

Community Facilities and Services

Community facilities include parks, fire stations, municipal buildings, public schools and similar facilities. Community services include police and fire protection, sewage and water services and municipal government.

Education

The Northern Berks region is served by the Hamburg Area School District (HASD). HASD is governed by a nine-member school board from three geographical regions of the school district: Hamburg Borough, Perry and Windsor Townships and Shoemakersville Borough, and Tilden, Upper Bern and Upper Tulpehocken Townships. Board members serve 4-year terms with no compensation. In addition, Blue Mountain Adventist Elementary School is a private K-8 school and Blue Mountain Academy is a private high school located in Tilden Township. The Community Facilities and Recreation Maps - Figures 06 through 08 illustrate the location of the Northern Berks region's public and private school sites. The remainder of this section will focus upon conditions at the public schools within the Northern Berks region.



Presently, Hamburg Area School District employs the following grade format:

- Perry Elementary: Kindergarten through Grade 5
- Tilden Elementary Center: Kindergarten through Grade 5
- Hamburg Area Middle School: Grades 6 through 8
- Hamburg Area High School: Grades 9 through 12

The following tabulates and graphs conditions at each of the HASD's four school sites:

Summary of Hamburg Area Facilities					
School Name	Year Built	Renovation Dates	Site Size (acres)	Grades Housed	2018-2019 Enrollment
Perry Elementary	2014	–	4.4	K-5	370
Tilden Elementary Center	2008	–	16.3	K-5	532
Hamburg Area Middle School *	1996	–	86	6-8	520
Hamburg Area High School *	1974	2002	86	9-12	698
Total					2,120
*located at one site Source: Hamburg Area School District, PA Department of Education					

Using 2018 population projections, the number of school-aged children within the Northern Berks region totaled about 2,120, or 11.8% of the total population. Assuming a similar future ratio, the following tabulates the number of new school-aged students that are projected based upon population growth:

Year	Total Population	Total Children Ages 5-19
2010	17,269	2,445*
2018	18,003	2,120*
2020	17,847	2,106
2030	18,484	2,181
2040	19,138	2,258

*Source: Pennsylvania Department of Education

- Hamburg Area School District could benefit from an improved process of residential development review. By learning of proposed developments early, the districts can better prepare for needed school expansion and bus routing.

- Each municipality within the Northern Berks region should revise its subdivision and land development application requirements so that adequate and timely notification to the school district is assured. Similarly, the school district should allocate manpower and resources in order to be equipped to properly respond to such applications and provide meaningful feedback to the municipalities by coordinating development within the region with public school capacity.

- Finally, the school district should continue to cooperate with the municipalities in the delivery of parks and recreation opportunities, provided student use takes priority during the school year, adequate supervision is provided, and other administrative issues can be resolved. HASD has already contributed to the availability of parks and facilities within the Northern Berks region to the benefit of all residents and municipalities. This represents potential savings of millions of dollars to local municipalities who would otherwise need to fulfill this need for the community.

Library Service

The Hamburg Public Library is located on North Third Street in Hamburg Borough. It is part of the Berks County Public Library System. It is one of the oldest libraries in Berks County, founded in 1903 using a \$10,000 gift from Andrew Carnegie. The Hamburg Public Library opened its doors in 1904 and is still located in the original building constructed from this donation. It is currently exploring applying for grant funding to make repairs and expand in order to provide more services to the community. The library provides various services such as book lending, WiFi, tax service for seniors and children and adult programming to the entire Northern Berks region.

Public Water Service

Public water service is available in the more densely populated areas of the Northern Berks region. In Shoemakersville and small portions of Perry, the Borough of Shoemakersville Water Plant services residents. This water system consists of five wells, a water plant and a water tower, producing 100,000 gallons of water a day. Hamburg Borough operates the water authority servicing customers in Hamburg and into the Edenburg area of Windsor Township. Assets include the Furnace Creek Filtration Plant and four wells, all located in Windsor Township. Tilden Township owns the system that services the Tilden Industrial Park and retail shopping areas and the Laurel Center provides water service to their nursing home location as well. There are no plans for water service expansion in the Northern Berks region currently. Figure 09 depicts the location of water service areas within the region.

