

Chapter 9

Community Facilities & Services Plan

Introduction

The location of key community facilities such as water, sewer, schools, parks, and roads, is important to providing the necessary services to residents and businesses. The provision of adequate facilities and services allows municipalities to develop at a higher density, in a more compact and efficient pattern, and is often tied to economic well-being. However, these facilities may also attract development to areas such as farmland and sensitive open space that are not appropriate for such high intensity uses. The challenge to municipal governments is to provide these services in an efficient and cost-effective manner, while still protecting the character of the Region.

Cooperative Efforts

The three Townships should continue to review opportunities for regional cooperation in the provision of services and facilities as both the demand and the cost of such services increase. The municipalities can also work with the school district in providing facilities and programs to area residents. A number of the objectives found later in this chapter relate to cooperative efforts.

Potential opportunities for regional cooperation include purchase or use of equipment, such as road equipment or road salt, emergency services planning and coordination, police, fire, and ambulance services, recreation facilities and programs, and building code administration.

Volunteer fire companies are finding it increasingly difficult to get personnel in adequate numbers. The municipalities should encourage cooperation among the volunteer departments, perhaps in areas such as recruiting and acquisition of compatible equipment in order to meet the fire protection needs of the community. Where necessary, water systems within the region should be expanded to address emergency situations and provide service to residents. Water planning should assure that water will be supplied at adequate volume and pressure to meet fire protection needs. Similarly the location and number of fire hydrants should also be planned.

If new school facilities are proposed by the Oley Valley School District, the municipalities should work with the District to assure that school facilities are located to be consistent with the requirements of the Future Land Use Plan.

To facilitate implementation of this Joint Comprehensive Plan and to address the needs and possibilities for cooperation in the future, the municipalities should formalize the joint planning process that began with the formation of the Joint Municipal Planning Committee. A committee comprised of representatives from all three municipalities

should be created that will meet on a regular basis to review this Comprehensive Plan and to identify what steps should be taken to promote its implementation. The concept of using committees composed of area residents to address major issues of concern within the area may be used on other issues.

Public Sewer Service

The majority of Oley Township is served by on-lot septic systems. As of 2007, the Oley Municipal Authority provides wastewater collection and treatment for 675 connections in the Village of Oley and the surrounding area, including the Charmingdale subdivision. Also served are developments along Friedensburg Road, including the Middle School, Vo-Tech, and Meadow Farms II Subdivision. In 2008, Amity and Oley Townships discussed plans for providing public sewer service to the Yellow House area to address suspected malfunctions. Due to economic reasons, Oley Township has decided not to proceed with public sewers in the Yellow House area at this time.

The Oley Municipal Authority sewage treatment plant is located south of Pleasantville along the Manatawny Creek. The sewage treatment plant discharges into Manatawny Creek and has a capacity of 400,000 gallons per day and 500,000 gallons per day maximum. The plant is presently running at near capacity due to its current connections plus infiltration and inflow.

In 1999, the Oley Municipal Authority made improvements to its sewage treatment and expanded the plant's capacity by 95,000 gallons per day. The 1995 Oley Township Sewage Facility Plan Update identified three areas in the Township where public sewers were to be provided to address malfunctioning on-site systems: Pleasantville, Water Street between Lake Road and Stitzer Road, and the Essig Subdivision near Route 73 and Snyder Road. The Oley Municipal Authority plans to reserve part of its new treatment capacity for these three areas, with Pleasantville and Water Street receiving the highest priority. The Township's 1995 Sewage Facility Plan Update estimated that the three areas together would generate 35,500 gallons of wastewater per day from 118 new connections. As of 2007, all but the Essig Subdivision have been connected to the system.

Nearly all of Alsace Township is served by on-lot septic systems but a new plant will be operational by the Fall of 2008. The new plant will have capacity for 190 families and 220 EDUs. The Muhlenberg Township Authority serves 59 connections in the Wedgewood Heights subdivision, which is located in the southwestern corner of the Township. Wastewater is collected from Wedgewood Heights through sewer lines owned by Alsace Township. The wastewater then flows through the Muhlenberg Township Authority system to be treated at the City of Reading Sewage Treatment Plant. Muhlenberg Township monitors the wastewater flow from Wedgewood Heights which is approximately 15,500 gallons per day. The Muhlenberg Township Authority collects

fees from each customer in Wedgewood Heights. A portion of these fees is turned over to Alsace Township.

