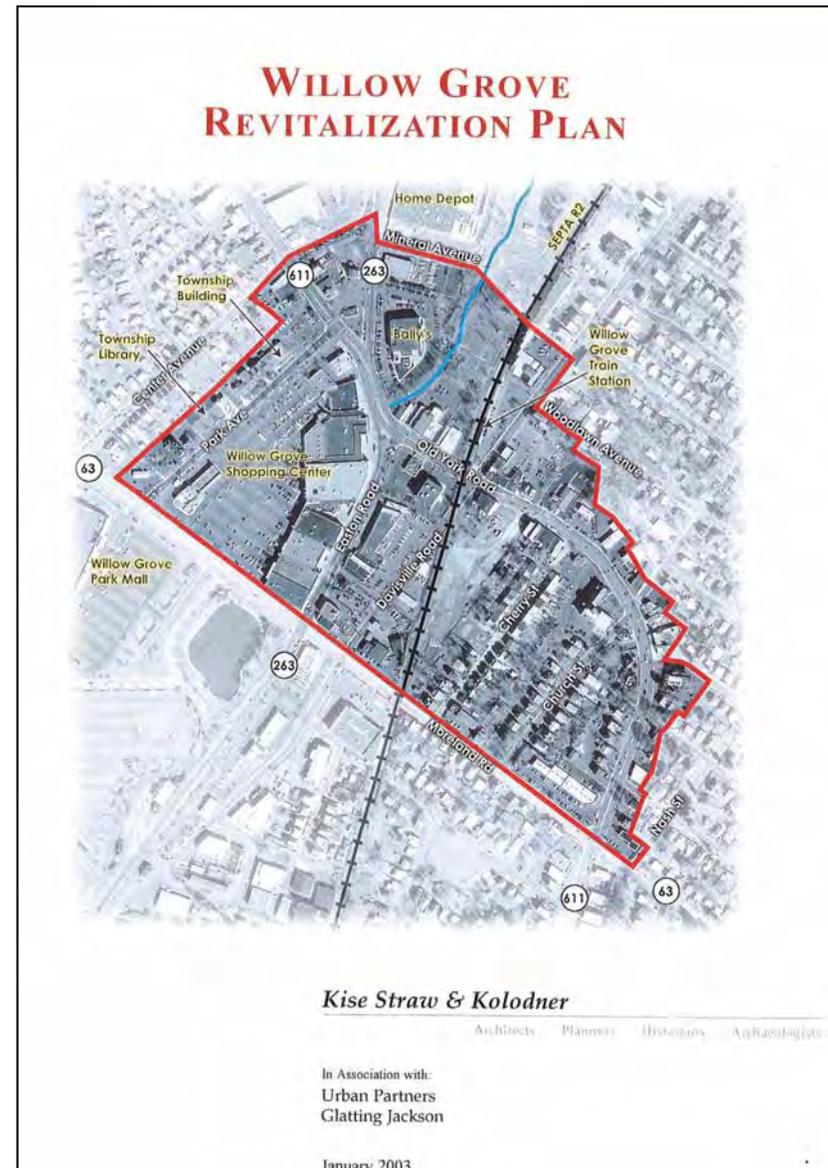


tricts face a variety of challenges in their attempts to stay competitive. Downtown Willow Grove's commercial area, for example, has steadily declined since the 1970s. The Town Center's problems are clearly evident: vacant and dilapidated properties abound, parcels are undersized and lack adequate street frontage, pedestrian access is poor, and the area is plagued by traffic congestion and insufficient off-street parking. These conditions have led to a downward spiral of disinvestment, declining property values, and continual turnover of small businesses.

In 2003, Upper Moreland completed its first Revitalization Plan and Redevelopment Plan, both of which applied to the Willow Grove area. The Township has completed several Revitalization projects since then. These include:

- Construction of Memorial Park Drive (entry road for Veterans' Memorial Park, with connection to Mineral Avenue)
- Construction of gateway plaza for Veterans' Memorial Park
- Parking lot improvements in Veterans' Memorial Park with gateway signage
- York Road Streetscaping Sample Block Project (includes decorative pavers, sidewalks, curbs, and pedestrian lighting)
- The Township, County, and School District adopted Tax Increment Financing (TIF) guidelines as a tool to leverage future private investments
- New TC-Town Center-1 and-2 Zoning Districts were created to facilitate implementation of the Township's revitalization/redevelopment vision
- A four-way intersection and elimination of the right-turn lane was constructed at Easton and York Roads, to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment, and allow for future construction of a "town center plaza"
- A study was recently completed confirming that the current train station location is best to support transit-oriented development in Downtown Willow Grove
- Davisville Road realignment studies— including multiple traffic studies and land appraisal

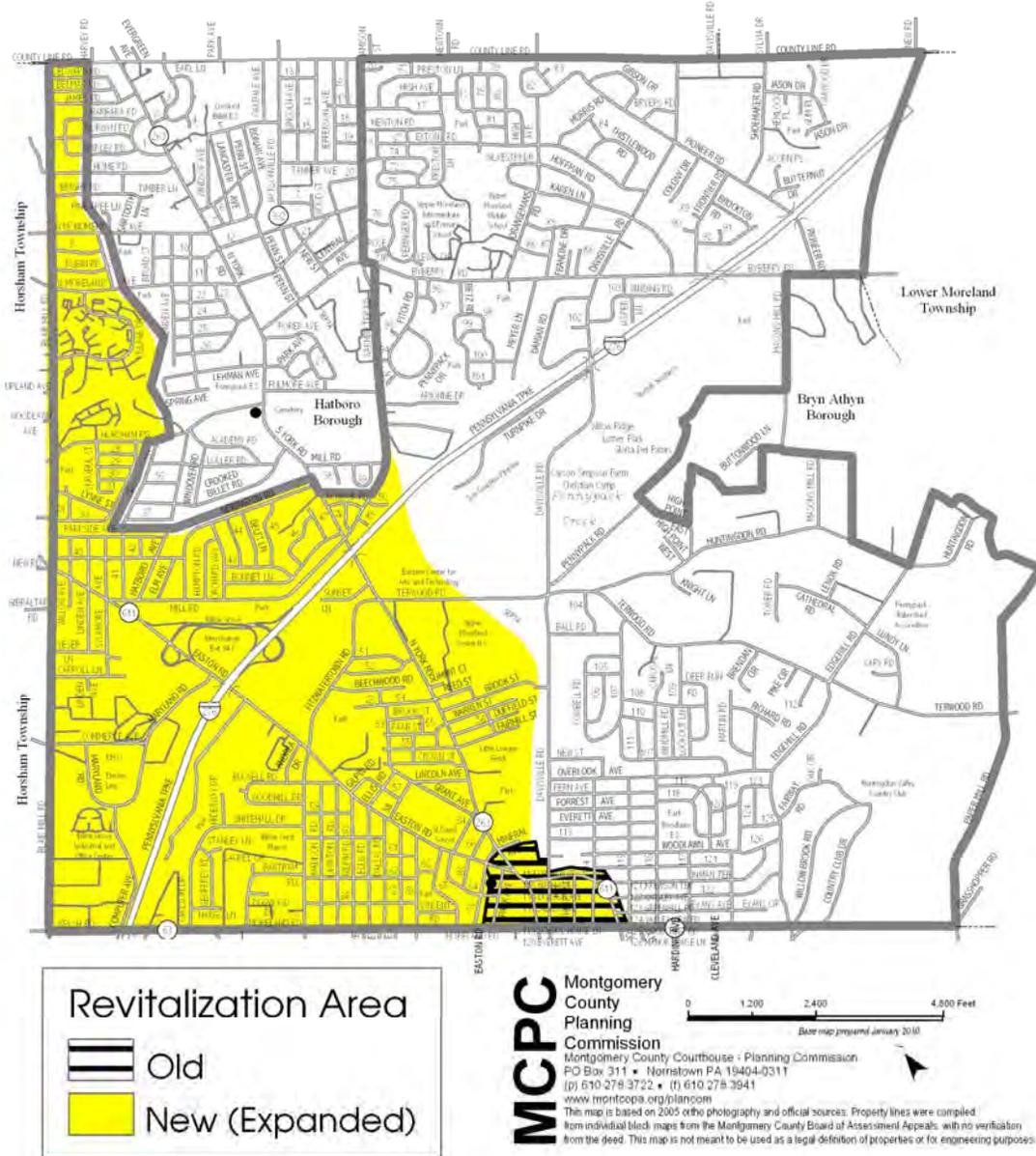
Figure 1.2: 2003 Revitalization Plan



(A stream bank restoration project in Veterans' Memorial Park is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2012)

Figure 1.3: Areas Eligible for County Revitalization Funding, 2003 and 2012

Upper Moreland Township



In 2003, Upper Moreland completed its first Revitalization Plan. The area eligible for Revitalization funding at that time was restricted to Willow Grove's core (hatched area, right). Since then, however, the area eligible for Revitalization funding was expanded to include all land west of the SEPTA Warminster Regional Rail Line (solid yellow area).

This plan seeks to encourage the revitalization of Downtown Willow Grove. Since the completion of the Willow Grove Revitalization Plan of 2003, the Township sought and achieved an expansion of the Revitalization Area so that it now applies to the portion of the Township west of SEPTA's Warminster—Regional Rail Line (Census Tracts 2003.01, 2003.07, and 2003.08). This stretches to Hatboro and Warminster in the north, and Horsham and Upper Dublin in the west, and comprises approximately 40% of the Township's land area [see **Figure 1.3: Areas Eligible for County Revitalization Funding, 2003 and 2012**]. This plan also addresses the adjacent portion of Davisville Road, extending north to Terwood Road (a portion of the Census Tracts 2003.09 and 2003.10), which is not currently included in the Revitalization Area. The area eligible to receive funding under the Montgomery County Community Revitalization Program encompasses Census Tracts 2003.01, 2003.07, and 2003.08. This plan recommends expansion of the Revitalization Area along Moreland Road so as to include the Abington side.

This plan sets forth a strategy for the Township's Revitalization. It identifies goals, prioritizes them, and recommends their means of implementation. This plan is a prerequisite for obtaining funding from Montgomery County's Community Revitalization Program, Central Business District Fund and the Local Economic Enhancement Program. However, the Township will also use the plan as a general vision for revitalization, and it will serve as the basis for obtaining funding from other economic development programs.

PLANNING PROCESS

The Upper Moreland Revitalization Task Force began formulating the Upper Moreland Revitalization Plan in July 2011. The Task Force had discussed the planning process in the months prior; in July, Montgomery County Planning Commission began working with the Township to write the plan.

The Revitalization Task Force hosted two public workshops at the Township building to discuss the plan. The first, on October 18th, 2011, was held to solicit public feedback on the plan's goals. The second, on December 15th, 2011, was used to obtain public feedback on plan priorities [see **Appendix A: Public Meeting Posters**]. At each session, a presentation was given to explain the nature of the Revitalization Program and other County economic development funding for which the Plan would make the Township eligible for funding from the County or other entities. The presentations transitioned into a multi-station workshop. Each station featured posters, staffed by a member of the Revitalization Task Force. Guests were given stickers which they used to vote for the goals they felt were most worthy of pursuing, and then, at the second workshop, vote for the priority of the selected goals. There was also an opportunity to provide written comments or discuss issues with Task Force members.

The workshops yielded valuable insight that data alone cannot reveal. It became clear that there is a desire for more residential development, transit-oriented development, and entertainment (particularly if entertainment it provides an opportunity for more social and family activity). After the public workshops, the Revitalization Task Force met to discuss public feedback and finalize the list of goals and their priorities.

In March, MCPC gave a presentation on the working draft of the Revitalization Plan to the Township Board of Commissioners and members of the public. A dialogue followed, in which Commissioners and members of the public provided feedback and had their questions answered. The two public workshops, Board of Commissioners presentation, and insight provided at every step of the process by the Revitalization Task Force guided and provided insight used for the development of this plan.

This plan was written for Upper Moreland Township by the Montgomery County Planning Commission, under a Community Planning Assistance contract. The plan was developed under the direction of the Township's Revitalization Task Force, comprised of Upper Moreland Township residents, business leaders, real estate professionals, elected officials and the revitalization coordinator.

The Upper Moreland Board of Commissioners recognize the importance of revitalization and redevelopment. They have shown flexibility with development in the past and will continue to do so. The Township has a forward looking approach to redevelopment and revitalization, and will work with developers to help projects come to fruition.

BACKGROUND SUMMARY

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BACKGROUND SUMMARY

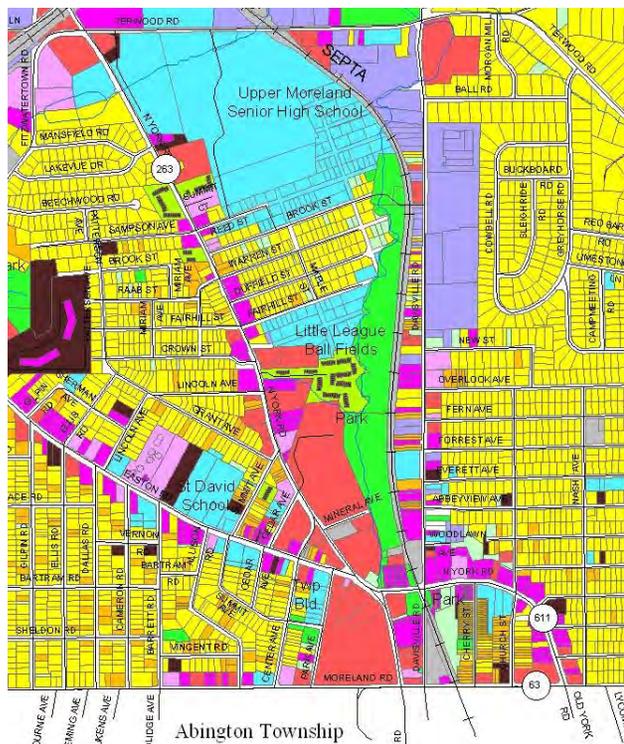
A. Existing Zoning and Land Use

Willow Grove Downtown

In the core of Downtown Willow Grove, zoning was changed to the TC-Town Center Districts, consistent with the recommendations of the Willow Grove Revitalization Plan of 2003. This district

encourages attractive design, walkable development, and mixed uses appropriate for a vibrant downtown. The CC Commercial Core District covers adjacent parcels to the north and east, along Easton, York, and Davisville Roads. The combination of TC, adjacent to CC, forms a logical transect, or gradual decrease in intensity and density as one moves away from the center of Willow Grove.

