

North Huntingdon

Comprehensive Plan Update

2/13/2023

AGENDA

- Recap of the January 9, 2023, meeting
- Comprehensive Plans: Why are they important?
- Comprehensive Plans: Suggested Areas of Focus
- Next Steps

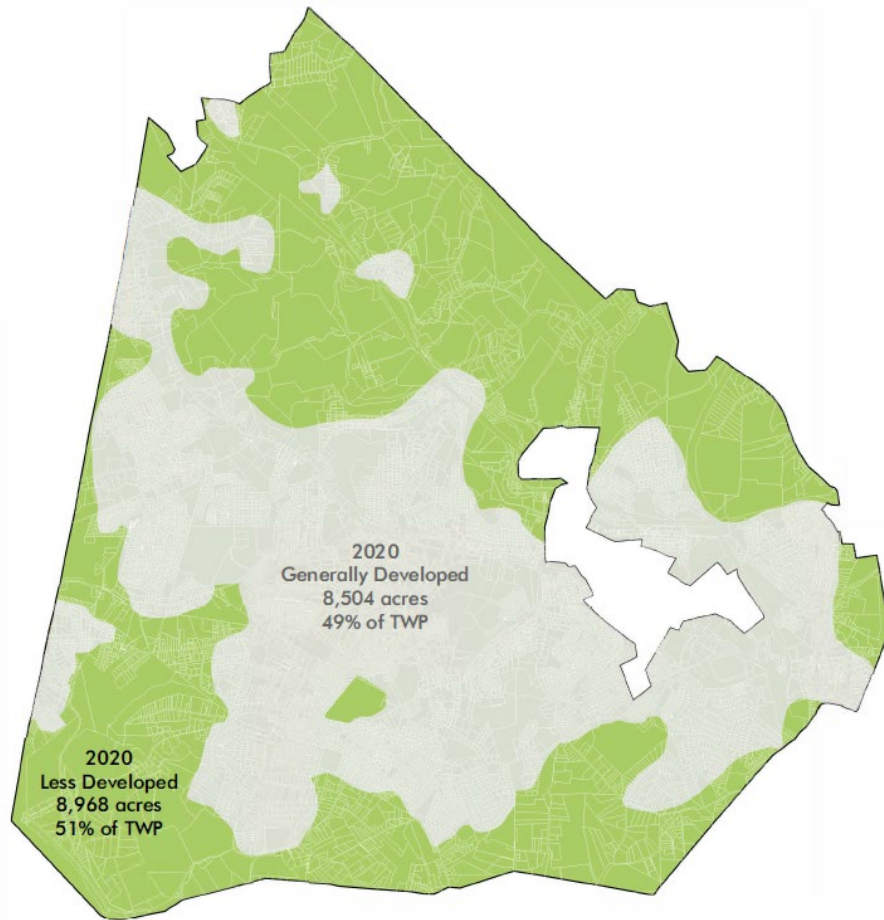
JANUARY 9TH MEETING RECAP

The purpose of the Buildout Modeling presented during the January 9th meeting was to illustrate a few key takeaways:

1. There is a significant amount of land that is still available for new development that can have long-term impacts on the township i.e., increased vehicular traffic, housing shortage/price increases, etc. A comprehensive plan can guide future development on this land, better serving the residents and township.
2. The online survey has indicated a want for measured development. Consensus has developed on topics, such as a desire for a greater sense of community and more recreation/public open space and concerns about new housing and congestion on local roads. **These sentiments will be impacted by the available land that has still yet to develop.**
3. Fortunately, there are tools available to address long-term planning via zoning and land use controls that can provide development flexibility while still maintaining accountability and predictability for all stakeholders.
4. There will be **resources that connect community input with best practices and precedents** provided during the Steering Committee Meeting #5 that address many of the concerns and desires raised throughout the online survey.

BUILDOUT MODELING

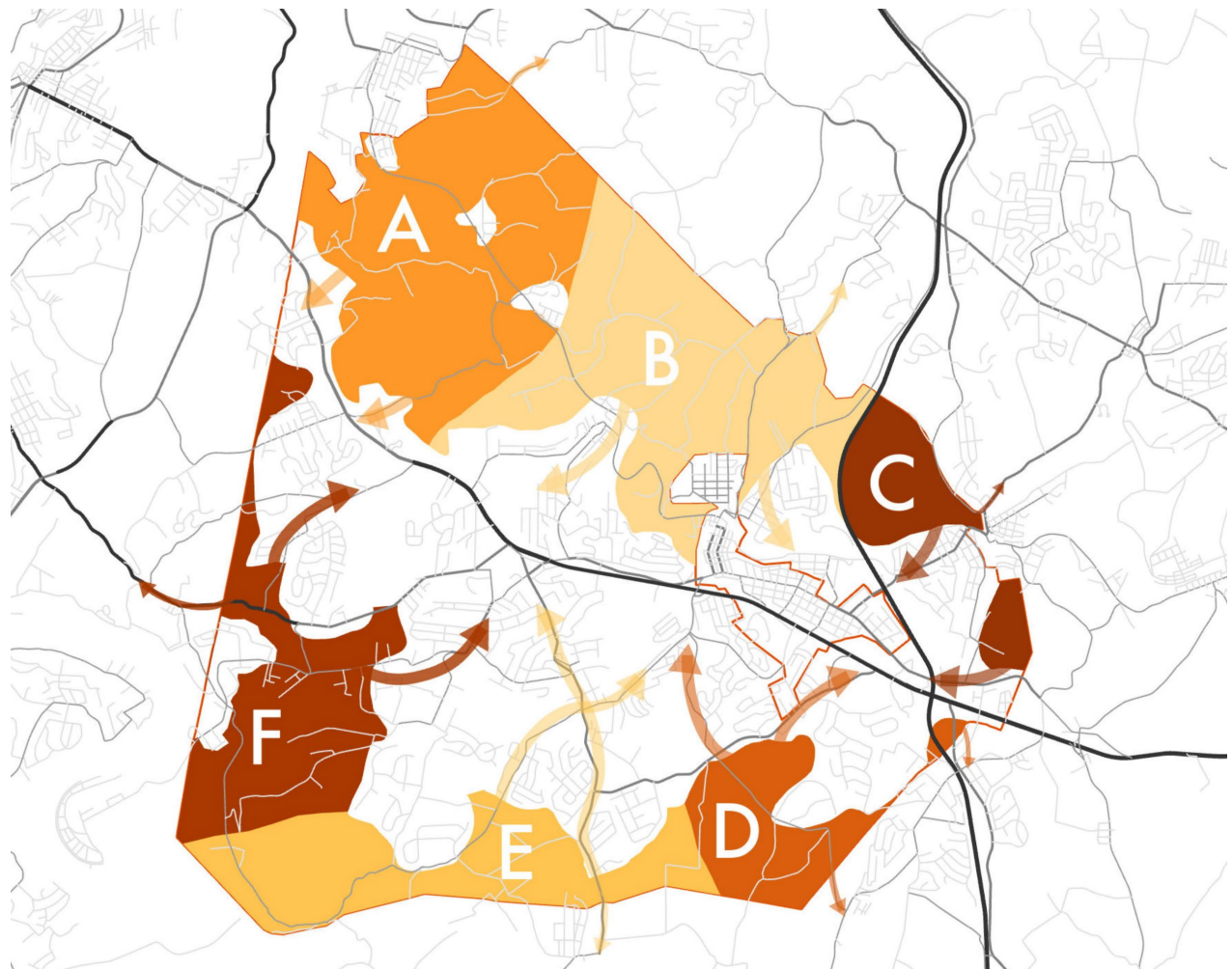
What is Buildout? – **A hypothetical scenario** if all the $\pm 8,500$ generally “Less Developed” land (Green on Map) was developed based on existing land use patterns and development trends, **independent of current market feasibility**.



Assumptions & Estimations:

- 90% residential; 10% non-residential
- 40% undevelopable
- 1 unit per acre - residential; 25% building coverage - non-residential
- Traffic estimated based on AADT (Average Annual Daily Trips) - ITE Manual
- 30% of all daily trips utilize Rt. 30

BUILDOUT MODELING



	Portion of Total "Less Developed" Area (Acres)	Potential % Increase in housing units and people	Potential Increase in Low-Intensity Non-Residential (Sq. Ft.)	Potential Increase of Traffic on Rt. 30
Area A	28%	10%	±1 M	Higher
Area B	25%	8%	±1 M	Medium
Area C	7%	2%	±0.5 M	Lower
Area D	8%	3%	±0.5 M	Lower
Area E	15%	5%	±1 M	Medium
Area F	16%	6%	±1 M	Medium

BUILDOUT MODELING: ASSUMPTIONS & ESTIMATIONS

- Land Use breakdown based generally on existing zoning and development trends
 - (90 percent residential; 10 percent non-residential)
- 40% of land estimated as undevelopable (i.e. open space, steep slopes, floodplain, existing buildings/uses)
- 1 unit per acre housing density based on trends revealed by building permit data analysis
- Building coverage for non-residential estimated at 25%
- Traffic based on 9.5 ADDT (Average Annual Daily Trips) per unit generated by housing and 6.0 AADT per 1,000 sf for low-intensity non-residential (Source: ITE Trip Generation Manual (10th Edition))
- Assumes 30% of all daily trips utilize Rt. 30

WHY A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

A comprehensive plan communicates community's goals and objectives, provides a blueprint for future land use, and serves as the basis for zoning, subdivision, and land use codes.