Sanitary Sewage Service

The Hamburg Municipal Authority went online in 1963, and services the Borough as well as the Tilden Corporate Center. It has had various expansions and upgrades since then. In 2001 the Authority absorbed Windsor Township Authority and began providing services along Old Route 22 and in Edenburg as well. The Authority has proposed sewer expansion to connect properties along the south side of Interstate 78 between Edenburg

and Hamburg Heights. Tilden Township has its own sanitary sewage system as well that flows to the Hamburg wastewater treatment plant. The service area includes properties near the Pennsylvania Route 61 and Interstate 78 intersection as well as the West Hamburg area.

Upper Bern Township also has a treatment plant that services the Shartlesville area with plans of expansion to the northeast and southeast. In Upper Tulpehocken, the former Borough of Strausstown is serviced by its own plant. Both the Upper Bern and Strausstown plants are managed by Select Environmental Solutions.

Perry Township services properties running from north to south through the western portion of the township mostly along Route 61 and into Shoemakersville Borough. Shoemakersville Borough also has their own plant that services the entire municipality as well as parts of Perry Township with plans on expanding north into Perry Township up to the Windsor Township border. In August 2020, Shoemakersville received a \$103,062 grant from the PA Small Water and Sewer Program run through Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development for valve replacements to create a more efficient and reliable system throughout the borough. The Public Utilities map, Figure 09 contains the location of existing and proposed sewer service areas within the Northern Berks region.

On-Lot Sewage Disposal Systems

Most properties in the Northern Berks region outside of Hamburg and Shoemakersville boroughs rely upon on-lot septic systems. Public education is important to make sure that residents know how to properly take care of on-lot septic systems. Many residents may have relocated from suburban areas where they previously had public sewers. Of most importance, property-owners need to understand the need to have their septic systems pumped regularly (typically at least once every three years). If a system is not pumped regularly, the drain field eventually will need to be replaced. Where problems have become severe in other municipalities, they have established ordinances requiring that property-owners show proof that they have had their system pumped at least once every three years.

Recycling

Two municipalities in this region, Hamburg and Shoemakersville participate in curbside pick-up of recyclable materials through private contractors. Additionally, Upper Tulpehocken offers an on-site recycle center option for township residents of both the township and surrounding municipalities. Tilden Township offers a drop-off facility for township residents that is managed by a third party operator. Berks County provides several recycling drop off locations throughout the County, including a facility located at 1316 Hilltop Road in nearby Leesport Borough.

Emergency Services

Tilden Township and Hamburg Borough both have their own municipal police departments covering each municipality. Tilden Township Police Department formed in the 1960s as an intergovernmental partnership with Centre Township and Centerport Borough. It disbanded in 1991; Township residents were then protected by Centre Township's police department and the Pennsylvania State Police. In 1998, the department was reinstated. It presently employs four full time police officers to protect residents and visitors of Tilden Township. Hamburg Borough employs eight patrol officers. Increasing mobility throughout the Borough, two officers are currently certified bike patrol officers. The Pennsylvania State Police Troop L provide the primary police protection for much of the region. A station is located in Tilden Township. Troop L's headquarters is located on Kenhorst Boulevard in Reading, and the troop services all of Berks, Schuylkill and Lebanon Counties. It may be beneficial within the Northern Berks region for municipalities without local police coverage to coordinate with those with existing police forces to provide more ample police protection. Shared police protection is often a more cost-efficient means of police coverage rather than formation of new individual police stations, while providing an alternative to relying solely on state police coverage.



The Northern Berks Region contains one EMS station, Hamburg Emergency Medical Services. Started in 1950 as a volunteer organization, the nonprofit organization has grown to including paid EMS workers as well, offering both Basic and Advanced Life Support services locally. In addition to Hamburg EMS, there a number of EMS volunteer groups outside the Region that service area residents.



Five fire companies primarily protect the Northern Berks region on a volunteer basis. Union Fire Company #1 of Hamburg Borough, formed in 1832, is the largest protecting the region with over 60 volunteers. Union Fire Company provides service to Hamburg Borough, Tilden Township, Windsor Township and nearby Lenhartsville Borough as well as approximately 12 miles of Interstate 78 and 10 miles of PA Route 61. They also provide water rescue to 6 miles of the Schuylkill River with water rescue and scuba recoveries. Union Fire Company is currently in the process of being recognized by the Pennsylvania

State Fire Commissioner as a “Participating Department”, a program that recognizes emergency responders as certified fire professionals at various levels in accordance with nationally recognized and sanctioned Professional Qualification standards.