There is a community sewer service in the Urban Acres Mobile Home Park at Elizabethtown Road and Pricetown Road. The Shady Lane Mobile Home Park on Spies Church Road contains a private system with a pump station that sends sewage to the Exeter Township wastewater collection and treatment system.

Alsace Township prepared an Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan to investigate long term sewage treatment needs in the Township. In 2007, the Township received funding to provide public sewer to the Alsace Manor subdivision near Pricetown Road, where malfunctioning on-site systems have occurred.

Ruscombmanor Township contains three areas proposed to be served by public sewer, including the Village of Breezy Corners, at the intersection of PA Routes 73 and 662; Pricetown along PA Route 662 east to the Golden Oaks Country Club; and further north on the PA Route 662 corridor from approximately Stitzer Road to the Borough of Fleetwood. The Fleetwood Borough Authority provides sewage treatment for all of these areas.

Sewer Service Areas are shown on Figure 9.2, Water and Sewer Service Areas.

Public Water Service

Public water service in Oley Township extends to the Village of Oley and the surrounding area, including the Charmingdale subdivision. As of 2007, the Oley Township Municipal Authority serves approximately 680 connections with water supplied by three wells that is pumped through water lines owned by the Authority. The water lines were recently extended to serve Friedensburg Road, as well as the Meadow View Farms II Subdivision. The remainder of Oley Township relies upon private on-site wells.

Wedgewood Heights is the only area in Alsace Township with public water service. The Muhlenberg Township Authority provides water to 59 connections in Wedgewood Heights through its own water conveyance system. The Muhlenberg Township Authority's water is supplied by 12 wells.

Ruscombmanor Township has two areas that are proposed to be served by public water-PA Route 662 from the Borough of Fleetwood line to approximately one mile south of the Borough along Willow Road, which is served by the Fleetwood Borough Water Authority; and a very small portion in the northwest part of the Township, which is connected to the Maiden creek Township Authority.

Sewer Service Areas are shown on Figure 9.2, Water and Sewer Service Areas.

Community Facilities, Services, and Development:

Goal: Provide good quality community facilities and services to the Region's residents in an efficient, cost-effective manner within the financial resources of the municipalities, consistent with concern for protecting natural resources.

Objectives:

- Work with the Oley Valley School District to ensure adequate facilities exist to meet current and projected enrollments.
- Continue the Act 537 process to ensure appropriate solutions are devised for areas with a high concentration of failing septic systems.
- Support efforts of water supply and sewer authorities to plan ahead for expansion of capacities and extensions of the areas of service in accordance with growth projections and the establishment of future growth areas. Work to achieve consistency of Act 537 plans and infrastructure planning with this Plan and its land use element. Initially, this will involve coordination with the Townships in addressing regional approaches to provide sewer and water infrastructure.
- Look for more opportunities to cooperate with neighboring municipalities on emergency services, road maintenance and other public works.
- Periodically review the adequacy of municipal contributions to private community service providers including volunteer fire companies and rescue groups, and recreation organizations, among others.
- Encourage community efforts to bring people together and create community cohesion.
- Continue to provide high quality fire and police services to the residents of the Region.
- Identify policies to ensure safe, reliable, cost efficient, and well-maintained sanitary sewage disposal and water supply in the Region.

- Increase resident awareness of resources and facilities within the Region and support efforts to protect, enhance, and increase accessibility and use of those resources and facilities.
- Coordinate land use and sewer and water planning so the extension of public sewer and water facilities is consistent with the land use and other goals and objectives of this Joint Comprehensive Plan.
- Review opportunities for regional sharing of equipment, services and facilities and continue intermunicipal cooperation.
- Identify the need for additional community, cultural and social facilities and services for all age groups in the Region, and encourage provision of those facilities and services.
- Establish the responsibilities of developers for providing social and cultural facilities.
- Identify community facilities and services that can help attract and support desired economic development.
- Encourage increased cooperation of municipalities and the Oley Valley School District in planning activities and utilization of school facilities.
- Identify methods of encouraging energy conservation.
- Address stormwater management concerns through implementation of the Act 167 Stormwater Management Plans for the Schuylkill River, Maiden Creek, and Manatawny Creek Watersheds

Education

Oley Township, Alsace Township and Ruscombmanor Township are each part of the Oley Valley School District, which also includes Pike Township. Oley Valley High School is located on the north side of Oley Village, from which the entire school district is served. Oley Valley Elementary School, the district's only elementary school, and Oley Valley Middle School are also located in Oley, just south of Route 73 on Friedensburg Road. The Berks County Career and Technology Center (Berks County Vo-Tech Eastern Campus) is adjacent to Oley Valley Elementary School. The Oley Valley Intermediate Unit operates from the former Alsace Elementary School on Antietam Road in Alsace Township.

