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Comprehensive Plan
for the Pequea Valley Region

Lancaster County, Pennsylvania

Draft | October 2025

places 2040
a plan for lancaster county pa

thinking beyond boundaries

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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PEQUEA VALLEY REGION
Lancaster County, Pennsylvania

To succeed in implementing our shared vision, partners in our region will need to rely on one another more than ever. This document is a statement of goals we hold in common in the Pequea Valley Region – things we want to work on together.

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OUR VISION

Blueprint for the Pequea Valley Region

Located in east-central Lancaster County, the Pequea Valley communities—Salisbury, Paradise, and Leacock Townships—form the Pequea Valley School District. These predominantly rural regions primarily lie within the Mill Creek and Pequea watersheds, with a small part of Salisbury extending into the West Branch of Brandywine Creek. The vibrant village of Intercourse, the hub of Leacock Township, is positioned at the crossroads of Old Philadelphia Pike and Newport Road, with US 30 travers-ing all three townships, linking the communities to the wider Lancaster County and beyond.

The Plain Sect population is the largest landowner, con-trolling 70-80% of the region's land. Agriculture, largely overseen by Plain Sect farmers, stands as the area's leading industry. The area is experiencing an agricul-tural transition, with larger farms acquiring smaller ones, leading to a rise in niche organic farming. Tourism also plays a significant role, especially in Leacock and Paradise Townships. Tourism has evolved from visitors primarily coming to observe the Plain Sect to those seeking shows, entertainment, and shopping. The Plain Sect's perception of tourism has shifted; initially skeptical, many have now engaged in the industry and recognized the economic benefits it brings.

The Pequea Valley region combines small-town charm with convenient access to various amenities, creating a distinctive combination of open spaces, farmland, and preserved wooded areas. Relationships are essential for addressing challenges, with the school district being particularly engaged and the Plain Sect deeply invested in their community. Strong volunteerism is evident with organizations such as TIN network and the local EMS. Renowned for its warm and friendly residents, this region nurtures a sense of community where neighbors collabo-rate to foster a safe and inviting environment.

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OUR JOURNEY

WHAT IS A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

All communities need a plan for their future. It's typically called a comprehensive plan (or "comp" plan), and its purpose is to:

- Educate people about the community's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges;
- Discuss how key resources will be protected and enhanced;
- Establish principles for growth and development;
- Recommend priorities for funding and new investment;
- Provide a rationale for future direction and policies; and
- Guide community leaders in making decisions.

The first thing you'll notice about this plan is that it's different than the comp plans we did in the past. It's less of an encyclopedia and more of a guidebook.

Like past plans, it still focuses on land use, transportation, and quality of life – but this plan doesn't try to address every aspect of these issues. Comp plans often present a laundry list of ideas, rather than a practical "to do" list. By contrast, this plan highlights just a few things that need to happen if we really want to make a difference in the next few years. We've highlighted the issues that our residents care about – and the things we most need to change.

The ideas in this plan reflect what Pequea Valley region leaders and residents said were important to them, but the policies outlined here also follow best practices in land-use planning – proven strategies to improve local quality of life. In creating this plan, we also considered the input of county planners and the Partners for Place (organizations and agencies who work in Lancaster County and have expertise in particular planning issues).

In addition to being concise, this plan tries to avoid planning jargon and technical language because it's intended to be accessible and user-friendly. If you're looking for data and analysis that supports the policies in this plan, you'll find it in the appendix to this plan, and in the supporting documents for *places2040*, the Lancaster County comprehensive plan.

Role of Past Plans

The Pequea Valley Strategic Plan, initially adopted by all three municipalities in 2014, served as the prior comprehensive plan. This plan emphasized issues and opportunities identified by the townships throughout the planning process. As the new plan is adopted by the townships within the region, it will supersede the 2014 plan. While we incorporate some enduring concepts from the previous plan, our current strategy primarily addresses present township concerns and aligns with the *places2040* framework.

CREATING THE PLAN

PARTICIPANTS

Residents of the Pequea Valley Region

Appointed and elected leaders of all three municipalities in the region initiated the comp plan process, provided guidance about the plan's direction, and offered input on the topics highlighted in the plan.

Residents of the region provided input at several meetings and events. An online survey helped identify their priorities for the community. Additionally, municipal leaders and Lancaster County Planning staff held interactive activities at the Together Initiative Network quarterly meeting and Factory Ministries 30th anniversary celebration.

Lancaster County Planning Department

With the help of comp plan committee members, department staff facilitated the planning process and prepared this plan in-house.

Partners for Place

During the planning process, county planning staff consulted with several of the county's "Partners for Place" – 28 regional, countywide, and city organizations and agencies whose work is closely related to the topics addressed in the plan. These partners shared their expertise to ensure that the recommendations in this plan fit with what they know about the county and the type of work they do.

Partners for Place

Building Industry Association of Lancaster County
Coalition for Smart Growth
Coalition for Sustainable Housing
Discover Lancaster
Economic Development Company of Lancaster County
Historic Preservation Trust of Lancaster County
Hourglass Foundation
Lancaster Bar Association
The Lancaster Chamber of Commerce & Industry
Lancaster City Alliance
Lancaster Clean Water Partners
Lancaster Conservancy
Lancaster County Agricultural Preserve Board
Lancaster County Agriculture Council
Lancaster County Association of Realtors®
Lancaster County Association of Township Supervisors
Lancaster County Boroughs Association
Lancaster County Community Foundation
Lancaster County Conservation District
Lancaster County Housing and Redevelopment Authorities
Lancaster County Solid Waste Management Authority
Lancaster County Workforce Development Board
Lancaster Farmland Trust
Penn Medicine Lancaster General Health
South Central Transit Authority
Susquehanna Heritage
Tenfold
United Way of Lancaster County

PROCESS

After the Lancaster County comprehensive plan (*places2040*) was adopted in 2018, people inside and outside the county expressed support for the plan's simple, direct approach – what is sometimes called an "implementable" comprehensive plan.

As the existing Pequea Valley plan passed the 10-year mark since its adoption in 2014, municipal leaders in the region discussed the possibility of creating a new comprehensive plan. Lancaster County Planning Department (LCPD) staff proposed utilizing the structure and five big ideas of *places2040* as the framework of the updated plan, and the three municipalities agreed to allow Lancaster County Planning Department (LCPD) staff to lead the update process.

To complete the plan update, LCPD staff proposed a series of meetings held with representatives of all three municipalities. From May 2024 to April 2025 the committee met 8 times to discuss different aspects of the plan. Their purpose was to identify the issues and opportunities that were most important to the region's future over the next 10–15 years and put those issues and opportunities in the context of the big ideas and policies in *places2040*.

Staff from LCPD's Implementation & Outreach Team typically led the discussions at these meetings, but other staff were involved. Many of the meetings featured interactive public input exercises.

Most of the committee meetings focused on a big idea from the *places2040* plan and the priority policies associated with it. At one of the later meetings, the committee members identified places in the region that were priorities for agriculture and natural land, growth management, transportation, and placemaking – improving the "look and feel" of places where people gather. This input was included in the "Issue and Opportunity Maps" that appear in this plan.

In 2025, County planning staff presented the first complete draft of the plan to the committee, who then shared the plan with other local stakeholders.

> **Next Steps**
>
> - After initial review by participants in the process, the planning commission and governing body of each participating municipality will review the draft plan.
>
> - Municipal governing bodies will then consider adopting the plan as the comprehensive plan for their municipality.
>
> - If the plan is adopted, county planning staff will facilitate the plan's implementation through regular regional meetings with appropriate municipal staff and/or elected officials.
>
> *Note: When the final plan is presented for adoption, this section will be updated to reflect conditions at that stage of the process.*
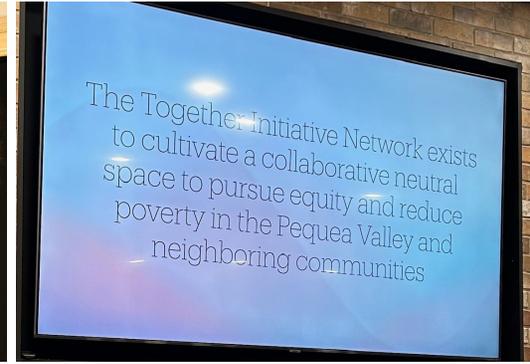
OUTREACH

Online Survey

As an effort to engage the public in the planning process, county planning staff created and promoted an online survey for the Pequea Valley region. In addition to gathering public input, the survey was designed to educate the public about *places2040* and the purpose of the regional plan. The survey ran from August 9 through September 21, 2024 and again in November. In total the survey received 265 responses from residents.

Here are a few key takeaways from the survey results. Participants:

- List open farmland and rural character as their primary reason for moving to the region.
- Take pride in the Pequea Valley School District.
- Value the community cooperation and friendly atmosphere of the region.
- Want to work towards solutions towards making housing affordable.
- Think there should be more pedestrian friendly roads and trails.
- Would like more natural space to bike, hike and enjoy nature.
- Are concerned about traffic safety along Rt 30 and other key corridors.

The Together Initiative Network (TIN) Quarterly Meeting

The Together Initiative Network (TIN) convened a quarterly meeting on August 28th, 2024, inviting the LCPD to discuss the housing challenges impacting the region. TIN comprises of a diverse coalition of local nonprofits, churches, businesses and leaders from surrounding municipalities.

During the meeting, LCPD staff engaged with residents about the upcoming comprehensive plan and distributed surveys to gather valuable community input.

Factory Ministries 30th Anniversary

The LCPD attended the Factory's 30th anniversary celebration. The Factory Ministries in Paradise, PA is a non-profit dedicated to reducing poverty in Lancaster County by supporting and empowering the under-resourced.

It was a great opportunity for LCPD to connect with the community and for the community to learn more about the work LCPD is doing on the Pequea Valley region's comprehensive plan. LCPD staff answered questions and handed out surveys to attendees.

For more information about the survey, please see p. in the Appendix to this plan.

REGIONAL CONCERNS

In our conversations about the future of the Pequea Valley Region, these topics rose to the top.

AGRICULTURE AND FARMLAND
Strike a balance between protecting farmland and fostering on-farm businesses.
- Protecting farmland is a priority, as it is vital to the natural landscape and local economy.
- Farming on its own is becoming less profitable. On-farm businesses are often necessary for farmers to create additional income.
- Niche farming has taken off in the region.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT
Focus development in growth areas in Paradise, Christiana-Gap, and the village of Intercourse.
- Redevelop aging commercial properties rather than building on greenfield land (previously undeveloped land).
- Contain growth to inside UGAs to preserve the agricultural and natural land in the region.

SCHOOL DISTRICT
Enrollment is down, but support for the school district remains steady.
- As a result of low enrollment rates, the Pequea Valley School District has consolidated its middle and high school. Based on the Pequea Valley School District 2024 Student Enrollment Report, the total school enrollment is 1,405.
- Young families wanting to move into the region for the school district are having trouble finding affordable housing.
- Some teachers are moving out of the school district due to high housing costs.

HOUSING
Like the rest of Lancaster County, the region faces barriers to affordable housing.
- Housing age, variety, and stock are all factors impacting high housing costs.
- Housing prices in the region are substantially above the county median while wages are only slightly above the county median.
- The region has a strong tradition of multi-generational families but are at a point where the new generation can't afford to live here.

TRANSPORTATION
Safety, connectivity, and congestion are issues that concern the region the most.
- The US 30 corridor is integral for the movement of goods.
- As a major thoroughfare, US 30 often experiences heavy freight traffic.
- Builders are having difficulty developing land due to poor road connections.
- Pedestrian safety is a concern in the region. US 30 and PA 340 near the village of Intercourse are especially dangerous for foot traffic.

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© NEW HOLLAND FARMERS' FAIR

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THE BIG IDEAS

PURPOSE

Traditionally, comprehensive plans address topics one by one, focusing on separate "silos" of information. In the past, comprehensive plans for Lancaster County – and for municipalities within the Pequea Valley region – followed that same pattern. *Places2040*, the Lancaster County comprehensive plan adopted in 2018, takes a different approach. It integrates the usual planning topics into 5 "big ideas" that cut across traditional silos. These ideas help us think more holistically about how to address the challenges and opportunities ahead of us and create the future we all want to see.

This plan for the Pequea Valley region, like the other regional plans that the Lancaster County Planning Department (LCPD) has created with local leaders and residents, includes the same big ideas and policies as *places2040*. To make these regional plans as strategic as possible, however, these regional plans only focus on the policies that are the highest priority for the next few years. Some of these policies are identified as a countywide priority and others as a priority for this region. Under each big idea in this plan, the "What We Need to Do Differently" section includes a table distinguishing between the two.

How were the countywide and regional priorities determined? Municipal officials and staff throughout Lancaster County chose the countywide priority policies in the first set of *places2040* implementation workshops. Although county planning staff expected to see regional differences, they found there was broad agreement about the most important policies. During the regional planning process, Pequea Valley region leaders and residents confirmed that these policies are crucial to this region as well – but they also identified a few other *places2040* policies they wanted to highlight. These are the regional priority policies.

POLICY SUMMARY

In standard planning terms, the 5 big ideas are the goals of this plan, and the statements called "What We Need to Do Differently" are the policies. The big ideas and policies are based on public input gathered during the 3-year effort to create *places2040*, the Lancaster County comprehensive plan.

While the county's residents didn't necessarily express these goals and policies word for word, the thoughts and ideas they shared with county planning staff made it clear what was important to them. The language in the county plan also reflects input from local leaders who know the issues in their community and planning partners who are local experts in the work they do.

This plan for the Pequea Valley region focuses on the same 5 big ideas as *places2040*. In the columns on this page and the next, the items listed below the big ideas are the policies associated with them. Here, the policies are in order as they appear in *places2040*. The items with a checkmark are the policies highlighted in this plan. Some of these policies are a countywide priority, others are regional, and some are both.

Creating Great Places

Great places are places where we're proud to live, work, learn, play, and visit. They're safe and attractive environments that improve our quality of life – and ensure the success and sustainability of our economy. When we create great places, we make it easier to achieve many of our other goals.

What We Need to Do Differently

- Make our downtowns more vibrant, safe, and attractive.
- ✔ Design communities that put people first.
- Create a mix of uses in our communities and corridors.
- ✔ Provide a greater supply and diversity of housing types to own and rent.
- ✔ Find new and innovative ways to reduce congestion.

Connecting People, Place, & Opportunity

We need to work harder to connect people with each other and the places around them – students with schools, workers with jobs, and jobs with housing. Simply put, it should be easier for residents and visitors to get around. By maximizing connections, we make everything more efficient and create more opportunities for interaction.

What We Need to Do Differently

- Make our downtowns into regional hubs.
- Create more places to hike, bike, play, and enjoy nature.
- ✔ Make it easier for residents and visitors to get around without a car.
- ✔ Connect housing, jobs, schools, transportation, and other destinations.
- ✔ Intentionally cultivate, retain, and expand industry.
- ✔ Maintain, attract, and retain a skilled workforce that earns a competitive wage.
- Facilitate business partnerships.

Taking Care of What We Have

Our world-class farmland, urban places, and natural areas provide a strong foundation for our quality of life and distinguish this place from any other. Stewardship of our heritage should be a priority, not just because we like the view, but because it makes the county more attractive to investment – particularly from visitors and prospective employers.

What We Need to Do Differently

- ✔ Preserve large, contiguous areas of agricultural and natural land.
- ✔ Preserve the farmer as well as the farm.
- ✔ Improve water quality and work together on stormwater management.
- ✔ Use existing buildings and maintain public infrastructure.
- • Promote entrepreneurship and help local businesses grow.

Growing Responsibly

We need to consider where development happens, when it happens, and what form it takes. To accommodate a growing population, we need to improve the pattern of growth and ensure that we develop in a more compact, efficient, and fiscally responsible way.

What We Need to Do Differently

- ✔ Grow where we're already growing.
- ✔ Prioritize redevelopment and infill in Urban Growth Areas.
- ✔ Manage the use of large tracts of vacant land in Urban Growth Areas.
- • Limit large-lot suburban development* in rural areas.
- • Build more compactly and efficiently.

Large-lot suburban development refers to subdivisions of single-family homes on 1- to 10-acre lots. These developments usually include new street networks and are often built outside of growth areas in locations without public sewer and water. Countywide, significantly more land is zoned for this type of development than is needed to accommodate projected rural population growth.

Thinking Beyond Boundaries

We need to think and act differently. We need to see places as they are, rather than dividing them up in traditional ways. Many of the issues we face aren't limited to municipal and school district boundaries.

We need to approach challenges more collaboratively, cultivate leadership, and take our partnerships to the next level.

What We Need to Do Differently

- ✔ Integrate place-based thinking into all future planning initiatives.
- ✔ Break down the traditional silos that limit our effectiveness.**
- ✔ Make planning and regulation more efficient, consistent, and regional.
- ✔ Keep ourselves accountable for the goals we've set.

*** For more information about this concept, see "Thinking Beyond Boundaries" on p. .*

WHAT'S ADDRESSED IN EACH BIG IDEA

In this plan, the discussion of each big idea (except Thinking Beyond Boundaries) is split into four parts: What We Heard, What the Data Tells Us, What We Need to Do Differently, and How We'll Measure Our Progress. Each of these parts represents a different stage in the planning process. The idea is to find a healthy balance between what residents want, what works, and what's possible.

First, we listened to residents' hopes and concerns for the region's future. Then we compared their observations with the data we collected – were their perceptions about the Pequea Valley region the same as what the data tells us?

We also talked with local leaders, LCPD staff, and the county's Partners for Place – local experts familiar with land-use and transportation issues in Lancaster County. The 5 big ideas and policies highlighted in this plan reflect all of this input and analysis. Although some of the ideas in this plan challenge us to do things differently, it's a prescription for a healthier community!

What We Heard

Here, we summarized the comments we heard from local leaders and residents and grouped them into a few short statements with some explanations below.

What the Data Tells Us

County planning staff gathered this data from a variety of sources including the U.S. Census, ESRI's ArcGIS Business Analyst, the Lancaster County Geographic Information System (GIS), countywide plans including _places2040_ (2018) and the _Lancaster Active Transportation Plan_ (2019), and analysis undertaken for other initiatives.

What We Need to Do Differently

These are the policies associated with each big idea. They don't tell us exactly how to accomplish our goals, but set a direction for us to follow. During the _places2040_ planning process, Lancaster County residents said these things will help us create the future we all want to see. Participants in the Pequea Valley region comprehensive planning process agreed that many of these policies apply to this part of the county as well.

How We'll Measure Our Progress

Under this heading, we've presented a series of indicators that might be used to determine our effectiveness in implementing the big ideas and policies in this plan. Rather than listing everything that would be helpful to know, we tried to be realistic about the data that's available to measure our success.