Shoemakersville Fire Company #1 was formed in 1909. In 1996 the company added water and ice rescue, growing since then to a fleet of four boats. The company also has five trucks and various off-road vehicles to aid in rescue and recovery. Shoemakersville Fire Company services Shoemakersville Borough and Perry Township.

Shartlesville Fire Company was founded in 1924. It services Upper Bern and Tilden Townships as well as provides mutual aid to neighboring companies as needed. Shartlesville Fire Company has actively been training in search and rescue techniques in order to assist more effectively on lost persons calls in the Blue Mountains.

Strausstown Volunteer Fire Company was chartered in 1915. They currently have five apparatuses used to aid on calls primarily in Upper Tulpehocken Township. Community Fire Company of Virgenville is located in nearby Richmond Township, but services Perry and Windsor Townships in addition to Richmond and Greenwich Townships. Founded in 1944, it is a volunteer-based company with five apparatuses for fire, rescue and EMS services.

These five volunteer-based organizations, like most in the nation, continually pursue the addition of more volunteers as current volunteers age out quicker than they are replaced. Continued efforts are needed to make sure that fire and emergency medical services are fully coordinated across municipal borders. It is essential that the emergency service providers continue to train together and coordinate the provision of the specialized vehicles and equipment, specialty trained volunteers and similar needs.

Parks and Recreation

Figures 06 through 08 show the recreation opportunities for Northern Berks region including state, municipal, nonprofit, private and school (public and private) owned land.

The majority of the Northern Berks region is well-served by passive recreation that is well-distributed. The Blue Mountains run through Upper Tulpehocken, Upper Bern, Tilden and Windsor Townships, providing hunting, trapping, hiking and bird watching opportunities among other forms of recreation. Kaercher Creek Park and Kernsville Dam are both located on the border of Hamburg Borough, located mostly in Windsor and Tilden Townships respectively. An access point to the northern reaches of Lake Ontelaunee is located in southeastern Perry Township. Perhaps most notable in the region, the Schuylkill River Trail and Water Trail run up the spine of the Northern Berks region and the Appalachian Trail runs east to west along the northern border through the Blue Mountains, the combination of which providing access to recreation to each municipality directly.

However, much of the region is potentially lacking in active recreational opportunities such as organized sports and playgrounds for their residents. According to the Berks County Greenway, Park and Recreation Plan of 2007, just Hamburg Borough and Perry Township were projected to meet the recommended minimum acreage of active recreation based on projections for their 2020 populations. At the time the Plan was adopted, the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) recommended that most communities have 6.25 - 10.5 acres of active recreation land available for community use for every 1,000 persons. Since then, NRPA has revised their recommendations to create a new dynamic plan based on several factors within a given municipality.

This helps tailor a recreation plan that would be more customized particularly to rural municipalities' needs that don't necessarily have uniform and tight population densities such as that within cities and the surrounding areas. NRPA offers a performance survey tool that a municipality can enter metrics such as agency size and budget, jurisdiction population and geography, and compare its performance to other peers. NRPA reports that in general a typical park and recreation agency offers one park for every 2,281 residents served, with 9.9 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. For more information on the performance survey tool, refer to <https://www.nrpa.org/publications-research/ParkMetrics/>.

The Region's park system does include a variety of active facilities within its denser areas. Each municipality has at least one active recreation park located within its boundaries: Shoemakersville Park in Shoemakersville Borough and Perry Township, Perry Township Recreation Area in eastern Perry Township, Edenburg Park in Windsor Township, Hamburg Community Park in Hamburg Borough, Tilden Township Recreation Park in Tilden Township, Shartlesville Community Park in Upper Bern Township, and Upper Tulpehocken Park and Strausstown Lions Community Park in Upper Tulpehocken Township. Additionally, Hamburg Area School District has parks at their school campuses in Tilden, Hamburg and Shoemakersville.

Continued efforts are needed to rehabilitate older recreation areas, particularly to make sure they meet modern safety standards, to add recreation in underserved higher density areas, and wherever practical, new developments should be required to include pedestrian connections to nearby parks, residential developments and existing trails to greater increase access to these amenities. Ideally a resident should be able to walk or bicycle to a park that is suitable for informal recreation without having to cross a heavily traveled road within urbanized areas. In October of 2020, Shoemakersville Borough was awarded a grant through the Community Conservation Partnerships Program with the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) to prepare a Master Site Development Plan for the Shoemakersville Park.