Table 9.1 shows that enrollment in the Oley Valley School District has decreased from 2,157 in 2000-2001 to 1,991 in 2007-2008, a reduction of 8 percent in 8 years. Overall, this indicates a fairly stable population with slight fluctuations occurring.

Previously, the District projected its total enrollment would peak in 2002 and decline between 2002 and 2006. These projections assumed continued slow growth in each of the four Oley Valley School District municipalities. The projections are still valid with continued slow growth in the municipalities and a stable or declining student population. The future projections up to the 2011-2012 school year continues to exhibit the pattern of slow decline in enrollment. The Oley Valley School District does not plan to construct any new schools or school building additions in the foreseeable future.

TABLE 9.1: TOTAL ENROLLMENT / PROJECTIONS

Total Enrollment Oley Valley School District 2000-2008		
SCHOOL YEAR	TOTAL ENROLLMENT	CHANGE
2000 - 2001	2,157	
2001 - 2002	2,129	-28
2002 - 2003	2,200	71
2003 - 2004	2,140	-60
2004 - 2005	2,073	-67
2005 - 2006	2,078	5
2006 - 2007	2,047	-31
2007 - 2008	1,991	-56
2008-2009 (proj)	1994	3
2009-2010(proj)	1968	-26
2010-2011(proj)	1897	-71
2011-2012(proj)	1861	-36

Sources: Oley Valley School District; PA Department of Education

Montessori Day School is the only private school in the Region. The following are the nearest colleges and universities to the Region:

- Albright College – City of Reading
- Alvernia College – City of Reading
- Reading Area Community College – City of Reading
- Pennsylvania State University Berks Campus – Spring Township
- Kutztown University – Maxatawny Township

Police Protection

The Police Departments providing coverage to the Region are:

- *Oley Township Police Department, #1 Rose Virginia Road, Oley, PA 19547*
- *Pennsylvania State Police, 600 Kenhorst Boulevard, Reading, PA 19611*

Oley Township has a police department with a full-time police chief and five part-time police officers. Police headquarters are located at the Oley Township Municipal Building. Ruscombmanor and Alsace Townships are patrolled by the Pennsylvania State Police. A few homes in Alsace Township have contracted privately with Central Berks Regional Police, located in Lower Alsace Township, for police protection.

Fire Protection

Oley, Alsace and Ruscombmanor Townships each have their own fire company. The Oley Fire Company serves Oley Township from its location on Main Street in the Village of Oley. The Alsace Fire Company provides fire protection throughout Alsace Township and is located off Pricetown Road at Alsace Manor. Ruscombmanor Fire Company is located off of PA Route 662 near the Ruscombmanor Municipal Building. The fire companies each provide primary protection in their own municipalities and act as secondary or backups to each other. Mutual assistance agreements are in effect between the two fire companies and with fire companies from several neighboring municipalities to assist in fire emergencies.

TABLE 9.2: FIRE DEPARTMENTS: OLEY, ALSACE, AND RUSCOMBMANOR TWPS

Fire Dept.	#	Location	Services Offered	Area Covered	Personnel	
Alsace Manor Fire Company	8	1 Antietam Road, Temple	Fire, Rescue	Alsace	15 Volunteer Firefighters + 10 other volunteers	
Fleetwood Volunteer Fire Company	45	16 N. Chestnut St, Fleetwood	Fire, Rescue, EMS	Fleetwood ; Ruscombmanor	48 Volunteer Firefighters + 29 other volunteers	4,000 Residents in Primary area and 10,000 in mutual air response area
Fleetwood EMS Division	535	16 N. Chesnut St, Fleetwood	Certified ALS (Advanced Life Support)	Fleetwood, Richmond, and Ruscombmanor		Operates as a membership program
Oley Fire Company	5	477A Main St, Oley	Fire, Rescue	Oley	32 Volunteer Firefighters	
Ruscombmanor Fire Company	34	3721 Pricetown Road, Fleetwood	Fire, Rescue	Ruscombmanor		
Walnuttown Fire Company	32	535 Park Road, Fleetwood	Fire, Rescue	Maidencreek; Ruscombmanor	12 Volunteer Firefighters + 10 Other volunteers	

Ambulance Service

Ambulance service from the Oley Fire Company serves Oley Township. On an as-needed basis, ambulance service is also available from Blandon, Boyertown, and Fleetwood. Ambulance service in Alsace is provided by Blandon, Oley, Lower Alsace

and Muhlenberg, depending upon location while Ruscombmanor receives ambulance service from Fleetwood, Blandon, and Oley.