Accessibility

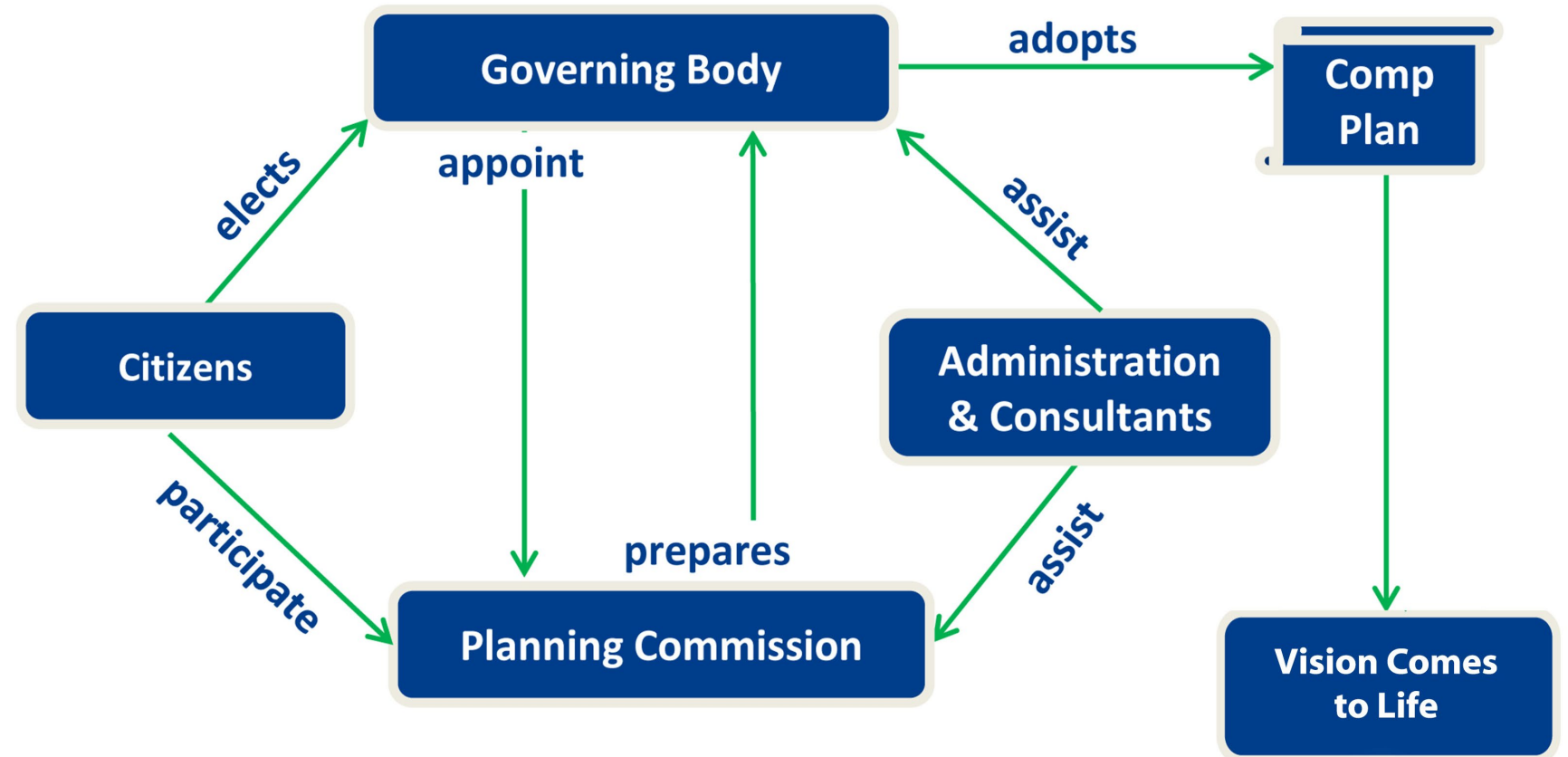
Accountability

Efficiency

Equity

Predictability

Transparency



WHY A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

To date, there have been over **950 public comments** recorded that have centered on **5 key themes**:

1. Housing Growth
2. Parks & Recreation
3. Traffic/Street Safety
4. Community
5. Commercial Uses

A comprehensive plan expresses a community's values and preferences – it reflects a community's desired future.



RULES OF THUMB: AIM CLOSE TO THE GROUND

Big projects require big budgets, lots of time, and constant management. Because the number of steps big projects require, they can easily discourage the public.

1. Take on simple, easy-to-execute **short-term projects** that do not require big budgets and multiple players.
2. **There is value and significant impact in smaller projects.**
3. Small projects build confidence and help communities gain experience implementing changes.
4. Small projects can fulfill the community's desire for more recreational activities and programs for various age groups in the short-term, while longer, more complex initiatives, such as zoning, and land use changes take place.

RULES OF THUMB: FILL THE GAPS

In the spirit of simplicity, temporary activation of underutilized spaces in high traffic areas can have an overwhelmingly positive effect on communities.

1. Taking inventory of the township and identifying places where the community could benefit from some type of temporary use enables residents to feel connected with each other and their surroundings.
2. “Filling the gaps” gives everyday citizens an opportunity to engage with their surroundings, rather than waiting for the professionals to do the job.
3. **Throughout the survey, respondents consistently voiced a desire to have the ability to gather and for more activities/programs for all ages.** Temporary activation of underutilized spaces could facilitate this want.
4. Since these are only temporary uses, a comprehensive plan can illustrate to the community it is OK to use these places in the interim, but a **longer-term vision does exist**. Simply put, a comprehensive plan helps manage expectations of the place.

RULES OF THUMB: WORKING AT SCALE

Managing the long-term land use and zoning of the township involves working at a variety of scales, navigating unique constraints, and facilitating public participation.

1. Zoning and land use changes are not short-term fixes. They require time and dedication.
2. Executing a successful comprehensive plan requires staff time and attention. Scaling future implementation with workload could entail the need for expanding staffing capacity.
3. Since zoning and land use policies are complex concepts, they must be communicated with transparency and honesty, which indicate possible outcomes that will impact the township.
4. **Thoughtful land use and zoning policy updates** can balance community housing mix and commercial development/redevelopment impact.

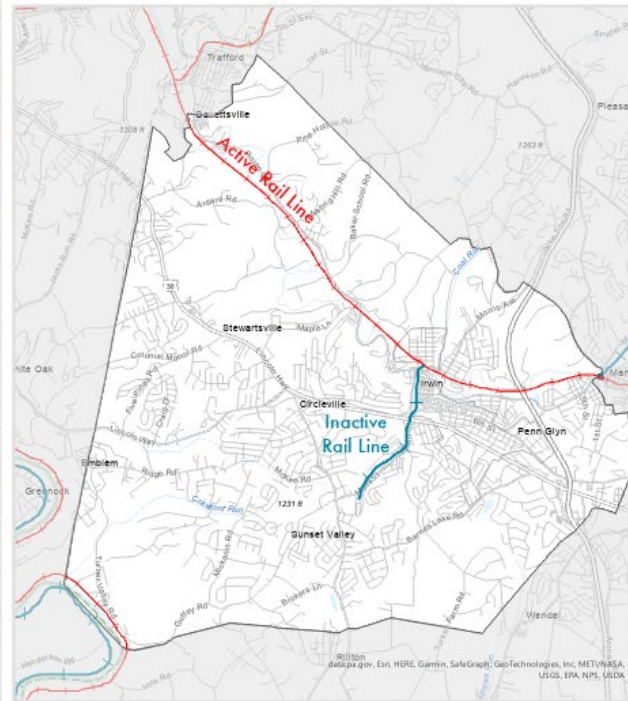
RULES OF THUMB: ENHANCE CONNECTIVITY

Suburban communities are commonly strained by vehicular infrastructure. The roads and bridges we use are a necessary part of everyday life but can sever physical and social connectivity. Long-term zoning and land use policy can create stronger ties between neighborhoods.

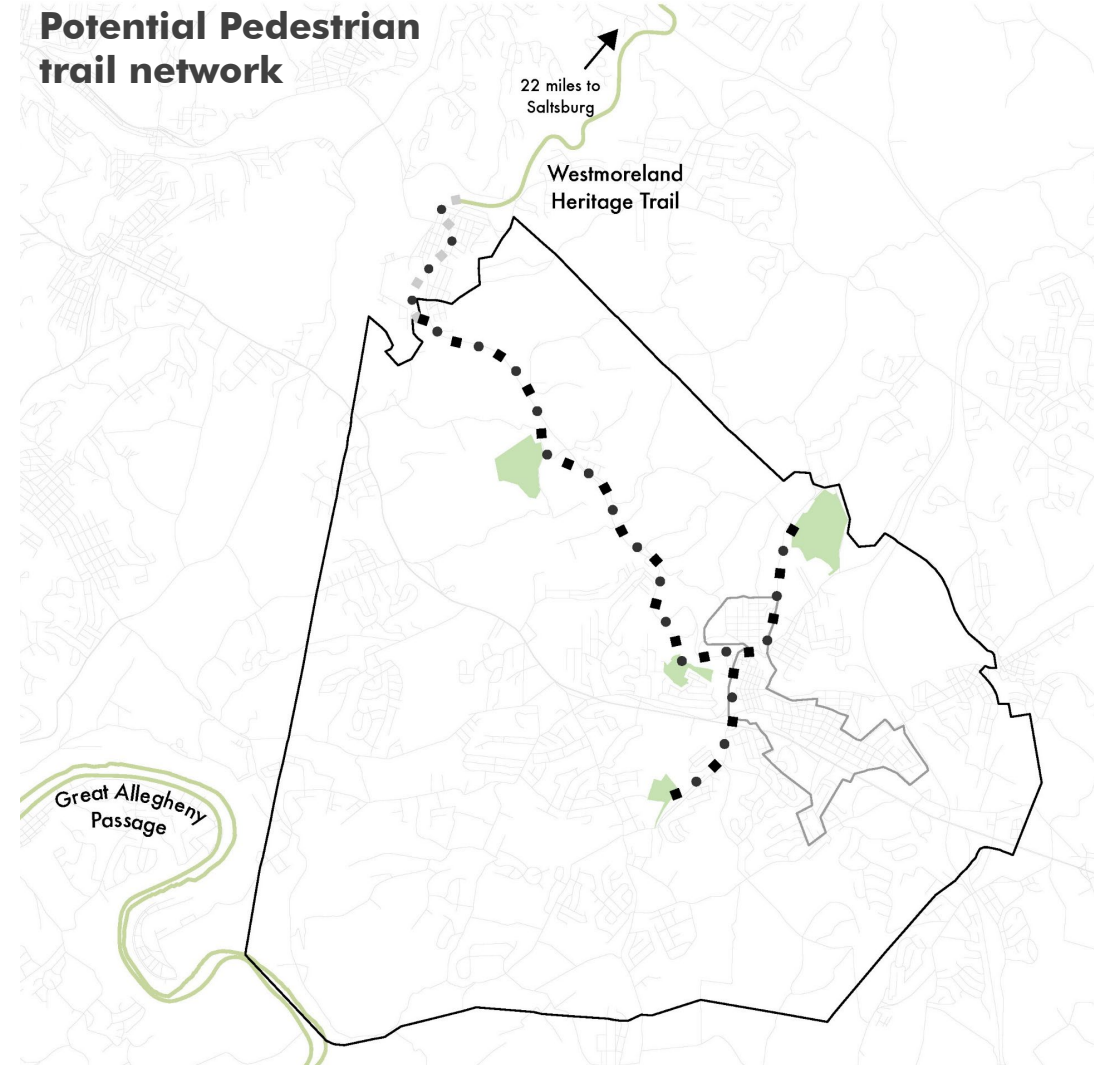
- 1. Embrace vehicular infrastructure as an opportunity for public art.** Bridges and other roadway structures are perfect canvases for celebrating the history of a community.
- 2. Coordinate closely with local and state (PennDOT) transportation experts** to ensure new development impacts are managed appropriately. A concern raised in the survey was the increased traffic congestion because of all the new housing units.
- 3. Think creatively for moving pedestrians throughout the community.** It was noted in the survey that US Route 30 poses a barrier for efficient connectivity. Can there be other means, such as a pedestrian trail, for moving residents throughout the township?