Greater cooperation among the municipalities, school district and major non-profit recreation groups would be valuable in providing recreation facilities and services. Goals for this group should include:

- Collecting basic data on the sizes of each recreation program and trends in their growth
- Identifying the greatest needs for recreation facilities based on actual use and current population trends
- Identifying opportunities share or jointly provide recreation facilities and programs, particularly to meet times of peak demand and avoid potential over-use of facilities
- Identifying recreation programs that are needed but are currently not provided

The latest Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan adopted by the Reading MPO in July 2020 is a project-based plan that built on the prior 2010 policy-based plan. Through the recommendations in the Plan, walking and bicycling are promoted not only for recreation, but as a means of transportation for members of the community who either choose not to drive or do not have the ability to do so.

The Plan identifies a potential need for safe pedestrian access within a half-mile radius and safe bicycle access within a two-mile radius of schools, public parks, passive recreation areas, bus stops, shopping centers and major employers. Additionally, consideration should be given to bicycle and pedestrian access when planning new developments, especially those proposed near developments with existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Surveys conducted targeted municipal officials, non-profit groups and public input to identify the community's needs for active transportation. Projects identified included accessible parking and improvements in downtown Hamburg and Hamburg Community Park, the completion of the Schuylkill River Trail/Thun trail and its connections in Perry, Windsor, Shoemakersville, Hamburg and Tilden, a connection to the commercial areas in Tilden Township to downtown Hamburg, and a marked bicycle route for the proposed Hex Highway in Tilden, Upper Bern and Upper Tulpehocken Townships.

In addition to serving local residents, these active transportation improvements can be valuable in attracting tourists to the region, particularly considering the dramatic increase in the popularity of mountain biking and hiking. For more information on bicycle and pedestrian access, refer to the Active Transportation section on page 154 as well as the Berks County Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan 2020 located at <https://www.co.berks.pa.us/Dept/Planning/Pages/BicycleandPedestrianPlanning.aspx>.

Community Facilities and Services Goals

Provide high-quality community facilities and services in the most cost-efficient manner, including addressing needs for future growth and seek to provide public facilities and services on a regional basis to avoid duplication of efforts.

Municipalities should work with the Hamburg Area School District to adequately plan for increased demands on the district caused by future large-scale developments coming into the area.

Provide central water and sewage services in the most cost-efficient manner, with regular investments to provide reliable services.

Encourage connecting areas with malfunctioning on-lot systems, areas with contaminated water supplies, and small privately owned sewer or water systems to existing sewer or water systems where economically and physically possible.

The municipalities should maintain an up-to-date Sewage Facilities Plan (Act 537). This includes implementation of an On-Lot Disposal Ordinance that promotes the maintenance of on-lot septic systems, if this has not already been in effect.

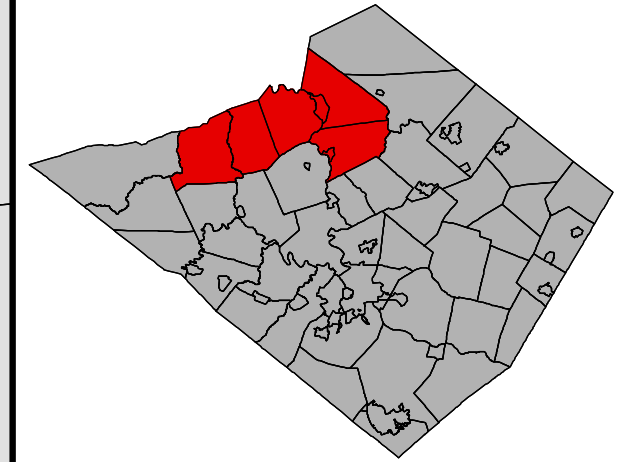
Emphasize full coordination of municipal and emergency services across municipal borders.

Continue to improve parks and playgrounds to meet a wide variety of recreational needs.











Complete a system of bicycle and pedestrian trails to provide vital links between existing recreation areas, commercial and residential developments, and school facilities.