Library Service

While there are no libraries directly located in the Region, there are several that are conveniently located nearby. The Berks County bookmobile travels through the Region. The Oley Valley School District provides books for school students.

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- Fleetwood Area Public Library - 110 West Arch Street in Fleetwood
- Muhlenberg Community Library - 3612 Kutztown Road, Laureldale
- Reading Public Library – 100 South Fifth Street, Reading, PA
- Exeter Library – 4569 Prestwick Drive, Reading, PA

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Municipal Structure

Oley, Alsace, and Ruscombmanor are all second class townships governed by a three-person board of supervisors. The supervisors are elected at large for six-year terms. Oley Township and Ruscombmanor Township each have a five-person planning commission while Alsace has a four-person planning commission. Each municipality has a three-person zoning hearing board. Each municipality also retains a municipal engineer and a municipal solicitor. Oley's municipal offices and garage are located at 1 Rose Virginia Road in Oley; Alsace Township's municipal building and garage is at 65 Woodside Avenue in the Alsace Manor subdivision off Pricetown Road; and Ruscombmanor Township is at 204 Oak Lane in Fleetwood. The municipal tax millage varies between them with Ruscombmanor at .09, Alsace at 1.0 and Oley at 2.2.

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

As population increases within the region, so does the need for open space and recreation facilities. Communities that provide open space and recreation opportunities for their citizens enjoy a higher quality of life, which has a positive influence on the local economy. It is important to achieve a balance between active recreation facilities and open space and hiking trails for passive recreation. The results of the citizen survey indicated a high level of support for open space and recreation.

The Region is a diverse area with historic and ecological resources plus agricultural lands along small villages. While recreational activities are abundant in Berks County and the surrounding municipalities, the Region is lacking in parks and recreation opportunities.

Regional Recreation Areas

Regional recreation areas attract visitors from throughout Berks County and beyond. The focus of these areas is usually picnicking, boating, fishing, camping, hiking or hunting.

They may also have areas set aside for environmental conservation. Regional recreation lands within a 25-mile radius of the area are listed as follows.

Federal Lands

Blue Marsh Lake National Recreation Area (Berks County)

State Lands

French Creek State Park (Berks County)
Evansburg State Park (Montgomery County)
Marsh Creek State Park (Chester County)
Nolde Forest Environmental Education Center (Berks County)
State Gamelands 182 (Berks County)
State Gamelands 280 (Berks County)
State Gamelands 106 (Berks County and Schuylkill County)
State Gamelands 110 (Berks County and Schuylkill County)
State Gamelands 80 (Berks County and Schuylkill County)
State Gamelands 222 (Schuylkill County)
State Gamelands 286 (Schuylkill County)
State Gamelands 196 (Bucks County)
State Gamelands 43 (Chester County)
State Gamelands 52 (Lancaster County)
State Gamelands 46 (Lancaster County and Lebanon County)
State Gamelands 225 (Lebanon County)
State Gamelands 205 (Lehigh County)

County Lands

Camp Joy (Berks County)
Kaercher Creek (Berks County)
Tulpehocken Creek (Berks County)
Youth Recreation Facility and Education Farm (Berks County)
Leaser Lake (Lehigh County)
Trexler Lehigh County Game Preserve (Lehigh County)
Central Perkiomen Valley Park (Montgomery County)
Green Lane Reservoir Park (Montgomery County)
Upper Perkiomen Valley Park (Montgomery County)

Municipal Lands

Lake Ontelaunee (City of Reading)

Hiking Trails

Appalachian Trail

Pinnacle Side Trail

Other Regional Parkland

Hawk Mountain Sanctuary

Local Recreation Areas

Local recreation areas are parks and other recreation-related properties designed for use by residents of the local municipalities. These are different than regional recreation areas which serve a much larger geographic area. Volunteer Park, a passive open space with picnic facilities, is the only municipally-owned park in Oley Township. Alsace Township owns the Alsace Township Park, which features a pavilion and basketball courts. The Oley Valley Youth Recreation Area, which is owned by a private non-profit organization, is the central athletic complex in the Region. Its baseball fields, softball fields, soccer fields and other recreation facilities are heavily used by sports organizations throughout the greater Oley/Alsace area. Ruscombmanor Township owns the Reueben Strause Park and the Ruscombmanor Municipal Ballfield.