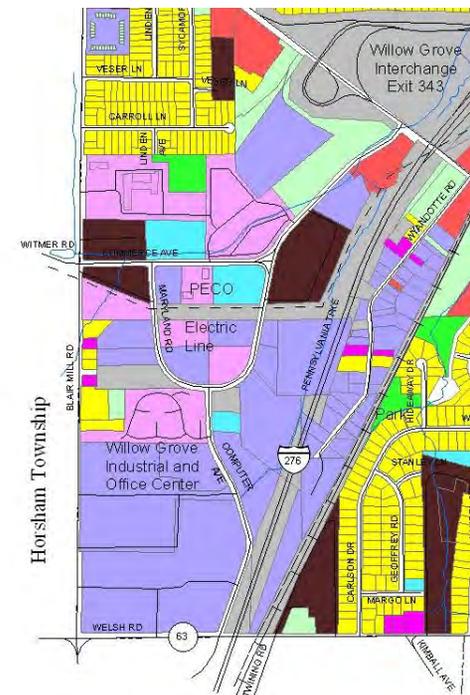
Figure 2.1: Existing Land Use



Willow Grove Downtown

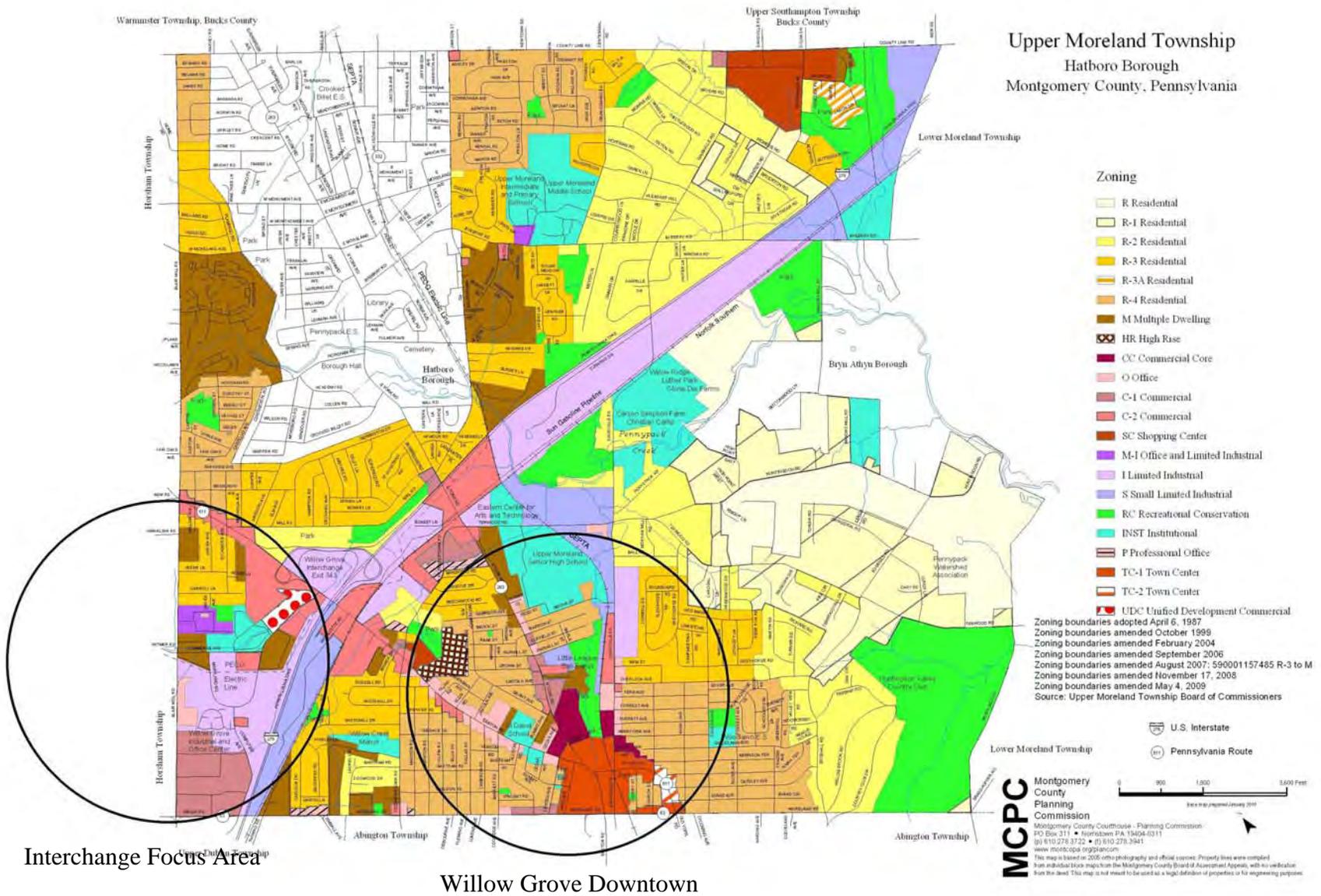
Existing Land Use

- Multifamily
- Single Family Attached
- Twin / Duplex
- Single Family Detached
- Country Residence
- Mixed Use
- Retail
- Office
- Industrial
- Institutional
- Utilities
- Undeveloped
- Public Open Space
- Private Open Space
- Agriculture



Upper Dublin Township
Interchange Focus Area

Figure 2.2: Existing Zoning



Continuing the transect idea, other nonresidential districts are zoned along the arterial roads leading out of the core, and permit a narrower range of uses. Veterans' Memorial Park is zoned RC Recreation Conservation, while the R-4 Residential District applies to the single-family neighborhoods separate from the arterial roads (the area along Cherry and Church Streets, surrounded by the downtown core, is included in this district). Zoning is generally suitable for revitalization and development, although future modifications may be required to permit an adequate degree of mixed uses, density, intensity, and flexibility.

The Willow Grove Downtown has a variety of land uses; since many of the parcels are small, there can be a range of land uses from property to property, in a small portion of the downtown [see **Figure 2.1: Existing Land Use**]. However, there are a few sizeable areas with only one land use. Retail uses cover most of the area from the Willow Grove Shopping Center north to the Giant. Veterans' Memorial Park, representing recreation uses, takes up a significant portion of downtown. Industrial uses occupy a fairly large area along the northern section of Davisville Road.

Interchange Focus Area

In the Interchange Focus Area, the I-Limited Industrial District applies to much of the land along Maryland Road and Computer Avenue. The UDC-Unified Development Commercial District, which permits a range of retail, office, institutional, and open space uses, covers the vacant 9.9-acre parcel along Rt. 611 and Maryland Road. The other districts emphasize office and limited

industrial, institutional, or multifamily uses. Unlike Willow Grove, zoning at the interchange does generally not encourage mixing of uses— especially in the same building.

In the Interchange Focus Area, most of the land is used for industrial or office uses, with institutional uses (much of it the Schilling Campus of Abington Memorial Hospital) also making up a sizeable land area. Zoning tends to be more site-specific in the Interchange Focus Area than in the Willow Grove Downtown, but a range of nonresidential uses are generally permitted.

B. Demographics

In 2010 the Township's population was 24,015. This was a decline of 978 people, or 3.9%, from the year 2000. Upper Moreland's population decline (in raw numbers) was highest of all sixty-two municipalities in Montgomery County (it was fifth-highest in percentage decline). Some of the population decline was attributable to the removal of approximately 80 flood-prone housing units. The County as a whole grew by 6.8% over the same time period. The Township's population is projected to grow over each of the five-year periods from 2010 to 2040, totaling a modest 3.7% rise (881 residents) by 2040 (DVRPC, 2012).

Upper Moreland is part of the relatively dense, developed suburban area in eastern Montgomery County; it's population density is 3,012 people per square mile (which is slightly less dense than the 3,140 people per square mile it contained in 2000). This is approximately twice as dense as the County as a whole (1,656

Figure 2.3: Population (2000, 2010) and Population Projections (2015 to 2040), Township

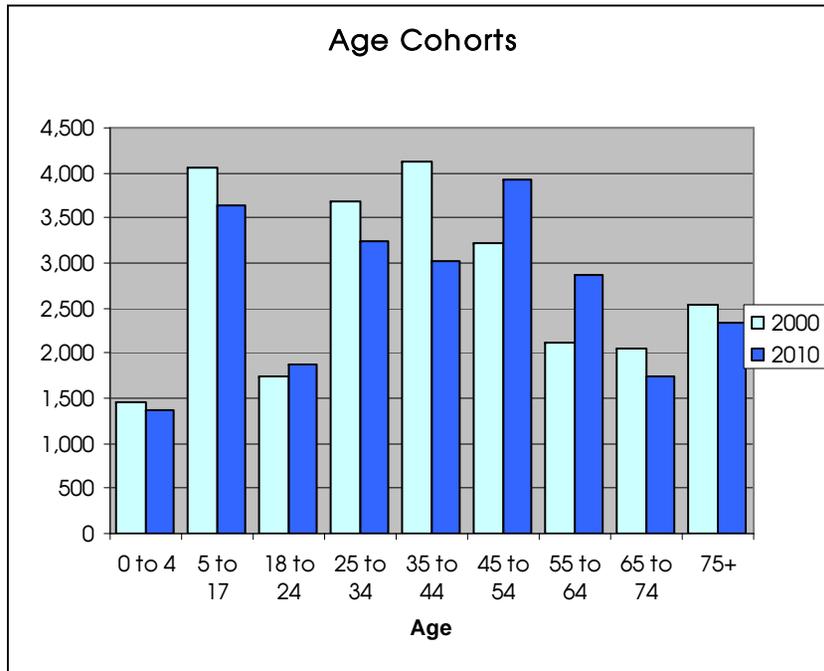
2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	Absolute Change 2010 to 2040	Projected Change 2010 to 2040
24,990	24,015	24,057	24,176	24,456	24,735	24,854	24,896	881	3.7%

Source: DVRPC, 2012

people per square mile), but not nearly as dense as adjacent Abington Township (3,566 people per square mile).

The Township’s population aged over the past decade, causing its median age to rise closer to that of the County median. The

Figure 2.4: Age Cohorts, Township (2000 and 2010)



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

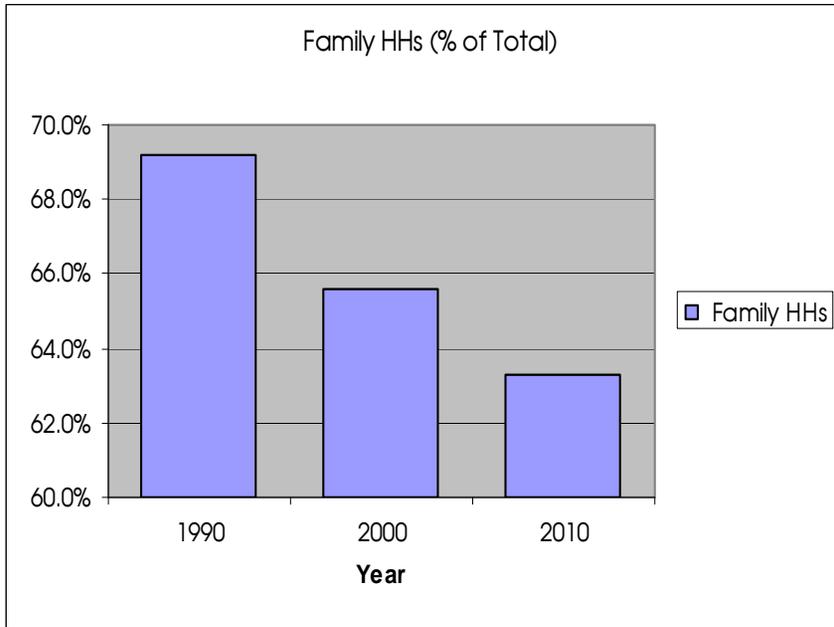
median age in the Revitalization Area increased nearly three years—from 37.0 in 2000 to 39.9 (County median age

= 40.6). Residents who became senior citizens in the past decade (those 55-64) were in the age cohort which underwent the highest percentage change, surging by 35 percent [see **Figure 2.4: Age Cohorts**]. Other notable changes include a decrease of 27 percent in the 35-to-44 cohort and increase of 22 percent in the cohort immediately above it (which seems to indicate the aging of the Baby Boomers).

The percentage of family households in Upper Moreland continued to decline [see **Figure 2.5: Proportion of Family Households**]; while they comprised 69 percent of households in 1990, they made up only 66 percent in 2000 and 63 percent in 2010. Married couples with children now make up only about one in five households (20.6%, down from 22.8% in 2000). Single-parent households increased over the past decade—from 5.5 to 6.3 percent.

An area may become eligible for the County Revitalization Program if it meets certain economic and demographic criteria. One of the most important criteria is income. As seen in **Figure 2.6**, the Revitalization Area’s median household income (\$55,000) is 13 percent lower than that of the whole Township

Figure 2.5: Proportion of Family Households, 1990 to 2010, Township



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

(\$63,000); the Township's, in turn, is lower than that of the County.

Figure 2.6: Median Household Income, Township

Median HH Income	
Montgomery County	\$76,380
Upper Moreland Township	\$63,167
Revitalization Area	\$55,187

Source: American Community Survey, 2010 (5-Year Estimate)

Figure 2.7: Market Area Snapshot: Willow Grove and Selected Downtowns (Within 5-Mile Radius)

Market Area (5-Mile Radius)	Median Household Income (1999)	Population (2000)
Doylestown	\$74,541	89,286
Ambler	\$71,285	146,635
Phoenixville	\$66,181	98,971
Willow Grove	\$61,570	234,156
Glenside	\$48,750	413,284

Source: U.S. Census; Missouri Census Data Center

A large part of this Plan will focus on Downtown Willow Grove. Therefore, a snapshot of the market areas of Willow Grove and some other local downtowns is provided in **Figure 2.7: Market Area Snapshot**. This shows income and population data for the market area of each revitalizing or revitalized downtown (defined as that within a 5-mile radius). It is true that the median household income in market areas with successful downtown business districts in the such as Doylestown, Ambler, and Phoenixville had incomes higher than that of the Willow Grove Market Area. However, even this limited analysis shows that the incomes were generally comparable to that of Phoenixville, and 27 percent higher than that of Glenside (the latter which is home to an attractive commercial area). Furthermore, the number of po-

tential customers or patrons that might be drawn to Downtown Willow Grove is significant; the population of its market area is dramatically higher than that of Ambler, Doylestown, and Phoenixville.

The Township’s demographic changes are similar to many developed suburban areas. In addition to the aging population, household size has decreased, and the population has declined. The population is expected to begin growing again in coming years, but future growth is expected to be modest. Regarding repercussions for transit-oriented development (TOD), it is interesting to note that the proportion of young adult households (aged 25-44) decreased 20 percent from 2000 to 2010. This demographic is important to attract if the Township wishes to draw residents interested in living in TOD housing, or that is likely to support restaurants or entertainment in the evening. However, support from residents for transit-oriented development could conceivably increase since the Township’s residents are aging, and that population may welcome development that is walkable and supports transit. Willow Grove’s existing market area population is much larger than that of other nearby successful downtowns, so even with demographic changes, there is reason to believe there should be an adequate customer base for a growing businesses district.