Hamburg, Perry, Shoemakersville, Tilden, Upper Bern, Upper Tulpehocken, Windsor
Joint Comprehensive Plan Update: June 2022





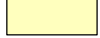








Community Facilities and Recreation



Community Facilities

-  Library
-  Municipal Building
-  Municipal and Police Building
-  Fire Station
-  EMS Station
-  Police Station
-  UrgentCare
-  Senior Citizen Facilities
-  Private School
-  Public School

Legend

-  Federal Recreation Land
-  State Recreation Land
-  Municipal Recreation Land
-  Non-Profit Recreation Land
-  Private Recreation Land
-  School Recreation Land
-  Interstate
-  State Route
-  Roads
-  Railroads
-  Streams and Water Bodies
-  Municipal Boundaries
-  County Boundaries

Source data: Berks County Planning Commission GIS, Berks County GIS/IS, Berks County Mapping, Berks DES

Published by the Berks County Planning Commission

BAB 6/22

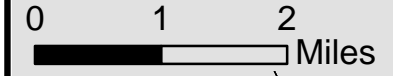
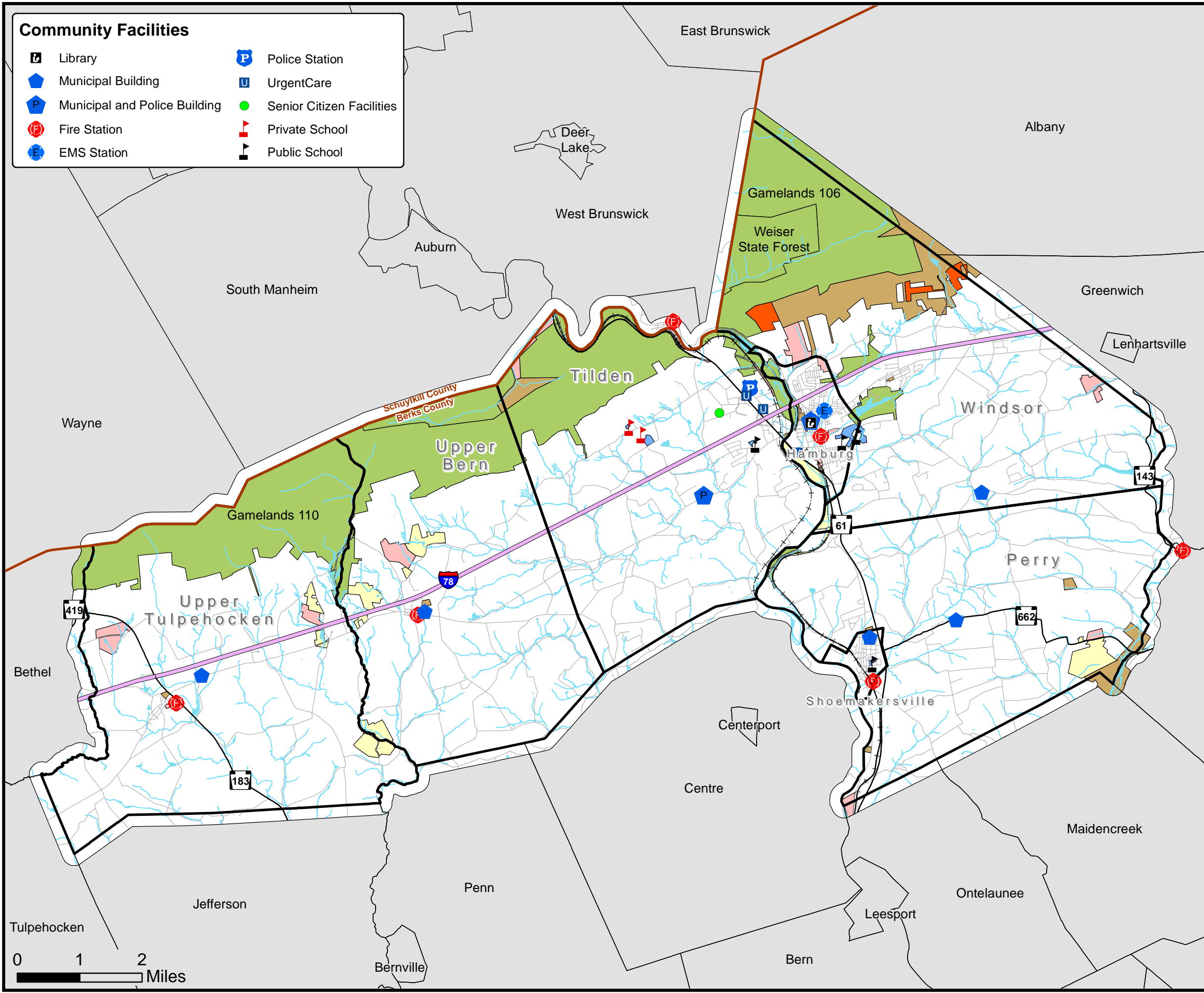
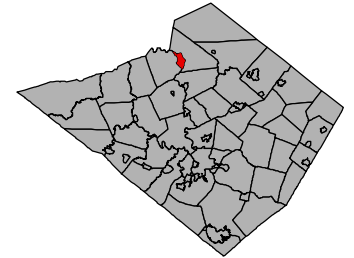