The Oley Valley High School/Middle School and the Oley Valley Elementary School each have a gym, outdoor basketball courts, baseball fields and soccer fields. The High School/Middle School also has a track and tennis courts. School District activities have first priority on the use of each school's gym and sports fields. In addition to school activities, community basketball groups use the School District's two gyms and the Oley Youth Recreation organization uses School District athletic fields.

There are a variety of other public, semi-public and private recreation areas available for the Region's residents including the following:

- Pleasantville Park (a private picnic grove in Oley Township)
- Reading Motorcycle Club (private non-profit motorcycle track & recreation grounds in Oley Township)
- American Legion Grounds (picnic and natural area owned by the American Legion in Oley Township)
- Poole Nature Preserve (Berks County Conservancy land in Oley Township)
- Oley Valley Fish & Game Club (a private non-profit fish and game club in Alsace Township)
- Portions of Mount Penn Preserve (owned by City of Reading in Alsace Township)
- Gasser Golf Course
- Golden Oaks Country Club
- Conservancy Land

- Pricetown Rifle Association
- Evergreen Country Club
- Hobby Horse Ranch

Open Space and Recreation

Goal: Provide for open space within the Region through the preservation of natural resources and the development and retention of parks and greenways.

Objectives:

- Provide and maintain parks, recreation and open spaces for area residents which are interconnected, accessible, well maintained, and safe.
- Maintain the fee-in-lieu responsibility of developers in providing park and recreation facilities and open space.
- Support the implementation of the Berks County Greenway and Open Space Plan and encourage coordination of recreation planning between the municipalities.
- Promote innovative development techniques such as Conservation By Design and open space development that will minimize land consumption and preserve remaining open space in the Region.
- Provide a wide range of active and passive recreational and cultural programs.
- Work with surrounding municipalities and counties to link open spaces, greenways, and natural areas outside of the Region.
- Encourage and support cooperative use of recreation facilities among the municipalities and the Oley Valley School District.

Future Recreation Needs

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) Standards recommend a minimum of approximately ten (10) acres of parkland for every 1,000 residents. The total population of the Region, according to the 2006 U.S. Census Bureau estimate, is 10,064. Applying the NRPA Standards, the Region should contain a **minimum** of approximately 116 acres of developed, usable active parkland (see Table 9.3). The municipalities should continue to keep recreation and open space provision a high priority.

TABLE 9.3: EXISTING AND RECOMMENDED OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION ACREAGE

Municipality	2006 Population (Estimate) Source: US Census Bureau	Minimum Recommended Acres (NRPA Standards- 10 acres / 1,000 persons)	Total Existing Public Recreation Acres (Municipal)
Alsace	3,758	37.6	3.9
Oley	3,661	36.6	56.6*
Ruscombmanor	4,158	41.6	6.8
Total Region	11,577	115.8	71.3

*includes 60% adjustment to estimate the proportion of a school district facilities available for recreation.

The Oley Valley Youth Recreation area is 14.7 acres. The Oley Valley High School/Middle School is 32.8 acres and the Oley Valley Elementary School is 37.1 acres. The Alsace Township Park is 3.9 acres, and Ruscombmanor’s facilities are 6.8 acres. These sites, which are each used for active recreation, total 95.3 acres. However, these 95.3 acres are reduced to 67.3 acres when just 60% of the school acreage is counted. NRPA suggests using this 60% adjustment to estimate the proportion of a school site actually available for recreation. Using NRPA standards, the Region as a whole is 44.5 acres deficient in per-capita recreational acreage. The municipalities should seek to develop usable recreation land before this deficiency grows as the population increases, and available open space is developed.