C. Housing

Upper Moreland added 169 housing units in the past decade (a 1.6 percent growth). That rate was relatively low for the County’s

municipalities, but is understandable since the Township is primarily built-out. The increase was larger than Abington’s, which added virtually no units, but trailed all other adjacent municipalities [see **Figure 2.8: Net Housing Unit Increase**]. The increase resulted in large part from construction of the Reiniger Tract, which added approximately 60 units at Byberry and Warminster Roads.

Figure 2.8: Net Housing Unit Increase, 2000 to 2010, Township

	Unit Increase	% Increase
Lower Moreland	566	13.4%
Warminster	1,329	11.4%
Horsham	784	8.5%
Hatboro	198	6.3%
Upper Dublin	305	3.3%
Upper Moreland	169	1.6%
Abington	2	0.01%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Note: This likely does not include flood-damaged units that were removed as part of a FEMA program. Approximately 80 units were removed; when subtracting them, the net increase in housing units from 2000 to 2010 in Upper Moreland was approximately 90 units.

In the last decade, there were two separate flood events that caused damage to residential units. As a result of flooding from Tropical Storm Allison, 40 homes were demolished and residents were relocated with \$7 million in funding from a FEMA program. These homes were located along Bonnet and Surrey Lanes. Forty apartments in two buildings were also demolished at Village Green Apartments. This project involved relocation of residents.

Figure 2.9: Housing, Year Built, Township

	Upper Moreland Township	Montgomery County
Built 2005 or later	2.3%	0.5%
Built 2000 to 2004	5.6%	1.5%
Built 1990 to 1999	11.6%	3.9%
Built 1980 to 1989	11.4%	5.8%
Built 1970 to 1979	13.2%	19.4%
Built 1960 to 1969	12.7%	15.3%
Built 1950 to 1959	17.4%	32.3%
Built 1940 to 1949	7.0%	12.1%
Built 1939 or earlier	18.9%	9.3%

Source: American Community Survey, 2010 (5-Year Estimate)

Figure 2.10: Jobs by Earnings, 2010, Township

	Jobs in:		
	Revit. Area	Township	County
\$1,250 per month or less	24.6%	23.4%	17.8%
\$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	40.9%	39.6%	31.4%
More than \$3,333 per month	34.4%	37.0%	50.8%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census; "On the Map Data"

Most of the housing in the Township (54 percent) was constructed prior to 1960. The Township has had much less of its housing stock constructed in the past few decades, when compared to the County (Thirty-one percent of the County's housing stock was constructed since 1979, but only 12 percent of Upper Moreland's housing was built in that time period). Some members of the community feel there is a need for new rental housing with modern amenities.

Homeownership rates stayed relatively stable in Upper Moreland over the past decade; 62.4% of occupied housing units were owner-occupied in 2010. However, vacancy rates increased significantly, from 1.8 percent in 2000 to 5.0 percent in 2010. This rate was higher than all abutting municipalities' except Hatboro's 6.9%.

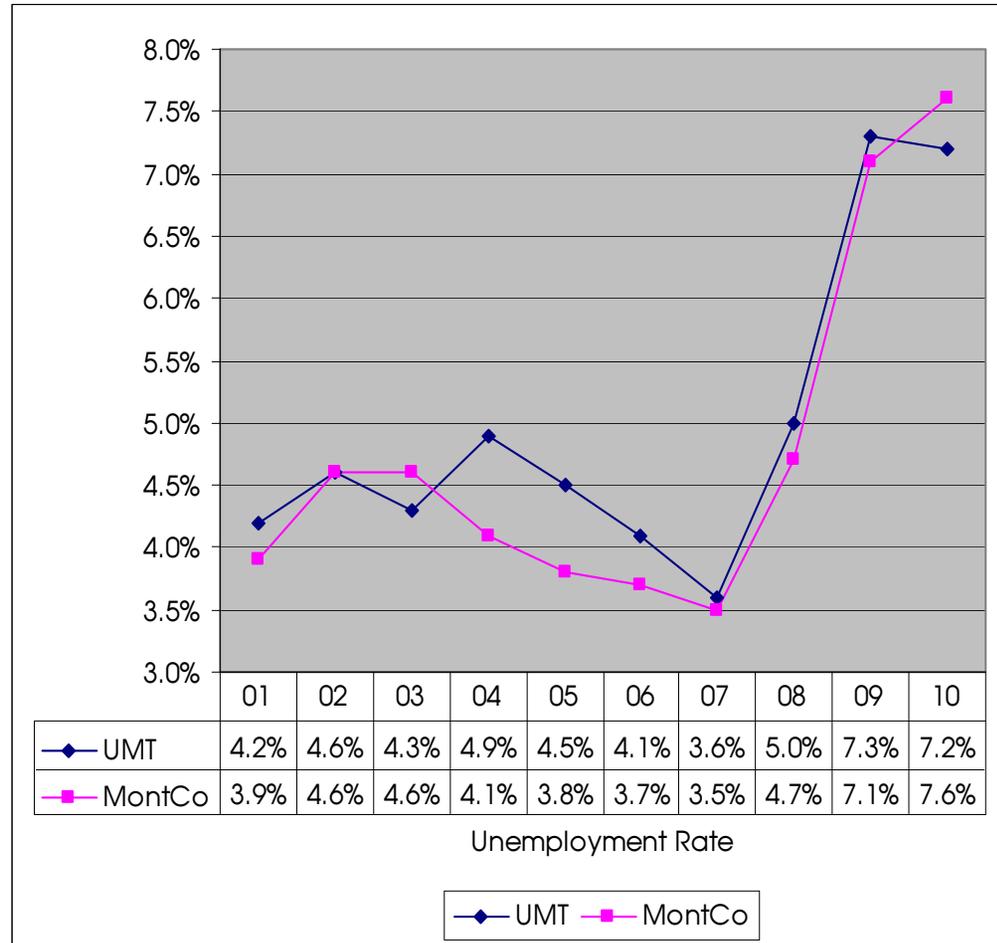
Upper Moreland has approximately the same proportion of each type of dwelling as that of the County, except for two types: single-family attached and small apartment buildings (10-19 units) such as garden apartments. The Township has a much lower proportion (eight percent) of single-family attached dwellings than the County (20 percent), and much higher proportion of small apartment buildings (12 percent) than that of the County (four percent).

Substandard housing units include those that are lacking complete plumbing facilities, complete kitchen facilities, or telephone service. Upper Moreland has a higher proportion of units meeting each of those criteria than the County does. Nearly one percent of units in the Township (0.8 percent) had incomplete plumbing facilities; this was twice the rate of the County (this data should be accepted with caution, since the Census data had a high margin of error).

The Revitalization Area itself had a median home value of \$238,000 (according to data from the 2005-2009 American Community Survey), while the average rent was just over \$900.

The housing stock in the Township is aging but stable. Interesting characteristics of the housing inventory in the Township include a larger than average share of garden apartments, but lower

Figure 2.11: Unemployment Rate (Township and County)

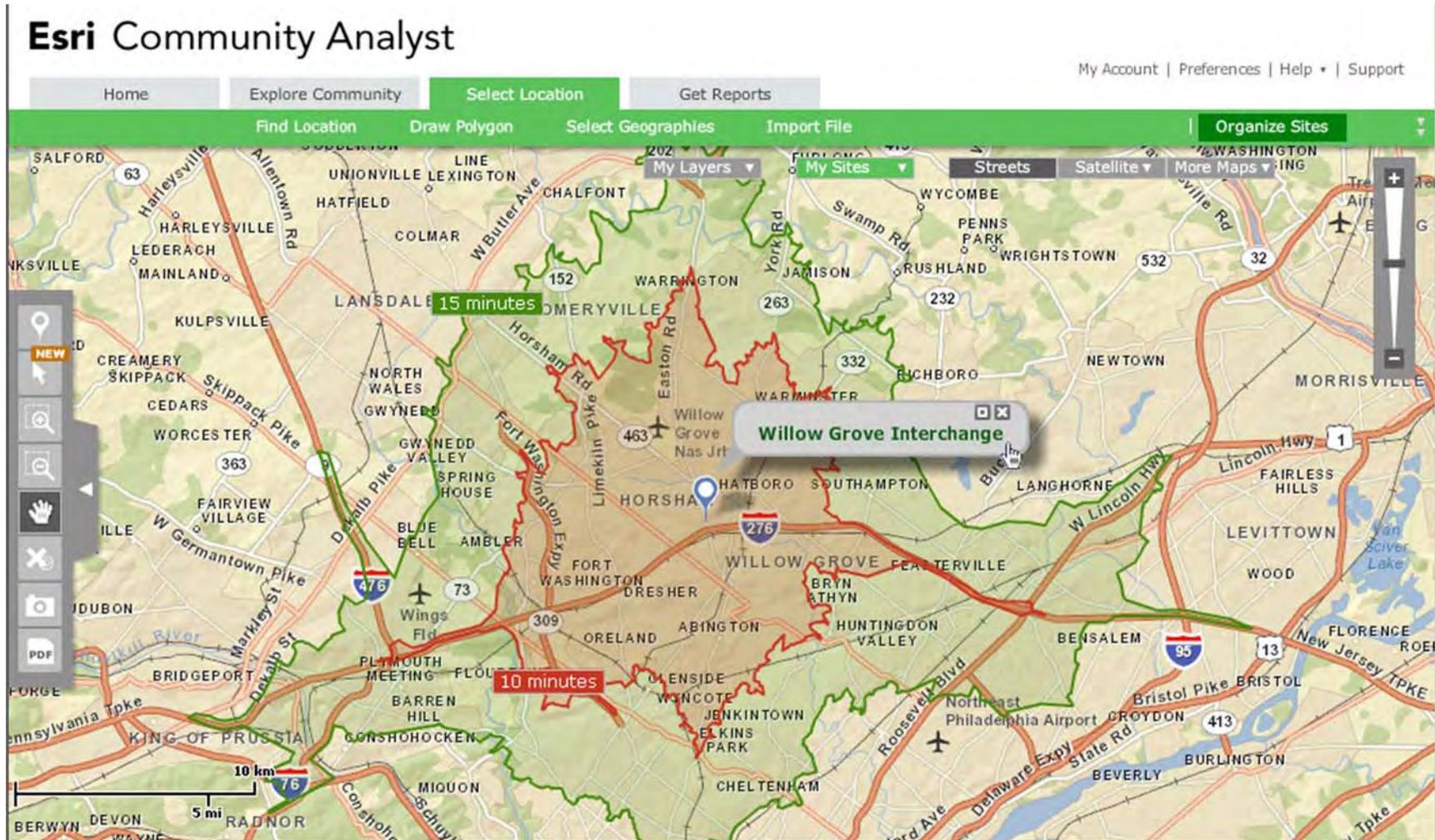


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Note: Rate shown is August rate for Upper Moreland Township (UMT) and Montgomery County (MontCo).

than average share of single-family attached units than the County as a whole. The data above is important because it made the Revitalization Area eligible for County funding.

Figure 2.12: Driving Distances from Interchange (10- and 15 Minutes)



Source: ESRI, 2012

D. Economic Development

According to the U.S. Census Bureau's "On the Map Data," 10,678 people worked in the Revitalization Area in 2010. In the Revitali-

zation Area, many people (20.5%) work in the Health Care & Social Assistance industry sector. Many of these (approximately 950) are employed at Abington Health Center's Schilling Campus. This five-building complex employs approximately 350 full-

Figure 2.13: Market Sectors with a Retail Surplus

	10 Minute Drive from	Retail Surplus (in
Grocery Stores	166%	\$251
Health and Personal Care	251%	\$113
Electronics and Appliances	243%	\$90
Furniture and Home Furnishing	186%	\$54
Building Materials and Supplies	163%	\$47
Other General Merchandise	116%	\$17
Department Stores	116%	\$14
Limited-Service Eating Places	112%	\$13
Clothing	115%	\$11
Lawn & Garden Equipment & Supply	180%	\$8.1
Special Food Services	123%	\$6.5
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Musical Instruments	125%	\$4
Book, Periodical, and Music	140%	\$3.9
Used Merchandise	370%	\$2.7
Florists	147%	\$1.6
Jewelry, Luggage, and Leather Goods	(A small retail gap existed at this level)	

Source: ESRI's Retail Marketplace Data, 2012

ESRI, a firm specializing in demographic and economic analysis of targeted areas, uses the term *Leakage* to describe a condition in an area where a market's supply is less than the demand. That is, retailers outside the market area are fulfilling the demand for retail products; therefore, demand is leaking out of the trade area. *Surplus* in an area represents a condition where supply exceeds the area's demand. Retailers are attracting shoppers that reside outside the trade area, so the surplus is in market supply. Retail surplus is calculated by dividing supply of products by demand from households within the defined area.

time employees at the hospital, 100 full-time at the surgical center, and 500 (many part-time) at the doctors' offices.

The concentration of health care jobs in the Revitalization Area is emphasized by comparing the figures for the Revitalization Area (20.5%) to that of the County (13.8%). Thus, as a share of all jobs, health care jobs are nearly 50% higher in the Revitalization Area than for total Montgomery County jobs [see **Figure 2.13: Employment by NAICS Sector**].

Retail employment is also well-represented in the Revitalization Area (19.4% of jobs, compared to 11.1% for the County overall). This is not surprising, given the sizeable concentration of retail businesses along the Township's major highways (as might be expected, the Revitalization Area, home to most of the major Township commercial corridors, has a higher proportion of jobs in the retail sector than the Township average).

Other industry sectors which contained a much larger share of total employment in the Revitalization Area than in the county include: "Administration and Support, Waste Management and Remediation;" "Accommodation and

Food Services," Notable categories that were underrepresented (where share of total employment was less than half of the industry's share in the County) included: "Professional,

Figure 2.14: Employment by NAICS Industry Sector, 2010

NAICS Industry Sector	Revitalization Area		Township		County	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
Administration & Support, Waste Management and Remediation	2,438	22.8%	2,909	17.8%	29,430	6.7%
Health Care and Social Assistance	2,191	20.5%	3,315	20.3%	61,102	13.8%
Retail Trade	2,067	19.4%	2,656	16.3%	49,033	11.1%
Accommodation and Food Services	662	6.2%	982	6.0%	24,353	5.5%
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	627	5.9%	790	4.8%	53,660	12.1%
Wholesale Trade	495	4.6%	960	5.9%	26,092	5.9%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	391	3.7%	458	2.8%	10,522	2.4%
Construction	347	3.2%	810	5.0%	18,453	4.2%
Other Services (excluding Public Administration)	309	2.9%	488	3.0%	13,592	3.1%
Manufacturing	295	2.8%	936	5.7%	45,690	10.3%
Finance and Insurance	197	1.8%	510	3.1%	35,724	8.1%
Transportation and Warehousing	167	1.6%	419	2.6%	8,990	2.0%
Information	138	1.3%	186	1.1%	13,571	3.1%
Public Administration	128	1.2%	137	0.8%	7,818	1.8%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	89	0.8%	194	1.2%	6,560	1.5%
Educational Services	72	0.7%	232	1.4%	29,171	6.6%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	65	0.6%	274	1.7%	4,850	1.1%
Utilities	0	0.0%	60	0.4%	2,668	0.6%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	254	0.1%
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	215	0.0%
TOTAL	10,678	100.0%	16,316	100.0%	441,748	100.0%

Source: "On the Map" Data; U.S. Bureau of the Census

Scientific, and Technical;” “Manufacturing,” “Finance and Insurance,” and “Educational Services.” Also notable is “Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation.” The inclusion of the last category is not surprising, given that the community has often expressed a need for more entertainment options.