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CREATING GREAT PLACES

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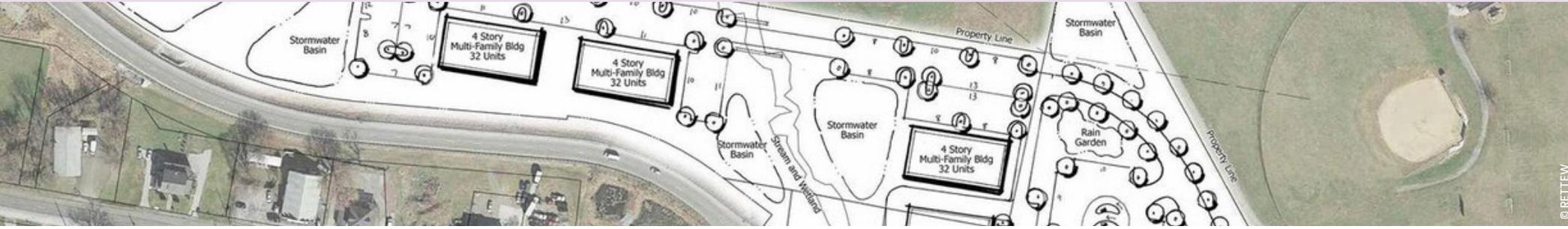
The Pequea Valley region is a vibrant place to live, work, learn, play, and visit, offering a high quality of life that attracts economic investment and creates opportunities. The region boasts a variety of attractions, including farmers' markets, village of Intercourse Heritage Days, the Rhubarb Festival and Balloon Festival, along with numerous local fire company events, all of which nurture a strong sense of community. Residents take pride in beautiful parks and a vibrant cultural identity, while also enjoying a range of diverse employment opportunities.

We want to maintain a community where everyone feels healthy and safe – and one that encourages creativity and investment. A place where individuals can find housing, jobs, and transportation tailored to their needs at every stage of life. Great places don't happen by chance! Through regional collaboration, we can protect and enhance the wonderful areas we already have, turning the ordinary into extraordinary.

What We Heard

Housing issues in the region are multifaceted.
- The region's tradition of multigenerational families is threatened by high housing costs, making it difficult for residents' children to afford to live in the region.
- While housing variety is needed, residents and developers also express a growing demand for additional single-family detached homes.
- Salisbury Township has a need for one to two acre lots for the Plain Sect community, who require land for their horses and gardens.
- Paradise Township has land zoned residential that could potentially accommodate future housing; however, the residents who own that land aren't ready to give up farming.
- Leacock Township sees future development occurring around the village of Intercourse where there's infrastructure and quarter-acre lots.
- Short-term rentals are becoming an issue for the region. They are lowering the housing stock while driving up housing costs.

Community gathering spaces and recreational activities play a vital role in the region's well-being.
- Teenagers need a space to socialize and bond, such as a gaming cafe or skate park. This is especially relevant in Paradise Township.
- Residents would like more community amenities that promote social interactions and offer health benefits such as a YMCA.
- The Pequea Valley School District serves as a vital community hub, hosting gatherings and events for residents. The former high school building extends its facilities to the public, including a fitness center, and is undergoing renovations to further enhance community engagement.

Traffic safety is a concern on the main corridors
- State routes are used by long-distance truckers, commuters, tourists, and non-motorized vehicles, including substantial buggy traffic. This mix of users often creates conflicts, which leads to both congestion and accidents.
- Freight traffic poses a unique set of challenges for the region. The US 30 (Lincoln Highway) corridor is integral for goods movement. As a major thoroughfare, US 30 often experiences heavy truck traffic.
- Trucks are bypassing the weigh station on US 30 by using PA 772, leading to increased congestion.
- The following information is from the Freight Safety Action Report (2025). This document is one of several white papers intended to inform and educate the Lancaster County Freight Advisory Committee (FAC) on freight safety.
  - Across all key indicators-fatality rate, serious injury rate and total fatal or suspected serious injury numbers Lancaster County's freight crash statistics are consistently above the Pennsylvania average for freight.
  - US 30 west of Lancaster was named a critical safety concern due to high freight volumes and the history of serious crashes.

What the Data Tells Us

Median Household Income
The region's median household income of $89,771 is higher than the median household income countywide ($83,703).

Housing Supply
Over 70% of the housing stock in the region is single-family attached compared to the county average of 56%.

Annual Housing Cost
The annual housing cost in the region (for residents with a mortgage) is $23,196, which is higher than the county average of $21,276. The annual rental cost ($14,484) in the region, however, is lower than the county average of $15,468.

Cost-Burdened Households
"Cost burdened" is defined as paying more than 30 percent of income on housing. The percentage of cost-burdened renters in the region is 35% while the percentage of cost-burdened homeowners is 27%.

Age of Housing Units
The average year of construction for housing units in the region is 1977, which is similar to the county-wide average of 1979.

Zoning
- About 30% of zoning in the PV growth areas allows only detached single-family housing as a new primary use.
- Leacock and Paradise allow ADUs (Accessory Dwelling Units), but only for relatives.
- Converting existing buildings into new housing units often presents zoning challenges. Two-unit or apartment conversions are only permitted through conditional use, which can pose obstacles for builders. In Salisbury Township, the reuse of existing buildings is somewhat restricted, only structures built before July 1973 are eligible for conversion. This aging housing stock presents a challenge for numerous homeowners.

Freight
The county initiated a Freight Advisory Committee to help inform future funding recommendations related to freight business and safety priorities. The county collaborated with Kittelson and Associates to collect preliminary data. Key segments and corridors for safety enhancements have been identified, with Salisbury Township having four road segments in the top 12 of the Freight High Injury Network. These segments typically involve locations with two or more crashes resulting in fatalities or serious injuries over the past five years. The following segments are in order by rank:
- Old Philadelphia Pike — from west of Springhead Road to east of Blank Road
- US 30/ Lincoln Highway — from Newport Avenue to west of Brackbill Road
- US 30/Lincoln Highway — from Chestnut Street to east of Hoffmeier Street
- Newport Road — from Usner Road to Lincoln Highway

Vehicle Crashes
Between 2019 and 2023 there have been 248 crashes on US 30 east of Lancaster City. Of those 248 crashes, 34% were speeding related, 22% were aggressive driver related and 16% of crashes occurred in the dark.

Average Commute
Based on the 2023 American Community Survey 5-year estimates, the average commuter time for the PV region is 23.5 minutes. Below is the breakdown.
- Paradise Twp: is 24.2 minutes
- Leacock Township: 20.7 minutes
- Salisbury Township: 25.7 minutes

For a detailed overview of the data, refer to the "Snapshot of the Region" beginning on p.

What We Need to Do Differently

Priority		Policy
Countywide	*Regional*	*In this section, policies are in order by countywide and regional priority rather than how they appear in places2040.*
✔	✔	Provide a greater supply and diversity of housing types to own and rent.
		Make our downtowns more vibrant, safe, and attractive.
		Create a mix of uses in our communities and corridors.
✔	✔	Design communities that put people first.
	✔	Find new and innovative ways to reduce congestion.

Provide a greater supply and diversity of housing types to own and rent.
- Offer a diverse housing stock to lower prices and better meet housing demands.
- Leacock Township created a mixed-use district in the village of Intercourse which will include town homes and apartments.
- Explore affordable housing options such as ADUs.

Regulation.
- Examine existing ordinances to identify any regulations that may impede the development of affordable housing.
- Collaborate with the county on simplifying zoning best practices to reduce barriers in regulation. The LCPD Simplified Zoning team is meeting with interested municipalities who want to learn more about the tool.

- Create zoning setback relief to allow construction of more single-family attached duplexes and townhomes.
- When defining short-term rentals in a zoning ordinance, one option is to classify them as a commercial use. This classification helps to prevent them from being subject to the same regulations as residential properties.
- To ensure consistent standards throughout the region, coordinate across municipalities when updating ordinances.

Collaboration.
- Foster partnerships with housing organizations, like the Coalition of Sustainable Housing, which offers resources for residents seeking affordable housing or looking to transition from renting to homeownership. .

Continued from previous page

Design Communities that put people first.

Cultivate "Third Places."
These are places that bring people together other than home and work. They allow for informal public interaction that fosters connections, social engagement, and a sense of belonging.
- Create spaces for teenagers to hang out like a gaming cafe or skate park to connect with each other.
- Continue to utilize the TIN (Together Initiative Network) for community resources.

Find new and innovative ways to reduce congestion.
- Consider adoption of a regional official map reflecting planned and/or desired vehicular, transit, and pedestrian improvements.
- Coordinate with PennDOT, Lancaster County, and others as appropriate to effectively advocate for transportation improvements in the region.
- LCPD staff are collaborating with the Lancaster County Freight Advisory Committee to identify truck and trade related issues, refine countywide goods movement strategy, and determine the next steps to inform development of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Submit the following transportation improvement projects to the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP):
- Consider a weigh station on US 30 and/or PA 41 to prevent trucks from using PA 772 and PA 340 to avoid the current weigh station.
- Wayfinding apps like Google Maps direct trucks over the PA 741 bridge to Chestnut Street in Gap as a shortcut. The road is suffering from deterioration due to the heavy traffic, and large tractor-trailers have knocked over utility lines.

How We'll Measure Our Progress

Housing Type, Supply, and Affordability

Mix of types	▲	Increase % of semi-detached, townhouse, or multi-family types
New housing supply	▲	Increase # of building permits
Housing cost burden	▽	Reduce incidence of housing cost burden (30%+ income on housing)

▲	Increase
▽	Decrease

Borough/Village Growth and Vitality

Businesses	▲	Increase # of businesses in villages
Employees	▲	Increase # of employees working in villages
Property values	▲	Increase property value per capita

Urban Growth Areas and New Communities

Mixed-use land	▲	Increase amount of new development that is mixed-use
Third places/social gathering places	▲	Increase # of third places in growth areas
Commercial/industrial vacancy	▽	Reduce vacancy rate for retail, office, and manufacturing

Health & Safety

Fatalities due to crashes	▽	Reduce # of fatalities due to crashes

Commuting

Time spent commuting	▽	Reduce length of average commute
Daily Vehicle Miles Traveled (DVMT)	▽	Reduce Daily Vehicle Miles Traveled

CONNECTING PEOPLE, PLACE, & OPPORTUNITY

In the Pequea Valley region – just like the county as a whole – we need to work harder to connect students with schools, workers with jobs, and jobs with housing. It should be easier for residents to get around and connect with the people and places they care about. The bottom line is, we want people to have plenty of options.

By developing a more integrated multi-modal transportation system, we can enhance efficiency – and more importantly, foster greater opportunities for interaction. Strengthening the connections between people and the places they need to be will significantly boost the region's ability to attract and retain residents, businesses, and jobs.

What We Heard

The region has strong ties to the Pequea Valley School District, but it can be challenging for students to find transportation and teachers to find housing.

- Residents list the school district as a deciding factor for relocating to the area.
- Public transportation is needed to take students to extra-curricular activities and internships.
- Some teachers are moving away from the region due to lack of affordable housing.
- The new PV middle/high school has opened for the 2025-26 academic year. Considering declining enrollment, the school district consolidated its resources.

Many areas with heavy foot traffic are dangerous for pedestrians.

- Sidewalk improvements to the village of Intercourse are slated for 2027. Leacock Township reported that the proposed changes, once complete, will be sufficient.
- On PA 772, the mix of freight and buggy traffic highlights the need for wider shoulders to improve safety for all road users.
- Pedestrian friendly infrastructure is needed along the US 30 corridor.
- The Gap Fire Company faces challenges due to its location in a residential area where children often play outside. Navigating the required right turn is difficult, and moving to a new site is not financially viable.

Strengthen existing industries & attract new industries.

- Urban Outfitters is one of the biggest employers in the region. Many people commute from outside the region because they cannot afford local housing.
- The Clinic for Special Children, which serves individuals of all ages with rare genetic disorders, has opened a new location in the village of Intercourse. There's a proposal for a coffee shop adjacent to the facility, but it needs to get zoning approval.
- Tourism plays a vital role in supporting the economy of the Pequea Valley region. This is especially significant for Leacock and Paradise Townships, encompassing both the villages and the farms.

What the Data Tells Us

School Enrollment

The middle and high school have consolidated due to low enrollment. Much of the population is Plain Sect and does not attend public school – only 43% of school age population is enrolled. There's been a 3.5% drop in enrollment over the past 10 years.

Top Industries

Construction, retail trade, manufacturing, educational services, health care, and social services make up the top industries in the region.

Public Transportation

The Red Rose Transit Authority (RRTA) operates the Route 21/Gap bus service, connecting key locations such as Downtown Lancaster, Bridgeport, Walmart, East Towne Centre, Tanger Outlets, Rockvale Outlets, Paradise, Leaman Place, Kinzers, Urban Outfitters, and the Village at Gap Shopping Center. They also operate the Route 13/White Horse bus service along PA 340 connecting the City of Lancaster with Bridgeport, Bird-in-Hand, Ronks, Newport, Intercourse, White Horse, and Cains.

For a detailed overview of the data, refer to the "Snapshot of the region" beginning

What We Need to Do Differently

Priority		Policy
Countywide	*Regional*	*In this section, policies are in order by countywide and regional priority rather than how they appear in places2040.*
✔		Connect housing, jobs, schools, transportation, and other destinations.
✔		Make it easier for residents and visitors to get around without a car.
		Make our downtowns into regional hubs.
		Create more places to hike, bike, play, and enjoy nature.
	✔	Maintain, attract, and retain a skilled workforce that earns a competitive wage.
	✔	Intentionally cultivate, retain, and expand industry.
		Facilitate business partnerships.

Connect housing, jobs, schools, transportation, and other destinations.

- Using official maps, develop a network of service roads to create better connections for residents and to attract outside investment.

Make it easier for residents and visitors to get around without a car.

Complete Streets
- Concentrate on key routes like US 30 and PA 340 to enhance pedestrian improvements.
- The village of Intercourse is set to implement pedestrian improvements in 2027. These enhancements will focus on upgrading sidewalks and crosswalks.
- Salisbury Township may consider proposing the addition of a right-of-way access easement at the Gap Fire Company specifically for emergency vehicle use.

Public Transit
- Identify clusters of residential areas, employment hubs, and other key amenities within the region that could benefit from improved transit services.
- Evaluate major destinations outside the region or county that are commonly visited by residents and may require enhanced connectivity.
- Collaborate with partners, county personnel, and state or federal agencies to seek funding opportunities aimed at developing new transit services or expanding current ones to accommodate growing demand.

Continued from previous page

Maintain, attract, and retain a skilled workforce that earns a competitive wage.
- Conduct a survey of the local business community to pinpoint gaps in the workforce.
- Partner with the Pequea Valley School District as well as higher education institutions to ensure the availability of programs that address these work-force gaps.
- Maintain collaboration with partners to enhance the connections between educational institutions and the business sector.

Intentionally cultivate, retain, and expand industry.

Industrial Land
- Collaborate with LCPD staff and additional partners to determine locations ideal for industrial development. Recognize possible conflicts between these preferred sites and other priorities, such as natural areas, agricultural lands, and historic sites.

Diversify Economy
- There may be more opportunities to develop tourism than industrial/man-ufacturing in this region. There are already examples of large, successful agritourism businesses like Cherry Crest Adventure Farm in Paradise.

How We'll Measure Our Progress

Roadway and Sidewalk Network Connectivity

Sidewalk coverage	▲	Increase % of roads with sidewalks in growth areas, especially in villages
Connectivity of new development	▲	Increase connections between new development and the existing road network

▲	Increase
▽	Decrease

Access to Parks and Trails

Miles of regional trails	▲	Increase miles of regional trails
Parks per capita	▲	Increase acreage of parks per 1,000 people
Park and trail access	▲	Increase % of growth area land within ½ mile of park or trail

Workforce Development

Workforce partnerships	▲	Increase partnerships between education institutions and businesses
Apprenticeships	▲	Increase in apprenticeships with local businesses
Business starts	▲	Increase in new businesses started

TAKING CARE OF WHAT WE HAVE

The Pequea Valley region is a remarkable place. It has expansive farmland, beautiful natural landscapes, and a vibrant tourism industry. It's essential for us to protect the unique character and culture of our community. Caring for that heritage should be a priority, not just because we want our community to be attractive, but also because we want to enhance the region's appeal for residents, visitors, and potential employers.

Retaining what we love about the community requires us to balance what we inherited with our vision for the future. If we approach this goal thoughtfully, we can maximize our assets for greater benefits in the long run. More than ever, it's important to maintain and improve the infrastructure we've established – water, sewer, stormwater systems, transportation, and technology.

What We Heard

Farmers are changing how they farm.

- Farming on its own isn't financially viable for many farmers, prompting them to explore on-farm businesses to remain on their land.
- Small farms are merging into larger agricultural operations, while still producing a range of commodities; they are being redefined into various industries.
- Farms in the region are in a transition from traditional dairy to pasture-based dairy.
- Niche farming such as grass fed and organic are the most profitable agricultural operations in the region.

We must strike a balance between preserving farmland and supporting on-farm businesses.

- Regulation needs to be balanced between helping the farmer and preserving the integrity of farmland.
- Salisbury is making remarkable strides in farm preservation, incorporating 3 to 4 new farms annually into the Farmland Trust. Collaborating with the Lancaster Farmland Trust, more than 100 conservation plans have been implemented in recent years.
- In some cases, encouraging farmers to preserve their farms is challenging. They aren't fairly compensated despite rising land values, which doesn't benefit future generations.

Preserve natural resources.

- Lancaster County is just 15% forested, making it the least forested county in Pennsylvania's Chesapeake Bay watershed. In comparison, the average forested land across Pennsylvania is 55%.
- State Game Lands 52, Money Rocks County Park, and Lancaster Conservancy's Welsh Mountain Nature Preserve are the largest publicly accessible natural lands in the region.

- The Welsh Mountain area is part of the Highlands Conservation area; conservation efforts are critical as the population grows.

Residents list reusing existing buildings as their top development method.

- There are often zoning challenges to convert existing buildings into new housing units. Two-unit or apartment conversions are typically permitted only by conditional use. This is sometimes a barrier for builders.
- Reusing existing buildings is somewhat limited in Salisbury Township as they only allow conversions of buildings constructed in July 1973 and earlier.

Roads experience considerable wear and tear due to the diverse mix of users who travel on them.

- A significant challenge faced by the Pequea Valley region, much like other areas in Lancaster County, are the ruts in the roads created by wheels of buggies and studded horseshoes.
- The substantial number of tractor trailers in the region cause road damage due to their size and weight.

Stormwater management continues to be a priority for the region.

- Water quality is an important issue in rural areas like the Pequea Valley region because of the agricultural runoff from farms which can impair streams.
- The Lancaster Farmland Trust has visited every farm in the three townships regarding conservation plans and water quality. This location is significant, as Salisbury Township is situated at the headwaters of the Pequea Creek watershed.