RULES OF THUMB: ENHANCE CONNECTIVITY

There are opportunities to create pedestrian-friendly connections throughout the community via **active/inactive rail lines & local/state roads.**



Potential Pedestrian trail network



RULES OF THUMB: SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESSES

Small businesses make our communities feel special and like home. These places only employ a handful of people, but their impact can create a greater sense of community.

1. Oftentimes, larger employers can detract from the community because of the financial incentives they require to locate their businesses within the area.
2. Small businesses may not generate a huge economic impact on a community, but they do have a significant psychic and emotional effect.
3. Survey respondents are concerned about a **limited mix of commercial uses**. A comprehensive plan can help support a rich variety of small businesses by limiting the size of commercial uses and buildings.

RULES OF THUMB: FIND YOUR SIGNATURE EVENT

Creating a signature event that is unique to your community is an economic force and a strong way of creating a community identifier.

1. Signature events are synonymous with the places their held.
2. The events can range from an annual concert series to a heritage festival.
3. Most importantly, **a recurring event brings the community together.**
4. A desire for a greater sense of community was one of the 5 key themes that was consistently mentioned in the online survey.

NEXT STEPS

Over the next few months, **close coordination with the steering committee and community stakeholders is critical** in order to create a high-quality comprehensive plan that addresses the long term needs of North Huntingdon Township.

Specifically, these are the proposed next steps:

1. EPD will present draft chapters of the 2023 comprehensive plan at each monthly steering committee meeting.
2. Steering committee members will provide comments on the draft information and any additional input that will inform the content of the comprehensive plan.
3. Community input will continue to be received via the online survey and will be incorporated in the comprehensive plan.
4. Public outreach should also be planned during any upcoming community events, such as parades and festivals, to reach a broader audience the survey may not capture.

NEXT STEPS

EPD has set up an online database with resources for the steering committee that include topic areas, such as:

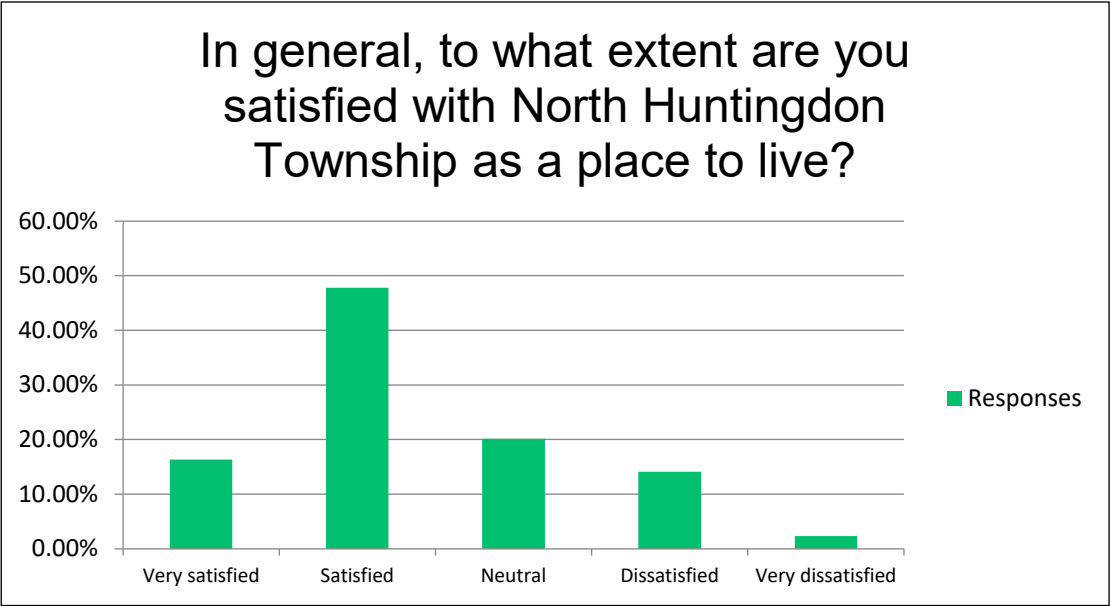
- 1.) Comprehensive Plans 101
- 2.) Comprehensive plans and affordable housing
- 3.) Comprehensive plans and smart growth
- 4.) Land use planning practices in Pennsylvania
- 5.) Comprehensive plan precedents

The steering committee is encouraged to explore this information and suggest additional focus areas/topics could be included in the 2023 comprehensive plan. EPD will continue adding information to the database and updating the committee on articles that are beneficial to this work.

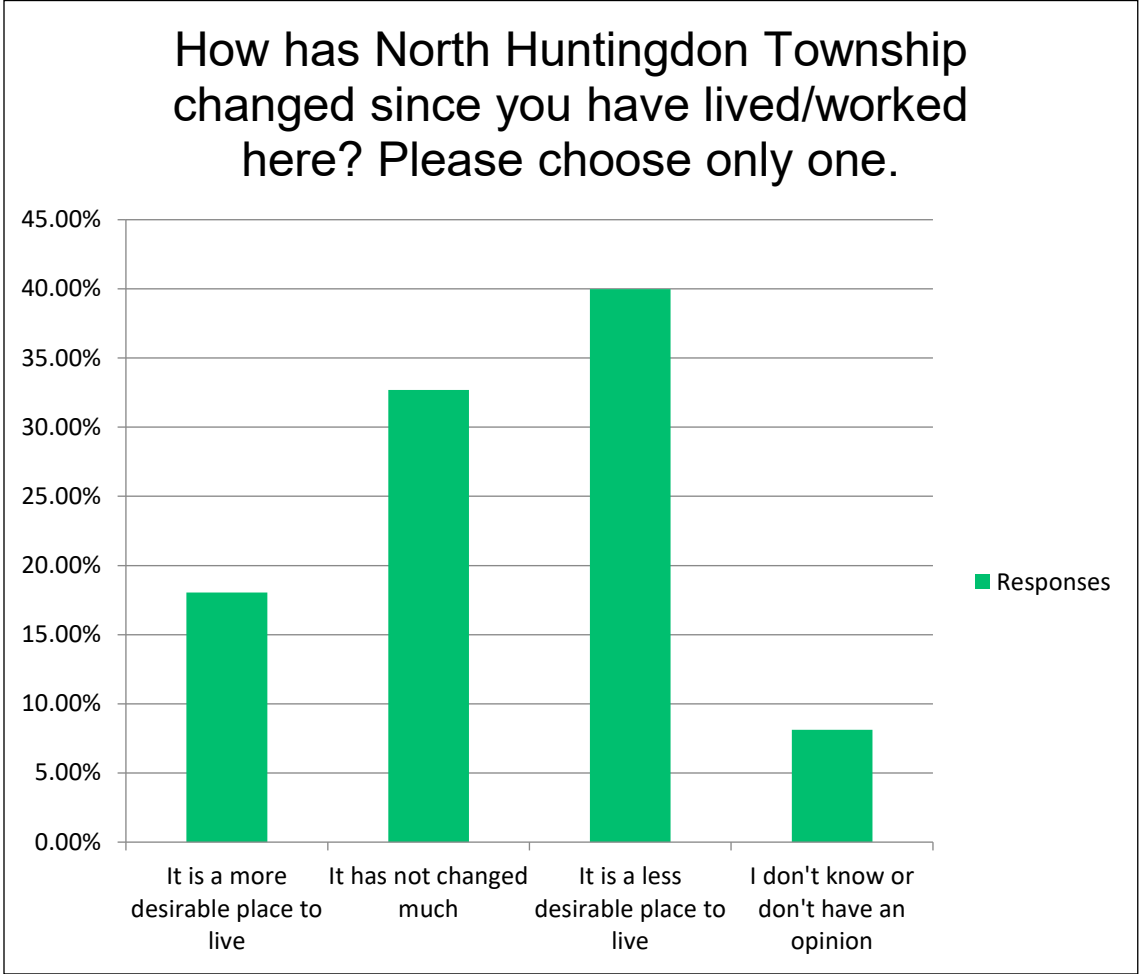
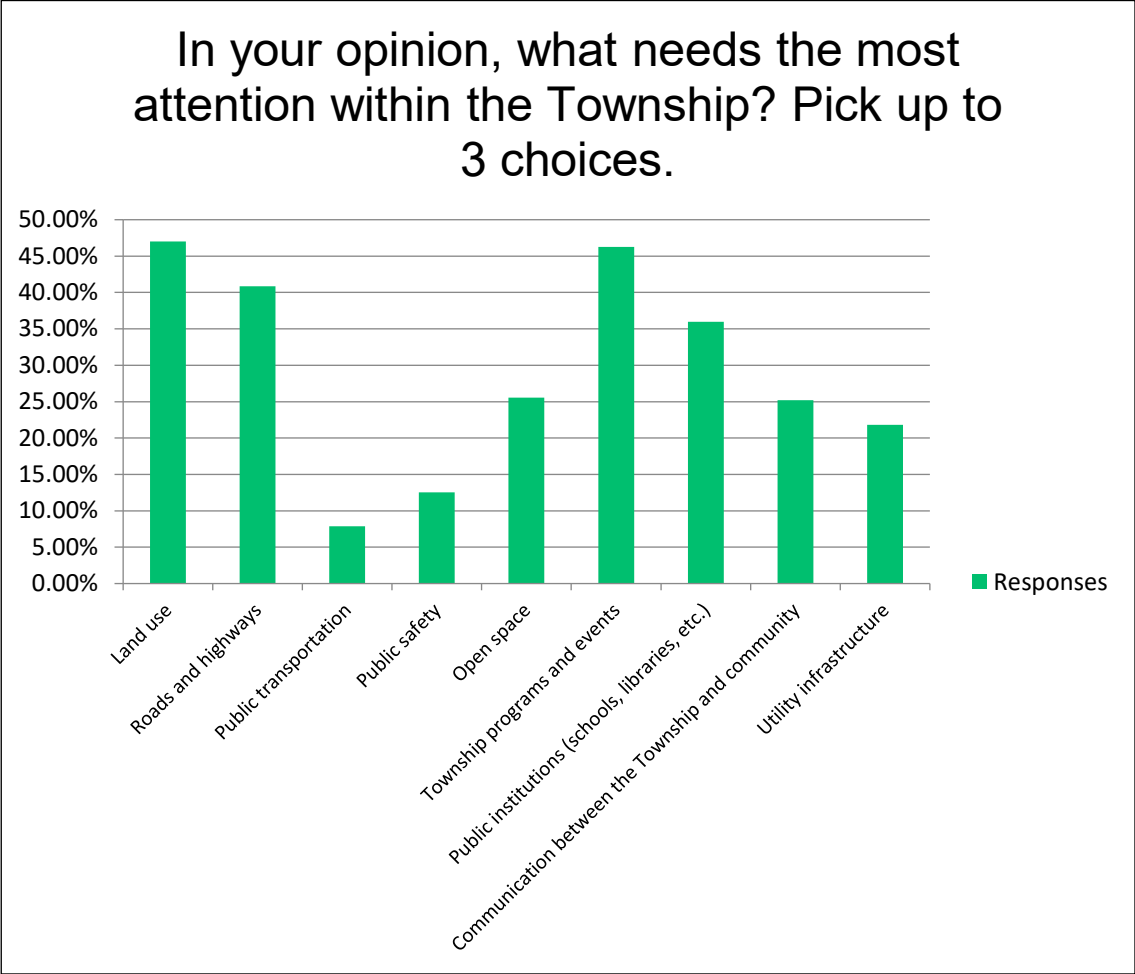
APPENDIX