As seen by **Figure 2.10: Jobs by Earnings**, in 2010 the Revitalization Area and Township had a higher proportion of lower-paying than the County did. Many of these lower-paying jobs may be administrative, health care, or retail (industry sectors which comprised three of the top four employers in the Revitalization Area).

Over the past decade, the year-by-year unemployment rate for Upper Moreland was similar to that of Montgomery County (see **Figure 2.11: Unemployment Rate**). The Township’s unemployment rate lagged slightly behind the County’s as rates dropped from 2003 to 2007.

To gain a better understanding of the retail marketplace, local leasing rates were investigated. Interviews with commercial realtors yielded information about retail sales in the Revitalization Area. Sales for small businesses (those less than 10,000 square feet) range from \$200 to \$400 per square foot. Larger businesses (those over 10,000 square feet) have sales ranging from \$100 to \$200 per square foot. Restaurant lease rates range from \$300 to \$500 per square foot.

The retail market in the Revitalization Area and nearby, competitive areas (defined as the area within a ten-minute-drive of the Willow Grove interchange) was examined, using ESRI’s Retail Mar-

ketplace data. This data shows estimated household spending in the area (which it refers to as “retail potential”), and compares it to retail sales of businesses in the area.

Some types of businesses in the local area do not meet the demand of local households. Therefore, there is “leakage” of spending dollars to businesses outside the local area. The Township and local developers might consider conducting further studies to determine the viability of such businesses to see if there is an opportunity to bring these businesses to the Revitalization Area. The following are some of those businesses:

1. **Full-service restaurants.** For the area within a 10-minute drive of the Willow Grove interchange, demand exceeds supply by 14 percent (\$18.4 million). Restaurants would be a natural fit for Downtown Willow Grove— particularly as zoning, the place-making initiative, and general revitalization strengthen its status as a walkable Town Center. The community often expresses a strong interest in attracting more full-service restaurants to Downtown Willow Grove. The Interchange area is also suited for restaurants; in the last few years several have opened for business or been the subject of land development plans there.
2. **Office supplies, stationery, and gift stores.** For the area within a 10 minute drive of the interchange, demand exceeds supply by 34 percent (\$4.3 million). However, it should be noted that the Revitalization Area itself seems to have an adequate supply of office supply stores, including, but not limited to: Office Max, Staples, and FedEx Office.

3. **Non-automotive vehicles.** These include vehicles such as motor homes, recreational trailers, campers, motorcycles, recreational boats, and ATVs. These are goods which the consumer is likely to travel a bit farther to shop for. Although there is no retail gap within a 10-minute drive of the interchange, within the wider 15-minute driving distance from the interchange, demand is five times that of supply (\$75 million).

[Source: ESRI's Retail Marketplace Data, 2012. This data was based in part on the Census of Retail Trade (2007), and the Bureau of Labor Statistics' annual Consumer Expenditure Surveys].

Market sectors which have a greater supply of a product or service than is demanded by local households are considered to have a “retail surplus”. The surplus shows that these businesses do more business with shoppers from outside the local area than those within the local area. These businesses are said to have a “retail gap”. Businesses which have a retail surplus may be those which are of extensive size, are clustered with other similar businesses, or have a powerful draw which brings customers from distant locations. For example, “Grocery Stores” have the largest retail surplus in the 10-minute drive area shown in the table in Figure 2.7: Market Sectors with a “Retail Surplus”— not surprising since there is a large Giant and other grocery stores within a 10-minute drive. Health and personal care has the second-largest surplus; this may be a result of retail activity related to the large health care presence alluded to earlier. The high ranking in the table for groceries and health care helps illustrate the fact that

there is not a lot of “destination retail” in the Revitalization Area drawing shoppers from great distances. Electronics has the third largest surplus in the market area studied. This is one of the few examples of a strong destination retail category in the Revitalization Area. Shoppers are evidently coming to the market area to shop at locations such as Willow Grove Park Mall or Radio Shack in Huntingdon Valley Shopping Center, and big-box and electronics stores in the Revitalization Area such as Best Buy, Walmart, and Sam's Club.

In summary, there are existing industry clusters in the Revitalization Area, such as the health care industry, which could grow with future investment— particularly investment in the Interchange Focus Area. This industry might be leveraged to attract employers from related industries that might benefit from collocation, such as medical technology manufacturers or pharmaceutical companies.

Data shows that there is a demand for full-service restaurants, office supply and gift stores, and non-automotive vehicles in the Market Area. In addition, information from the Task Force and others indicates that, among other uses, there is a demand for restaurants in the Revitalization Area. The Revitalization Task Force and public also recognize there are not enough movie theaters, entertainment, or community centers in the vicinity. All of these businesses (except vehicle sales and multiplexes) would be an excellent fit in Downtown Willow Grove (although multiplexes would not fit well in Downtown Willow Grove, an arts theater or IMAX certainly would).

E. Infrastructure

Major state highways serving Upper Moreland and the Revitalization Area include one interstate: the Pennsylvania Turnpike (I-276) with its Willow Grove Interchange. Other major roads serving the Revitalization Area include the arterial Welsh and Moreland Roads (PA Route 63), Easton Road (PA 611), York Road (PA Route 611/263); and Davisville, Blair Mill, Warminster, Fitzwatertown, and Terwood Roads. PA Route 611 links the area with Horsham and Doylestown to the north, and Jenkintown and Philadelphia to the south. In addition to Warminster Regional Rail Line mentioned below, SEPTA bus routes 22, 55, 80, and 310 serve the area.

Easton and York Roads are classified as major arterial roads, while Fitzwatertown, Terwood, Davisville, Blair Mill, and Horsham Roads are classified as minor arterials. These major roads are owned by the state, with the exception of Easton Road between Moreland and York, which is a County road. According to the most recent DVRPC traffic count (2010), Easton Road at the Turnpike carries 42,000 vehicles per day.

The Willow Grove Train Station is an attractive structure constructed in 1939 which retains historic characteristics. It is the Township's only rail station, and is located on SEPTA's Warminster Regional Rail line, near the intersection of York and Davisville Roads. The station is a key piece of the Revitalization Area's infrastructure. The Township just concluded a TCDI examining the feasibility of relocating the station and the potential to support and encourage transit-oriented development. Consideration was given to relocating it op-

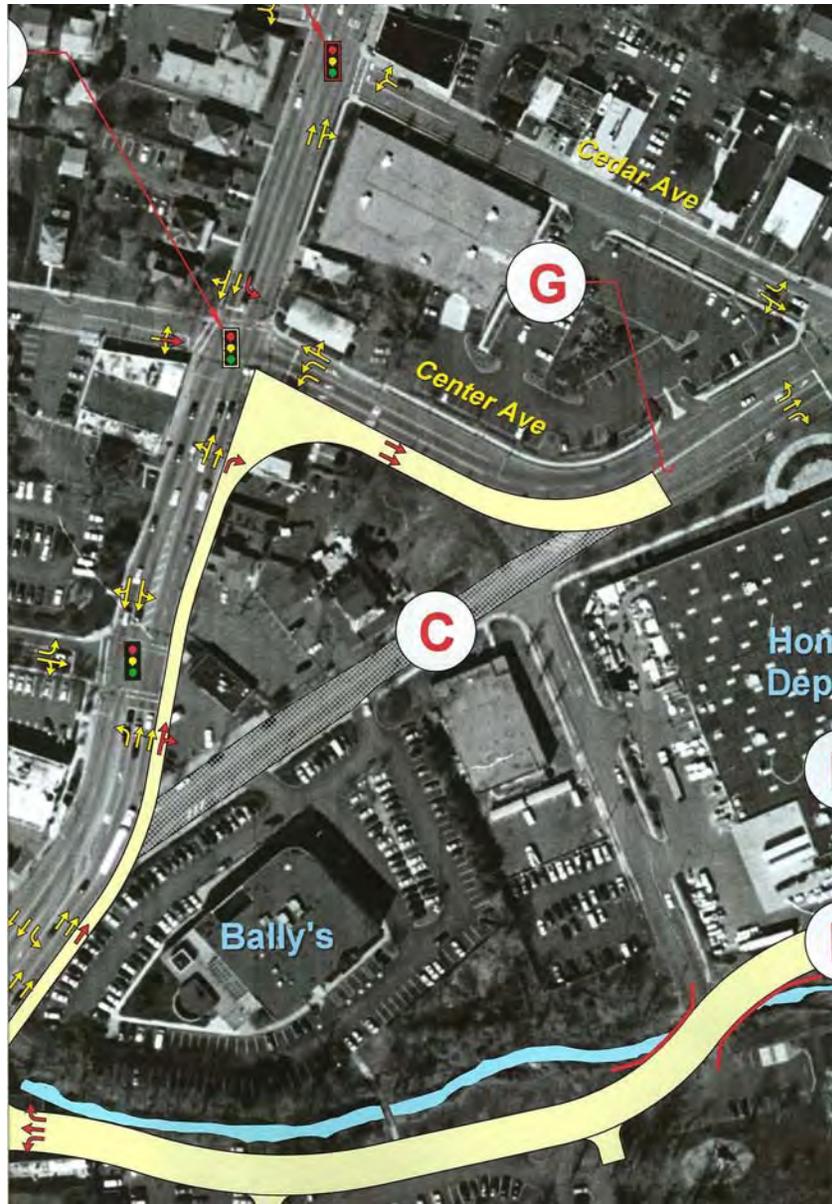
posite its current location and south of York Road, further north between the current location and Settlement Music School, and simply improving its functionality at the current location. The study examined each location's impact on traffic delays, passenger loading time and train dwell-time in the station, nearby property development or redevelopment, parking for the central business district, transit, and ability to encourage private investment in and around the station area. The study concluded that moving the station would not be possible at this time unless a significant public investment is made.

There are intersections in Downtown Willow Grove that are functionally challenged. One of these is the intersection of York and Davisville Roads. The SEPTA railroad diagonally crosses this intersection, and highway backups occur on both roads when a train is in the station. Past planning efforts have recommended realigning Davisville Road to provide additional parking and larger development parcels. Plans have also recommended reconfiguring the intersection of PA 263 and Easton Road to create a "T" intersection [see **Figure 2.15: Proposed Intersection Modification (2005)**].

Parking is an ongoing concern in Downtown Willow Grove. The Revitalization Task Force feels the supply of parking is inadequate; convenience of available parking is also a problem. In the downtown, parking lots and areas tend to be uncoordinated and scattered, with multiple owners; street parking is limited.

Shared, coordinated parking, or acquisition of new parking areas would help alleviate this situation. The ability to consolidate parking through a shared investment in structured parking, as a

Figure 2.15: Proposed Intersection Modification (2005)



Prepared by Transportation Planning and Design (TPD)

component of train station upgrades, is also a key component of the revitalization of Willow Grove.

A quick analysis of available parking and existing land uses shows there are approximately 2,600 parking spaces in the downtown. However, the demand for parking, based on existing land uses and parking required by zoning for those land uses, is nearly 3,400 spaces. Therefore, there is a shortage of nearly 800 parking spaces. This shortage could increase if the property with the former Bally's is developed.

The Township's stormwater system is tested by heavy rains, and flooding often occurs. This flooding has been severe enough that several dozen homes were destroyed in two storm incidents in recent years. Much of the stormwater originates in the headwaters of the Pennypack Creek located in adjacent municipalities, complicating matters [see **Figure 2.17: Township Location on Pennypack Creek**].

The Revitalization Area is well-served by the transportation network of major highways, commuter rail, and public buses; however, traffic congestion is an ongoing problem. Additional investment in infrastructure would have the potential to spur economic development. The train station, for example, could become a greater amenity and better economic development and transit-oriented development catalyst. Parking and stormwater infrastructure are continuing challenges for the Township. Investments to the parking infrastructure would stimulate economic development and transit-oriented development, and investments in the stormwater system would alleviate flooding and enhance safety.

Figure 2.16: Example of Missing Link in Sidewalk Network (Easton Road under Turnpike; pictured below and right)



F: Public Safety

Violent crimes are rare in Upper Moreland. The highest incidence of violent crime was robbery (with only 7 incidents reported in 2011, as of November). In the Township, public safety concerns tend to be focused on issues related to highways, traffic, and pedestrian safety rather than crimes that tend to be issues in urban areas. There are numerous heavily-traveled roads in Upper Moreland, so this is perhaps not surprising.

Pedestrian safety issues include broken sidewalk connections along heavily-traveled roads, such as Easton Road between Fitzwatertown Road and Home Depot Drive. **Figure 2.16** shows one such broken link in the sidewalk network. That area will have a sidewalk constructed by the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission as part of the planned Turnpike bridge widening. Other missing links in the sidewalk network include, but are not limited to: portions of Easton Road near the location pictured, numerous segments of York Road (including Downtown Willow Grove), and most of Maryland Avenue west of Commerce Avenue. Portions of Davisville

Road proposed to be added to the Revitalization Area also have sidewalk gaps. Crosswalks are also missing or not well-marked in key locations, such as parts of Downtown Willow Grove. Some Townships have dedicated fees for sidewalks; this may be something the Township should consider in the future.

Another major public safety concern is vehicular safety. The police department concluded a study in February 2012 of the safety, accessibility, and efficiency of the Township's "high-crash zone", an area which accounts for approximately 13 percent of the Township's crashes and 27 percent of its traffic citations, is located along Easton Road, from Maryland Road north to Blair Mill Road. There is a concern for public safety and adequate accessibility due to accidents. The Sergeant who conducted the study told the Board of Commissioners that he believed the three primary problems in that corridor were congestion, aggressive drivers, and drivers unfamiliar with the area.

Some of the most pressing safety issues in Upper Moreland are related to transportation efficiency and safety. If addressed sufficiently, these have the potential to promote increased economic development.