Continued from previous page

- BMPs (refer to p. 37) were implemented which include:
  - Installing gutters on barns
  - Improving drainage
  - Stream bank restoration
  - Planting tree buffers along streams
  - Manure management
  - Creating stream crossings
  - Installing fencing along streams
- Farmers require time to adopt new practices and see their benefits. While most farms have conservation plans established, some express hesitations about implementing best management practices. Their concerns stem from uncertainty about whether the investment is worthwhile, especially since they are unsure if their children will continue farming the land.
- The Pequea Creek Watershed Restoration Plan was completed in 2023.
- The Mill Creek Watershed Implementation Plan was created in 2006, and a tributary focused amendment was added in 2022.

What the Data Tells Us

Agricultural Preservation and Conservation
Data will be provided in a later draft

Natural Lands Conservation
Data will be provided in a later draft

Parkland-to-Population Ratio
Data will be provided in a later draft

For a detailed overview of the data, refer to the "Snapshot of the region" beginning on p.

What We Need to Do Differently

Priority		Policy
Countywide	*Regional*	*In this section, policies are in order by countywide and regional priority rather than how they appear in places2040.*
✔		Preserve large, contiguous areas of agricultural and natural land.
	✔	Preserve the farmer as well as the farm.
✔	✔	Use existing buildings and maintain public infrastructure.
✔	✔	Improve water quality and work together on stormwater management.
		Promote entrepreneurship and help local businesses grow.

Preserve large, contiguous areas of agricultural and natural land.

- Continue to work with the Lancaster County Agricultural Preserve Board, Lancaster Farmland Trust, and the Lancaster Conservation District to preserve large, contiguous areas of agricultural land.
- Partner with the PA Game Commission, County of Lancaster, and the Lancaster Conservancy for conservation efforts and to acquire additional natural land as needed for outdoor recreation.
- Collaborate with LCPD staff and local organizations to locate areas in the region where preservation of natural lands should be prioritized. These lands could include areas surrounding existing public parks and preserves, public water sources, or intact, high-quality natural areas.

Preserve the farmer as well as the farm.

- Ongoing education for local farm-based business owners regarding regulations in the industry is highly encouraged.
- Consider revising local zoning regulations to include Rural Special Districts – nodes of commercial and industrial activity outside growth areas. Work with local stakeholders (including farmers) to evaluate the regulations that apply to these uses. Where feasible and appropriate, remove any unnecessary barriers to these businesses.

Use existing buildings and maintain public infrastructure.

- Maintain the ongoing repair of roads impacted by user traffic in quadrants to ensure cost efficiency.
- Utilize the county's Simplified Zoning Tool to streamline regulations on conversions and infill development.

Improve water quality and work together on stormwater management.

- Involve the Pequea Valley School District in watershed restoration efforts, providing authentic learning for students while helping the region meet MS4 requirements.
- Maintain collaboration with the Pennsylvania State Conservation Commission, National Fish and Wildlife Fund, and the Lancaster Conservation District to access valuable resources.
- Continue to partner with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation for watershed restoration projects such as the Pequea Creek Watershed Restoration and the Upper Conestoga Watershed Plan.
- Collaborate with the county on regionally updating the countywide Act 167 storm water management plan.

MS4s and BMPs

An MS4 refers to a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System, a system that collects and conveys stormwater runoff to local waterways. While many communities have these storm sewer systems, only communities within areas of certain populations and densities must seek an MS4 permit.

These MS4 communities must comply with particular stormwater regulations and establish a stormwater management plan (SWMP). This permit is administered under the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) MS4 program, and is managed by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

BMPs, or best management practices, are techniques used to reduce water pollution. The *Pennsylvania Stormwater Best Management Practices Manual,* published by the Pennsylvania DEP, outlines both structural and non-structural BMPs that can help to mitigate the impacts of stormwater runoff.

How We'll Measure Our Progress

Water Quality

Impaired streams	▽	Reduce % impaired streams
Nitrogen/phosphorus/suspended sediment	▽	Reduce total levels of nitrogen, phosphorus, and suspended sediment
Riparian buffers	▲	Increase miles of riparian buffers
Tree canopy	▲	Increase % of land covered in tree canopy

▲	Increase
▽	Decrease

Protected Agricultural Land

Agricultural land preserved	▲	Increase total acres of agricultural land preserved
Contiguous agricultural land preserved	▲	Increase % of contiguous agricultural land preserved
Agricultural land in effective agricultural zoning	▲	Increase total acres of agricultural land in effective agricultural zoning

Protected Natural Land

Natural land preserved	▲	Increase total acres of natural land preserved
Contiguous natural land preserved	▲	Increase % of contiguous natural land preserved
Natural land in effective conservation zoning	▲	Increase total acres of natural land in effective conservation zoning

Agricultural Economy

Total value of agricultural products sold	▲	Increase value of agricultural products sold
Value of agricultural products sold directly	▲	Increase value of agricultural products sold directly (buy local)

GROWING RESPONSIBLY

We know we'll see growth and change in the future, but we want to preserve farmland and the unique scenic vistas of the Pequea Valley region. We can protect what we love by encouraging responsible growth – by carefully managing where, when, and how development occurs. To achieve this, we need to focus on the locations of new projects, how they're designed, and when they happen.

Buildable land within growth areas is limited. We need to treat that land as a vital resource, ensuring that it meets a variety of needs for the future – residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional. Prioritizing infill and redevelopment is essential. We should build up and not out – while still retaining the character of our communities.

While growth keeps the economy moving, it's important that it happens in the right places. Outside growth areas, we should limit large-lot suburban development to safeguard agriculture, protect natural resources, and preserve the character of rural communities.

What We Heard

Focus development inside Christina-Gap, Paradise, and the village of Intercourse.

- Paradise Township is expanding its Village Growth Area (VGA) by adding Agriculture-zoned parcels in the northwest and southeast. This includes legacy areas near the quarry and two Commercial-Industrial (C-1) parcels at the Salisbury Township boundary. Additionally, several preserved farm parcels along the northern boundary with New Holland Borough are being removed from the VGA.
- Parcels zoned for commercial and mixed-use are being added north of US 30 in the Christiana-Gap Village Growth Area (VGA), with many having access to public sewer.
- Leacock Township has proposed extensions to existing growth areas.
- Ideal locations for compact neighborhoods are in Gap between PA 897 and PA 772, and near the village of Intercourse where essential infrastructure is already in place.
- The Plain Sect population is seeking 1 to 2 acre lots, due to their average family sizes and land needs for children, horses, and gardens.
- A potential area for development is in South Hermitage, south of White Horse. The area has 100 acres of non-preserved farmland.
- Cambridge offers another 20-30 acres for potential similar development.

We need water/sewer infrastructure to support new growth (for both business/industry and housing).

- In some cases, the lack of water and sewer infrastructure makes new home construction difficult. Paradise Township is hiring a consultant to develop a water feasibility study.
- Quarries present one of the least intrusive ways to extract natural resources such as water but are a finite resource.
- Leacock Township is sharing sewer services with the newly constructed PV middle and high school.

Promote redevelopment of vacant/underutilized commercial properties instead of development on natural or agricultural land.

- Leacock Township does not want to see development west of the village of Intercourse and to the north of PA 340.
- Infill and redevelopment should be a top priority and should fit in with the surrounding character of the area.
- Reusing existing buildings is somewhat limited in Salisbury Township as they only allow conversions of buildings built in July 1973 and earlier.

What the Data Tells Us

Population Increase

From 2000 to 2023, the region's population increased 17% from 19,588 residents to 22,864 residents.

Urban Residential Density

Data will be provided in a later draft

Buildable Land in Growth Areas

Data will be provided in a later draft

Large Vacant Tracts

As of 2024, there were # vacant parcels that were greater than 40 acres in size within the Intercourse VGA Paradise VGA Christina-Gap VGA.

Water and Sewer Service in Urban Growth Areas

Data will be provided in a future draft

Commercial and Industrial Areas

As of 2024:
- Leacock Township has 415 acres of vacant land zoned commercial and industrial.
- Paradise Township has 275 acres of vacant land zoned commercial and industrial.

- Salisbury Township has 404 acres of vacant land zoned commercial and industrial.

For a detailed overview of the data, refer to the "Snapshot of the region" beginning on p.

What We Need to Do Differently

Priority		Policy
Countywide	*Regional*	*In this section, policies are in order by countywide and regional priority rather than how they appear in places2040.*
	✔	Grow where we're already growing.
	✔	Prioritize redevelopment and infill in Urban Growth Areas.
✔		Manage the use of large tracts of vacant land in Urban Growth Areas.
		Limit large-lot suburban development in rural areas.
		Build more compactly and efficiently.

Grow where we're already growing.

- Evaluate and update zoning, development, and design standards in regions newly or imminently receiving public water services to ensure alignment with the land use, economic, and community character objectives of each township.
- Growth area boundaries have been adjusted to reflect recent development and each municipality's plans for the direction of growth in its community. This effort was part of a Lancaster County Planning Department initiative to update these boundaries countywide.
- Paradise Township is adding agricultural land west of the VGA while removing preserved farms from their VGA.
- In the Gap-Christiana VGA, parcels are being added north of US 30 that have sewer service or residential or industrial uses.

Prioritize redevelopment and infill in Urban Growth Areas

- Revise current zoning regulations to make it easier for infill development as residents cite that as the type of development they are most open to.
- Leacock Township created a Mixed-Use Village (MUV) Overlay Zone to accommodate the Center Street Expansion project which encompasses 10.9 acres

within the Intercourse VGA. The overlay will bring the region a mix of residential uses such as townhomes and apartments, and commercial uses. Commercial uses include a cultural heritage museum and a future warehouse expansion for Windy Valley furniture and HC Quality Doors, both of which are well-established businesses in the area.

Simplify Zoning.

- Utilize the Simplified Zoning tool, found on the county website, to help to streamline the zoning approval process and minimize resources needed to create communities that are better aligned with planning initiatives and market demands. Regulating in this way enables neighborhoods, municipalities, and regions to adapt more easily as each community's needs change.

Manage the use of large tracts of vacant land in Urban Growth Areas.

- The region should look at parcels with access to water infrastructure, along major roadways, and are 10 acres or more in size.

How We'll Measure Our Progress

Growth Inside Urban Growth Areas

New dwelling units	▲	Increase % of new dwelling units in growth areas to accommodate projected population
New non-residential square footage	▲	Increase % of new non-residential square footage on best suited lands in growth areas
Total acres developed	▽	Reduce the acres developed per year

▲	Increase
▽	Decrease

Growth Outside Urban Growth Areas

New dwelling units	▽	Reduce % of new dwelling units built outside of growth areas
Total acres developed	▽	Reduce the acres developed per year

Residential Density

Net density in UGAs	▲	Increase overall net density for Christina-Gap, Intercourse-Gordonville, and Paradise VGAs (Goal: 2.5 dwelling units per acre)
Single- vs multi-family density	▲	Increase average single- and multi-family density

Employment Location

Jobs in UGAs	▲	Increase % of jobs in growth areas
Jobs in employment centers	▲	Increase % of jobs in employment centers

Building Height

Average height of new buildings	▲	Increase average height of new buildings in urban character sectors (downtowns and adjacent, older neighborhoods)

THINKING BEYOND BOUNDARIES

Residents of the Pequea Valley region appreciate the history and traditions of their community – it is a huge part of what makes the region a unique place to live. To keep it that way, we need to plan ahead and work together, and we need to do things a little differently than we have in the past.

To plan effectively for the future, the Lancaster County comprehensive plan (*places2040*) encourages us to "Think Beyond Boundaries." The Pequea Valley region, like all of Lancaster County, has many boundaries that impact how people live, work, and go to school. As you travel between the communities in our region, it's not always clear where these boundaries are. They're only visible on a map.

Here are just a few examples of the many boundaries that divide the region:

- **Local Government –** There are three municipalities in the region. Each municipality is responsible for making its own land use decisions, so there are three municipal planning commissions and three separate governing bodies.

- **Zoning –** Each of the three municipalities in the region has its own zoning ordinance regulating land use. In the region, there are 30 unique zoning districts.

- **Water and Sewer Infrastructure –** Water and sewer infrastructure is maintained by three separate authorities

- **Police, Fire, and Emergency Services –** The region is serviced by the PA state police. There are 7 fire companies that service the region and three ambulance services.

While these boundaries are essential to administering public services, they've incentivized municipalities to solve challenges on their own. Thinking beyond boundaries is about approaching these issues more collaboratively. Forests, farmland, river and streams, roads, and neighborhoods don't follow municipal, school, or political boundaries. Neither does our economy and all the infrastructure that keeps it running. To address the challenges identified in this plan, we need to find ways to work around the barriers that boundaries create.

Changing Our Mindset

Thinking Beyond Boundaries is the key to implementing this plan. Of course, the plan's success depends on municipal involvement and support – but it also requires the participation of municipal authorities and school districts. County planning staff and the county's Partners for Place (countywide, regional, and city organizations involved in land-use planning) are also ready to offer assistance.

Government organizations and agencies cannot be, and should not be, the only stakeholders engaged in the implementation of this plan. The only way to truly make a difference in the Pequea Valley region is to involve a full range of public, private, and nonprofit partners to achieve our goals.

Pequea Valley region leaders should seek out opportunities to tap into the passionate organizations, businesses, and individuals that live and service the region, especially those that have already demonstrated interest in long-range planning efforts. Developers and realtors know their markets. Legal professionals understand the impact of policy decisions. Volunteers can move mountains.

The county policies associated with Thinking Beyond Boundaries are listed on the next page. They provide a solid framework for successful change in the Pequea Valley region, as well.
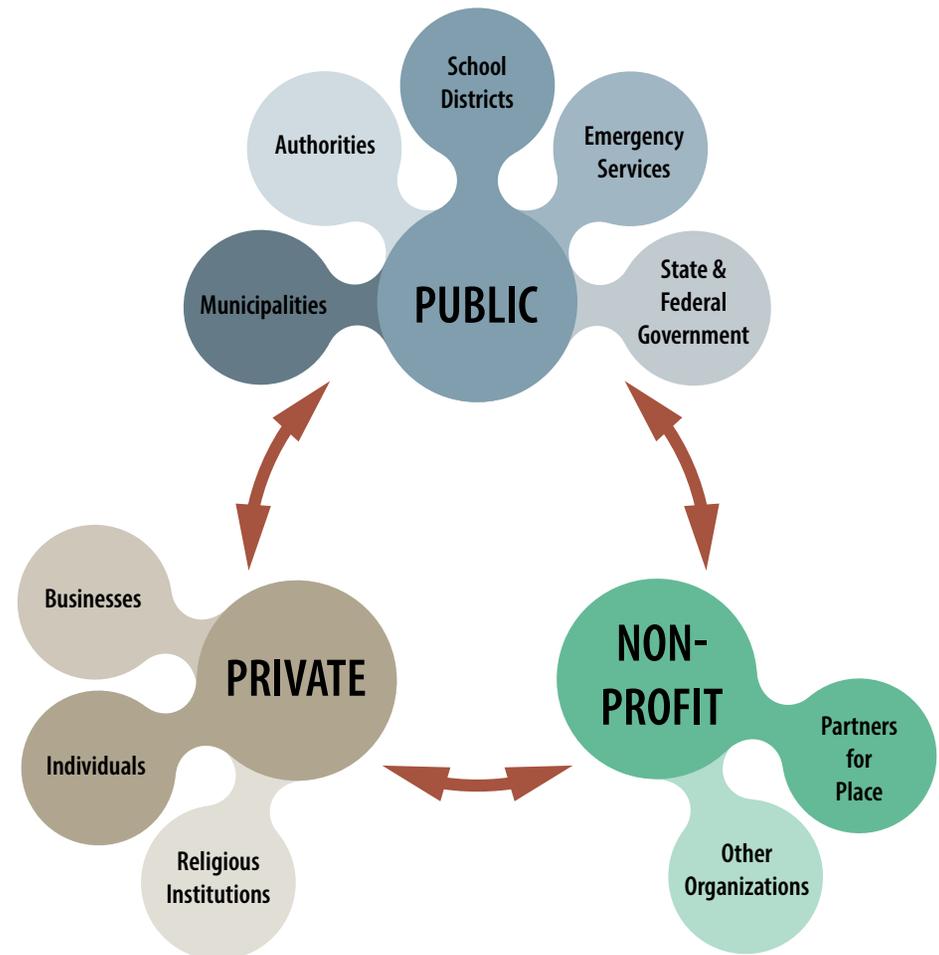
Integrate place-based thinking into all future planning initiatives.

When we think about places, we shouldn't be limited by existing political and organizational boundaries. Thinking in terms of communities and corridors – the way visitors see them, without boundaries – will make a big difference. Instead of stopping our work where a municipal boundary begins or ends, we need to think about the "functional" boundaries of the challenge we face.

The Bird-In-Hand Zoning District is an example of municipalities working across boundaries. Bird-In-Hand is in both East Lampeter and Leacock townships. Leacock Township incorporated the Bird-In-Hand Zoning District, created by East Lampeter staff in 2016, into their zoning. The change mirrors the East Lampeter Township ordinance for Bird-in-Hand so that the village is in one zoning district.

Break down the traditional silos that limit our effectiveness.

In addition to creating stronger links between the public, private, and nonprofit sectors, we need to cultivate leadership in the community – people who can be champions for this plan. We need to educate residents about how planning issues affect their health, quality of life, environment, and economy. We need to include a broader spectrum of our community in the planning process.

Make planning and regulation more efficient, consistent, and regional.

Being fiscally responsible means simplifying our approach to land-use and making it less burdensome and time consuming. We should incentivize what we want to see and discourage what we don't. Plan regionally and implement locally!

Keep ourselves accountable for the goals we've set.

We should set targets on a regional basis but provide feedback to individual municipalities and other partners to ensure they're doing their part. We should use data to track our progress and report back to the community on the status of our goals. Local municipal leaders should meet regularly to review how municipalities and other partners are making progress in implementing this plan.

Catalytic Tools & Strategies

While any step to implement this plan is a step toward making the Pequea Valley region a better place, we'll only make a lasting impact if we focus our energy. During the *places2040* planning process, county planning staff researched best practices in the field. They found that the tools and strategies listed below have the greatest potential to make a difference:

Place-Based Planning
As discussed in many parts of this plan, we need to look at places as they actually are, instead of emphasizing the boundaries in our community. We want to infuse this philosophy into everything we do.

Simplified Zoning
In Lancaster County as a whole, there are over 500 zoning districts, and each municipality applies different terminology and policies to address the same challenges. To help us overcome this barrier, county planning staff have developed a guide to simplified zoning.

Official Maps
Official maps are visioning documents that illustrate improvements a community wants to see in the future. These improvements usually relate to transportation, community facilities, and environmentally critical areas such as floodplains, habitats, and groundwater recharge areas. Transportation needs can focus on cars, buses, rail, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Community facilities are things like parks, utilities, and stormwater management facilities.