It is a recommendation of this plan to preserve land now, while the land is still undeveloped, creating an open space system consisting of a network of connected active and passive open space and recreation opportunities. Lands targeted as high priority Greenways by the *Berks County Greenway, Park, and Recreation Plan* should receive

highest priority for acquisition. However, if the Townships encounter an opportunity to acquire open space that is vulnerable to incompatible development, and can be incorporated into the Region's recreation system, they should acquire the land.

Passive recreation and/or undeveloped open space may include stream corridors, wetlands, steep slopes, ridgelines, and groundwater recharge areas. Active recreation areas are characterized by property that is suited for athletic fields or playgrounds (flat and well-drained); has adequate public access; and closer to population centers.

Greenways and Creek Conservation Corridors

What is a Greenway?

The Pennsylvania Greenway Partnership Commission defines a greenway as follows:

A greenway is a corridor of open space. Greenways vary greatly in scale, from narrow ribbons of green that run through urban, suburban, and rural areas to wide corridors that incorporate diverse natural, cultural, and scenic features. Greenways can be land- or water-based, running along stream corridors, shorelines, lakes, waterfalls, or wetlands. Some follow old railways, canals, ridgelines, or other features. They can incorporate both public and private property. Some greenways are primarily recreational corridors, while others function almost exclusively for environmental protection and are not designed for human passage. Greenways differ in their location and function, but overall, a greenway network will protect natural, cultural, and scenic resources, provide recreational benefits, enhance the natural beauty and the quality of life in neighborhoods and communities, and stimulate economic development opportunities.

Benefits of Greenways

Greenways can have a number of benefits:

- Protect natural, cultural, and scenic resources.
- Link communities together.
- Provide for recreational opportunities such as walking, biking, picnicking, camping, skiing, fishing, equestrian trails, snowmobile trails, and links to recreation resources.
- Enhance the quality of life and promote revitalization in communities.

- Provide educational and interpretive opportunities.
- Enhance tourism and economic development opportunities.
- Maintain habitat linkages (wildlife corridors) and ecosystems.
- Allow access to natural, scenic and cultural resources.
- Preserve and build upon existing trail networks.
- Provide alternatives to vehicular travel.
- Provide riparian buffers to protect water quality.
- Provide linkages to trails of regional significance.

The municipalities should work toward the establishment of a greenway/bike path system, with highest priority given to the linking of existing parks and open space facilities, as well as creating links to trail systems outside of the Region. Not all corridors will be developed as active greenways with trails, nor will they all exist along a creek – these corridors should exist to preserve vital natural features, particularly ridge lines, woodlands, wetlands, and native vegetation.

Recommended Greenway / Bike Path System

The Future Greenway Network recommended by the *2007 Berks County Greenway, Park, and Recreation Plan* depicts a regional system of proposed greenways and bike paths. The plan is conceptual and subject to further refinement, but is the starting point for a Region-wide system. Given the many benefits of greenways, the effort is worth it. Greenways and trails should be considered along creeks, as connections to existing local trails, subdivisions, recreational and municipal facilities, and businesses.

The Greenways for the Oley Hills Region include the following high priority corridors:

- Antietam Highlands Greenway;
- Irish Mountain Greenway;
- East Penn Valley Greenway;

The Greenways for the Oley Hills Region include the following medium priority corridors:

- Oley Hills Greenway;
- Little Manatawny Greenways.

The goal of the bike path system is to include a bike lane along existing roads to accommodate bicycles safely. The bike path system is designed, where possible, for interconnection of existing and proposed parks and school facilities. Unfortunately, due to unsafe conditions such as high traffic volume, narrow cartways, and poor sight distances, some ideal connections are not possible.

Green Infrastructure

Green Infrastructure is a natural life support system. It is an interconnected network of protected land and water that supports native species, maintains natural ecological processes, sustains air and water resources and contributes to the health and quality of life for the Region's communities and people. Within this infrastructure, streams and rivers, ridgelines, hiking and biking trails, passive open space, as well as wildlife migration corridors can be found.

The 2007 Berks County Greenway, Park, and Recreation Plan recognizes the following areas as important ecological areas:

- Poole Sanctuary
- Bieber Creek Wetlands
- Oley Hills
- Little Manatawny Creek
- Irish Mountain

The Oley Hills Region is also identified as a Hub by the Pennsylvania Highlands, which is part of the statewide Highlands Corridor, as designated by the Department of Environmental Protection.