Figure 2.17: Township Location on Pennypack Creek

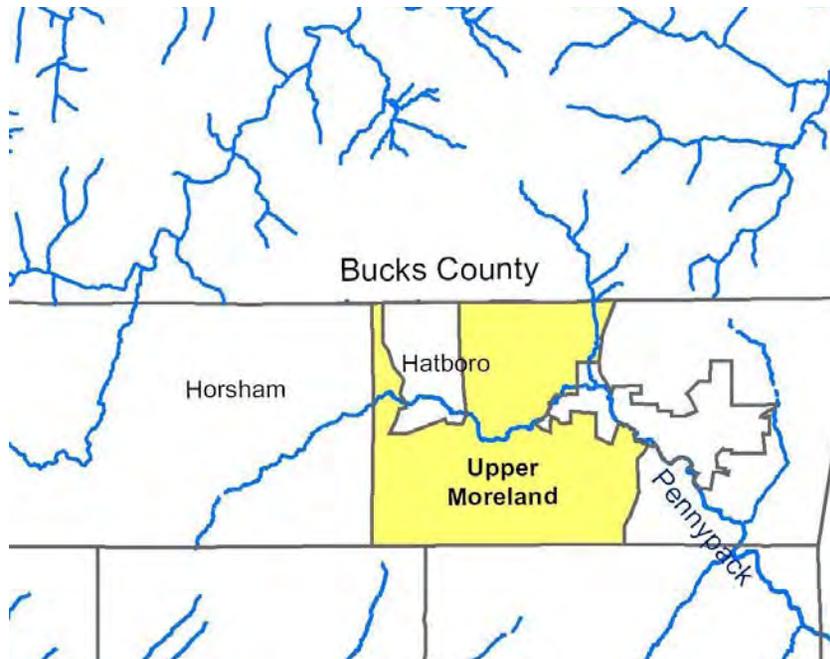


Figure 2.18: Nonviolent Crimes, 2006-2010

Year	Thefts From Vehicles	Other Thefts	Retail Thefts*	Criminal Mischief	DUI ARRESTS
2006	143	163	44	197	203
2007	159	165	36	177	247
2008	166	174	98	220	255
2009	105	150	118	144	229
2010	115	172	121	158	223
Avg	137.6	164.8	83.4	179.2	231.4

Notes: As of November 2011, the number of retail thefts had reached 126

Source: Upper Moreland Police Department, 2011

GOALS AND VISION

VISION

The vision of the Upper Moreland Revitalization Plan is to create policies and stimulate projects which will make Downtown Willow Grove a destination for visitors, shoppers, diners, and those seeking recreation. The vision also includes increased Township revenue, greater industrial efficiency and intensity, job creation, revitalization, and redevelopment, and a strengthened positive image of both Downtown Willow Grove and the entire Township. These high aspirations will not be achieved overnight. However, they are attainable, particularly when they are realistic, have general public support, and are pursued with a sustained effort over time.

The focus of the Township's Revitalization Plan is Downtown Willow Grove, just as it was when the first Revitalization Plan was written in 2003. After Willow Grove, and in different ways, the Interchange Focus Area is an area targeted for revitalization and redevelopment planning, which is synergistic with the Township's focus. Its characteristics make it an appropriate area to market to large office, medical, or light industrial employers.

GOALS

The broad goals of the Plan, by area, are as follows (for specific recommended projects, see the Action Plan and Implementation Matrix):

A. Downtown Willow Grove

This plan seeks to build on the revitalization achievements of the past eight years that were

identified in the Willow Grove Revitalization Plan (2003), and seeks to continue to build on those goals (for a list of those accomplishments, see Introduction).

The 2012 Upper Moreland Revitalization Plan focuses on parking and development of infrastructure, improvements to the aesthetics and image of the business district, and making the transportation system more efficient and easier to navigate. The Plan identifies areas of the downtown adjacent to the existing Revitalization Area that are also worthy of future public investment.

Figure 3.1: Conceptual Sketch: Mixed Uses in Willow Grove



Source: Federal Realty Investment Trust

The Plan’s recommendations are intended to make parking, walking, shopping, doing business or traveling to, and within, Downtown Willow Grove easier and more appealing. They are also intended to facilitate the transit-oriented, walkable nature of future development. The Plan recognizes that many of the critical improvements needed are major investments that will require strategic partnerships among the Township, SEPTA, Montgomery County local developers, property and business owners and others to be successful. This is particularly important for Willow Grove Train Station improvements. Such is also the case for the development of major new off-street parking, to be shared among multiple users and various land uses.

These recommendations, when implemented, will move Downtown Willow Grove closer to its ultimate goal— of becoming a vibrant, transit-oriented and mixed-use downtown that is a major destination for shopping, dining, and recreation.

The Plan’s recommended actions for Willow Grove are explained in detail in **Chapter 4: Action Plan**. Briefly, they are as follows:

- Infrastructure upgrades, to provide adequate and accessible parking, and to ensure the train station is maximized as an amenity for the downtown.
- Aesthetic improvements, to improve the downtown’s appearance.
- Expansion of the Revitalization and Redevelopment Areas, to make all of the financing and policy tools available to more parts of Downtown Willow Grove.
- Gateway and wayfinding signage to strengthen the “sense of place” in the downtown and make it easier for people to get to Willow Grove-area attractions and community resources [see **Figure 3.5: Sign Examples**]

Aesthetic improvements include façade and streetscape upgrades.

Figure 3.2: Existing York Road Facades and **Figure 3.3 Conceptual Façade Improvements** show how large display windows, masonry facades, decorative cornices and standardized awnings can help create a more attractive, memorable downtown that is more likely to attract shoppers and pedestrian activity.

Figure 3.4: Some Opportunities in Downtown Willow Grove (South) shows examples of downtown opportunity sites. These are located in the heart of downtown and along the nearby portions of roads leading into downtown. Users of these sites could take advantage of the proximity of the train station and Veterans’ Memorial Park. These opportunity sites include:

- **The Willow Grove Shopping Center** (#1 in Figure 3.4, 13 acres) is the largest opportunity site by far. In 2009, that property was subject of a conceptual design plan which would have increased building intensity on the site by adding 250 residential units and a 6-story parking garage, while enhancing pedestrian connections to Easton Road. The Revitalization Task Force believes this site remains an attractive location for future mixed-use, town-center style development.
- **The Willow Inn Property** (#2 in Figure 3.4). This is strategically located at the intersection of PA Routes 611 and 263. Future redevelopment could be maximized by combining the Willow Inn property with adjacent parcels, which are under common ownership.

Figure 3.2: Existing York Road Facades



- The former **Bally's Fitness Center** (#3 in Figure 3.4) (now vacant and owned by LA Fitness) and a portion of the Verizon parking lot (some of the Verizon parking lot is being used by SEPTA for parking). Considered together, these contiguous properties occupy a prime location bounded by York Road, Easton Road, Mineral Avenue, and Memorial Park Drive. A 2005 study proposed roadway improvements in this area which would consolidate this property with the property with the Willow Inn, which would have the effect of creating

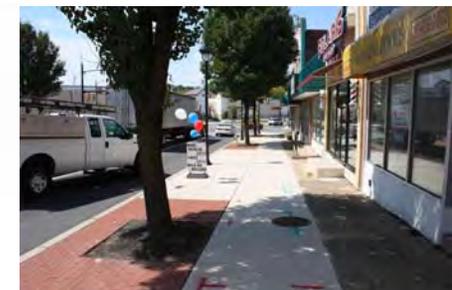
a larger development parcel (see **Figure 2.15: "Proposed Intersection Modification (2005)."** One or both of the sites could host additional parking; infill or more intense, transit-oriented development. Parking and access could be shared while eliminating curb cuts, for greater efficiencies and a more pedestrian-friendly street front.

- **Ehrenpfort Block, SEPTA Parking Lot** (#4 in Figure 3.4). The Ehrenpfort Block, including the SEPTA parking located to the rear, is a potential mixed-use redevelopment site, favorably located in the heart of downtown, next to the train station and park. Veterans' Memorial Park is an amenity for the surrounding area which is likely to help encourage revitalization; this would only grow in importance if and when trails link the park to other areas, and additional recreation amenities are added.
- **Former Bank property** (#5 in Figure 3.4). This site is under common ownership with the property on the corner of York and Davisville Roads, and could be the site of a redevelopment

Figure 3.3: Conceptual Façade Improvements



The visualization, left, is a conceptual rendering showing potential façade improvements and tree planting on a block on York Road (see Figure 3.2 for existing view). The visualization shows the type of improvements that a façade improvement program could encourage, including but not limited to architectural elements appearing in circles, below left. The photo below shows improvements made to the streetscape as under the Streetscaping pilot project on the Ehrenpfort Block of York Road.



ment project utilizing both properties and shared parking.

- **Burger King property** (#6 in Figure 3.4) at York and Easton Roads and the Extra Space Storage property (see below) have the potential to host future development with a design more appropriate for a town center—oriented towards the street and the pedestrian, with a greater density or intensity.
- **the Montgomery County Annex** (#7 in Figure 3.4), which hosts government offices that are somewhat set back from the road. This location is shown as an opportunity site in part because it has the potential to host a development designed to fit better in a walkable, small-town setting. If it were to become a retail use it could produce a more favorable fiscal impact for the Township; if it were to become residential it could produce more foot traffic to support local businesses in the evenings and on weekends.
- The **Extra Space Storage** (#8 in Figure 3.4) property includes nearly an acre of vacant land between the storage facility and the street. This creates a gap in the built environment along York Road, and does not encourage pedestrian traffic.
- The parking lot for the **Willow Grove United Methodist Church** (#9 in Figure 3.4), at York and Church

Figure 3.4: Some Opportunity Sites in Downtown Willow Grove (South)



Figure 3.5: Some Opportunity Sites in Downtown Willow Grove (North)



Roads, is underutilized much of the week. A shared parking arrangement could take advantage of peak-parking time differentials, provide additional parking for local businesses, and provide revenue for the church.

- **York Road, between Lincoln and Summit Avenues (#2 in Figure 3.5).** Part of the east side of this area is the site of an approved midrise residential development. The area contains a mix of nonresidential uses on relatively small lots that range in size from 5,000 s.f. to just under an acre. Several of the properties have built areas well below what zoning permits, meaning building expansions, or demolition and more intense redevelopment is possible.
- **Parking Lots, Office Max and Giant (#1 and #4 in Figure 3.5).** The Giant supermarket and Office Max have six acres of parking (combined). Both locations are located within 1,000 feet of one of the primary intersections in Willow Grove—Easton and York Roads. These parking areas could be sites of more intense development, possibly in conjunction with structured parking.
- **Former Ball Bearing Factory (#5 in Figure 3.5).** This is a relatively large property of approximately four acres, and may be suitable for future residential development.
- **Davisville Road.** Davisville Road consists of numerous small properties, several of which could be considered underdeveloped. One such property is that shown as #6 in Figure 3.5. Consolidation and redevelopment could increase development

Figure 3.6: Sign Examples

Gateway & wayfinding sign, Norwalk (right)



Gateway sign, Pennsburg (above)



potential in this area. For example, the property designated as #7 in the same Figure is the location of a proposed midrise residential development.

The Task Force and larger community have identified a need for a greater number and variety of entertainment and recreation options. These include, but are not limited to: restaurants, a movie theater (especially an arts or IMAX theater), a community center, and children’s entertainment. There is a great desire to attract such amenities to Downtown Willow Grove, especially in the case of restaurants and the theater.

No matter how revitalization and redevelopment proceeds, the needs and concerns of existing local businesses must be accommodated during any future revitalization or redevelopment project.

B. Interchange Focus Area

(Maryland Road/Easton Road/Commerce Avenue)

Due to the expansion of the Revitalization Area, the area in the vicinity of the Willow Grove Interchange is now eligible for County Community Revitalization Program Funding. The Revitalization Task Force identified an area including Maryland Road, Commerce Avenue, Computer Road, and the nearby portion of Easton Road as a major focus area of the Revitalization Plan (henceforth designated as the “Interchange Focus Area”).

The Vision for this area is to enhance its role as an employment center; generate tax revenue for the Township; capitalize on its access to and visibility from the Pennsylvania Turnpike; take advantage of the presence of relatively large properties, which include a significant amount of vacant, undeveloped, or underutilized land; and attract uses which will create synergy with other uses in the area.

The Interchange Focus Area is not intended to compete with Downtown Willow Grove, but rather leverage market and tax base opportunities provided by its location adjacent to the Turnpike interchange and large parcel sizes. It is hoped that the tax base generated in this location can be used to leverage funding for projects and improvements in Downtown Willow Grove.

Opportunity sites are plentiful in this area; they include undeveloped, vacant and underdeveloped land. [see **Figure 3.7: Opportunity Sites in Interchange Focus Area**]. Undeveloped land

includes the 9.9 acre parcel on the northwest corner of Route 611 and Maryland Road, which was formerly the site of the George Washington Motor Lodge. A major vacant building stands at 2405 Maryland Road, the former site of Tyco Electronics and home to a 122,000 square feet industrial building.

The Interchange Focus Area also includes a power line corridor—7.4 acres along the Turnpike, and a 3.3 acre-strip linking two segments of Maryland Road south of Commerce Avenue. The utility corridor is not an area likely to be available for land development, but it is noteworthy that the Township leased the corridor from PECO for use as a trail. This would be an amenity for employers, their employees, and residents.

In addition to vacant land, the underdeveloped land in this area totals at least nine acres (the land outlined in red in **Figure 3.7: Opportunity Sites in Interchange Focus Area**). These are areas where land owners could choose to expand the developed portion of their sites, or where future owners might redevelop larger buildings.

In total, the vacant, undeveloped, and underutilized land in the Interchange Focus Area are areas which might attract major office, industrial, or super-regional retail land uses (such as the Home Depot, located on the northern edge of this area); the underutilized land might also serve as expansion sites for current businesses as they grow. Furthermore, the area is also considered by the local real estate community to be a prime location for a future full-service hotel and conference center.

Figure 3.7: Opportunity Sites in Interchange Focus Area



The health care sector is well-represented by existing land uses in the Interchange Focus Area. Abington Memorial Hospital's Schilling Campus is a 40-acre complex which employs 600 people. It includes 246,000 square feet of office space, and includes laboratories, outpatient and surgical services, medical schools, and conference facilities. The area also includes Buxmont Medical practice. The health care sector is a growth industry, and is expected to be responsible for a high percentage of new jobs for years to come. The Township recognizes the existing health care presence and the industry's prospects for future growth. As a result, health care (offices, medical schools, labs, pharmaceuticals, medical equipment manufacture or assembly) is one area which the Township will give serious consideration to as it plans for the future of the Interchange Focus Area.

Other sectors that might be analyzed in a feasibility, cost-benefit, or other study of the Interchange Focus Area include high-tech and other light-industrial industries that have the potential to produce sizeable fiscal impacts. However, since the surrounding area is home to suburban residential areas, heavy industries that might produce nuisances or pollution would not be desirable.

Whereas Downtown Willow Grove is likely to attract a mix of uses that can fit into a town-center-style environment, the Interchange Focus Area is more suitable for uses that require more

land and would benefit from close proximity to the Pennsylvania Turnpike. As a result, one of the Township's first priorities for this area is to undertake more intensive planning efforts— including examining the projected impact of various types of development, which would help the Township make more informed decisions about revitalization and redevelopment.