Complete Streets
The principle behind complete streets is that our road network (as a whole) should be designed for all modes (types of transportation) and all users (people who are young, old, and/or have disabilities that affect their mobility). This is not to say that every road can or should have a bike lane or a wider shoulder. It all depends on context – different environments call for different solutions. Within this region's growth areas, additional amenities for pedestrians and bicyclists might be appropriate. In more rural areas, "complete streets" really just means improving safety and signage for motorists.

Infrastructure and Public Services
To accommodate even modest growth, we need adequate water, sewer, and transportation infrastructure. Without it, local businesses can't expand, particularly in the industrial sector. It's also difficult to build more compactly. It's important to know where water and sewer service exists, and whether its capacity meets local needs. For that reason, a countywide water and sewer infrastructure study is underway. Data from that study will help to guide growth management decisions in the future.

Collaborate
As discussed elsewhere in this plan, most of the challenges we face are best solved by partnerships between the public, private, and nonprofit sectors. Issues like traffic congestion, stormwater management, affordable housing, trail development, stream restoration, and landscape protection are regional issues that call for regional solutions. In some cases, such as the challenge of addressing on-farm businesses that grow too big for the farm – we might want to consider a countywide approach.

Align Resources

The focus here is on avoiding duplication of effort – and using our time, talents, and treasure more wisely. As a whole, Lancaster County has a wealth of technical resources and funding opportunities. If we align these resources around the big ideas and policies in our regional and countywide plans, we'll have a much better chance of success.

Making It Happen

Despite some of the challenges of working across boundaries, stakeholders in the Pequea Valley region have already made efforts to cooperate as a region. The region worked together to develop their 2014 comprehensive plan, the *Pequea Valley Strategic Plan*. The region also shares some resources such as the Pennsylvania State Police and Leacock Township shares sewer resources with the newly constructed Pequea Valley high school and middle school.

The precedent set by these efforts of regional cooperation provides a strong foundation for the implementation of this current plan. The regular meeting of leaders provides an existing framework for managing the goals of this plan and encouraging intermunicipal communication.

The staff of the Lancaster County Planning Department – particularly the regional liaison assigned to LCPD's East Planning Area – will also continue to work with the region moving forward. County staff will also seek the involvement of the county's Partners for Place in helping the region better understand and address future issues and opportunities.

Policy Priorities

The following table identifies all the *places2040* policies that are highlighted in this plan and puts them in order of importance as defined by local participants in the planning process. As county staff begins to work with the Pequea Valley region to implement the plan, these policies will be the focus.

Policy	Big Idea
Prioritize redevelopment and infill in Village Growth Areas.	Growing Responsibly
Preserve large contiguous areas of agricultural and natural land.	Taking Care of What We Have
Use existing buildings and maintain public infrastructure.	Taking Care of What We Have
Create more places to hike, bike, play and enjoy nature.	Connecting People, Place and Opportunity
Grow where were already growing.	Growing Responsibly
Make our downtowns more vibrant, safe and attractive.	Creating Great Places
Preserve the farmer as well as the farm.	Taking Care of What We Have
Make it easier for residents to get around without a car.	Connecting People, Place and Opportunity
Provide a greater supply and diversity of housing types to own and rent.	Creating Great Places
Maintain, attract and retain a skilled workforce that earns a competitive wage.	Connecting People, Place and Opportunity
Connect housing, jobs, school, transportation, and other destinations.	Connecting People, Place and Opportunity
Promote entrepreneurship and help local businesses grow.	Taking Care of What We Have
Improve water quality and work together on stormwater management.	Taking Care of What We Have
Break down the traditional silos that limit our effectiveness.	Thinking Beyond Boundaries
Create a mix of uses in our communities and corridors.	Creating Great Places
Make our downtowns into regional hubs.	Connecting People Place and Opportunity
Intentionally cultivate retain and expand industry.	Connecting People, Place and Opportunity

FUTURE LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION MAP

PURPOSE

This chapter of the plan focuses on the Future Land Use and Transportation Map for the Pequea Valley region. It's a conceptual graphic that illustrates many of the big ideas and policies in this plan. Essentially, it's the community's vision for how this part of the county will look in the future, if the plan's recommendations are implemented.

The framework for this map was taken from the countywide map in *places2040,* the Lancaster County comprehensive plan. Although the Pequea Valley region map borrows heavily from *places2040*, it includes a few additional elements not shown on the countywide map. We also made a few tweaks to the map legend and symbology (the way things are shown). Following the map, there's a "What's on the Map" section that provides additional detail about the map's content.

The Future Land Use and Transportation Map shows:

- **Landscape Character Sectors –** These areas represent the different types of environments (or landscapes) found in the region – everything from the most rural to the most urban. These same sectors (once called character zones) are shown on the countywide map in *places2040*.
- **Priority Places** – These are places that should be our focus for the next several years. Other places are important, too – they just weren't identified as a high priority in the near term. The places shown on the map are a combination of places identified in recent countywide plans, as well as in the engagement process for this plan.

- **Other Elements** – Items that provide points of reference on the map, and that contribute to our understanding of landscape character sectors and priority places.

Things to Keep in Mind

- This map shows changes to *places2040* growth area boundaries that were suggested by local leaders during the planning process. LCPD staff will work with Leacock, Paradise and Salisbury Townships to adopt these changes in the near future.
- This map is not intended to determine specific land-use decisions at the local level. Instead, it's a hybrid between existing realities and future goals. The purpose of the map is to get residents thinking about new approaches to planning for the places they care about.
- This plan also includes four sets of "Issue and Opportunity" maps. These additional maps incorporate the priority places from the Future Land Use and Transportation Map, as well as some broader areas and nodes (concentrated locations) that are also a priority. These maps are found in the next chapter of this plan.

Future Land Use and Transportation Map

Region

Pequea Valley Region
Lancaster County, Pennsylvania

Landscape Character Sectors

Natural Spaces

- Preservation
- Conservation

Agricultural Areas

- Preservation
- Conservation

Rural Communities

- Core Areas
- Other Developed Lands

- Suburban Communities
- Urban Perimeters

Urban Cores

- Boroughs
- City

Special Districts

Priority Places

- Growth Area
- Priority Road
- Amtrak Line

Other Elements

- Buildable Land
- Quarry
- Municipality

- Other Road (Major)
- Other Road
- Water Body
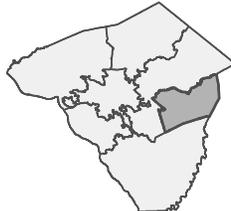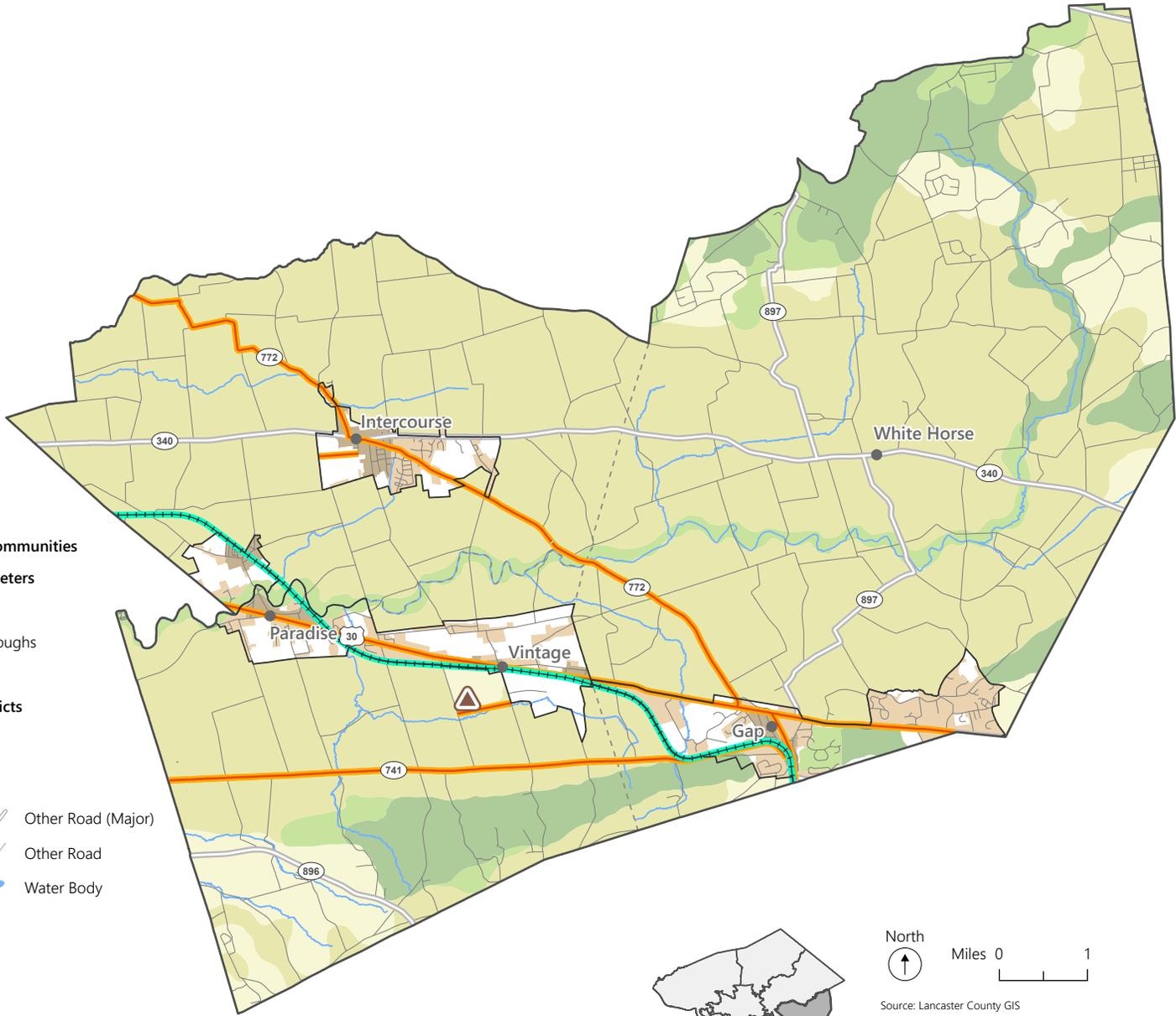
Intercourse

White Horse

Paradise

Vintage

Gap

North

Miles 0 — 1

Source: Lancaster County GIS
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This map is not a legally recorded plan, survey, or engineering
schematic and it is not intended to be used as such.

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Future Land Use and Transportation Map

Growth Areas

Pequea Valley Region
Lancaster County, Pennsylvania

Intercourse VGA

Paradise VGA

Christiana-Gap VGA

WHAT'S ON THE MAP

Landscape Character Sectors

Several different colors appear in the background of the Pequea Valley Region Future Land Use and Transportation Map. Each of these colors represents a different type of landscape found throughout the whole county. This way of looking at things is called a "land-use transect." A transect identifies all the different types of environments or landscapes you find in a particular geographical area – in this case, Lancaster County.

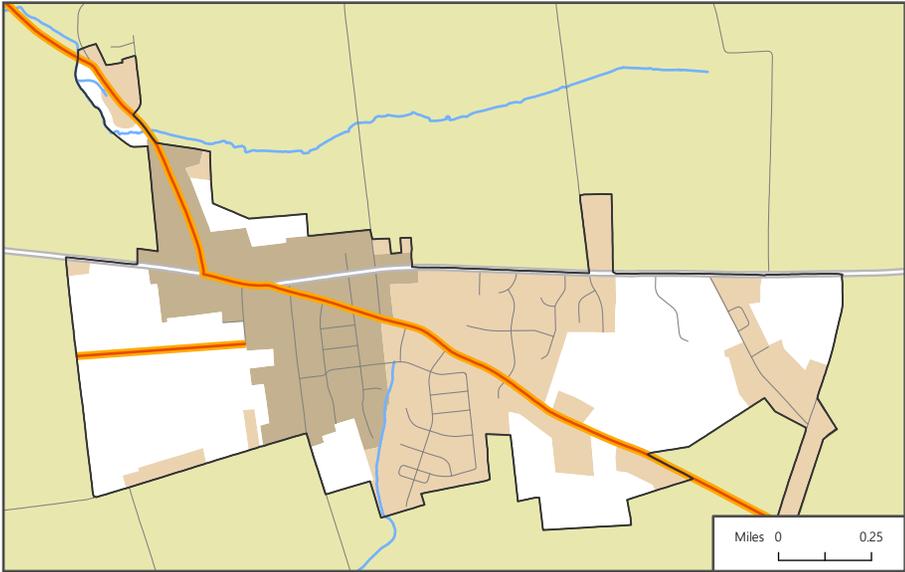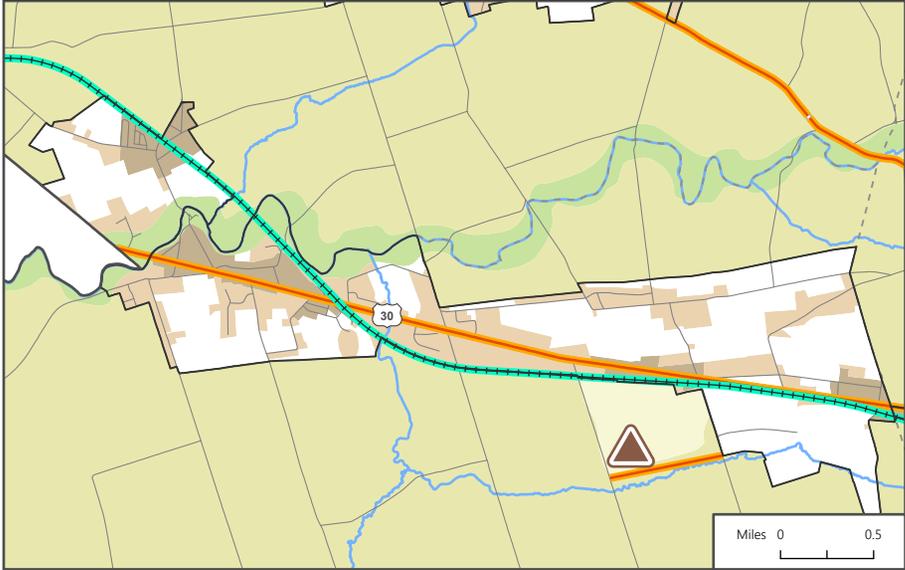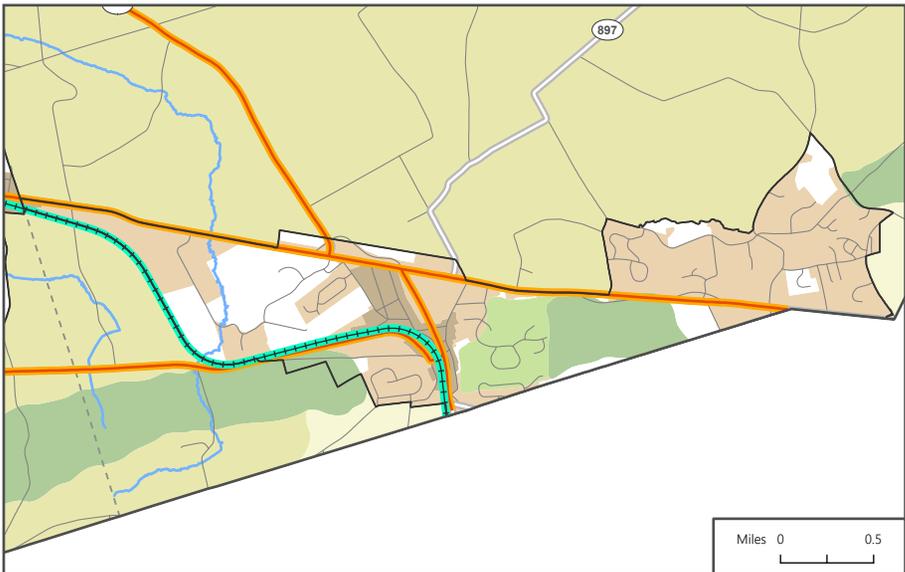Here's one way to think about it. If you could look down on the county from space, you wouldn't see a lot of detail – just farmland, natural areas, and urban areas. If you had the right lens, you might see a little more. You'd notice some differences in each of these environments. Some farmland is more productive than others; some natural areas are better preserved than others. So you could split the farmland and natural areas into more precise categories. You could do the same in the city and boroughs. For instance, the downtown areas are more built up than other parts of town.

In a transect, these different environments are usually presented as a series of sectors. The most rural landscapes are at one end of the spectrum, and the most urban ones are at the other end. Each sector has its own character, so the Lancaster County comprehensive plan (places2040) calls them "character zones." Since *places2040* was adopted, we have changed this term to "landscape character sectors."

The county plan identifies seven character sectors in Lancaster County. Six sectors classify land from rural to urban, and one sector applies to landscapes that don't fit neatly into that scheme. It's called a "special district," and it applies to industrial, institutional, and airport uses in urban areas. Special districts can exist in rural areas as well, but they're not shown on this map. More analysis and policy development are needed on the countywide and regional levels before we start using that term.

If we map these character sectors, it shows us which areas of the county have similar characteristics. For instance, we can see which parts of the county are the most "natural," and which areas are considered "suburban." Of course, our land uses are a lot more complicated than the character sectors make them out to be. Still, it's a useful way to classify the land in simpler terms.

Lancaster County has 60 municipalities, each with its own zoning ordinance. As a result, different municipalities apply different policies and regulations to areas of land that have similar characteristics. This system makes it difficult, expensive, and time-consuming for homeowners, builders, developers, and businesses to make investment decisions about the properties they own and manage – especially if they involve more than one municipality.

If municipal zoning ordinances were tied to the character sectors identified in this plan, it could simplify the way land-use decisions are made and eliminate a lot of waste and redundancy. For example, Pequea Valley region municipalities could apply similar policies and regulations to rural zoning districts.

How Character Sectors Were Determined

Inside growth areas, the character sectors reflect conditions on the ground based on aerial photos available at the time the plan was prepared (2025). At that time, Lancaster County Planning Department (LCPD) staff used their professional judgment to assign the appropriate character sectors to all built land within these growth areas, which include the Christina-Gap, Paradise, and village of Intercourse Growth Areas (VGAs).

Outside growth areas, the character sectors are an approximation of agricultural and natural land cover. County Geographic Information System (GIS) layers with this information were simplified into smoothed contiguous areas and classified as appropriate for preservation or conservation. As a result, these rural character sectors are more generalized than the urban sectors. The reality on the ground is more fine-grained and complex.

In the pages that follow, you'll find a description of each character sectors and the policies associated with it in the Lancaster County comprehensive plan, *places2040*.

The Future Land Use and Transportation Map for the Pequea Valley Region displays the same character sectors found on a similar countywide map in *places2040,* the Lancaster County comprehensive plan. The seven types of sectors are listed here (as they appear on the map's legend) and are described in more detail on this page and the next. After these tables, you'll find another set of tables outlining the policies associated with the sectors as presented in *places2040*.