FIGURE 07

Hamburg, Perry, Shoemakersville, Tilden, Upper Bern, Upper Tulpehocken, Windsor
 Joint Comprehensive Plan Update
 June 2022

Community Facilities and Recreation Hamburg Borough



Legend

- Federal Recreation Land
- State Recreation Land
- Municipal Recreation Land
- Non-Profit Recreation Land
- Private Recreation Land
- School Recreation Land
- Interstate
- State Route
- Roads
- Railroads
- Streams and Water Bodies
- Municipal Boundaries

Community Facilities

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Library | Police Station |
| Municipal Building | UrgentCare |
| Municipal and Police Building | Senior Citizen Facilities |
| Fire Station | Private School |
| EMS Station | Public School |

Tilden

Windsor

0 1,500 3,000 Feet

Source data:
 Berks County Planning Commission GIS, Berks County GIS/IS, Berks County Mapping, Berks DES

Published by the Berks County Planning Commission

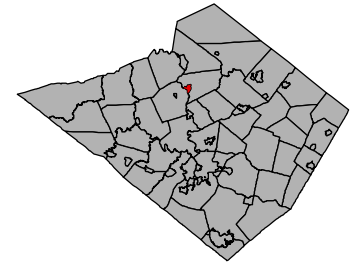
BAB 6/22



FIGURE 08

Hamburg, Perry, Shoemakersville, Tilden, Upper Bern, Upper Tulpehocken, Windsor
 Joint Comprehensive Plan Update
 June 2022

Community Facilities and Recreation Shoemakersville Borough



Perry

Centre

Community Facilities

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Library | Police Station |
| Municipal Building | UrgentCare |
| Municipal and Police Building | Senior Citizen Facilities |
| Fire Station | Private School |
| EMS Station | Public School |

Legend

- Federal Recreation Land
- State Recreation Land
- Municipal Recreation Land
- Non-Profit Recreation Land
- Private Recreation Land
- School Recreation Land
- Interstate
- State Route
- Roads
- Railroads
- Streams and Water Bodies
- Municipal Boundaries

Source data:
 Berks County Planning Commission GIS, Berks County GIS/IS, Berks County Mapping, Berks DES

Published by the Berks County Planning Commission
 BAB 6/22

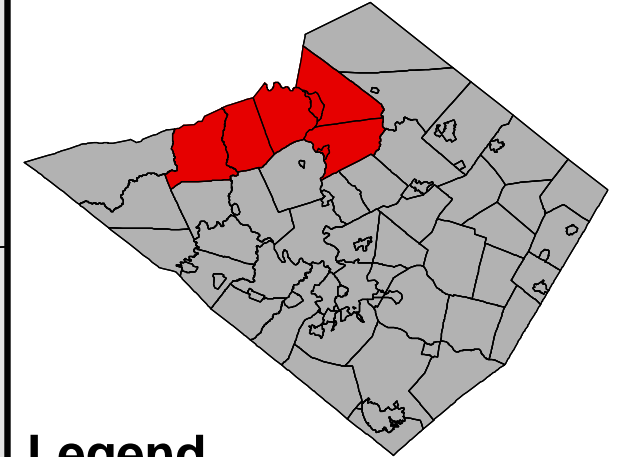
0 1,000 2,000 Feet



Hamburg, Perry, Shoemakersville, Tilden, Upper Bern, Upper Tulpehocken, Windsor
Joint Comprehensive Plan Update: June 2022



Public Utilities



Legend

- WaterPlants
- ▲ Existing Public Sewer Plant
- Existing Sewer Pump Stations
- Existing Public Water Service
- Existing Public Sewer Service
- Proposed Public Sewer Service
- Interstate
- State Route
- Roads
- Railroads
- ~ Streams and Water Bodies
- Municipal Boundaries
- County Boundaries

Source data: Berks County Planning Commission GIS, Berks County GIS/IS, Berks County Mapping, Berks DES

Published by the Berks County Planning Commission

BAB 6/22