Once a development strategy is formed, the Township intends to make this area as attractive as possible to developers from industries the Township decides to target. Therefore, the Plan recommends the following:

- Undertake a market study and initiative
- Offer financing and development facilitation, in coordination with the Montgomery County Redevelopment Authority
- Audit zoning and making appropriate modifications to facilitate development of the desired land use type, if necessary
- Strengthen identity and transportation efficiency by addressing streetscape, signage, and facades

The Revitalization Task Force appreciates the potential of the Interchange Focus Area to serve as an even greater employment center for selected industries requiring large lots and immediate access to the Pennsylvania Turnpike. Therefore, many of the Revitalization Plan's recommendations are directed there.

ACTION PLAN

ACTION PLAN

The success of the Township's Revitalization Plan and its recommendations depends on various factors. Responsible parties must be identified who will oversee or assist with implementation of projects (see **Figure 4.3** and **4.4**, Implementation Matrices). Additional finance mechanisms are important to ensure a project's viability. These factors are also weighed by the County's Community Revitalization Board when it considers whether to approve a revitalization plan and implementation projects.

Major revitalization projects with the capacity for significant impact will require significant investment by the Township itself. These projects, such as adding parking to Downtown Willow Grove or improving infrastructure, would greatly benefit Downtown Willow Grove businesses by improving their access to customers and reducing the risk inherent with aging infrastructure. This type of investment is not cheap, and could mean an expenditure on the order of \$5 to \$10 million. However, for such initiatives, it is generally impossible to rely exclusively or primarily on outside funding sources (in fact, these funding sources often require a major investment by the local government). When a municipality does choose to invest in its revitalization, and thus in its very future, it is critical that the dollars spent be used to leverage spending from the private sector. Public spending has the power to leverage a much-greater amount of private-sector investment, thus making what might have been considered impossible possible.

The Revitalization Task Force identified two primary focus areas for revitalization projects: Downtown Willow Grove, and one near the Willow Grove Interchange running along Maryland Road, Commerce Avenue, and Easton Road. Closer examination of both areas and area-specific recommendations follow.

A. DOWNTOWN WILLOW GROVE

When the Township's first Revitalization Plan was written in 2003, the area "down the Grove" (or Downtown Willow Grove) was the only area eligible for Revitalization funding. The Township successfully obtained Revitalization implementation grants for expanding Veterans' Memorial Park's entrance area (by acquiring property), constructing a grand entrance and road for the park, and for constructing a pilot streetscape project on York Road. The Township is also restoring stream banks along the creek, and has relocated parking within Veterans' Memorial Park. Although the Revitalization Area was dramatically expanded since the 2003 Plan was written, Downtown Willow Grove remains the top priority for the Township's revitalization efforts.

The Revitalization Plan recommends numerous projects which would accelerate revitalization in the downtown and make transit-oriented development even more attractive. These include the following:

High-Priority Projects

Aesthetic Improvements — Recommended aesthetic improvements are grouped into two categories: (1) Streetscape and (2)

Facades. Upper Moreland has constructed the first phase of the streetscape pilot project on the Ehrenpfort Block of York Road, and now intends to implement the next phase on York Road (Davisville Road to Cherry Street). Also high on the list of areas targeted for future streetscape revitalization include the original phases 2 and 3 of the project (crosswalks and pedestrian plaza at York and Davisville Roads, and a landscaped median at York and Easton Roads). The Township has also attempted to obtain ARLE program funding for a crosswalk north of the railroad tracks. The initial grant application was not funded, but this remains a Township objective.

We recommend that streetscape improvements be extended to adjacent areas outside the pilot project for the project to have a strong visual impact and attract and protect pedestrians. The most important area for streetscape improvements is York Road, from Davisville Road to Cherry Street.

One place where such improvements would make an impact would be the side opposite the York Road pilot project, the southwest side of York Road with sidewalk, lighting, and landscaping improvements. Other areas to improve with streetscape upgrades include Easton Road and Davisville Road. These improvements will leverage additional improvements from area property owners.

Building facades are a critical component of community image and sense-of-place. A matching grant or revolving loan program should be created to incentivize business or building owners to

invest in their facades. Funding would be contingent upon applicants making a significant upgrade to the façade that meets specified design parameters. Design criteria would meet the TC-Town Center Zoning District's façade standards, and would be supplemented by heightened standards for architectural treatment, color, lighting, and signage. Architectural design support is a key component of this project. Whether it be included in façade improvement design guidelines or zoning incentives, the Revitalization Task Force recommends that parking garages be encouraged to wrap their parking areas with active residential uses (this promotes active streets with pedestrian-friendly design).

Infrastructure Improvements — Infrastructure improvements are comprised of three categories of projects; (1) parking improvements (2) train station reconstruction, and (3) water and sewer system upgrades.

Currently, the Revitalization Task Force is evaluating downtown parking. It is generally accepted that businesses in the downtown core are in need of additional and convenient off-street parking. Such parking is vital to the health of the central business district and affects the quality of its land uses.

To obtain more detailed information on the parking situation, MCPC analyzed existing parking supply and demand (specifically, the area within the Redevelopment Area; see map, **Figure B-1: Willow Grove Redevelopment Area**). The analysis showed that there is a parking shortage of nearly 800 parking spaces. For the methodology of the analysis and more detail, see **Figure B-2: Parking Analysis Calculations**.

There are many facets of parking improvements in Downtown Willow Grove. It may be appropriate for the Township to conduct a detailed parking study, acquire property for parking, make improvements to infrastructure to prepare land for parking areas, make a site ready for parking development, and/or improve existing parking areas to make them more efficient (possibly involving shared parking and access), or help broker a land swap or site consolidation to facilitate parking development.

New parking in the downtown would be most effective if it benefited multiple uses. The cost of creating new parking areas would be significant, but Revitalization funding could be an important source to fill funding gaps. Any new parking construction would require the Township to work with SEPTA, property developers, and businesses in the area as part of the planning and implementation process. This would be coordinated with planning for the redevelopment of the Willow Grove Train Station, and might be incorporated into future station area improvements.

The Willow Grove Train Station (constructed in 1939) is an historic structure with attractive architecture that adds character and identity to the downtown core, while serving an important role in the transportation network. Concurrent with preparation of this plan, the Township undertook a TCDI study to examine the optimal location and configuration for the train station and its site. This study determined that the station should remain in its current location, with improvements to:

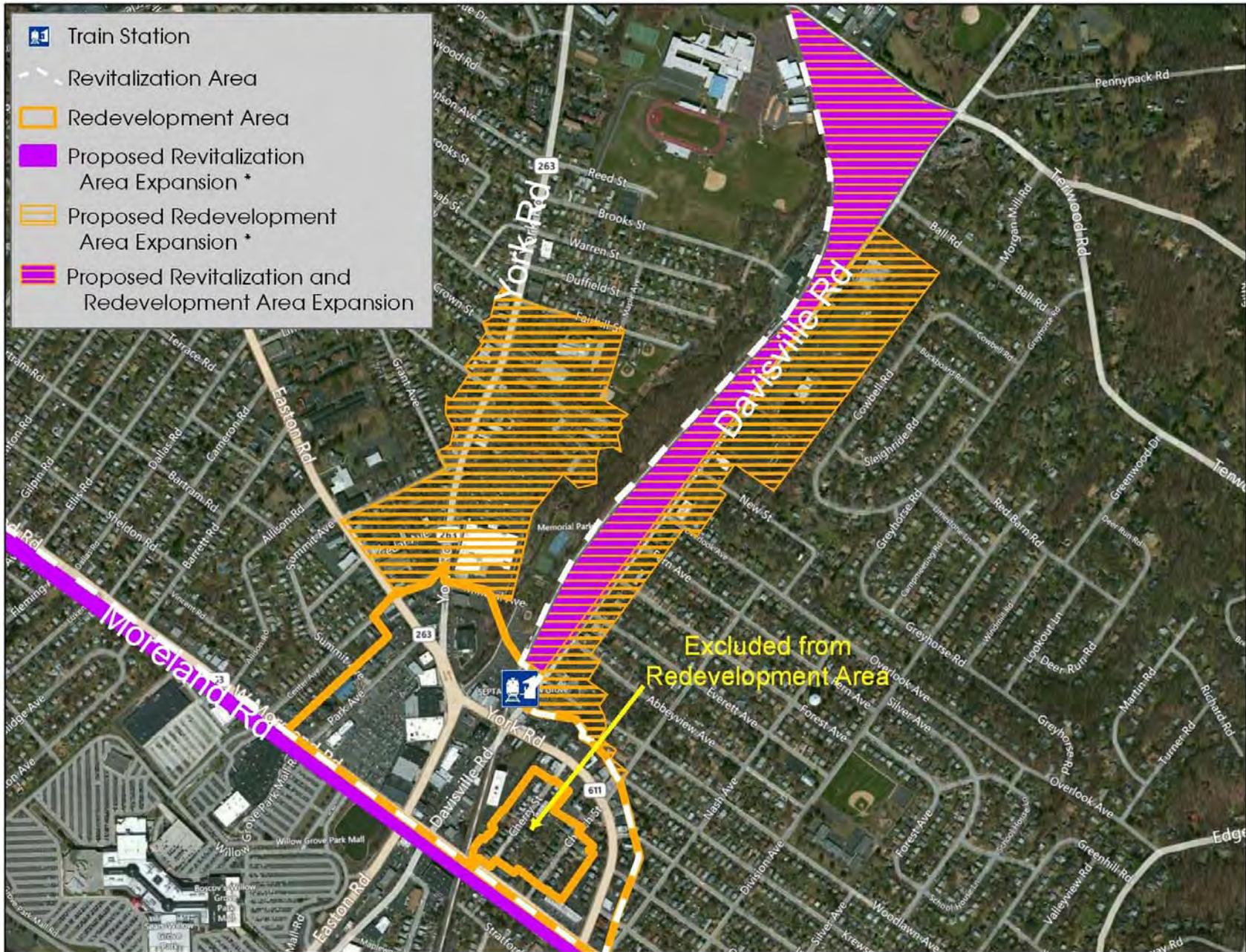
- Increase the utility of the station
- Improve access to surrounding development
- Leverage investment in new parking to serve the station and surrounding development
- Reduce traffic impacts to York and Davisville Roads, partly through the use of train controls

A program for the historic train station structure, perhaps incorporating a restaurant or other use, would also add value and utility to the site. The vision is for improvements to the train station to help it become an amenity that drives economic development in the downtown. Station reconstruction will include the addition of high-level platforms to make the station ADA accessible and speed boarding times for all riders.

Water and sewer infrastructure upgrades, if necessary, would make locating or expanding in Downtown Willow Grove more attractive. Such improvements could eliminate potential risk for the business owner.

Revitalization and Redevelopment Area Expansions (to North)
— [see Figure 4.1: Proposed Expansions of Revitalization and Redevelopment Areas in Willow Grove] This plan recommends adding Davisville Road (between the Train Station and Terwood Road) to the Revitalization and Redevelopment Areas. It also proposes adding York Road (extending north from Easton Road to Fairhill Street on the east side, and from Easton Road to Summit Avenue on the west side) to the Redevelopment Area.

Figure 4.1: Proposed Expansions of Revitalization and Redevelopment Areas in Willow Grove



Expanding the Revitalization Area to include the Davisville Road area would ensure that a significant area that serves either as a part of Downtown Willow Grove or a gateway to it, would be grouped with the existing Revitalization area. Proposed streetscape and façade programs, among others, could then be expanded to this area. All but a small portion of this area is zoned CC—Commercial Core, C-1 Commercial, C-2 Commercial, LI-Limited Industrial, and S-Small Limited Industrial.

Expanding the Redevelopment Area would affect a vital part of downtown. This area would then be eligible to have a framework devised for future development of the area, and give the Redevelopment Authority the ability to facilitate financing or acquire property to help implement the plan.

B. Medium-Priority Projects

Signage — Gateway or Wayfinding signage would help advance “place-making” in Willow Grove, and is the logical extension of the current TCDI project which will create a design for such signs. Such signage would help create a unified Willow Grove identity, and serve as examples of the style of sign the community advocates.

Revitalization Area Expansion (to South) — Moreland Road is a major road in Downtown Willow Grove, but only one side of the street (the Upper Moreland side) is eligible for revitalization improvements. Streetscape, façade, and other revitalization projects would be most effective if undertaken in a comprehensive manner affecting both sides of the street. This plan recommends

adding the south side of Moreland Road to the revitalization area. A preliminary conversation with Abington was favorable towards this idea, and would open the door to multi-municipal revitalization projects.

C. Lower-Priority Projects

On-Street Parking Creation (Easton Road, between Moreland and York Roads) — When parking is added to an urban area, it has the effect of calming traffic, making pedestrians feel more comfortable and protected, making it easy for customers of local businesses to find convenient parking, and helps motorists see that “this area is open for business.” New off-street parking spaces on Easton Road, between Moreland Road and York Road, could be constructed, or made available through shared parking arrangements. The self-storage facility in the heart of Downtown Willow Grove is one business that has expressed interest in serving as the site for new off-street parking.

B. INTERCHANGE FOCUS AREA

The Revitalization Plan recognizes that vacant and underutilized land near the Willow Grove Interchange (along Maryland Road, Commerce Avenue, and Easton Road) is a significant opportunity area. Unlike other areas of the Township, it includes parcels of substantial size and is located on (or near) the doorstep of the Pennsylvania Turnpike. Most of this area is buffered from the Township’s single-family residential districts. For these reasons,

the Township’s goal of attracting a sizeable employer or employers would have a large fiscal impact rest here.

High-Priority Projects

Feasibility, Fiscal Impact, and/or Cost-Benefit Analyses; Business Attraction Initiative— Feasibility studies are needed to understand the full potential of this area. Such studies would examine the viability of new retail, office, or industrial development in the UDC-Unified Development Commercial Zoning District; and could examine the potential of the area along Maryland Road and Commerce Avenue to host new employers in sectors and businesses such as office, light industrial, biotech, pharmaceutical, medical, and research & development areas. This could examine the highest and best use for properties in the Interchange Area, or create a land use policy.

A fiscal impact study would evaluate the effect on Township costs and revenues of various development scenarios. This is critical to help the Township understand how development would affect the municipal and school district revenue stream.

A Cost-Benefit Analysis would be useful to show both the pros and cons of a development scenario. This might examine not only the direct economic, secondary economic, and employment benefits— but also potential negative impacts, if applicable (such as impacts on traffic, crime, emergency services, and other services the Township needs to provide).

Redevelopment Area Expansion — The Task Force recommends the Redevelopment Area in Downtown Willow Grove be

Figure 4.2: Proposed Redevelopment Area Expansion (Interchange Focus Area)



expanded by adding a separate area near the Willow Grove Interchange (Maryland Road—Commerce Avenue—Easton Road area) [see **Figure 4.2: Proposed Redevelopment Area Expansion (Interchange Focus Area)**] This would be followed by amendment to the Redevelopment Area Plan incorporating this location. Establishing a Redevelopment Area in the Interchange Focus Area would create a framework for developers for future development of the area, and give the Redevelopment Authority the ability to facilitate financing or acquire property to help implement the plan. The steps which need to be completed to achieve this are:

1. Define a new Redevelopment Area boundary
2. Complete a blight certification
3. Amend the current Redevelopment Area Plan (2003), which includes creation of a land use plan.
4. Montgomery County Planning Commission review and approval
5. Township Board of Commissioners' approval (Township may wish to revise according to any further recommendations from the Township Advisory Planning Agency).