Community Facilities / Open Space and Recreation Actions

- A. Support efforts of Regional Open Space and Recreation Organizations, including the Berks County Open Space Advisory Council, and the Berks County Conservancy, to plan for and seek funding for the continued acquisition, improvement and appropriate development of recreation facilities, greenways, and recreation programs in the Region.
 - 1. Seek to develop additional municipal parkland
 - 2. Develop a Region-wide greenway and bike trail system.

3. Implement the goals and objectives of the *2007 Berks County Greenway, Park, and Recreation Plan*.

- B. Evaluate the need to develop a regional or separate municipal open space and recreation plans.
- C. Establish and maintain language in Subdivision and Land Development Ordinances to require developers to dedicate land or pay a fee in lieu of land for all new subdivisions.

Each subdivision or land development would have to be reviewed to determine whether the dedication of land or the fee in lieu of land would be more appropriate, based upon the size and location of the development.

Maintain standards for recreation facilities. Review National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) Standards for appropriateness.

- D. Where appropriate, work with PennDOT to widen and improve road shoulders and require developers to improve shoulders along their properties in order to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle facilities.
- E. Maintain a dialog with the Oley Valley School District regarding development activities, school facilities needs, location of school facilities, and school bus routes.
- F. Work with the Oley Valley School District to assure availability of school district facilities to the Region's residents.
- G. Promote and support efforts of community organizations to provide recreational facilities and programs for all area residents and services and programs for seniors and youth.
- H. Provide for public areas within the Region through provision of open spaces, village greens, recreation facilities, greenways, improved pathways, and indoor facilities.
- I. Enforce on-lot Sewage Management Ordinances and State mandates to manage, monitor, and maintain on-lot sewage disposal facilities in the Region and assure that the best available technology is used.
- J. Involve local fire companies and school district personnel in review of subdivision and land development plans, where appropriate.

- K. Encourage volunteerism for non-profit agencies and increased coordination of volunteer services among agencies.
- L. Continue to promote recycling activities and work to establish recycling centers, if deemed appropriate, that are convenient and well managed.
- M. Address the need for fire and emergency medical personnel as fewer volunteers become available. Cooperate regionally to ensure adequate service throughout the Region.
- N. Coordinate policies of governing bodies, and the municipal authorities regarding the development of public sewer and water facilities within the Growth Areas, as depicted on the Future Land Use Plan, to assure consistency.
- O. Bring together citizens, the business community, and the school district to plan and organize community-wide activities, events, and programs to foster community spirit, economic development, and community attractiveness.
- P. Maintain current and workable emergency operations plans.
- Q. Require all wastes to be treated and/or disposed of in an approved, environmentally responsible manner.
- R. Promote efficient, effective, and professional management of public facilities. Identify opportunities for technological enhancements for municipal government.
- S. Update the municipal Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plans and include on-lot management recommendations. Seek input from surrounding municipalities.

Plan for the Reliable Supply of Water

The 2000 amendments to the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) state that a County or multi-municipal comprehensive plan *shall* include a plan for the reliable supply of water. Chapter 10, The Natural Resources Plan, provides a detailed description of the geology and groundwater of the Region.

Where developments, businesses, or other entities propose to utilize ground water or surface water supplies in substantial amounts, hydrologic studies should be required and the party causing the extraction is required to demonstrate that such use will have no adverse effects on the water supplies of other entities in the Region.

In cases in which watershed areas are used for public recreation purposes, public access

and usage should be consistent with the need to protect water supplies.

Efforts to protect groundwater resources must occur at all levels of government. Special consideration to the types and densities of permitted land uses should apply in areas that offer little natural protection to groundwater. Such efforts should also apply where the protection level is unknown. Groundwater quality is also a concern since domestic water for many of the residents of the Region outside of the few community water service areas are supplied by individual wells.

Land use regulations, land acquisition, and education programs can play a key role in protecting groundwater. Examples of land use control activities include the following:

- Land use plans that consider groundwater vulnerability;
- Zoning ordinance and site plan review standards related to aboveground secondary containment, interior floor drains, and other topics;
- Purchase of land and/or conservation easements to provide a wellhead protection buffer around any future municipal wellfields; and
- Public education through public meetings, school-based classroom programs, library displays, cable television videos, public information flyers, and municipal newsletters.

Protection of groundwater resources requires efforts on several fronts, including the need for regional planning, land planning for individual sites, and technological advances that may offer alternative solutions. Regional planning must be based on the entire watershed; it will do little good for one community to implement solutions to its problems only to find that neighboring communities do not. Groundwater has no respect for community boundaries. From a land planning perspective, simply requiring larger lots does little or nothing to enhance groundwater quality. One of the few readily available solutions to polluted wells or failed septic systems is to obtain public water and sewer. With the larger lots sizes and frontages prevalent in some areas in the Region, the costs of water and sewer services to homes are likely to be very expensive. On the other hand, where lot frontages are smaller, so too will be the cost of public utilities.

Municipal zoning ordinances should contain provisions to protect sources of water supply through the following techniques:

1. Natural resource protection standards (net out provisions) protecting floodplains, wetlands, wetland margins, steep slopes, watercourses, water bodies, and lake and pond shores.

2. If municipal water supplies are developed, wellhead protection provisions pursuant to wellhead protection planning should be completed.
3. Stream Corridor Overlay Zoning.
4. Floodplain, wetland, and hydric soil protection provisions.
5. Environmental performance standards and environmental assessment requirements for industrial and commercial uses. Businesses should have Spill and Pollution Prevention Plans.
6. Provisions to minimize impervious cover.

When development plans are reviewed, developers must indicate proper management of stormwater runoff as well as control of erosion and sedimentation to protect local water resources.

The recommendations of the Manatawny Watershed Stormwater Management Ordinance, as prepared in accordance with Act 167, the Stormwater Management Act, should be adhered to.

In accordance with current best management practices, stormwater management should be considered part of the hydrologic cycle with less emphasis on detention and more emphasis on infiltration to reduce the volume and the rate of runoff, pollution, and thermal impacts. Developers must identify the resources within their tracts, and to analyze and mitigate the impacts of development. Natural resources should be incorporated into the open space system.

It should be noted that lawful activities such as extraction of minerals impact water supply sources. Such activities are governed by statutes regulating mineral extraction that specify replacement and restoration of water supplies affected by such activities.

The following chart (Table 9.4) provides a reference for zoning ordinance policy recommendations and techniques for water resource protection.

TABLE 9.4: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROTECTING WATER SUPPLIES

Stream Corridor Overlay Zoning	Zoning Policies	Water Resource Protection Provisions	Impact Analyses
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restrict development and impervious surfaces • Require riparian vegetative buffers • Encourage use of best management practices • Encourage stream habitat improvement • Encourage conservation easements/donations/dedications • Protect wetlands and wetland margins • Require floodplain and wetland studies based on soil types • Employ Innovative stormwater management techniques 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage development where public sewer and water exist; discourage on-site sewer and water • Limit impervious surfaces • Establish performance standards for uses • Protect aquifers through controlling uses and potential polluting activities • Establish an overlay protection zone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulation/restriction of potential contaminating uses and substances • Performance standards • Design standards • Operating requirements • Review process • Wellhead protection ordinance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supply locations • Geologic conditions, recharge rate, degree of renovation • Aquifer characteristics: groundwater movement, use, yield, quality, quantity, well interference • Test well results and impacts • Plan to protect groundwater system underlying and adjacent to the site: prevention, remediation, emergency management • Monitoring of groundwater quality and quantity
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The Townships and municipal water authorities should cooperate to encourage the provision of public water service in Growth Areas, and to discourage public water service outside of the Growth Areas.

Overlay Zoning

Overlay zoning is the application of an additional set of regulations to an established zoning district. Overlay zones supplement, but do not replace, the existing applicable zoning regulations. Overlay zones can be used for any number of objectives, ranging

from commercial corridor improvement to stream corridor and wellhead protection efforts. Areas commonly targeted for overlay zoning include: floodplains, watersheds, environmental areas, stream corridors, historic districts, and economic revitalization areas. The use of an overlay zone can be especially effective to ensure consistent regulation of land uses within multiple zoning districts.

Monitoring of Needs

Monitoring the need and opportunity for additional, expanded, or improved community services and facilities will help the Townships plan for their efficient and economical provision. The goal for community facilities and services is to provide them on a coordinated, regional basis, where possible, to meet the existing and future needs of the residents of the Region in a manner consistent with financial resources.

The majority of respondents to the citizen survey indicated high satisfaction with the rural character and small town atmosphere of the Region, but also indicated concern that the level of emergency services (for example, police and fire and ambulance protection) be sustained. The Townships should jointly monitor the efficiency of current emergency services to ensure that the Region has adequate provision of these services.