Overview of Landscape Character Sectors

This matrix introduces basic patterns found in each of Lancaster County's seven character sectors.

Natural Spaces and Agricultural Areas include sub-sections due to their slightly different preservation and conservation components. Similarly, Rural Communities are separated by their traditional core areas and other developed lands surrounding them. Lastly, Urban Core sub-sections separate Lancaster City from the county's 18 boroughs.

Natural Spaces

Preservation Areas:

- Encompass large contiguous areas of exceptional natural lands, including woodlands and wetlands. They also include natural resource-based industries such as quarries and sustainable timbering.

- Provide ecological benefits such as improved air and water quality and habitat protection. They may also provide scenic and recreational value.

Conservation Areas:

- Comprised of important natural lands that are smaller and more fragmented than those within Natural Preservation sectors. They include some low-density uses and natural resource-based industries such as quarries and sustainable timbering.

- Buffer and enhance the ecological benefits of Natural Preservation Areas. May also provide scenic and recreational value.

Agricultural Areas

Preservation Areas:

- Made up of large contiguous areas of farmland with fewer incompatible land-use and utility intrusions. Include natural resource-based industries such as quarries and sustainable timbering.

- Contain the best combination of prime soils, aquifer recharge areas, and other physical characteristics that produce economically sustainable yields.

Conservation Areas:

- Consist of smaller, more fragmented areas of farmland with some incompatible land-use and utility intrusions. They include some other low-density uses and natural resource-based industries such as quarries and sustainable timbering.

- Contain a patchwork of prime soils combined with lesser quality soils that are vital to sustaining the rural economy.

Rural Communities

Core Areas:

- Identified by moderate to higher density uses with traditional village scale and character.

- Often comprised of detached residential dwelling units on smaller lots, mixed with small-scale commercial, industrial, and institutional uses.

Other Developed Lands:

- Typically, defined by low to moderate density uses with automobile-oriented patterns. They often lack traditional village scale and character.

- Characterized by single-family detached residential dwelling units on larger lots, sometimes mixed with small-scale commercial, industrial, and institutional uses.

Suburban Communities

- Typically identified by low to moderate density and automobile-oriented land uses separated from one another.

- Primarily comprised of single-family detached residential dwellings on larger lots, with commercial uses typically located in strip centers, big-box stores, and shopping malls.

- Have transportation networks with minimal street connectivity and limited pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

Urban Perimeters

- Often have higher density and traditional urban patterns within walking distance of Urban Cores. They may include some villages and Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TNDs).

- Comprised of attached and detached residential dwellings on smaller lots, mixed with small-scale commercial, industrial, and institutional uses.

- Include a more connected transportation network with some pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

Urban Cores

City:

- Include the Central Business District and adjacent areas of downtown Lancaster City with the highest density and traditional urban scale.

- Primarily made up of mixed-use 3- to 5-story buildings, with a few structures approaching 20 stories. Residential dwellings often exist above commercial uses.

- Has a highly connected transportation network and includes extensive pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

Boroughs:

- Include Central Business Districts and adjacent areas of borough downtowns with higher densities and traditional urban scale.

- Primarily comprised of mixed-use 2- to 3-story buildings, with a few structures approaching 10 stories. Some residential dwellings exist above ground-floor commercial uses.

- Have highly connected transportation networks and include some pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

Special Districts

- Typically contain a single large-scale commercial, office, industrial, or institutional use, often in a campus-like setting. Uses may include, but are not limited to, business parks, airports, school campuses, municipal facilities, and natural resource-based industries such as quarries.

- With the exception of college campuses, transportation networks typically have limited pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure along with minimal street connectivity.

Notes:

1. *Special Districts are also found in rural areas, but these were not identified as part of the places2040 planning process. In the future, the Lancaster County Planning Department will identify these areas in the context of place-based planning and analysis to implement places2040.*

2. *In this plan, the term "Special District" does not refer to a governing or taxing entity. Instead, it applies to certain land uses and patterns that do not fit easily into other Landscape Character Sectors. It's a term commonly used in transect-based planning.*

Priority Places

Priority places are places that should be our focus for the next several years. Other places are important, too – they just weren't identified as a high priority in the near term. The places shown on the map are a combination of places identified in recent countywide plans, as well as in the engagement process for this plan.

Growth Area
These include Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) and Village Growth Areas (VGAs). All of the UGAs and VGAs shown on the map have some existing infrastructure (sewer service, and sometimes water) to support growth – or have plans to provide sewer service.

UGAs – These areas are particularly important to the county's future, because they will accommodate the majority of our population and employment growth.

- *Location* – Surrounding or adjacent to the city or a borough (in some cases, more than one borough).
- *Character Sectors* – Developed land generally is classified as Suburban Communities, Urban Perimeters, Urban Cores (City and Boroughs), or Special Districts.
- *Adoption Status/Boundaries* – Map shows VGAs and VGA boundaries that were proposed for adoption by Leacock, Paradise, and Salisbury Townships in 2025, working together with LCPD.

VGAs – Although these communities were mentioned less often in our civic engagement process, they are important because they will accommodate some rural growth.

- *Location* – Generally surrounding or adjacent to a village outside UGAs.

Defining Villages

In Lancaster County, any group of dwellings with an established history and place name could be considered a village. Although all of these places are significant, *places2040* generally defines the term "village" as communities that 1) are located <u>outside</u> Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) and 2) have 50+ dwelling units.

Villages that meet these criteria appear on the Growth Management Framework Map developed for *Balance* (2006), the growth management element of the previous Lancaster County comprehensive plan – and the same villages appear on the Lancaster County Future Land Use and Transportation Map in *places2040*.

- *Character Sectors* – Developed land generally is classified as Rural Community (Core or Other Developed).
- *Adoption Status/Boundaries* – Map shows VGAs that were adopted prior to 2025 or proposed for adoption in the near future.

Priority Road
The roads highlighted on this map were identified in recent countywide plans and in the engagement process for this plan. They were identified for several reasons including:

- The need for improvements to reduce congestion, improve safety for different users and modes, or improve connectivity.
- Recreational potential.
- Protecting the region's identity and sense of place.

Priority Trail

Trail segments highlighted on this map are existing regional (multi-municipal) trails, as well as proposed trail connections that would link to other regional trails to form a more complete countywide network. In some cases, the proposed connections would link to multi-county trails extending outside Lancaster County.

Amtrak Line

This line is part of the Keystone Corridor and is highlighted because it is a countywide priority identified in *places2040*.

Mobility Hub (Primary)

These hubs provide the most transportation options and connections between modes (automobile, transit, bicycle, pedestrian), especially for trips outside the county. They have the most transit riders, making them prime locations for transit-oriented, compact, mixed use development as well as employment and leisure. Facilities generally include a climate-controlled building. Vehicle sharing (bicycles, scooters, etc.) and commuter parking is available.

Other Elements

Buildable Land

Inside growth areas (UGAs and VGAs), areas shown in white represent areas of land that were considered "unbuilt" based on analysis undertaken by LCPD staff in 2025.

It's important to note that these areas are a generalized visual representation of unbuilt land, not a representation of the data in *Lancaster County: Buildable Lands, 2015–2040*, a report completed during the *places2040* planning process. The data in that report was generated using a different methodology.

Other Railroad

All railroads other than Amtrak.

Other Trail

All other existing trails and walking paths.

Quarry

Quarries are shown on this map because mining is an industry focused on natural resources (such as limestone, shale, and clay) that exist only in certain locations. The quarries shown on this map are those with active permits (2018) issued by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). *Note: Inside UGAs, quarries are classified as part of the Special District character zone. Outside UGAs, they currently form a part of the Natural or Agriculture zones – although they may be classified as Special Districts in future place-based planning and analysis to implement places2040.*

Municipality

Other Road (Major)

A selection of major roads in Lancaster County is shown as a point of reference – a visual aid in locating places on the map.

Other Road

- The Region map shows a selection of significant roads, also as a point of reference, to provide additional locational context.
- The Growth Areas map shows all other roads.

Water Body

For clarity, this map only shows a selection of the largest and most significant water bodies in the region.

ISSUE AND OPPORTUNITY MAPS

PURPOSE

This chapter of the plan includes four sets of "Issue and Opportunity" maps. These maps highlight specific places where action is needed to achieve the vision illustrated in the Future Land Use and Transportation Map. The Issue and Opportunity Maps include all the priority places from the Future Land Use and Transportation Map, as well as some broader areas and nodes (concentrated locations) that are also a priority.

The places on these maps were primarily identified by local residents, but the maps also include places that are highlighted in countywide plans or suggested by the county's Partners for Place (see p. 10). Although the original idea was to provide a map for each of the big ideas, we found it made more sense to use these categories:

- **Natural & Agriculture** – Natural areas, farmland preservation, water quality, recreation
- **Growth Management** – Housing, jobs, industry, infill and redevelopment
- **Transportation** – Congestion and safety
- **Placemaking** – Places where people gather; places that could be made safer and more attractive

Each set of maps is followed by a key that lists all the places that appear on that set of maps. Following all the maps and keys, there's a "What's on the Maps" section that provides additional detail about the maps' content.

Placemaking

Region

Pequea Valley Region
Lancaster County, Pennsylvania

Priority Places

○ Area

● Node

Other Elements

⬚ Municipality

⬚ Growth Area

〰 Major Road

〰 Other Road

Intercourse

White Horse

1

Paradise

Vintage

2

Gap

772

340

897

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340

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741

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30

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Miles 0 1

Source: Lancaster County GIS
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Placemaking

Growth Areas

Pequea Valley Region
Lancaster County, Pennsylvania

Intercourse VGA

Paradise VGA

Christiana-Gap VGA

KEY TO HIGHLIGHTED ITEMS

Placemaking

Region			
Type		*Issue or Opportunity*	*Source*
Area	**1**	**Pequea Valley High School** Maintain fitness center, trails, and athletic fields as community recreational spaces	Local input
Area	**2**	**Paradise Township & Gap Area (Around US 30 Corridor)** Create more third places for residents (especially students)	Local input

Growth Areas

Intercourse VGA

Type		Issue or Opportunity	Source
Node	A	**Village of Intercourse** Upkeep village design standards to maintain unique character	Local input
Node	B	**Intercourse Library** Maintain as community gathering space	Local input
Node	C	**Intercourse Community Park** Maintain as public open space	Local input

Paradise VGA

Type		Issue or Opportunity	Source
Node	D	**Paradise Community Park** Maintain as public open space	Local input

Christiana-Gap VGA

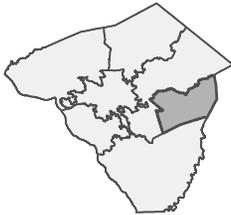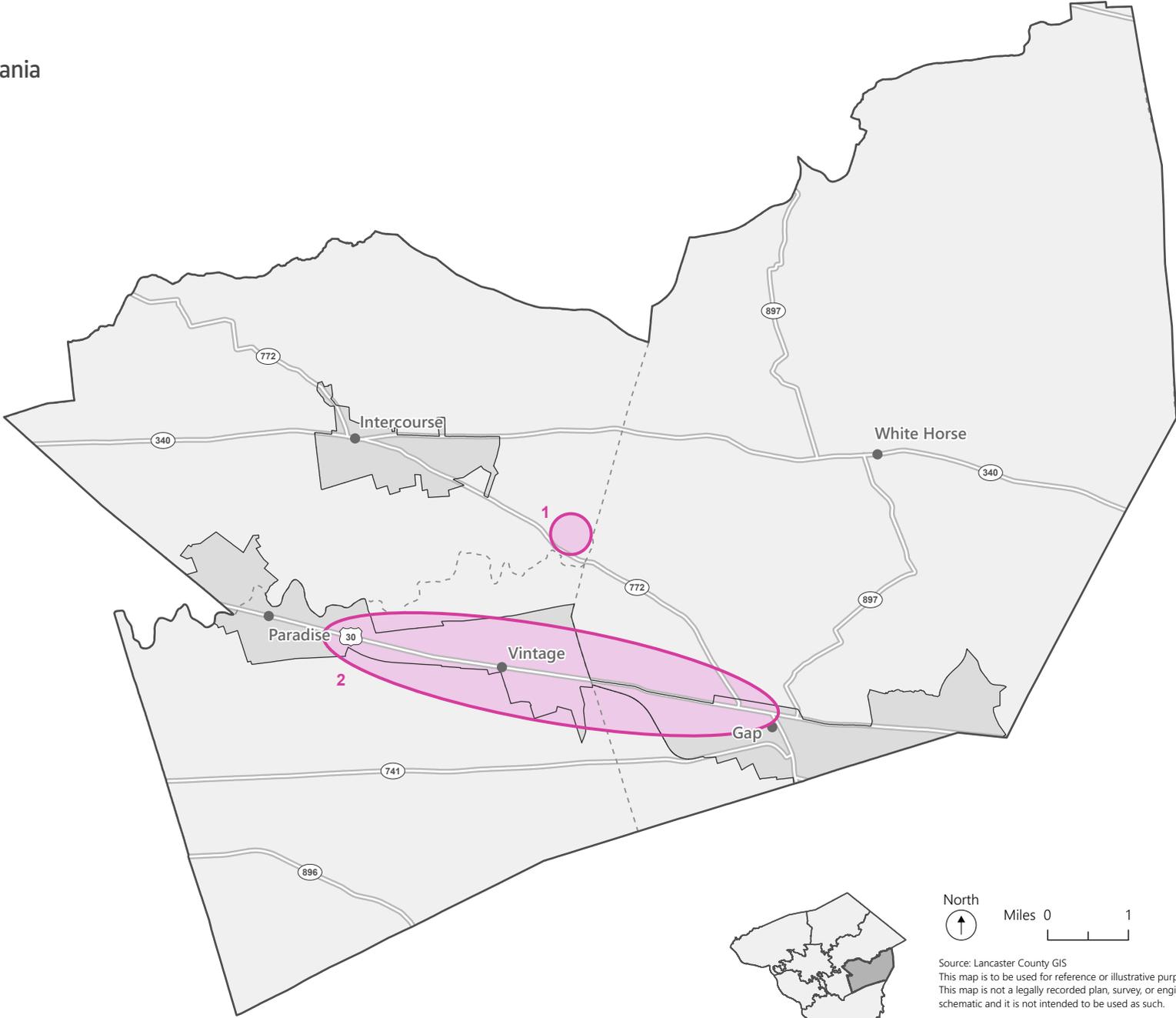| Type		Issue or Opportunity	Source
Node	E	**Intercourse Library (Gap Branch)** Maintain as community gathering space	Local input
Node	F	**Salisbury Community Park** Maintain as public open space	Local input

Natural & Agriculture

Region

Pequea Valley Region
Lancaster County, Pennsylvania

Priority Places

○ Area

Other Elements

▢ Municipality

▢ Growth Area

∿ Major Road

∿ Other Road

△ Quarry
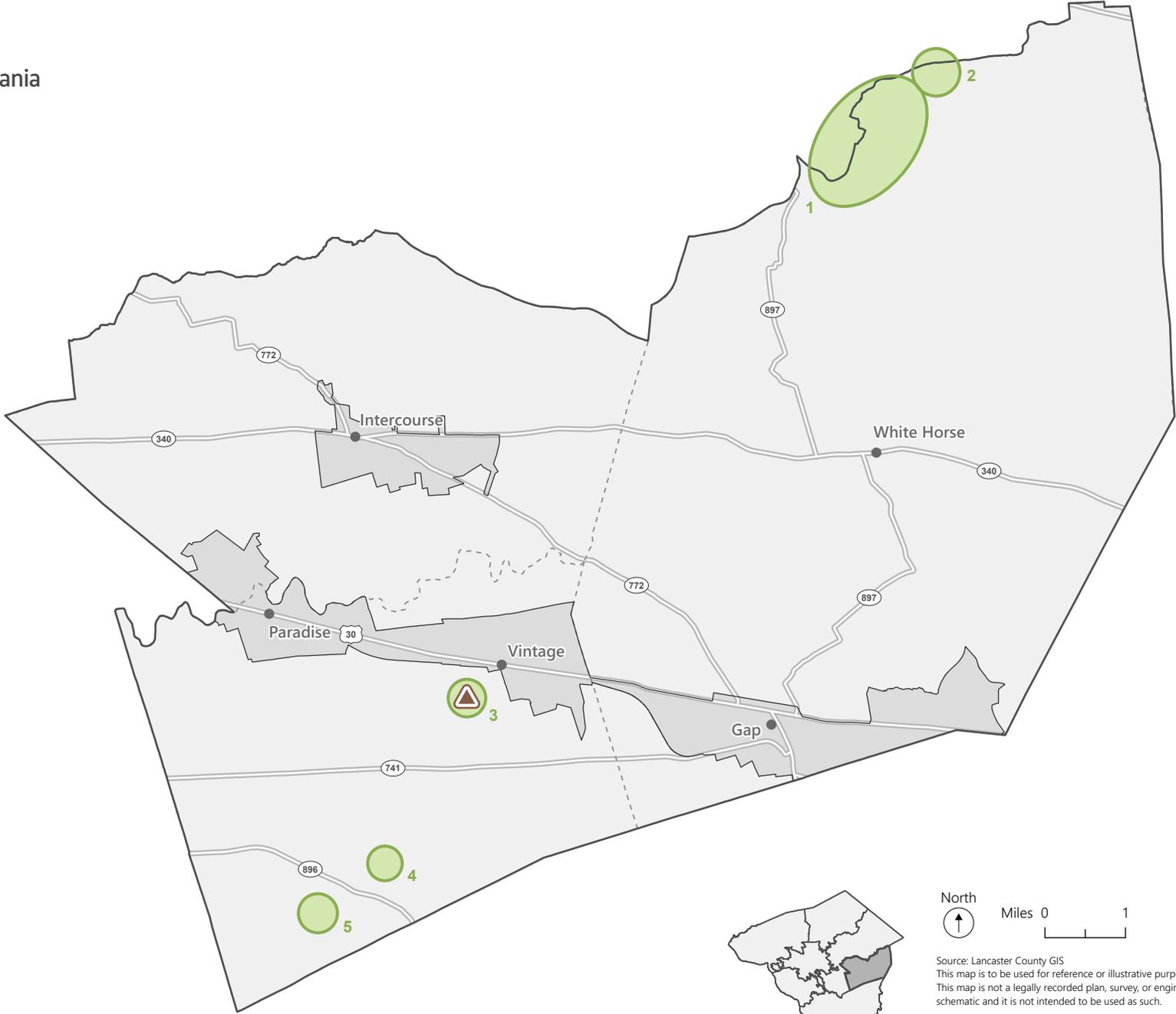
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Intercourse

White Horse

Paradise

Vintage

Gap

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Natural & Agriculture

Growth Areas

Pequea Valley Region
Lancaster County, Pennsylvania

Intercourse VGA
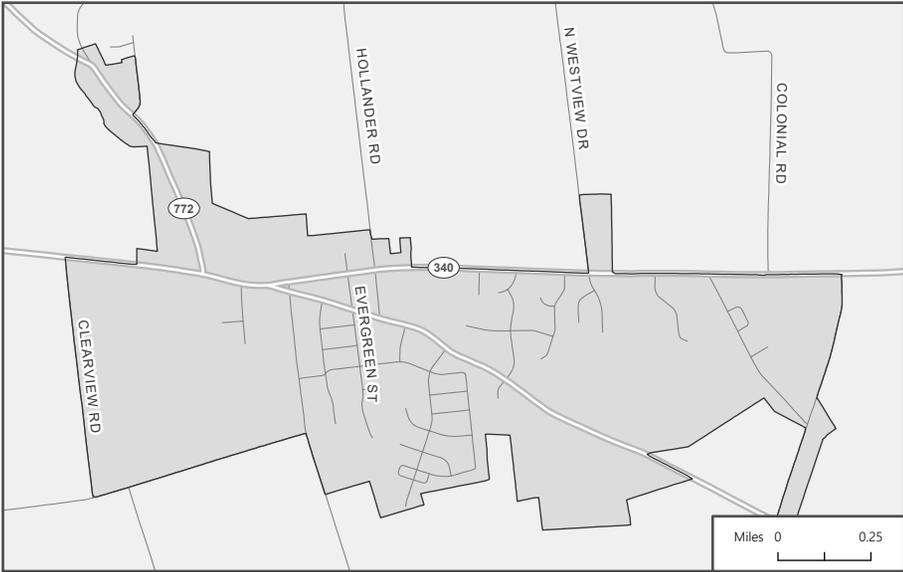
Paradise VGA

Christiana-Gap VGA

KEY TO HIGHLIGHTED ITEMS

Natural & Agriculture

Region			
Type		*Issue or Opportunity*	*Source*
Area	**1**	**Welsh Mountain Nature Preserve** Prioritize conservation efforts	Local input
Area	**2**	**Money Rocks County Park** Prioritize conservation efforts	Local input
Area	**3**	**Allan Myers Paradise Quarry** Allow reasonable expansion of the quarry as the least intrusive method for natural resource extraction	Local input
Area	**4**	**Homewood Nature Preserve** Prioritize conservation efforts	Partners for Place
Area	**5**	**Wildflower Lookout (46 Peach Lane in Ronks)** Maintain scenic viewshed	Partners for Place

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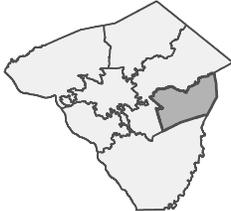
Growth Management

Region

Pequea Valley Region
Lancaster County, Pennsylvania

Priority Places

⬭ Area

Other Elements

⬚ Municipality

⬚ Growth Area

⌁ Major Road

⌁ Other Road

1

2

3

3

3

4

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Intercourse

White Horse

Paradise

Vintage

Gap

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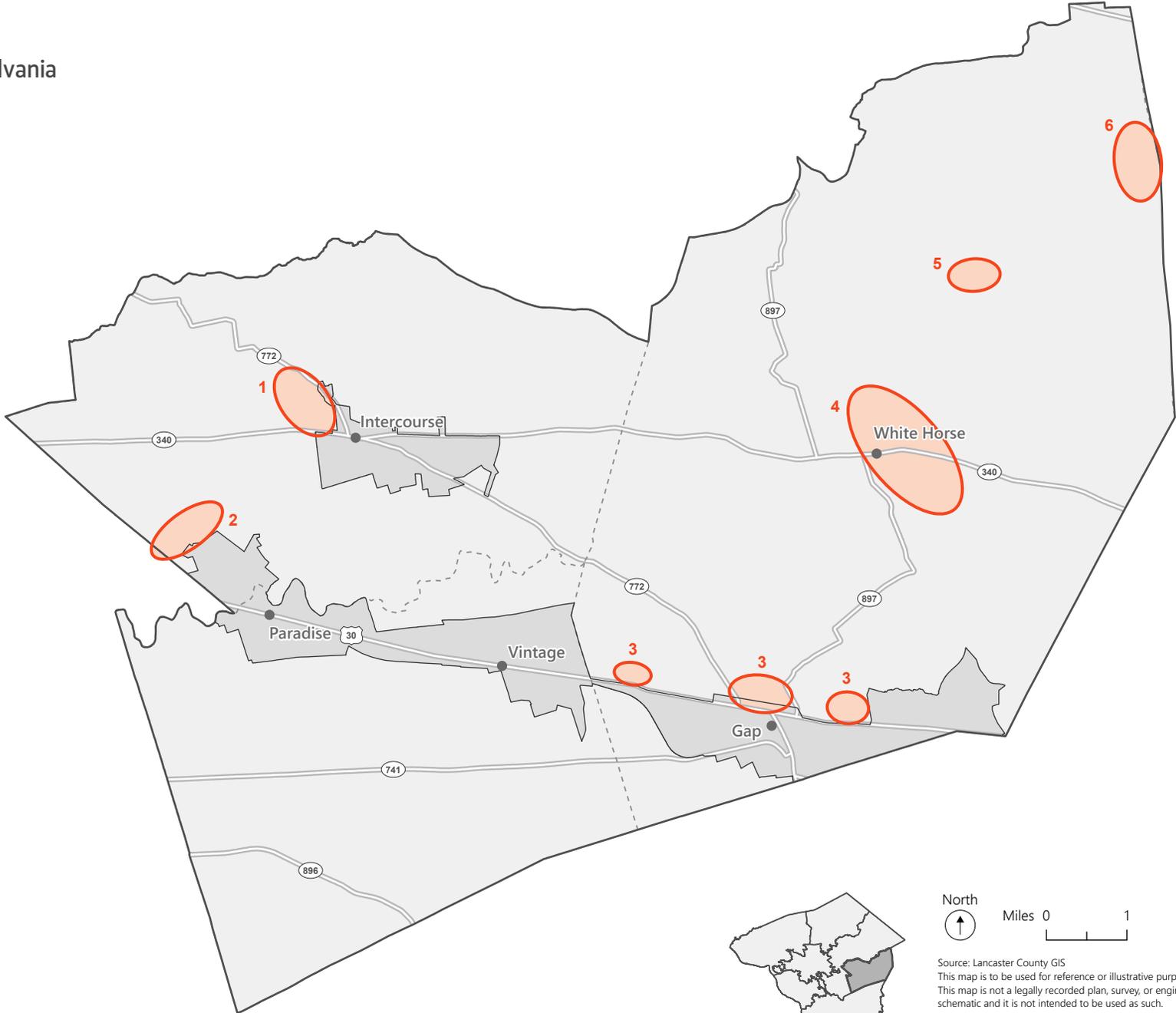
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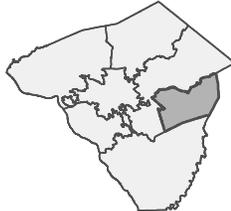
Growth Management

Growth Areas

Pequea Valley Region
Lancaster County, Pennsylvania

Intercourse VGA

CLEARVIEW RD
772
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N WESTVIEW DR
COLONIAL RD
340
EVERGREEN ST
A

Miles 0   0.25

Paradise VGA

E GORDON RD
N BELMONT RD
QUEEN RD
HARRISTOWN RD
30
CHERRY HILL RD
BLACK HORSE RD
QUARRY RD
MCILVAINE RD
B

Miles 0   0.5

Christiana-Gap VGA

897
USNER RD
NEWPORT RD
HOFFMEIER RD
LIMEVILLE RD
HOOVER RD
30
741

Miles 0   0.5

KEY TO HIGHLIGHTED ITEMS

Growth Management

Region		

Type	Issue or Opportunity		Source
Area	**1**	**West of Intercourse & North of PA 340** Do not develop land that is currently zoned agricultural	Local input
Area	**2**	**Center Street Expansion** Mixed-use development in the Intercourse VGA	Local input
Area	**3**	**Gap Area (Between PA 897 & PA 772)** Potential site for higher density development	Local input
Area	**4**	**South of White Horse** Potential site for 1 to 2-acre residential lots	Local input
Area	**5**	**South Hermitage** Potential site for 1 to 2-acre residential lots	Local input
Area	**6**	**Cambridge** Potential site for 1 to 2-acre residential lots	Local input

Growth Areas

Intercourse VGA

Type	Issue or Opportunity		Source
Node	**A**	**Growth Area Boundaries** Two parcels zoned Commercial/Industrial brought into UGA	Local input LCPD

Paradise VGA

Type	Issue or Opportunity		Source
Node	**B**	**Growth Area Boundaries** Two legacy area parcels brought into UGA	Local input LCPD

Transportation

Region

Pequea Valley Region
Lancaster County, Pennsylvania

Priority Places

Road

● Node

Other Elements
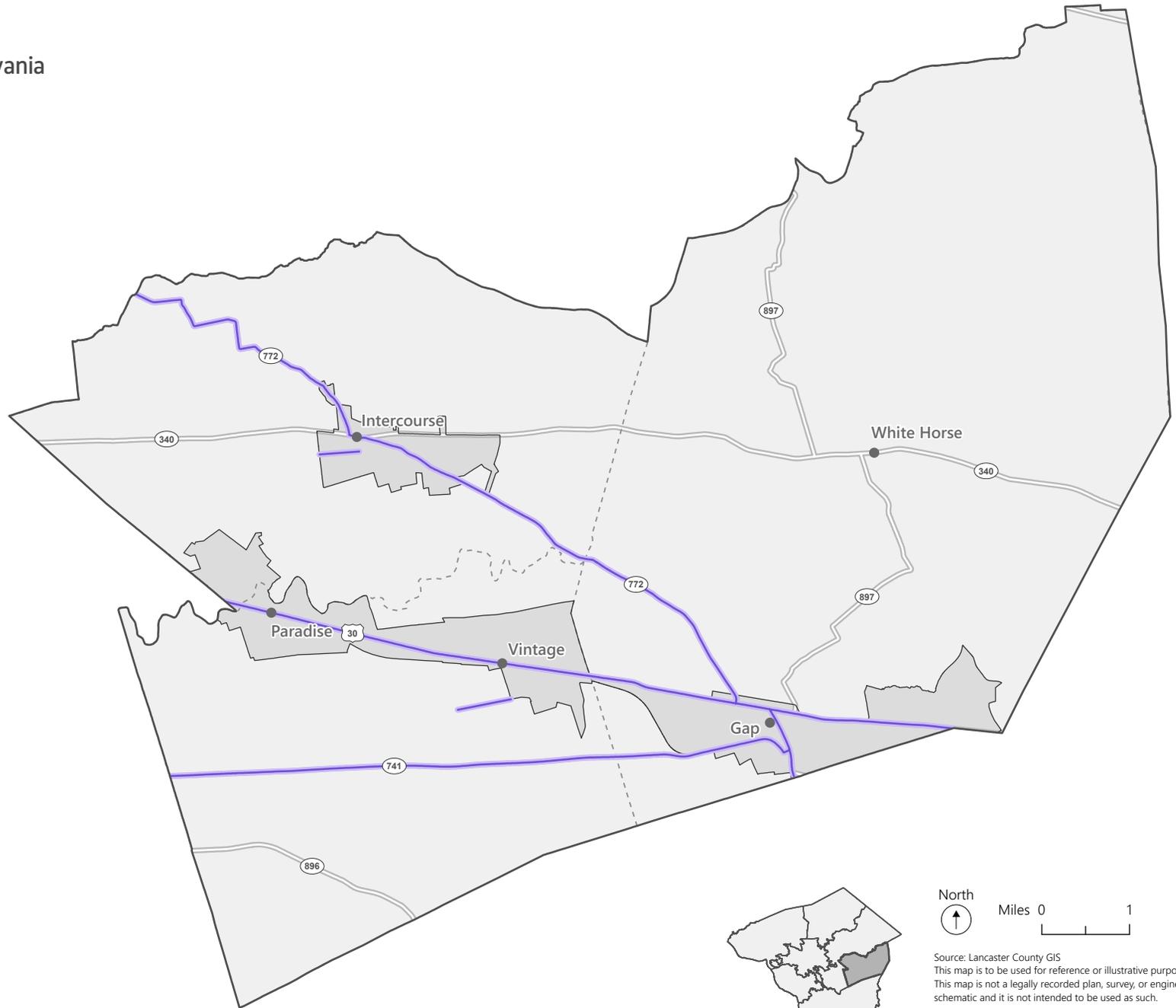
Municipality

Growth Area

Major Road

Other Road

Intercourse

White Horse

Paradise

Vintage

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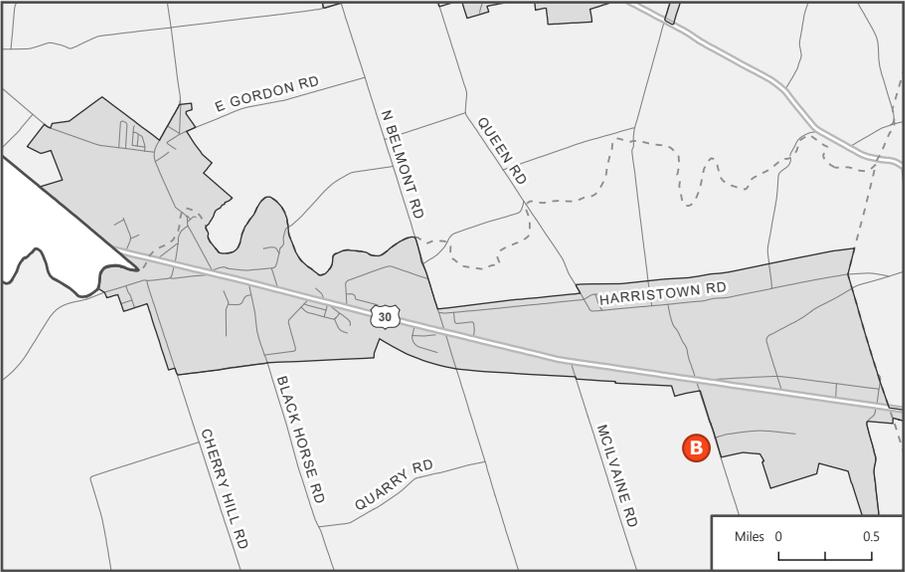
Transportation

Growth Areas

Pequea Valley Region
Lancaster County, Pennsylvania

Intercourse VGA

Paradise VGA

Christiana-Gap VGA

KEY TO HIGHLIGHTED ITEMS

Transportation

Region

Type	Issue or Opportunity	Source
Corridor	**US 30** Address heavy freight traffic	Local input
Corridor	**PA 41** Address heavy freight traffic	Local input
Corridor	**PA 741** Address heavy freight traffic	Local input
Corridor	**PA 772** Address increased truck traffic as a result of trucks avoiding weigh station on US 30	Local input
Corridor	**Vintage Road & Mcilvane Road** Create service road to help drivers bypass congestion	Local input
Corridor	**Clearview Road & Center Street** Create service road to help drivers bypass congestion	Local input

Growth Areas

Intercourse VGA

Type		Issue or Opportunity	Source
Node	A	**PA 340 & Queen Road** Install traffic signal	Local input

Paradise VGA

Type		Issue or Opportunity	Source
Node	B	**Hershey Avenue** Address issues with sight distance	Local input
Node	C	**New Holland Road & PA 772** Install traffic signal	Local input

Christiana-Gap VGA

Type		Issue or Opportunity	Source
Node	D	**Gap Fire Company** Current location is a safety concern for pedestrians, and it's difficult for fire engines to turn out of the station	Local input
Node	E	**PA 741 Bridge & Chestnut Street** Mapping applications direct trucks over this bridge and into nearby residential neighborhoods, which is unsafe for pedestrians and causes roads to deteriorate faster than usual	Local input

WHAT'S ON THE MAPS

Priority Places

Priority places are places that should be our focus for the next several years. Other places are important, too – they just weren't identified as a high priority in the near term. The places shown on these maps are a combination of places identified in recent countywide plans, as well as in the engagement process for this plan.

Area
Large-scale places that highlight a specific issue or opportunity. These places are shown only on the Region maps.

Priority Road
These are corridors that highlight a specific issue or opportunity such as:
- Improvements to reduce congestion, improve safety for different users and modes, or improve connectivity.
- Recreational potential.
- Protecting the region's identity and sense of place.

Amtrak Line
This line is part of the Keystone Corridor and is highlighted because it is a countywide priority identified in *places2040*.

Priority Trail
Trail segments highlighted on these maps are existing regional (multi-municipal) trails, as well as proposed trail connections to form a more complete countywide network. In some cases, the proposed connections link to trails extending outside Lancaster County.

Priority Water Body
Water bodies that highlight a specific issue or opportunity, such as improving water quality, protecting natural resources, increasing recreational potential, or addressing deforestation along stream banks.

Node
Smaller, concentrated places that highlight a specific issue or opportunity. These places are shown only on the Growth Area maps.

Other Elements

Municipality

Growth Area
These include Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) and Village Growth Areas (VGAs). All of the UGAs shown on the map have some existing infrastructure (sewer service, and sometimes water) to support growth – or have plans to provide sewer service.

UGAs – These areas are particularly important to the county's future, because they will accommodate the majority of our population and employment growth.

- *Location* – Surrounding or adjacent to the city or a borough (in some cases, more than one borough).
- *Character Sectors* – Developed land generally is classified as Suburban Communities, Urban Perimeters, Urban Cores (City and Boroughs), or Special Districts.
- *Adoption Status/Boundaries* – The Pequea Valley region does not have any designated UGAs. All growth areas are considered Village Growth Areas (VGAs).

VGAs – Although these communities were mentioned less often in our civic engagement process, they are important because they will accommodate some rural growth.

- *Location* – Surrounding or adjacent to a village outside UGAs.
- *Character Sectors*– Developed land generally is classified as Rural Community (Core or Other Developed).
- *Adoption Status/Boundaries* – Map shows VGAs that were proposed for adoption in 2025 or shortly thereafter.

Other Road (Major)

These roads represent a selection of major roads in Lancaster County and are shown as a point of reference – a visual aid in locating places on each map.

Other Road

These are local roads that are shown only on the Growth Area maps. *Note: By contrast, the Future Land Use and Transportation Map includes "Other Roads" on both the Region map and Growth Area maps.*

Quarry

Quarries are shown on this map because mining is a natural resource extraction industry that can exist only in certain locations. The quarries shown on this map are those with active permits (2018) issued by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

APPENDIX

SURVEY RESULTS

As with any comprehensive planning process, public input was an important part of the effort to create the comprehensive plan for the Pequea Valley region. From March 2024 to April 2025, the committee met 8 times to guide the plan's direction. Participants in that process included municipal elected officials, municipal managers, members of local planning commissions, and other concerned citizens.

While input from that group was central to the process, the ideas and concerns of other stakeholders are also represented in this plan. These participants included county planning staff as well as the Partners for Place, a group of regional, countywide, and city organizations and agencies whose work touches on land use planning. For a complete list of these partners, refer to p. 10.

Other residents also played an important role in developing this plan for the Pequea Valley region. Residents had an opportunity to provide input at several Pequea Valley regional Leaders Meetings, meetings of township supervisors and borough councils, and local planning commission meetings.

The Lancaster County Planning Department facilitated the survey. It was handed out during outreach events and posted on the Lancaster County Planning Department website as well as the Pequea Valley municipality websites.

The survey for the Pequea Valley region focused on the five big ideas in places2040, the Lancaster County comprehensive plan. The countywide plan was the model for this regional plan, so the survey was designed to be consistent with its message. To ensure that the survey focused on residents of the region, it also asked participants to share (voluntarily) some limited demographic information.

The raw results of the survey are included here, together with some observations about what we learned from survey participants. There were 265 responses from residents of the region.

© LNP

© PARADISE MEADOWS

© LNP

Demographics

For the first three questions, we asked participants to tell us about themselves.

Question 1
In which age group do you belong?

18-24 years
5%

65 years and older
14%

25-44 years
43%

45-64 years
38%

No response:
• Under 18 years
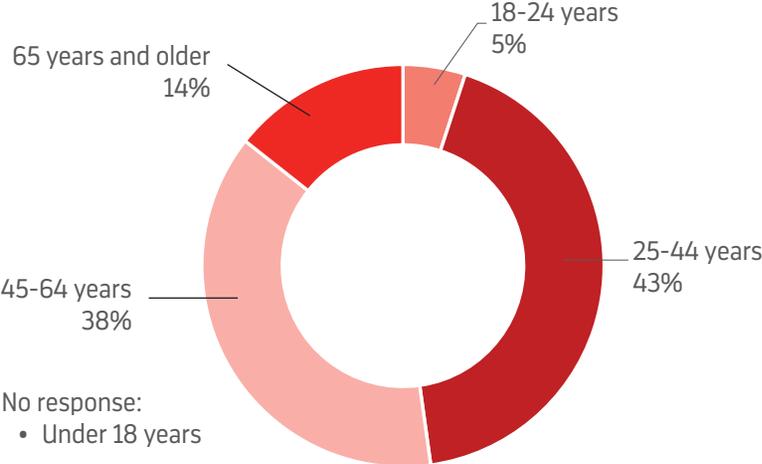
Question 2
*Do you describe yourself as a . . .
(please select all that apply)*

Public official
2%

Non-profit representative
2%

Student
2%

Employee
5%

No response:
• Visitor
• Consultant

Resident
88%

Question 3
I live in...

Prefer not to answer
1%

Other areas of the county
6%

Salisbury Township
42%

Leacock Township
20%

Paradise Township
30%
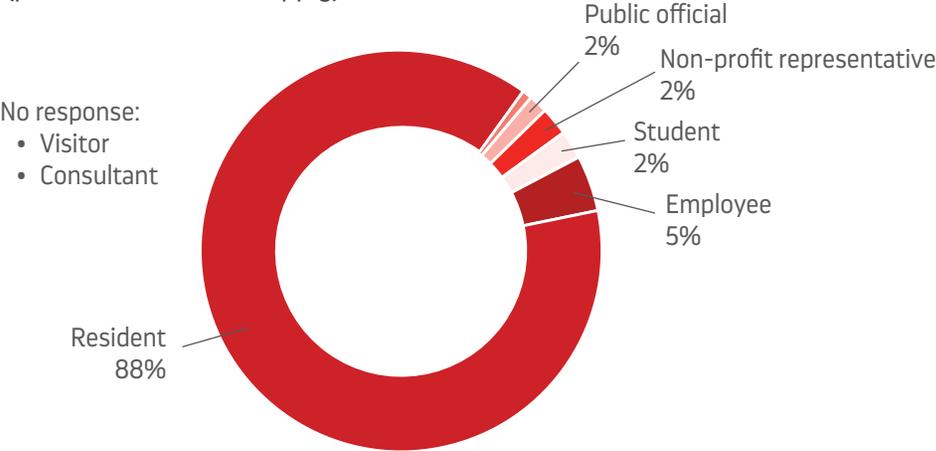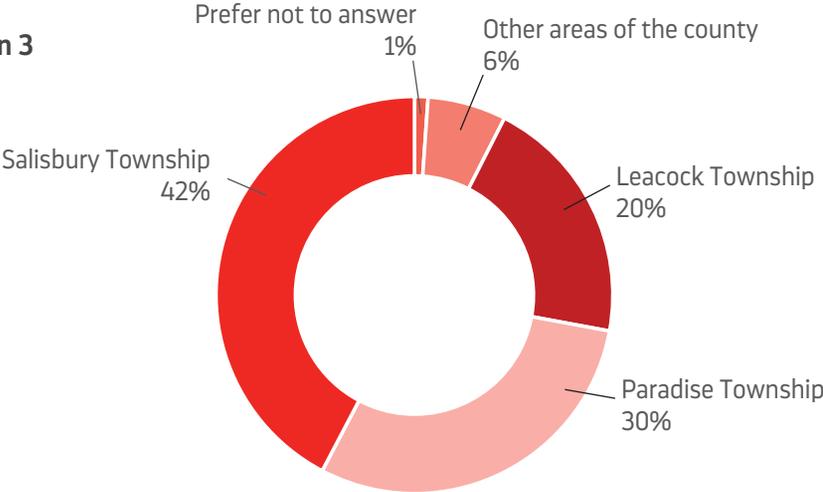
Creating Great Places

In questions 4 and 5, we asked what it would take to create better places to live, work, and play.

Question 4
A big part of Creating Great Places is making sure there's good quality and affordable housing for residents. Please choose up to three of the following options that you think best meet this need.

Category	Value
Single Family Neighborhoods	161
Accessory Dwelling Units	131
Townhouse/Rowhouses/Duplexes	130
Mixed-Use Development	130
Apartments	84
On-Farm Housing	80
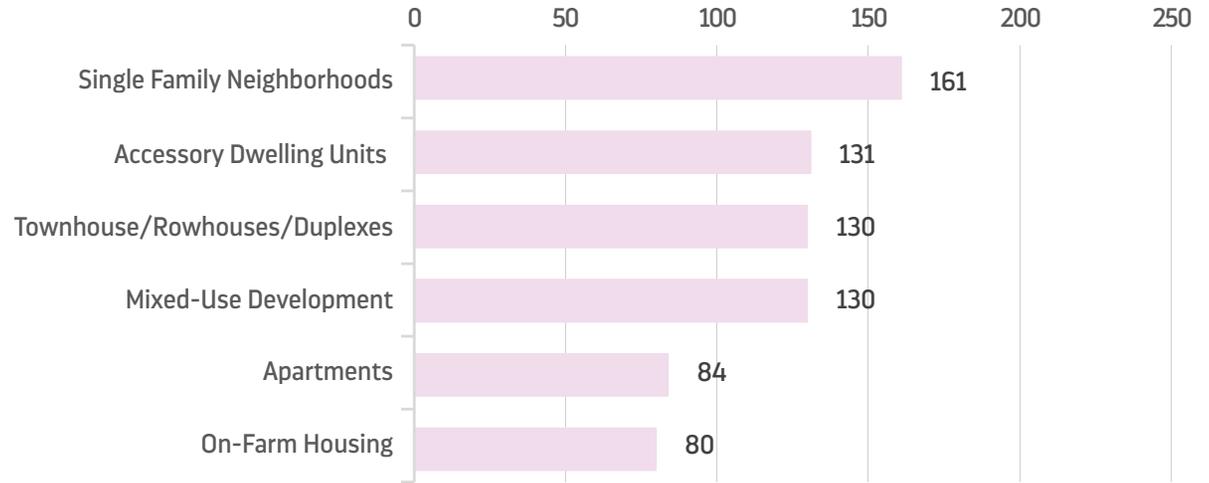
Question 5
Which of these policies do you think are most important to Creating Great Places in the area? Please choose up to three policies.

Category	Value
Make our downtowns more vibrant, safe, and attractive	161
Create alternative ways for residents to get around the region	157
Design communities that put people first	157
Provide a greater supply and diversity of housing to own and rent	145
Create a mix of uses in our communities and corridors	105
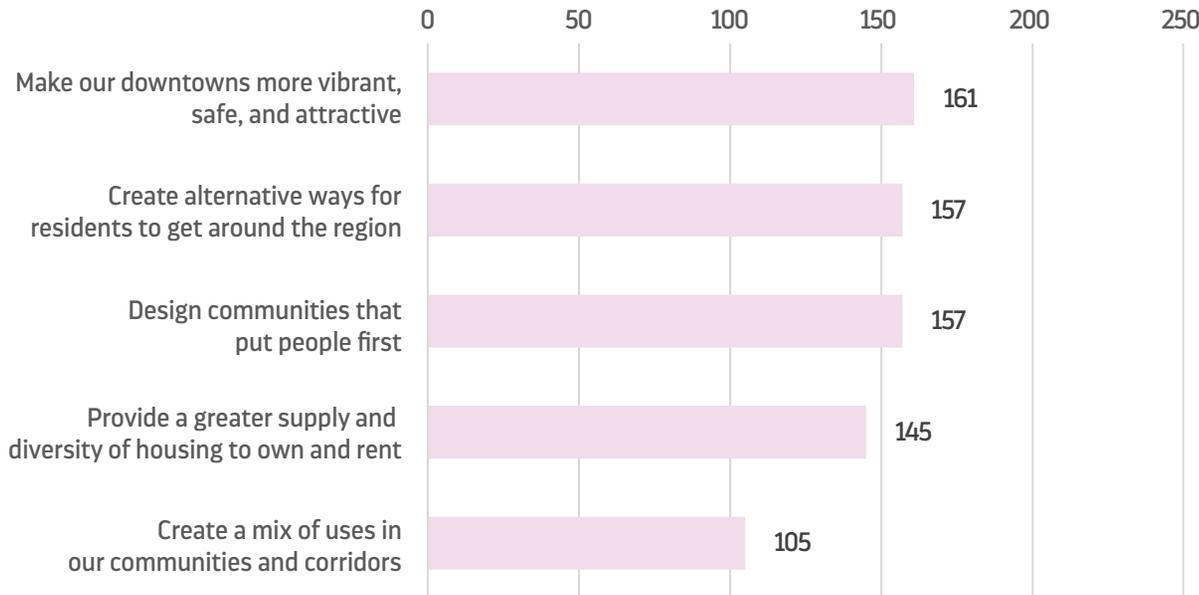
Takeaways

Participants are open to options when it comes to solutions for "missing middle" housing.

Question 4
- Participants viewed single-family neighborhoods most favorably. There was also interest in mixed-use development, townhouses and ADUs.

Question 5
- Participants believe that there are several policies that can create great places in the region.

Connecting People, Place, & Opportunity

In questions 6 and 7, we explored what kind of connections are most important to the residents of the Pequea Valley region and how to go about doing that.

Question 6
There are a lot of options for making better connections in the area. Please select up to three of the issues below that are most important to you.

Question 6	Value
There is a need for streets to be designed for the safety of those on bikes and in buggies	210
There is a need to make walking safer and more convenient for residents	186
There is a need for more investment in highways and roads	127
There is a lack of public transit in the region	105
Many trails in the region don't connect to important destinations and need to be expanded	62

Question 7
Which of the following policies do you think would be most effective at creating better connections in the region? Please select up to four policies:

Question 7	Value
Create more places to hike, bike, play, and enjoy nature	167
Make it easier for residents and visitors to get around without a car	156
Maintain, attract, and retain a skilled workforce that earns a competitive wage	134
Facilitate business partnerships	131
Connect housing, jobs, schools, transportation, and other destinations	129
Make our downtowns into regional hubs	67
Intentionally cultivate, retain, and expand industry	41

Question 8
Select three pairs of destinations that are most in need of safer, more accessible connections.

Destination Pair	Value
Intercourse to Gap	187
Paradise to Gap	183
Paradise to Intercourse	110
Gap to White Horse	97
White Horse to Welsh Mountain Nature Preserve	68
Paradise to Gordonville	52
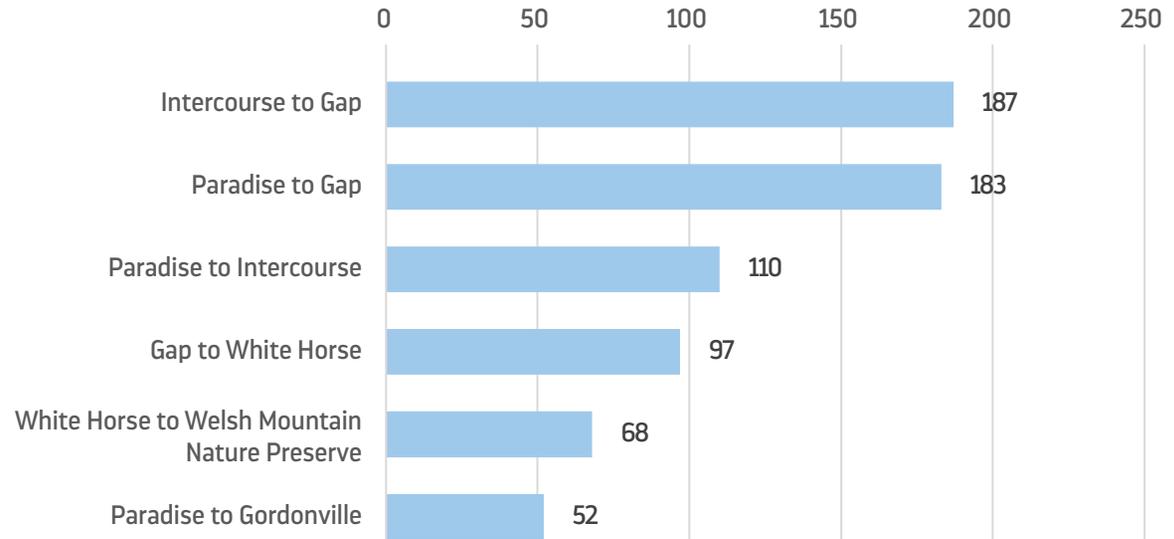
Takeaways

Participants supported trails as a way to make walking safer and more convenient in the region.

Question 6
- Many participants felt that the best ways to make better connections in the region are by connecting trails to important destinations and by making walking safer and more convenient.

Question 7
- Facilitating business partnerships and creating more places to hike, bike, play and enjoy nature were the top two policies chosen as the most effective way to create better connections in the region.

Taking Care of What We Have

In Questions 9 and 10, we asked participants to identify the places they want to protect.

Question 9

"Taking Care of What We Have" means protecting the best of what this area has to offer. Please select the three places in the area that are most important to you.

Place	Value
Farmland and Rural Areas	180
Mill Creek, Pequea Creek, and Other Water Bodies	91
Historic Towns and Villages	89
Schools and Sports Fields	82
Forests and Trails	77
Fire Houses, Libraries, and Other Public Buildings	74
Local Restaurants and Shops	65
Suburbs and Single-Family Neighborhoods	62
Parks and Pools	61

Question 10

How should we Take Care of What We Have? Please select up to three policies that you think are most important to the area.
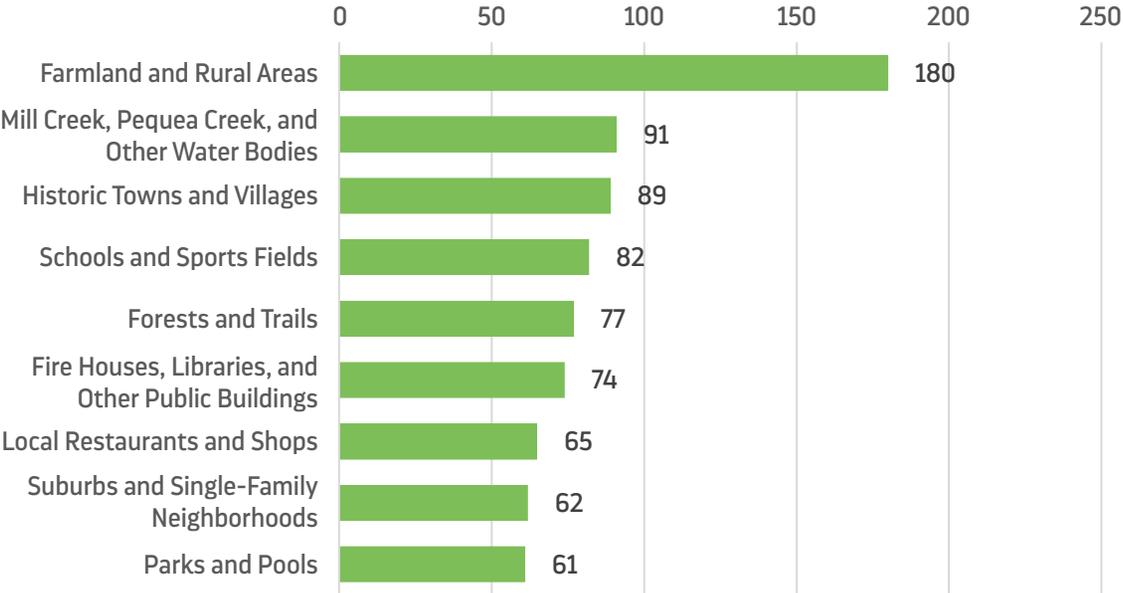
Policy	Value
Preserve large, contiguous areas of agricultural and natural land	200
Reuse existing buildings and maintain public infrastructure	188
Preserve the farmer as well as the farm	154
Promote entrepreneurship and help local businesses grow	118
Improve water quality and work together on stormwater management	114
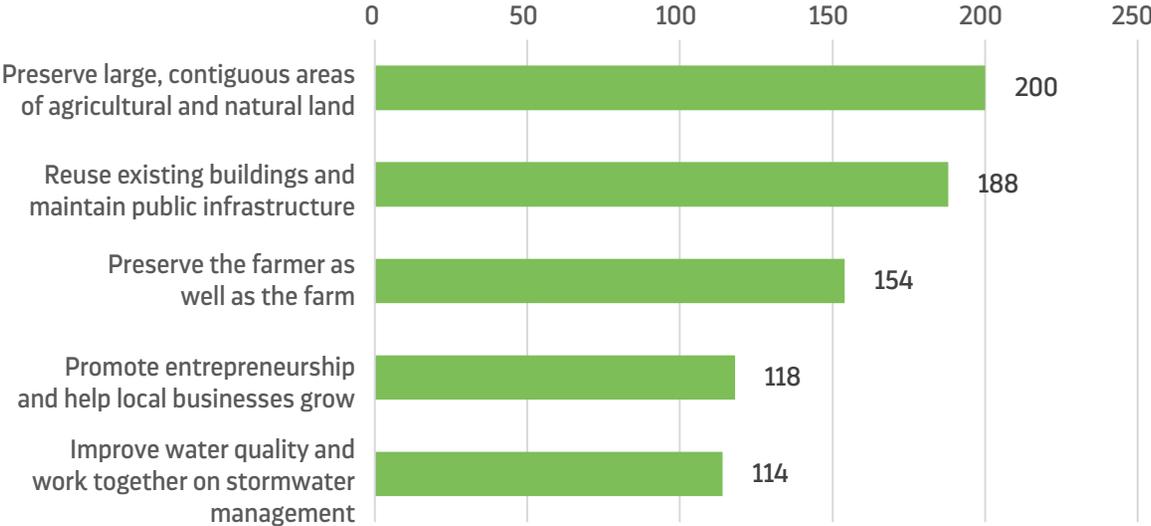
Takeaways

Most participants list the protection of agricultural and natural land as their top priority.

Question 9
- Farmland and rural areas are most important to survey participants.

Question 10
- Preserving large, continuous agriculture and natural land from development and reusing existing buildings and maintaining public infrastructure are the top two methods chosen to take care of the region.

Growing Responsibly

Questions 11 and 12 focused on where the community should build and develop.

Question 11
Building places for new residents to live, work, and play can take many different forms. Please select up to three of the following that you think are the best fit for the area

Turn vacant, already built properties into new uses — 252
Build in areas that won't impact the region's farmland or natural areas — 230
Build more housing that takes up less land — 128
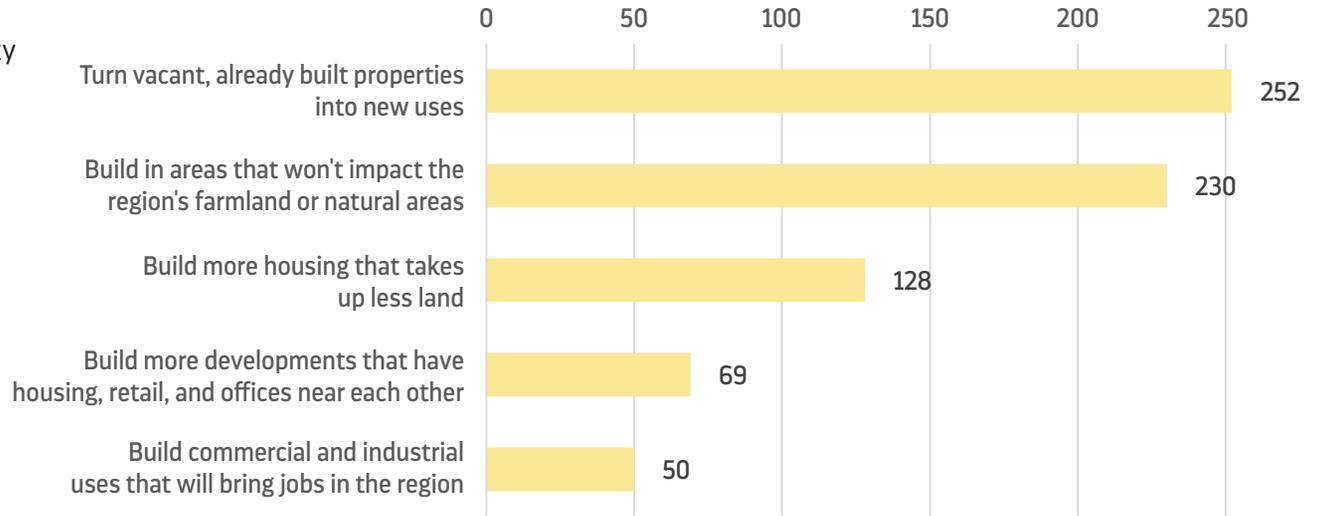Build more developments that have housing, retail, and offices near each other — 69
Build commercial and industrial uses that will bring jobs in the region — 50

Question 12
Which three of the following policies do you think is most important in the Pequea Valley region?

Prioritize redevelopment and infill in Urban Growth Areas — 205
Build more compactly and efficiently — 172
Grow where we're already growing — 164
Limit large-lot suburban development in rural areas — 117
Manage the use of large tracts of vacant land in Urban Growth Areas — 84
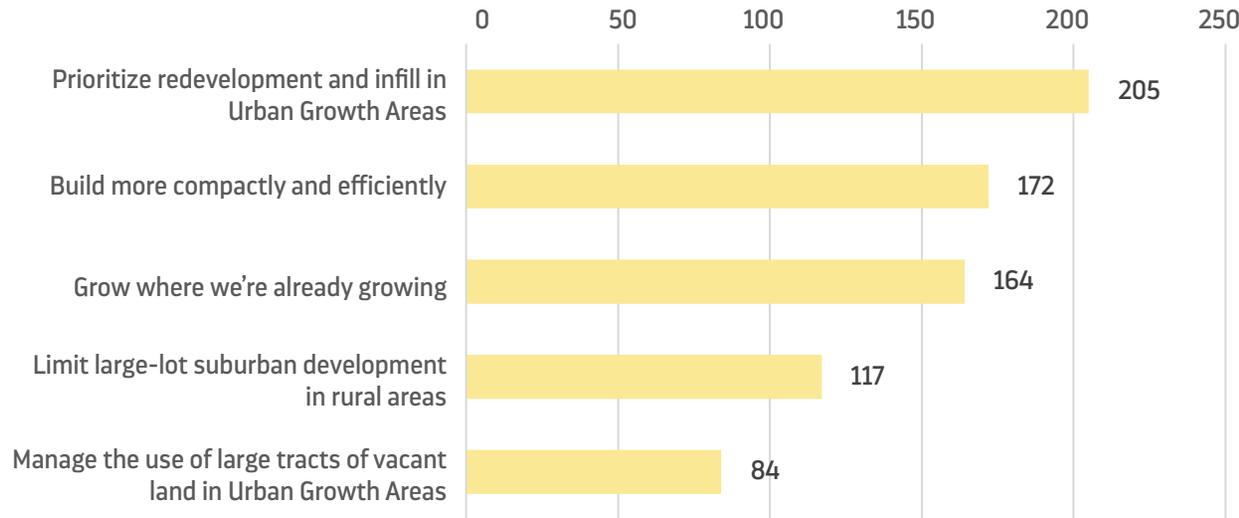
Takeaways

An overwhelming majority of participants would like to grow where they are already growing and would like to see an emphasis on redevelopment and reinvestment.

Question 11
- 95% of participants agreed that turning vacant, already built properties into new residential or commercial uses is the best fit for the region.

Question 12
- Participants would like to prioritize redevelopment and infill in Urban Growth Areas.

Thinking Beyond Boundaries

Question 13

It's important that we work across traditional boundaries to accomplish the goals of this plan. Which two policies do you think are the best way to do this?

Make planning and regulation more efficient, consistent, and regional — 141

Integrate place-based thinking into all future planning initiatives — 140

Keep ourselves accountable for the goals we've set — 117

Break down the traditional silos that limit our effectiveness — 110
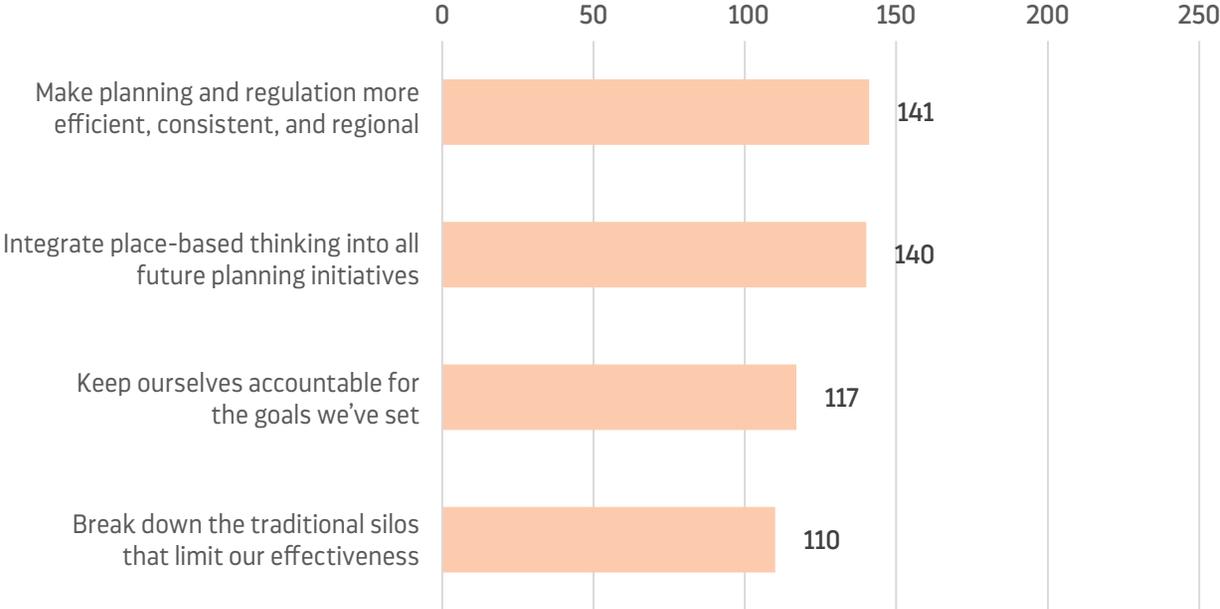
Takeaways

Survey participants felt that integrating place-based thinking in all future planning initiatives and making planning and regulation more efficient, consistent, and regional would help them work across traditional boundaries to accomplish their goals.

Open Comment Section

Survey participants were also able to share their thoughts in an open comment section of the second online survey, which received 71 unique responses. The "word cloud" on the right highlights some of the concepts that participants mentioned the most.

In general, participants:

- List the open farmland and rural character as the main reason for moving to the region.
- Take pride in the Pequea Valley School District.
- Value the community cooperation and friendly atmosphere.
- Want to work towards solutions to make housing affordable.
- Think that there should be more pedestrian friendly roads and trails.
- Are concerned about traffic safety along the US 30 corridor.
- The residents would like more natural space to bike, hike and enjoy nature.

Here are some of the comments from the Pequea Valley region residents, as submitted:

"I have been a Pequea Valley resident my whole life, and I am fighting to keep my children in the Pequea Valley School District. It is hard to find housing!"

"We need more housing to grow the district; however I would like to see the integrity of the green spaces maintained. Affordable housing for those living on the US 30 corridor as well."

" We need to find ways to enable potential single family home buyers in the district to find and afford homes. If there are zoning regulations that prevent this or provide others an advantage over families who would enroll their children in the public school, they should be amended to provide everyone an equal opportunity to buy a home in PVSD. All regulatory options should be considered to enable developers the opportunity to develop properties that would minimally impact our farming culture and natural resource areas."

"We should do our best to preserve the natural beauty of this area."

"Pequea Valley has always been known for its Amish and its farmlands and the wildlife we need to do what we have to keep that vibrant for the tourism industry"

"We do not have enough accessible wild places, that is hiking and biking trails, inside the valley."

"I would like to see farmland/residential areas protected from being squished by industry and truck traffic. I do not want an industrial building in my back yard. Commercial industry is being built on farmland and our roads/neighborhoods are not sufficient to safely handle the increase in traffic to those places of business. I would also like to see existing facilities be reused instead of new construction as the first choice, specifically for industrial use but also for residential."

"US 30 has become a fast and dangerous route to travel. A lot of vehicles passing cars using the center lane."

"The roads are all so narrow through the entirety of the valley making it impossible to use a non-vehicle as a method of transport in a safe manner. With limited shoulders and no bike trails/paths connecting communities, it makes non-vehicular transport a challenge."

"It's good to see cooperation between the different townships to gather this data. Continuing to work together will be vital in the future. "

"Lack of before / after school care options and lack of summer care options for the PVSD is alarming. How are both parents supposed to work full time jobs if there aren't options for childcare."

"The Intercourse library is a hidden gem of the area. Thankful for the resources, programs and services they provide to our communities, and hope to see this continue."

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SNAPSHOT OF THE REGION

Demographics

Population by Municipality

	2000*	2023**	% Change 2000–2023	% of Region's 2023 Population
Salisbury Township	10,012	11,513	15.0	50.4
Leacock Township	4,878	5,675	16.3	24.8
Paradise Township	4,698	5,676	20.8	24.8
Pequea Valley Region	**19,588**	**22,864**	**16.7**	**100.0**

Source: *Decennial Census 2000 & **2023 Annual Population Estimates, Census Bureau

Race

American Indian & Alaska Native		Asian		Black or African American		Hispanic or Latino		Native Hawaiian & Pacific Islander		White		Other Race		Two or More Races	
Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
9	0.0	10	0.0	225	1.0	887	3.9	28	0.1	21,703	95.1	252	1.1	584	2.6

Source: DP05, ACS 2023 5-Year Estimates, Census Bureau

Educational Attainment

High School or Equivalent		Some College, No Degree		Associate Degree		Bachelor's Degree		Graduate or Professional Degree	
Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
4,076	31.70	1,113	8.60	697	5.40	1,230	9.60	589	4.60

Source: DP02, 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Census Bureau

Public School Enrollment Projection

School District	Actual Enrollment (2023-24)	Projected Enrollment in 10 Years (2033-34)	10-Year Change
Pequea Valley	1,345	1,298	-3.5%

Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education

Internet Access/Computer Usage

	Has a Computer						
With Dial-Up Internet Subscription Alone		With a Broadband Internet Subscription		Without an Internet Subscription		No Computer	
Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
0	0.0	4,560	67.1	2,240	32.9	1,938	28.5

Source: S2801, 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Census Bureau

Median Household Income

Municipality	Income
Paradise Township	$ 95,811
Salisbury Township	$ 91,763
Leacock Township	$ 82,039
Region Average	**$ 89,771**
Lancaster County	**$83,703**

Source: S1901, 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Census Bureau

Average Household Size

Type of Tenure	Persons per Household
Homeowner	3.5
Renter	3.0

Source: B25010, 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Census Bureau

28.5%
HOUSEHOLDS WITHOUT A COMPUTER

67.1%
HOUSEHOLDS WITH BROADBAND INTERNET

Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

5.7%
POVERTY RATE IN THE REGION

8.7%
POVERTY RATE IN THE COUNTY

Source: S1701, 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Census Bureau

Housing

Median Value of
Owner-Occupied Housing

Municipality	Housing Value
Leacock Township	$ 381,800
Salisbury Township	$ 367,400
Paradise Township	$ 325,900
Pequea Valley Region	**$ 359,700**
Lancaster County	**$ 279,400**

Source: 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Median Gross Rent
Per Month

Municipality	Gross Rent
Salisbury Township	$ 1,330
Paradise Township	$ 1,135
Leacock Township	$ 1,134
Pequea Valley Region	**$ 1,207**
Lancaster County	**$ 1,289**

Source: B25064, 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Census Bureau

Housing Units Built Prior to 1980

Municipality	Number of Units	% of Municipality's Total Units
Salisbury Township	2,126	60.6
Paradise Township	1,244	67.3
Leacock Township	1,114	64.8

Source: B25034, 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Census Bureau

Housing-Cost-Burdened
Residents: Homeowners

Municipality	%
Paradise Township	32.5
Leacock Township	26.9
Salisbury Township	24.4
Pequea Valley Region	**27.1**

Source: 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Housing-Cost-Burdened
Residents: Renters

Municipality	%
Salisbury Township	42.3
Paradise Township	35.6
Leacock Township	23.8
Pequea Valley Region	**34.7**

Source: S2503, 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Census Bureau

Age of Housing: Average Year Built

Municipality	Average Year Built
Leacock Township	1940
Paradise Township	1978
Salisbury Township	1985

Source: S25035, 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Census Bureau

Monthly Cost for Housing
Units with a Mortgage

Municipality	Cost
Leacock Township	$2,093
Salisbury Township	$1,919
Leacock Township	$1,837
Region	**$1,933**
Lancaster County	**$1,773**

Source: B25088, 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Census Bureau

Owner- vs. Renter-Occupied Households

Owner-Occupied			Renter-Occupied		
Number	% of Region	Vacancy Rate	Number	% of Region	Vacancy Rate
4,861	71.5	0.4	1,939	28.5	2.8

Source: DP04, 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Census Bureau

Employment

Industry Mix

Industry	Number of People Employed	% of Region's Total Employment
Construction	2,040	18.5
Retail Trade	1,818	16.5
Manufacturing	1,740	15.8
Educational Services and Health Care/Social Assistance	1,337	12.1
Arts/Entertainment/Recreation and Accommodation/Food Services	776	7.0
Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing/Hunting/Mining	726	6.6
Professional/Scientific/Technical Services and Administrative/Support/Waste Management	693	6.3
Wholesale Trade	503	4.6
Other Services Except Public Administration	487	4.4
Transportation/Warehousing/Utilities	402	3.6
Finance/Insurance/Real Estate/Rental/Lease	382	3.5
Public Administration	91	0.8
Information	47	0.4
Pequea Valley Region	**11,042**	—

Source: S2405, 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Census Bureau

Transportation

23.5 MINUTES

AVERAGE COMMUTE IN THE REGION

Source: 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

ANNUAL BUS RIDERSHIP
JULY 1, 2024 – JUNE 30, 2025

28,865
ROUTE 13 (WHITE HORSE)

43,748
ROUTE 21 (GAP)

Source: South Central Transit Authority | Red Rose Transit Authority

Vehicle Crashes

Route	Total Crash Count	FSSI* Crash Count	FI* Crash Count	Target Collision Type	Target Facility Type	Other Factors
US 30 (east of Lancaster City)	248	14	130	Rear End (46% of all crashes)	Segment (78%)	• 16% crashes in dark • 7% of FI* crashes are impaired drivers Related: • 34% of crashes are speeding-related • 22% of crashes are aggressive driver-related

Note: FSSI: Fatal and Suspected Serious Injury; FI: Fatal Injury

Source: Final Report - LCPD WO5.pdf

SALISBURY TOWNSHIP HAS
4 OF THE COUNTY'S TOP 12
HIGH-INJURY FREIGHT ROADS
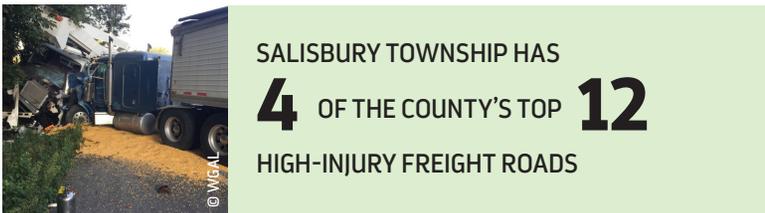
Source: Kittelson and Associates 2025

Agriculture & Natural

Park Land to Population

Acres of Park Land	Population	Ratio	
		Goal	Actual
X	X	10 acres/1,000 people	5.6 acres/1,000 people

Source: Lancaster County GIS

Note: Includes only municipally-owned park land; excludes trail acreage.

Lancaster County Planning Department
150 North Queen Street • Suite 320 • Lancaster, Pennsylvania 17603
717-299-8333

www.lancastercountyplanning.org

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR THE PEQUEA VALLEY REGION
Lancaster County, Pennsylvania

DRAFT | OCTOBER 2025