Medium-Priority Projects

Streetscape Enhancements (Easton Road, North of Fitzwater-town Road)—This would fill in missing links in the sidewalk network [see **Figure 2.16: Example of Missing Link in Sidewalk Network**], and add street trees and decorative lighting. The end result would be safer and more attractive conditions for pedestrians, and a more welcoming gateway corridor to the Township and nearby employment center on Maryland Road and Commerce Avenue.

Interchange Improvements — [see **Figure 3.7: Opportunity Sites in Interchange Focus Area**]. The Willow Grove Interchange and adjacent Easton Road are a major concern of the Township. These areas are subject to regular traffic congestion, and traffic accidents at the intersections along this stretch of Route 611 are a major problem.

The Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission is widening the Turnpike bridge over Easton Road (and simultaneously build a sidewalk on Easton Road underneath the Turnpike, filling a gap in

the pedestrian network). This could be the first of several infrastructure improvements in this area.

The potential of this area for development or redevelopment would be maximized by fundamental improvements to the Willow Grove Interchange (the fourth-busiest interchange in the state). This would involve, among other improvements, the creation of a double-ramp onto the Turnpike from southbound Easton Road, and widening and reconstruction of Easton Road itself. Past plans have studied or suggested a more direct link from Maryland Road to the Turnpike, and more road interconnections between properties. Greater traffic efficiency in this area would ease congestion and make local properties more appealing for development or redevelopment.

Providing safe sidewalks and other pedestrian connections is also important. In addition to standard sidewalks, pathways or trails could be used. The Township recently acquired an access easement under the PECO power line in this area; an extension of the Power Line Trail from Horsham to Easton Road is now more feasible, and the County's proposed Cross County Trail is planned for this general area as well. Therefore, the Township strongly supports initiatives to improve traffic and nonvehicular circulation in this area.

Lower-Priority Projects

Wayfinding Signage —This would help strengthen the image of the area along Maryland Road and Commerce Avenue as a busi-

ness campus or park. Potential locations for such signs are areas where motorists enter or drive along the periphery of the Interchange Focus Area (potential locations are shown in **see Figure 3.7: Opportunity Sites in Interchange Focus Area**).

Gateway Sign —Currently, the Chamber of Commerce and Sonic have modest gateway signs in this general vicinity, which emphasizes this area is considered a gateway to Willow Grove, Upper Moreland, local businesses and points of interest. However, adding a major gateway sign at a strategic location would enhance identity and image. If used to identify the area as a gateway to the Maryland/Computer/Commerce industrial/business area, such a sign could strengthen the identity of the area as a center of business/industry.

Façade Improvements —A façade improvement program (loans or grants) would encourage owners of structures in this area to improve their appearance and thus that of the general area. It could also be used to help create a “common look” for the area and help identification of the area as an industrial/business center.

Zoning Review for Medical (and other feasible) Uses — The Task Force recommends re-examining the zoning districts in this area (currently the I-Limited Industrial, O-Office, and INST-Institutional, and C-2 Commercial). The purpose is to ensure the widest range of permitted medical uses, provided they are not incompatible with other uses in the vicinity. The medical field is

a growing, high-paying industry; it appears that this area could host a greater number of jobs and employers in this field.

Potential Future Projects

Upper Moreland Township wants to encourage mixed-used development in Downtown Willow Grove. The Township took the first step towards doing so by adopting the TC-Town Center Zoning District, which applies to Downtown Willow Grove. This district encourages mixed-use, high-quality, pedestrian-oriented development. In the future, the Township hopes to facilitate high-density residential development or parking projects in this location.

A residential development downtown might look something like the mixed use project that was proposed for the Willow Grove Shopping Center a few years ago. That redevelopment project would have had a significant residential component [see **Figure 3.1: Conceptual Sketch: Mixed Uses in Willow Grove**], and would have been transit-oriented. New residential uses of high densities are important to creating a more mixed-use, round-the-clock, business-supportive environment downtown.

Creation of new parking downtown would serve the public, and/or multiple land uses, and might well take the form of a parking structure. Parking would benefit the business community and could make it easier and more desirable to visit downtown.

Another future potential project is development of a major cultural attraction. One cultural attraction that the community has of-

ten vocalized a desire for is a movie theater— particularly a specialized one such as an art film cinema or IMAX that would fit well in a town center, on a relatively small movie theater building footprint. Such customized theaters have helped revitalize small-towns such as Ambler, Doylestown, and Phoenixville and meet the demand of theater-goers interested in a unique arts film, IMAX, or small-town theater experience.

Up the road in Horsham, plans are being formulated for a revitalization of the former Willow Grove Naval Air Station. Since this would be a megaproject with far-reaching impacts, the Township should be proactive in making its opinion heard regarding the development and any related transportation changes.

Figure 4.3: Implementation Matrix: Willow Grove

ID #	Project	Priority	Costs	Implementation Partners ¹	Potential Funding Sources
1	Aesthetic Improvements: (1) Streetscape and (2) Facades	High	Streetscape: \$300,000-\$700,000 per block; Facades: \$75,000-\$200,000	(1) Property Owners, PennDOT; (2) WGCOG	(2) (1) TE; Facades: (2) Property Owners, Local Banks
2	Infrastructure Improvements (1) Parking and (2) Train Station Reconstruction and Expansion	High	TBD	(1) Property Owners/Private Sector, SEPTA, WGCOG; (2) SEPTA, Property Owners	(1) PCTI; (2) TCDI received for planning, PCTI, TE, TCSP. State Capital Grants (may be
3	Revitalization & Redevelopment Area Expansions (to north)	High	N/A	MCRA	N/A
4	Signage (Gateway, and/or Wayfinding)	Medium	\$150,000-\$500,000	WGCOG	(TCDI received for planning)
5	Revitalization Area Expansion (to south side of Moreland Road)	Medium	None	Abington Township	N/A
6	Increase On-Street Parking on Easton Rd.	Lower		MontCo, Property and Business Owners	PCTI, TCDI, TCSP

Notes: Upper Moreland Township will be a responsible party for all projects. ¹ These projects might be undertaken under the auspices of MCPC Planning Assistance.

Key: EMCOC= Eastern Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce, MCRA= Montgomery County Redevelopment Authority, MontCo= Montgomery County, PCTI= Pennsylvania Community Transportation Initiative, TCDI= Transportation and Community Development Initiative, TE= Transportation Enhancements Program (Federal), WGCOG= Willow Grove Chamber of Commerce

Figure 4.4: Implementation Matrix: Interchange Focus Area

ID #	Project	Priority	Costs	Implementation Partners	Potential Funding Sources
7	Feasibility, Fiscal Impact, and/or Cost-Benefit Analysis	High	\$40,000-\$50,000	WGCOG, EMCOC	MontCo Central Business District Fund
8	Redevelopment Area Expansion	High	N/A	MCRA	N/A
9	Interchange Improvements	Medium	TBD	PA Turnpike Authority	TE
10	Marketing Study/Initiative	Medium	¹	WGCOG	
11	Streetscape Enhancements (Easton Rd., north of Fitzwatertown Rd.)	Medium	\$400,000 per block (?)	PennDOT	TE
12	Wayfinding Signage	Lower	TBD	Business Owners	TCDI received for planning
13	Gateway Sign	Lower	Possibly \$15,000-\$25,000		TCDI received for planning
14	Façade Improvements	Lower	\$30,000-\$100,000 (design costs may be extra)	Property Owners	Property Owners
15	Zoning Review for Medical Uses	Lower	¹	MCPC	N/A

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Upper Moreland's Revitalization Plan will guide revitalization and redevelopment planning in the Township—concentrating on Downtown Willow Grove and the Interchange Focus Area. The Plan will be used to compete for revitalization funding from the County or other funding sources, as available; and to seek redevelopment funding and assistance from the Montgomery County Redevelopment Authority and other applicable sources. Regardless of the financing programs pursued, however, this document will serve as a guiding vision for Township planning in the years to come, and can be used to flexibly and creatively pursue financing to help vision become reality.

Willow Grove remains the Township's top revitalization and redevelopment priority. The Town Center will be assisted by revitalization and redevelopment efforts that will make it more of a walkable, vibrant, transit-oriented destination in the future. The Plan seeks to increase opportunities for dining, shopping, and working; and to provide more residential choices. This will mean aesthetic improvements such as façade and streetscape improvements; investments in parking, transportation, and other infrastructure; use of additional financing mechanisms which expansion of the revitalization and redevelopment areas will make possible; and improved wayfinding signage.

The Plan's recommendations for the Interchange Focus Area will capitalize on its excellent highway access and undeveloped or underdeveloped land. Investments in this area and the completion of feasibility, fiscal impact, or other studies will improve the area's function as an employment center, and will help the Township attract major employers in the office, light industrial, or medical sectors.

Regardless of the location, the Revitalization Plan seeks to create policies and initiatives that will increase the Township's tax base, revenues, and jobs. The many active and dedicated Commissioners, the Revitalization Task Force, the Willow Grove Chamber of Commerce, interested citizens, Township staff, and the business community at large will see to the implementation of this plan. Plans are already being made to pursue specific implementation steps such as expansion of the eligible redevelopment area. In addition to the steps formally recommended in the Action Plan, next planning steps should include the preparation of a Township Comprehensive Plan; and creation of conceptual revitalization and redevelopment, parking, and train station expansion plans for Downtown Willow Grove.

APPENDIX A: PUBLIC MEETING POSTERS

Opportunity Area: Willow Grove



Easton Road. Currently there is no on-street parking. Also, Federal Realty is interested in adding banners to the façade of its building and has asked the Township for recommendations.

This might involve:

1. Façade improvements
2. Streetscape improvements
3. Signage: wayfinding (directional) and gateway signs



Veterans' Memorial Park, before Revitalization



(above and below) Ehrenpfort Block of York Road, before Revitalization



Upper Moreland Revitalization Plan

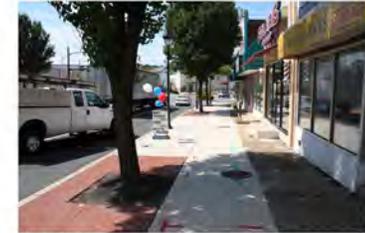
Opportunity Area: Willow Grove



Veterans' Memorial Park Gateway Plaza (above and below), and decorative crosswalk.



Photo credit: Stephen Somer & URS Corp.



York Road, after decorative pavement and street lighting installed.



Willow Grove gateway sign, landscaping, decorative lighting standards and pedestrian crossing button.

What revitalization has achieved in Willow Grove:

1. Veteran's Memorial Park: acquisition and building demolition for park entrance; construction of entrance road; fountain, plaza, benches, landscaping, sidewalks, curbs, and Willow Grove gateway sign.
2. York Road: Streetscape improvements, including decorative crosswalks, street lights, and traffic signal standards; and pedestrian signal buttons.

Upper Moreland Revitalization Plan

Opportunity Area: Willow Grove



Façade improvements can improve the image and appeal of the business district



Streetscape improvements on this block in Souderton added greenery and created a more inviting pedestrian environment.

This might involve:

1. Business façade improvements.
2. Parking improvements (this might involve new on-street spaces on Easton south of York, more efficient design/management of existing off-street parking, or entirely new parking).
3. Expansion of streetscape improvements to other blocks.
4. Creation of a mixed-use building(s) downtown (bringing potential customers closer to Willow Grove businesses).
5. Establishing a new arts/cultural attraction.
6. In residential neighborhoods, conversion of multifamily residential back to single-family.

Upper Moreland Revitalization Plan



Street parking on Easton, south of York; or a new parking garage could encourage customers to stop, shop, and enhance street life in Willow Grove.



Some single-family homes have been converted into multi-dwelling units. In some areas, it makes sense to reconvert them back to single-family homes to help stabilize a neighborhood.

Opportunity Area: Davisville Road



Davisville & Terwood intersection



2008 Aerial photos, Davisville Road



Streetscape improvements could enhance the physical environment for businesses and their clients/customers.



The are highlighted in red might be added to the Revitalization Area in the future. We can add goals for this area now.

Upper Moreland Revitalization Plan

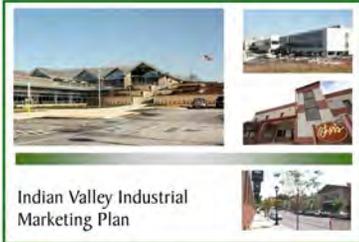
This might involve:

1. Streetscape improvements
2. Evaluate tools for investment on Davisville

Opportunity Area: Easton & Maryland Roads (NW Corner)



A marketing plan (right) would seek to attract businesses in a targeted industry by promoting local assets.



Indian Valley Industrial Marketing Plan

Preliminary Site Plan Prepared for Willow Grove Redevelopment Area Plan, 2003 (below). As part of the creation of a new redevelopment area, a new conceptual plan like this would be developed.



UDC-Unified Development Commercial District, NW corner of Maryland & Easton (2008).



This might involve:

1. A land use study to determine the best use(s) of the property.
2. A market study or plan, to market the area for retail, office, or limited industrial development (business attraction).
3. Creation of a new Redevelopment Area (Montgomery County Redevelopment Authority could then assist in pursuing and administering project financing).
4. New gateway signage welcoming visitors to Upper Moreland.

Upper Moreland Revitalization Plan

Opportunity Area: Maryland & Computer Rds. (Industrial Park)



Signage in the industrial park area uses various sizes and styles; a coordinated sign program could establish a consistent look and strengthened business park identity.



A design manual could be created to encourage a consistent look for businesses in the industrial park area.

Business attraction may involve tax increment financing (TIF), creating a marketing plan, or developing a site plan showing a preferred development concept.

This might involve:

1. An office-industrial marketing study and/or plan.
2. Directional and/or gateway signage, and façade improvements (to achieve a consistent look, tying separate buildings together as a business park).
3. Business attraction.

Upper Moreland Revitalization Plan

Opportunity Area: York Road (East Side, SEPTA RR to Fairhill; West Side, SEPTA RR to Cedar)



The opportunity area includes this portion of York Road (photo is looking south from Fairhill, right).



Shade trees and decorative lighting are two elements which could be added to York Road.

Strolling shoppers often find street trees help create an inviting environment (below).



Map of this opportunity area



This might involve:

Streetscape improvements. This might mean new street trees, new or decorative crosswalks, replacement of older sidewalks/curbs, and/or decorative street lighting.

Upper Moreland Revitalization Plan

Opportunity Area: Wyandotte Rd.



Businesses on Wyandotte Road could benefit from reconfiguring the winding road.



Development on Wyandotte Road is often the first view people have when arriving in the Township.