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY INPUT TO DATE

To date, over **950 public comments** have been recorded via an online survey that has **9 questions** about living/working in North Huntingdon Township.

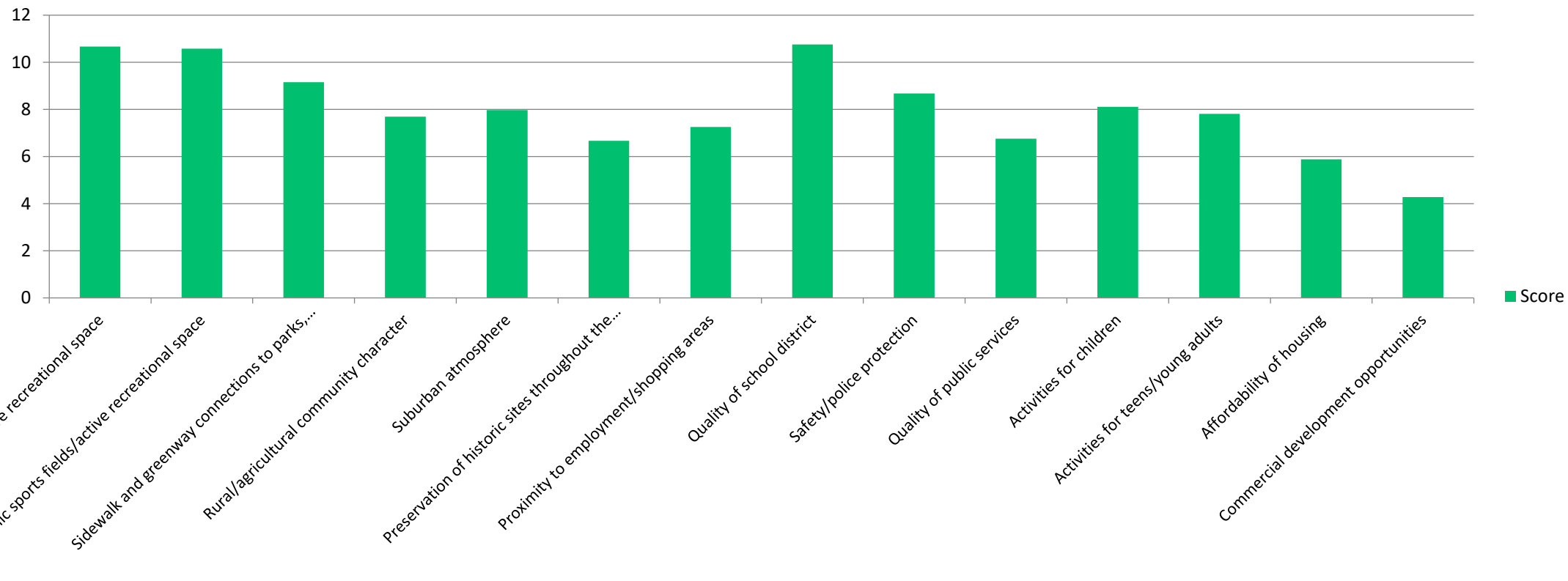


SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY INPUT TO DATE

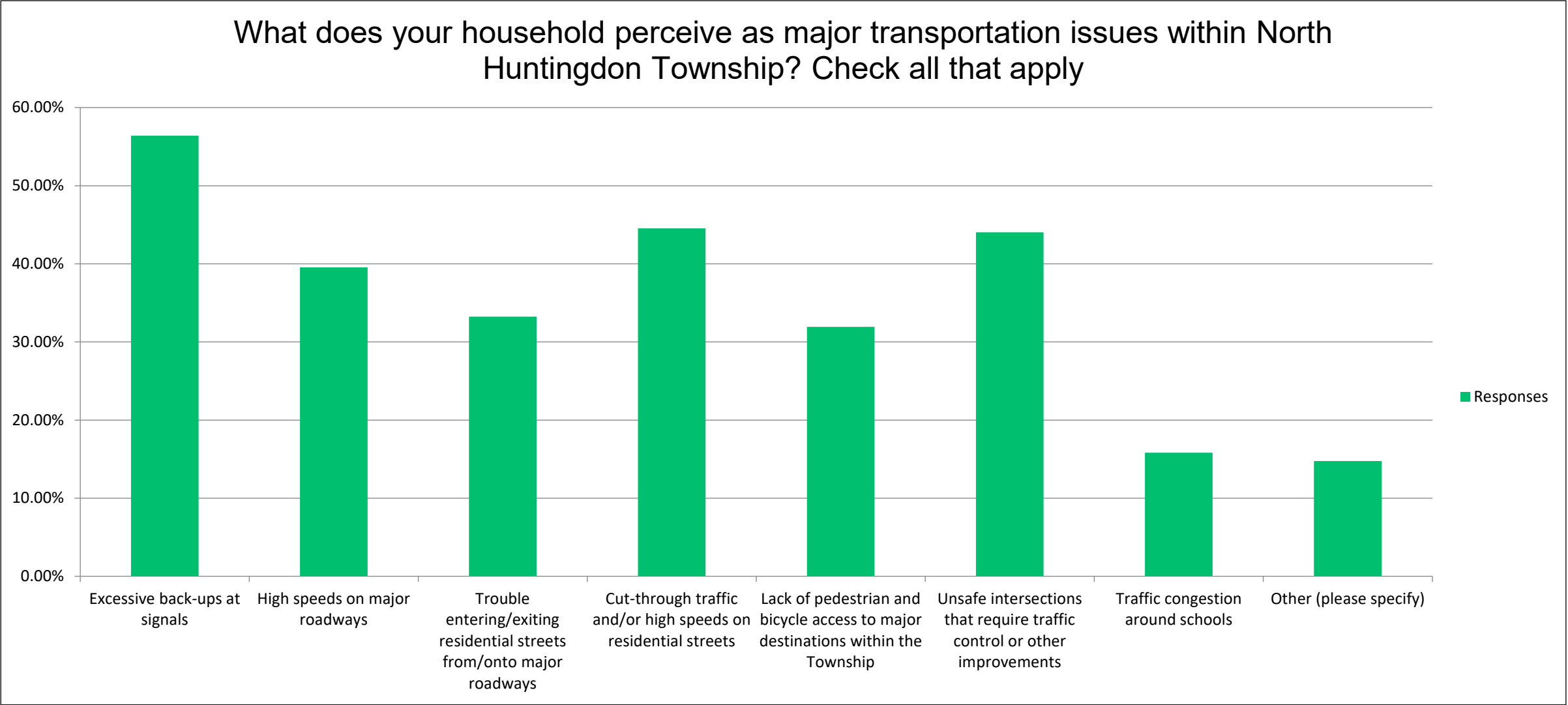


SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY INPUT TO DATE

Over the next decade, what are the most important aspects needed to enhance North Huntingdon's community character? Please rank the following community attributes from 1 to 5 in order of importance for preserving the future quality of life in North Huntin

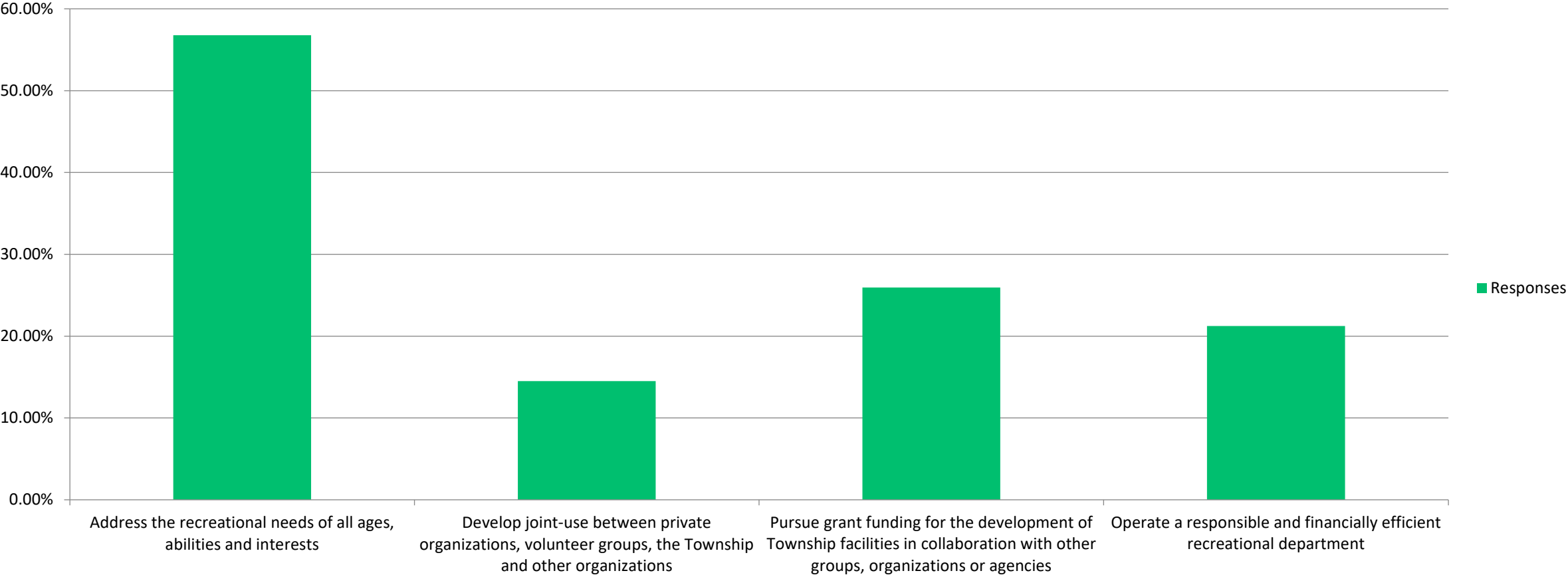


SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY INPUT TO DATE

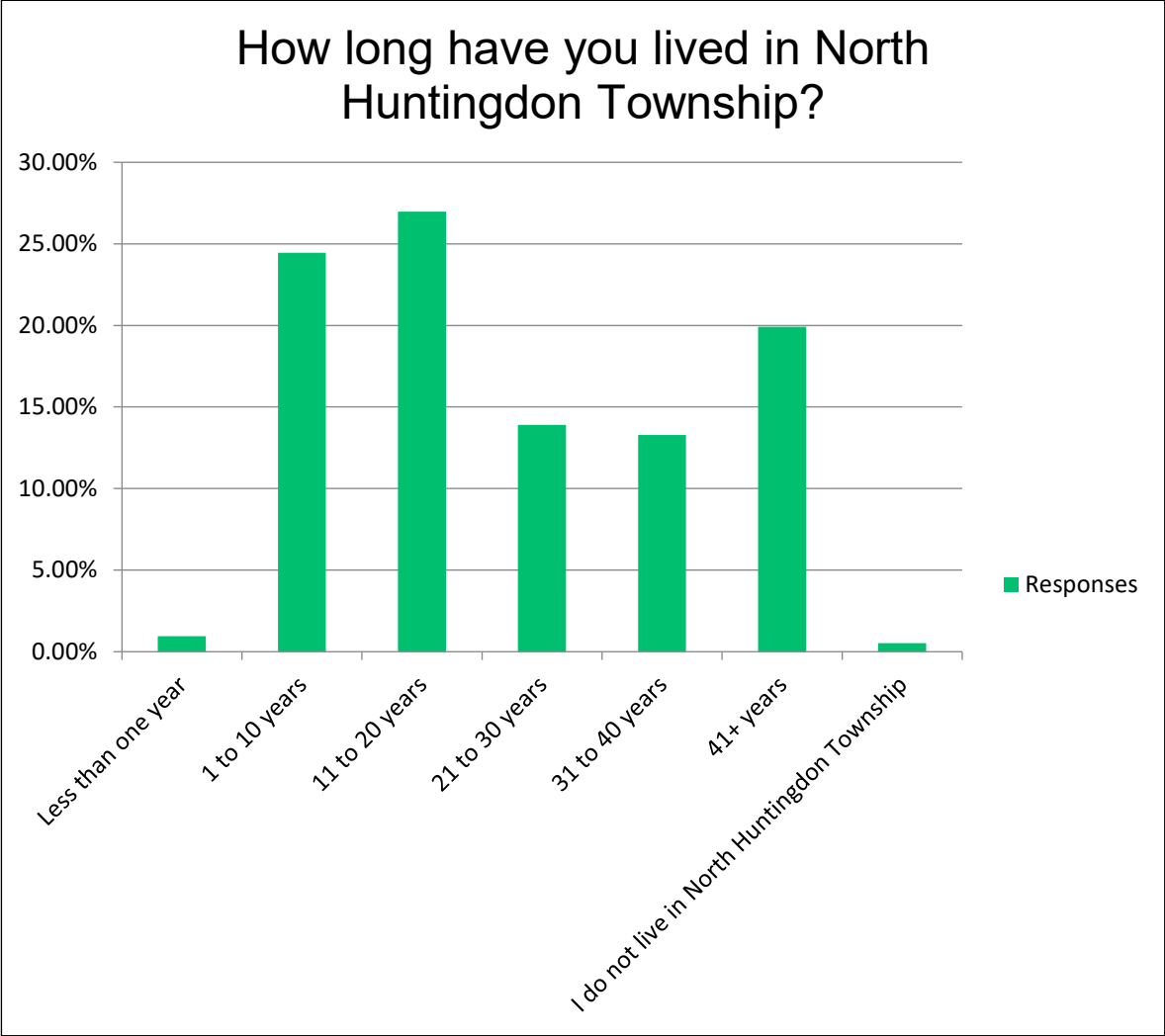
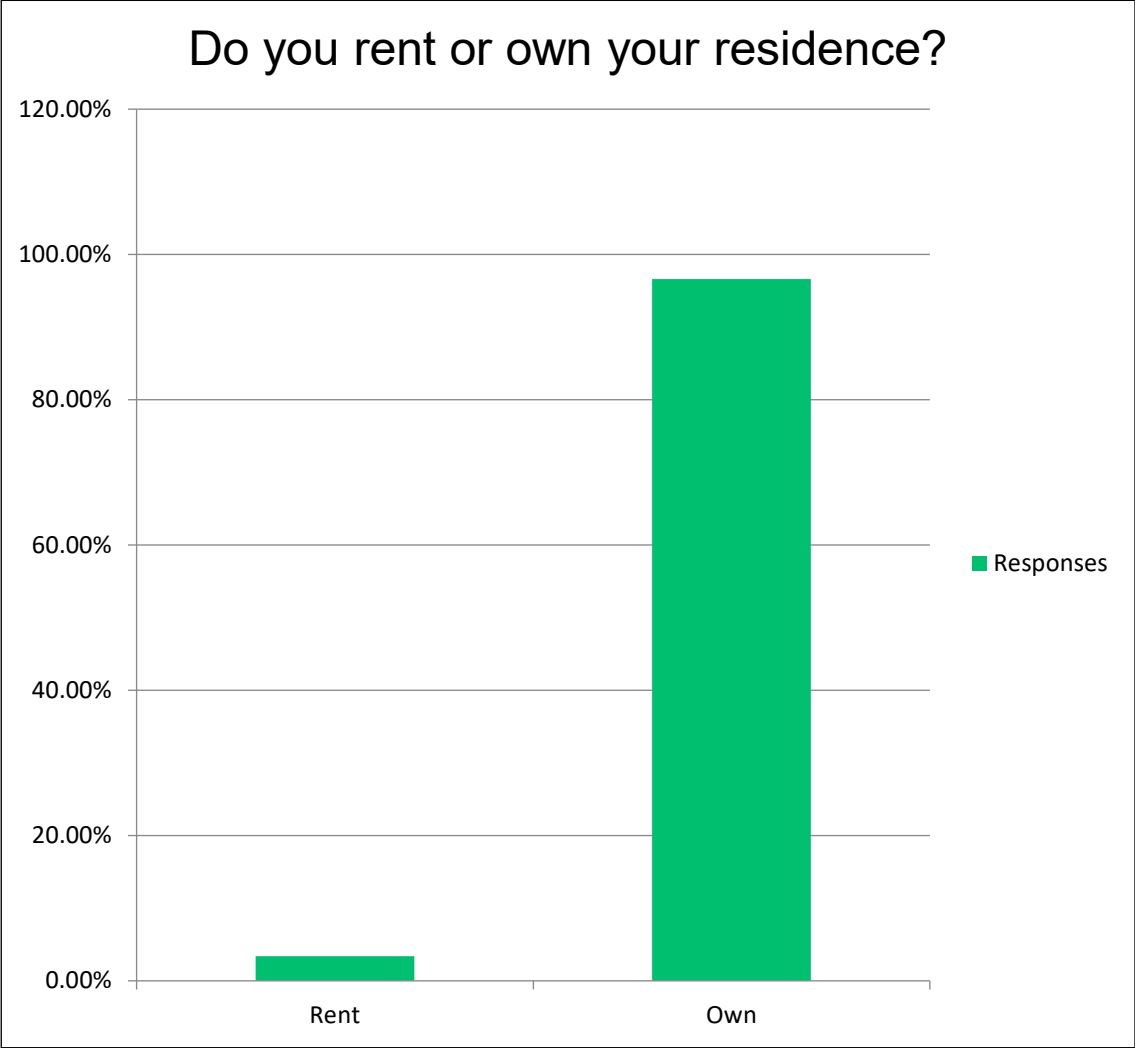


SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY INPUT TO DATE

The Township has identified four objectives to strive for to achieve its vision for improving recreational and green space at the more than 450 acres that it manages. Of the four objectives below, which do you view as most important?



SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY INPUT TO DATE



DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS: 2004-2019

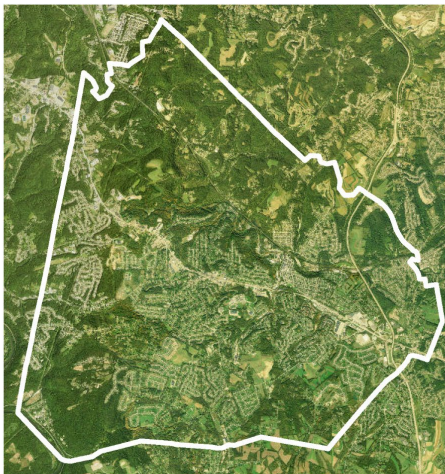
2004



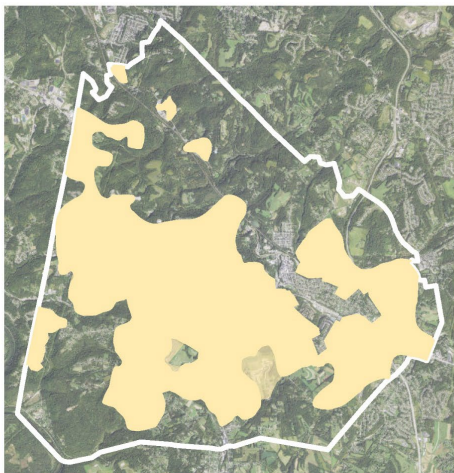
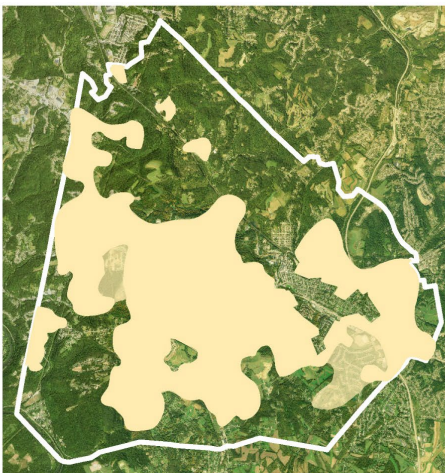
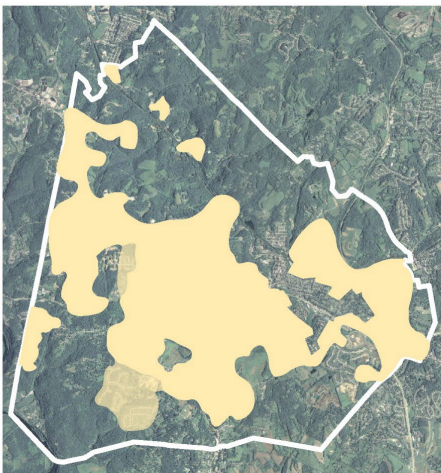
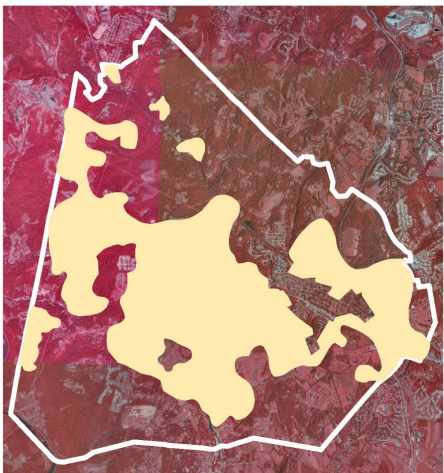
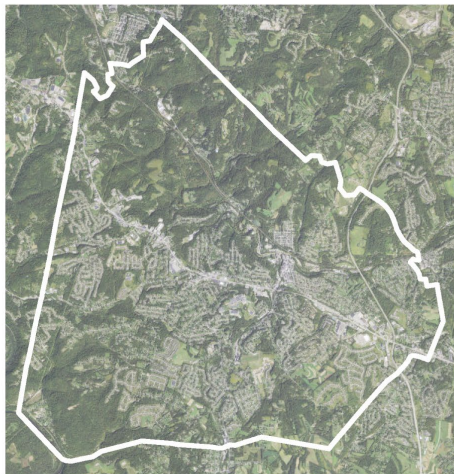
2010



2015



2019

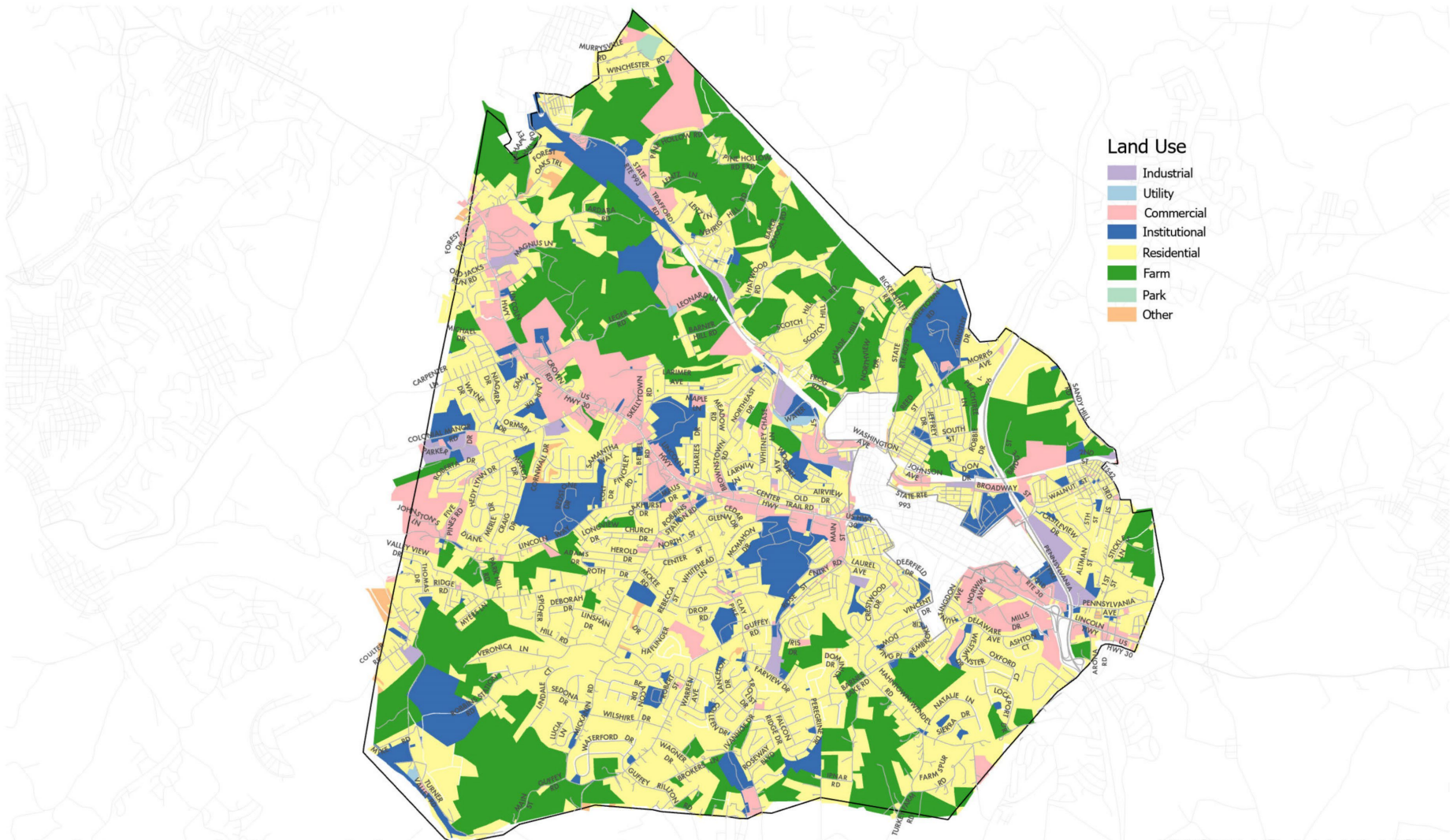


Source: NAIP 2004, 2010, 2015, 2019

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DEVELOPMENT PATTERN 2004-2019

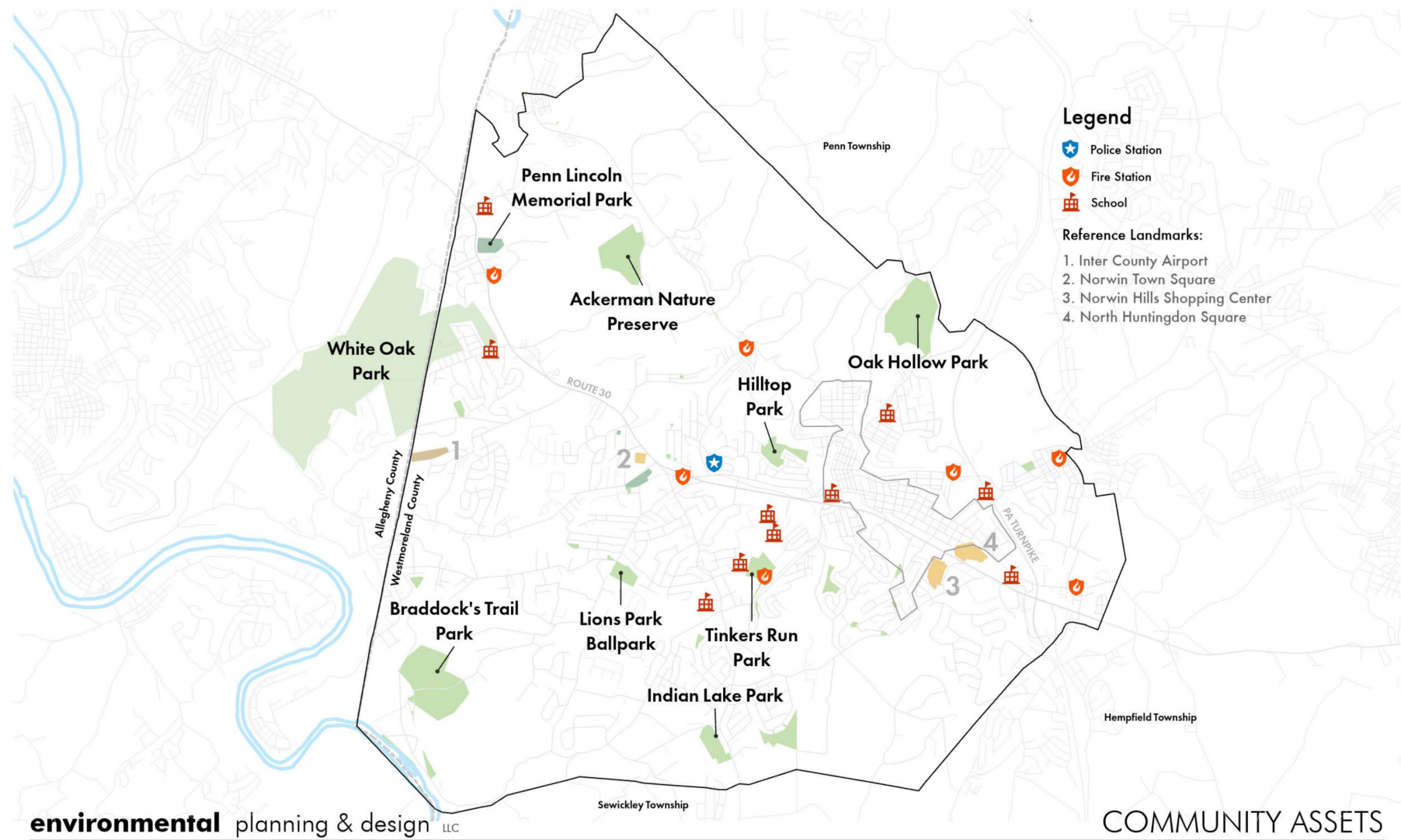
EXISTING LAND USE



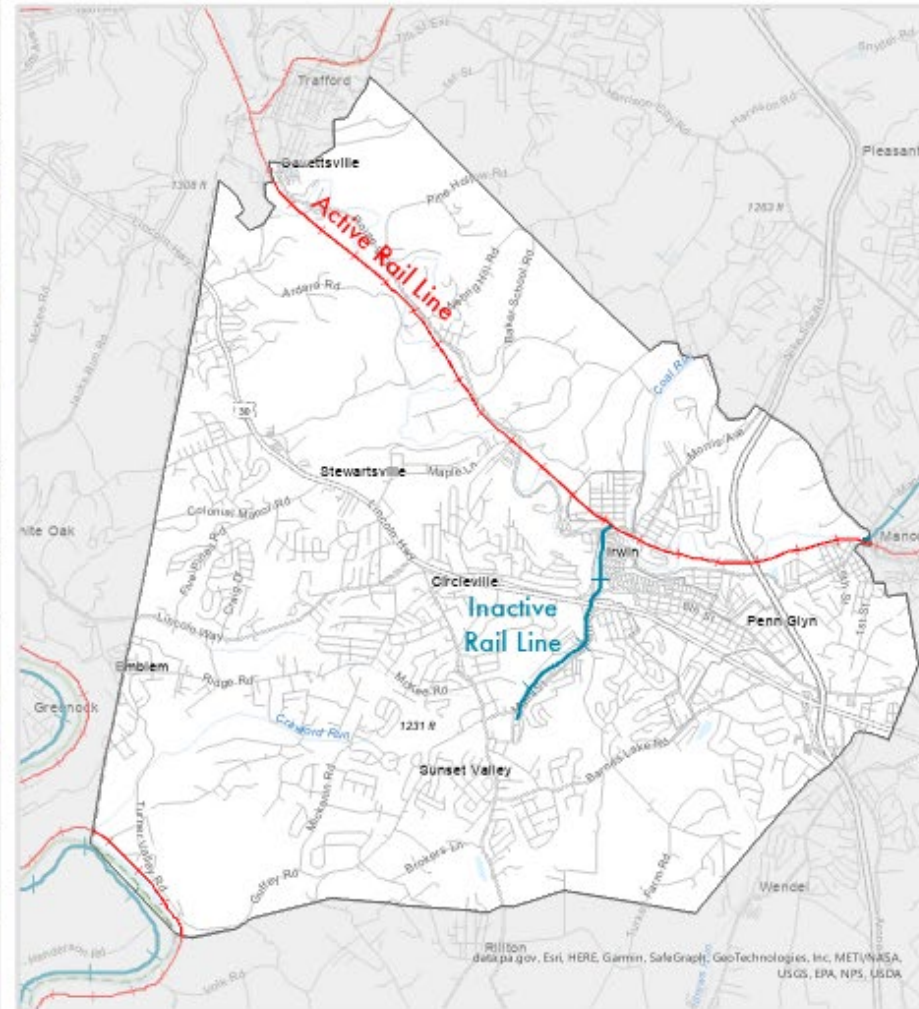
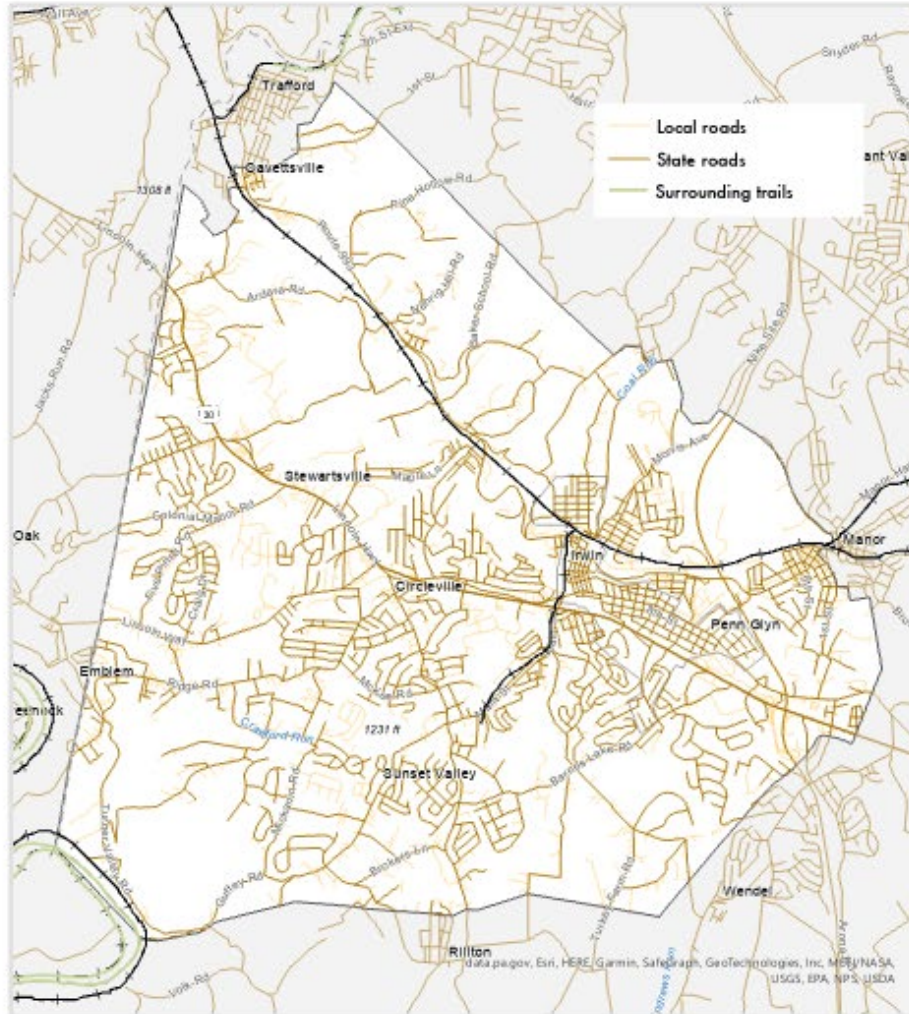
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EXISTING LAND USE

COMMUNITY ASSETS



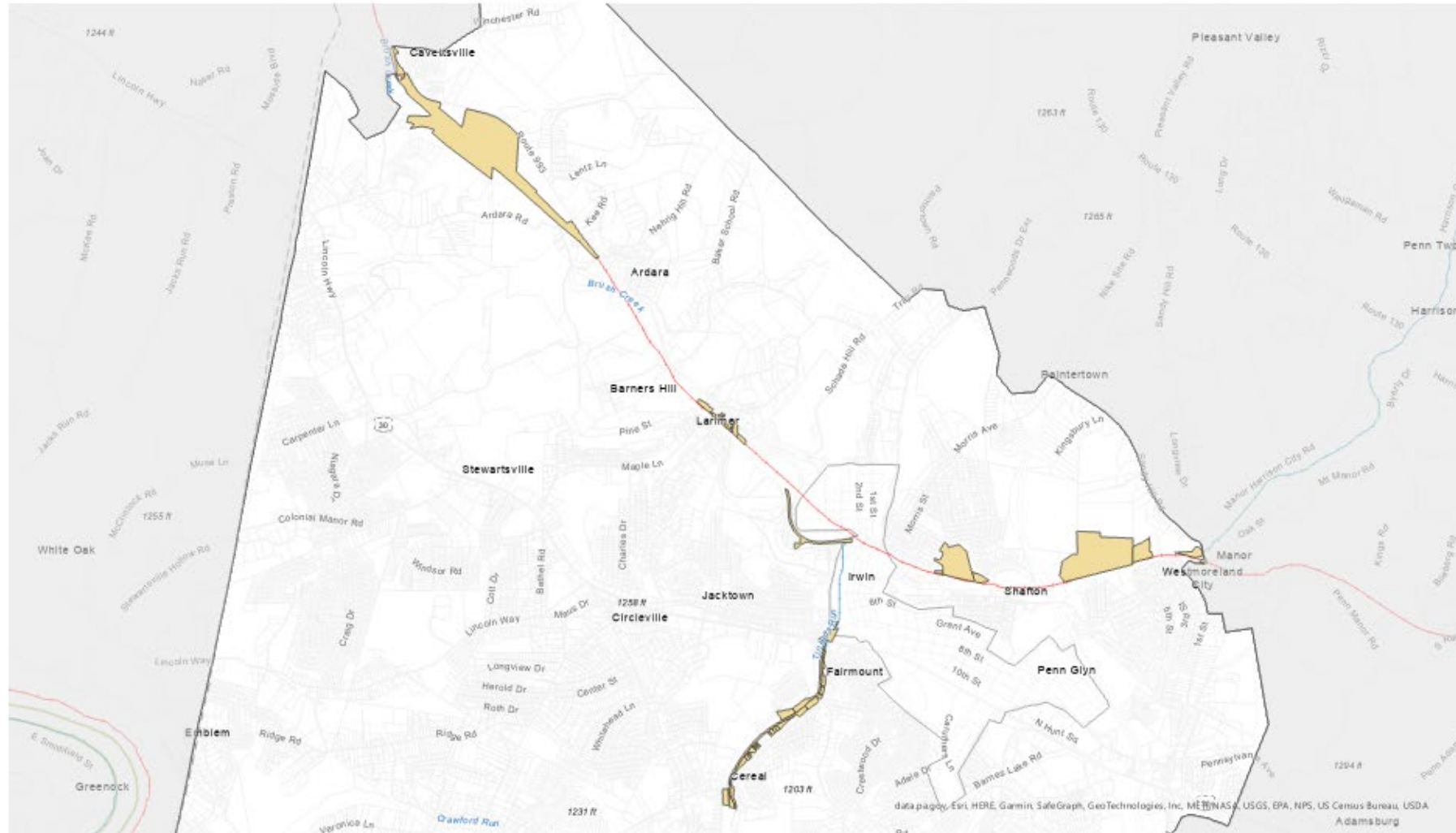
TRANSPORTATION NETWORK



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TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

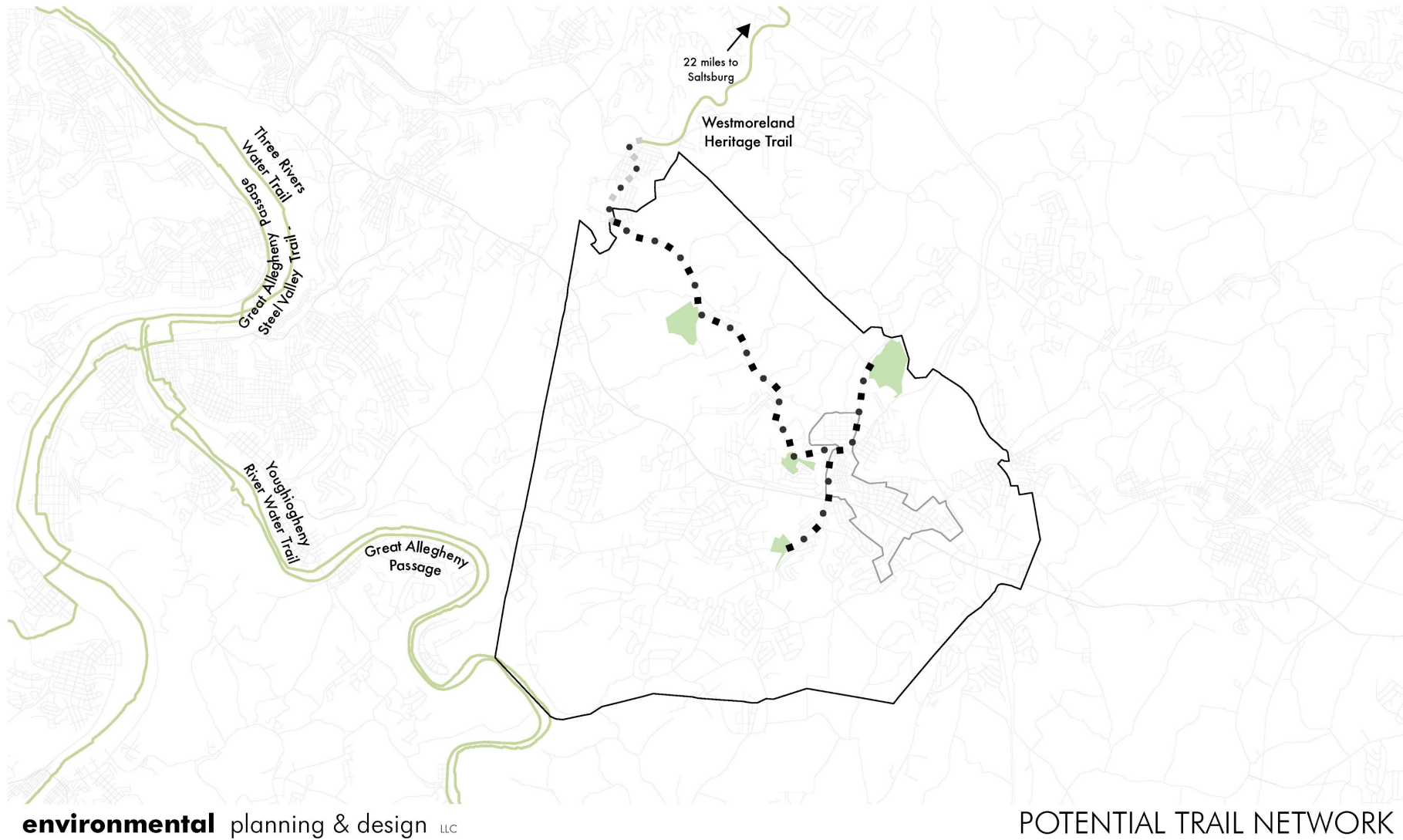
PARCELS INTERSECTING RAIL LINES



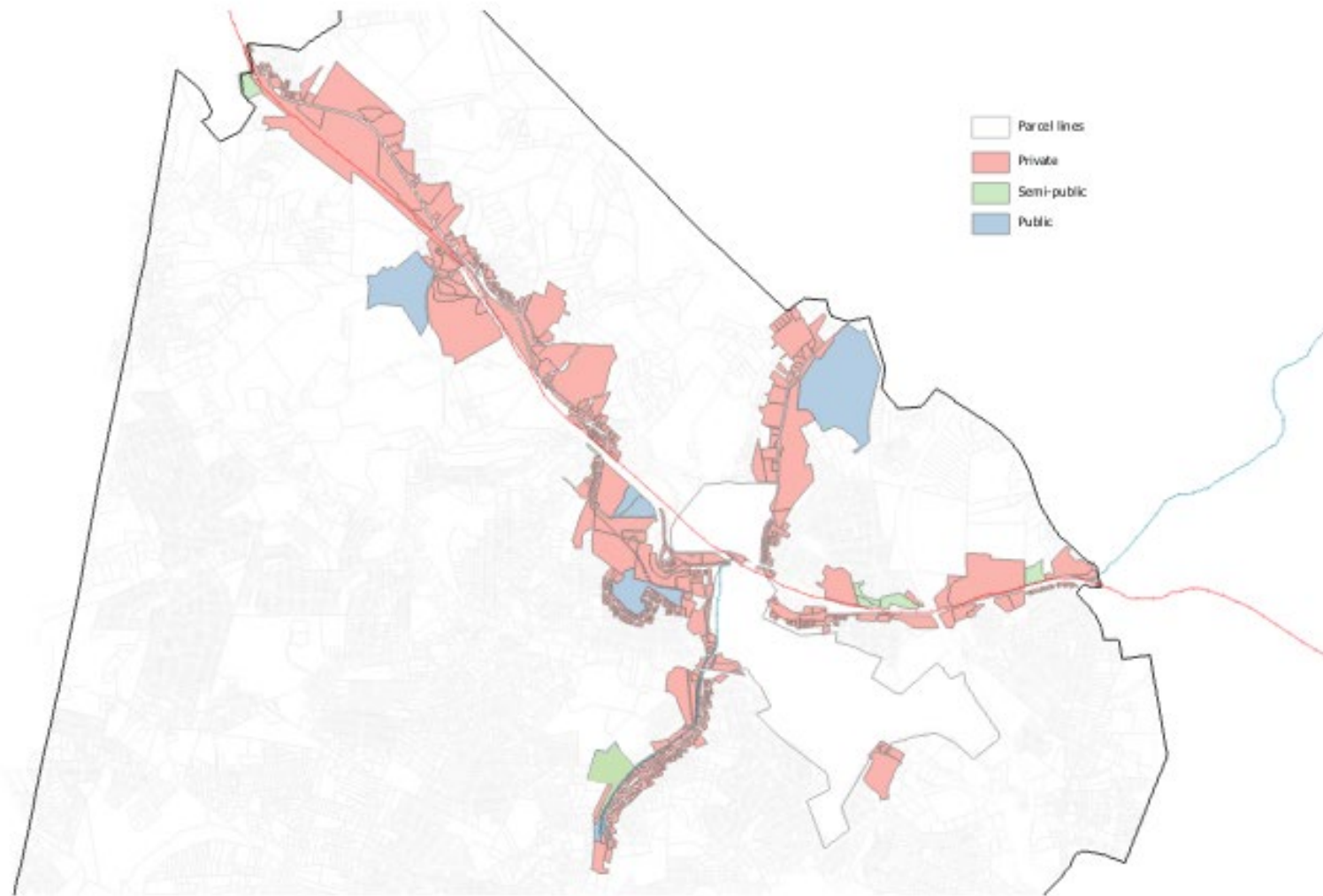
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PARCELS INTERSECTING RAIL LINES

POTENTIAL PEDESTRIAN TRAIL NETWORK



PARCELS SURROUNDING POTENTIAL TRAIL NETWORK



WATERSHED