A façade improvement program could encourage businesses adjacent to the Turnpike to meet certain standards when rehabbing or rebuilding. Zoning could require such standards for new buildings.



A landscape buffer or wall could screen development from the Turnpike.

This might involve:

1. Buffering from the Turnpike (with a wall or row of evergreens)
2. Improving the function and organization of Wyandotte Road and its businesses.
3. Signage or façade improvements.

Upper Moreland Revitalization Plan

Opportunity Area: Easton Rd. (Fitzwatertown to Home Depot Dr.)



Street trees are missing, sidewalks are not continuous, and highway lighting design is functional, not decorative, along much of Easton Road (above and below).



This might involve:

Streetscape Improvements. In this area street trees, sidewalks, and decorative lighting would likely get priority.

Upper Moreland Revitalization Plan



Decorative lighting, a continuous sidewalk, and street trees along York Road in Hatboro (above) and Bethlehem Pike (below).



Opportunity Area: Willow Crest Hospital Property



Willow Crest Hospital site, on northwest side of Fitzwatertown Road.

This might involve:

1. A site reuse plan (perhaps for office, residential, educational, or medical use).
2. Business attraction.
3. A plan for redevelopment (identifying and illustrating the most appropriate uses for the site, which shall be compatible with the surrounding area).

Upper Moreland Revitalization Plan

Fiscal Impact \$\$\$

“How does revitalization affect my taxes?”

- Revitalization, whether it be attraction of new businesses, improvements to existing businesses’ buildings, or upgrades to streetscapes or signage, can have a positive effect on the local business climate.
- Improved business climate: can lead to increase in business profits, employment, and/or property values (residential or nonresidential).
- When any of these happen, all other things being equal, the Township’s tax revenues increase.
- When tax revenues rise, there is less pressure to raise taxes.



If the Willow Grove Shopping Center is redeveloped in the future, it might be transformed from its current look (above, left), to a mixed-use development. The sketch (above, right) shows a conceptual vision that had been considered within the past few years. The sketch envisioned a broad entry, directly linking the development to the heart of Willow Grove, opposite Veterans’ Memorial Park.

Upper Moreland Revitalization Plan

Fiscal Impact \$\$\$: Images of Redevelopment



A Miller’s Ale House (conceptual design sketch—above, right) has been proposed for a currently-undeveloped portion of the parking lot adjacent to Home Depot (above, left). *Sketch courtesy of SR3 Engineers.*

Revitalization of vacant or abandoned property can add thousands of \$\$\$s to the Township’s tax revenue and provide jobs. When the business environment of a downtown or commercial center is improved with aesthetic, functional, transportation, or safety improvements, the Township may receive additional tax revenue from the business(es) directly affected, and more jobs may be added. It is also possible that there will be spillover effects on surrounding areas (“business follows business”).



Redevelopment of an abandoned service station (above, left) at Easton and Mill Roads into a Sonic restaurant (above, right) made it possible for the Township to earn more tax revenue from the property.

Potential Projects (Willow Grove)

Streetscape Improvements: expand pilot project from northern side of York Road between Memorial Park Drive and Davisville ("Ehrenpfort Block") to other blocks, including improvements for pedestrian access and safety.



York Road, after decorative pavement and street lighting installed

Investment Options for Davisville Road (from train station to Terwood): At no cost, we could look into expanding the Revitalization and/or Redevelopment Area to include this area. This would make it easier to obtain loans or grants for projects here.



Investment Options for Moreland Road: At no cost, encourage Abington to make their side of Moreland Road a Revitalization Area. This would allow projects focused on Moreland Road to improve both sides of the road, rather than just one.



Moreland Road, looking towards Abington

Upper Moreland Revitalization Plan

Potential Projects (Willow Grove)

Additional Off-Street Parking: (i.e., a new or expanded lot, or a garage). Ideally, this would be built to serve multiple local businesses.



Additional On-Street Parking: This would be located on Easton Road adjacent to Willow Grove Shopping Center. It could provide more parking for local businesses and calm traffic.



Easton Rd, looking south from York Rd

Façade Improvement Program: This would likely mean setting up a loan fund or matching grant program to encourage commercial building owners to improve their facades. It would require property owners seeking funding to share some of the cost.



Signage: (gateway or wayfinding) This could build on the Willow Grove Place-making Study. Such signs could help strengthen the downtown's public image and define its boundaries for motorists passing through town.



Upper Moreland Revitalization Plan

Potential Projects (Maryland-Easton-Commerce Area)



Approximate Vicinity of Potential Study Area

Feasibility/Impact Study: Examine potential for retail, office, or limited industrial uses for this general area; study the fiscal impact of designated new land use(s). Such a study could be used to attract new business.

Marketing Study and Marketing Programs

A marketing study could be used to attract new businesses and create a land use policy for the area. A marketing program (materials and advertising) could be used to promote industries/businesses already in this area.



Indian Valley Industrial Marketing Plan

Make UDC (Zoning) District an Official

Redevelopment Area: This would be followed by a Redevelopment Plan. These steps would provide a framework for future development of the area for developers, and give the Montgomery County Redevelopment Authority the ability to facilitate financing or acquire property to help implement the plan.



Upper Moreland Revitalization Plan

Potential Projects

(Easton Rd, from Fitzwatertown to Home Depot)

Sidewalk connections, street trees, and decorative lighting. Such improvements would improve the appearance of one of the Township's most heavily-traveled roads, which functions as a gateway to the Township itself, as well as downtown Willow Grove. This would make conditions safer and more attractive for pedestrians, and could improve the Township's image.



Easton Road, north of Fitzwatertown



A local streetscape after decorative lighting and sidewalk were added

Upper Moreland Revitalization Plan

APPENDIX B: DOWNTOWN PARKING ANALYSIS

land uses using the lot were assigned a “0” in the table under “Parking Spaces” in order to avoid double-counting.

The parking analysis found that there are 3,383 spaces demanded, based on existing uses. However, existing supply is only 2,602; therefore, there appears to be a parking space shortage of 781 parking spaces. This parking analysis did not attempt to determine if shared parking arrangements were in effect. Shared parking arrangements would lower the total demand for parking spaces, due to greater efficiencies in parking.

Figure B-2: Parking Demand Analysis Calculations

Owner/Business (current or former)	Address	Street	Parking Spaces	Use	square feet	Units	Spaces Required	Notes
Willow Grove Apts	9-11	Park	13	apartments		34	68	
Willow Inn	210	N York	0	apartments		2	4	
Inman Terrace	25	N York	8	apartments		10	20	
Lombardo, Denise R	27	N York	0	apartments		4	8	
Mandarin Garden build-	91	N York	14	apartments		10	20	
Three Stars Associates	217	Davisville	0	apartments		5	10	
CJS Enterprises	60	N York	0	apartments		2	4	
Abounasra, Emad	58	N York	0	apartments		2	4	
Harrison, Martin & Karen	30	N York	0	apartments		2	4	
Cichan, Anthony B	26	N York	5	apartments		5	10	
Willow Grove Methodist	42-34	N York	109	institutional	12,391		124	
Kauderer, Bernard M	305	Easton	5	mixed-use	612	2	4	
Morgan, Thomas	349	N York	27	office	3,526		18	
Giant	315	N York	0	office	2,376		12	
Willow Grove Apts	9-11	Park	0	office	2,748		14	
Imagination Enterprise	15	Park	5	office	740		4	
Willow Grove Square	49	Easton	0	office	10,329		52	
Wickrema, Harrith	29	Easton	0	office	2,768		14	
Felte, Robert F Jr, & Patricia A	5	N York	11	office	1,102		6	
Milestones Health Care	9	N York	9	office	3,150		16	
Goldstein, Allan & Sandra	19	N York	3	office	886		4	
State Farm	23	N York	6	office	1,898		9	
Lombardo, Denise R	27	N York	6	office	926		5	
33 York Rd LLC	33	N York	2	office	1,490		7	
Ehrenpfort Building	125	N York	0	office	1,932		10	
Ehrenpfort Building	133	N York	0	office	2,114		11	
Montgomery County An-	102	N York	54	office	5,400		27	
Cichan, Anthony B	22	N York	3	office	392		2	
Law, Joan L & Bennett L	18	N York	4	office	1,534		8	

Figure B-2: Parking Demand Analysis Calculations (continued)

Owner/Business (current or former)	Address	Street	Parking Spaces	Use	square feet	Units	Spaces Required	Notes
14 N York Rd Associates	16	N York	2	office	1,631		8	
ERA Holdings, LLC	37	N York	13	office	2,412		12	
Fink, Steven & R Jane	301	Easton	0	office (medical)	1,674		17	
Dr. John M. Stack	15	N York	6	office (medical)	3,897		39	
Willow Grove Ice Rink	551	N York	77	recreation	24,000		240	
Giant	315	N York	482	retail	92,146		461	
Morgan, Thomas	357	N York	12	retail	1,905		10	
Toast Bridal	361	N York	30	retail	3,070		15	
Big Head's	601	N York	72	retail	3,387		17	
Belfatti, Richard & Helen	629	N York	6	retail	2,400		12	
Office Depot	300	N York	96	retail	22,546		113	
Willow Grove Shopping Center	10-170	Park	811	retail	195,250		976	
Willow Grove Square	49	Easton	0	retail	15,957		80	
Sherwin Williams	?	E Moreland	25	retail	5,993		30	
Goodman, Bruce	35	E Moreland	13	retail	3,276		16	
Shopping Strip	?	E Moreland	97	retail	15,600		78	
Relax the Back	13	N York	6	retail	7,580		38	
Comcast	31	N York	12	retail	6,105		31	
Computers, Cell Phones, and Pagers	37	N York	8	retail	4,430		22	
Petco	39	N York	8	retail	9,256		46	
Sleepy's	45	N York	13	retail	4,264		21	
Enterprise Rental Car	55	N York	23	retail	1,740		9	
Jackson Hewitt, Nails	73	N York	33	retail	1,818		9	
Finest Barber Shop	75	N York	0	retail	826		4	
Computers Service Center	81	N York	0	retail	2,809		14	
Ehrenpfort Building	109	N York	66	retail	3,240		16	
Ehrenpfort Building	111	N York	0	retail	2,196		11	
Ehrenpfort Building	115	N York	0	retail	1,748		9	
Ehrenpfort Building	119	N York	0	retail	1,368		7	

Figure B-2: Parking Demand Analysis Calculations (continued)

Owner/Business (current or former)	Address	Street	Parking Spaces	Use	square feet	Units	Spaces Required	Notes
Ehrenpfort Building	123	N York	0	retail	1,760		9	
Ehrenpfort Building	125	N York	0	retail	2,709		14	
Ehrenpfort Building	129	N York	0	retail	3,177		16	
Ehrenpfort Building	133	N York	0	retail	2,114		11	
It's Sold Here	98	N York	12	retail	4,395		22	
Park, Chung Wong and Yehsik	88	N York	0	retail	1,296		6	
Kelly, Thomas and Dennis Michael	86	N York	0	retail	1,224		6	
WGI Associates	84	N York	0	retail	1,630		8	
Nails	64	N York	0	retail	1,303		7	
CJS Enterprises	60	N York	0	retail	1,380		7	
Abounasra, Emad	58	N York	0	retail	1,304		7	
Malitas, Fotios & Alexandra	54	N York	0	retail	1,141		6	
Willow Grove Methodist Church	42-34	N York	0	retail	1,482		7	
Harrison, Martin & Karen	30	N York	5	retail	1,281		6	
Willow Grove Auto Top	41	N York	14	retail (auto service?)	3,300		15	Estimate
Weinrich Bakery	51	Easton	65	retail (bakery)	2,790		14	
PNC Bank	126	Easton	22	retail (bank)	5,200		26	
First Niagara Bank	21-27	Easton	0	retail (bank)	7,673		38	
First Niagara Bank	9	Easton	10	retail (bank)	3,572		18	
Three Stars Associates	65	N York	31	retail (bank)	4,032		20	
Kremp Florist	220	Davisville	48	retail (florist)	4,453		22	
Ralph's of Philly	318	N York	9	retail (restaurant)	986		7	Employees on largest shift
Willow Inn	210	N York	36	retail (restaurant)	4,299		29	estimated based on 30% of customer parking
Manhattan Bagel	200	N York	9	retail (restaurant)	1,818		13	

Figure B-2: Parking Demand Analysis Calculations (continued)

Owner/Business (current or former)	Address	Street	Parking Spaces	Use	square feet	Units	Spaces Required	Notes
Burger King	106	N York	55	retail (restaurant)	3,299		22	Employees on largest shift esti- mated based on 30% of customer parking
Fusion Restaurant	3	Easton	13	retail (restaurant)	2,449		17	
Mandarin Garden	91	N York	28	retail (restaurant)	8,068		56	
Salon Manivanh	213	Easton	0	retail (salon)	3,536		18	
Morgan, Thomas	341	N York	0	retail (service)	113		1	
Speedy Muffler King	1	N York	15	retail (service)	2,816		14	
Extra Space Properties Ten LLC	72	N York	35	storage	18,500		37	No requirement; required parking estimated at 1 space per 500 square feet
Giant	315	N York	0	warehouse	13,440		27	
Required Parking							3,383	
Parking Supply			2,602					
Parking Shortage							781	

APPENDIX C: ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF FUNDING

Figure C-1: Additional Sources of Funding

Program Name	Category	Eligibility
Business in Our Sites	Smart Growth & Community Revitalization	Pennsylvania municipalities, municipal authorities, redevelopment/industrial development agencies, private developers
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)	Smart Growth & Community Revitalization	Local governments, non-profits, and for-profit developers.
EGGS Program	Improvements to Growth Management and Community Design to Maximize Use of Transportation Infrastructure	Municipalities
Historic Preservation Tax Incentives	Private Sector Investment and Reuse of Historic Buildings	Property owners
Keystone Communities Program	Smart Growth & Community Revitalization	Pennsylvania units of local government; redevelopment authorities; housing authorities; non-profit main street organizations,; economic development organizations; neighborhood, downtown, and business improvement districts; non-profit corporations.
Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance (LERTA)	Tax Breaks for Business Attraction	Local PA taxing entities
Local Government Academy Multi-Municipal Planning and Community Sustainability Grant Program	Smart Growth & Community Revitalization	Pennsylvania local governments
Section 108 Program	Smart Growth & Community Revitalization	Pennsylvania counties and municipalities
Tax Increment Financing (TIF) Guarantee Program	Smart Growth & Community Revitalization	Pennsylvania municipalities and their authorities
TE Program	Improvements to Transportation Infrastructure	State, county and local municipal governments
Transportation and Community Development Initiative (TCDI)	Planning & Studies for Private Sector Growth or Redevelopment	Pennsylvania local governments
Transit Revitalization Investment Districts (TRID)	Studies for transit-oriented tax increment financing district	Pennsylvania local governments

UPPER MORELAND REVITALIZATION PLAN, 2012



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UPPER MORELAND TOWNSHIP, MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA