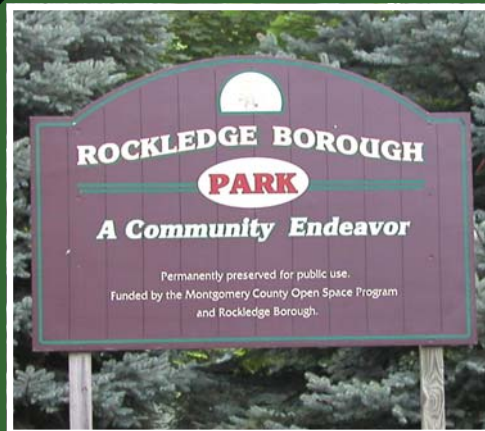


OPEN SPACE PLAN



ROCKLEDGE BOROUGH

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

— FEBRUARY 2006 —

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MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

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Joyce Walz, Vice-President

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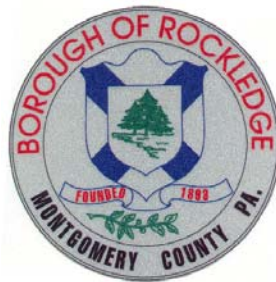
Joyce Walz

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BOROUGH MANAGER

Keith Truman



Cover Photograph: Rockledge Park

Inset: Rockledge Park Sign, Rockledge Avenue

ROCKLEDGE BOROUGH

OPEN SPACE PLAN

FEBRUARY 2006

This report was partially funded by
The Montgomery County Green Fields/Green Towns Program

Montgomery County Planning Commission

RESOLUTION #2006-01

MONTGOMERY COUNTY OPEN SPACE BOARD
APPROVAL OF THE ROCKLEDGE BOROUGH MUNICIPAL OPEN SPACE PLAN

WHEREAS, On January 30, 2006, the Commissioners of Montgomery County established the Green Fields/Green Towns Program which provides grant funds for open space preservation; and

WHEREAS, the Green Fields/Green Towns Program requires the preparation of municipal open space plans and provides grants which may be used by any municipality in Montgomery County for the preparation of an open space plan; and

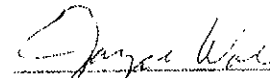
WHEREAS, Rockledge Borough has prepared an open space plan in accordance with guidelines established for the Green Fields/Green Towns Program; and

WHEREAS, the Montgomery County Open Space Board has reviewed the plan in accordance with guidelines established by the county.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Open Space Board hereby approves the Rockledge Borough Open Space Plan subject to final adoption by Rockledge Borough.

RESOLVED THIS 30th DAY OF JANUARY, 2006.


Joseph Denelsbeck, President


Joyce Walz, Vice President

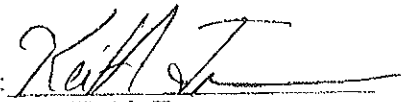
ATTEST: 
Keith Truman
Borough Manager

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CHAPTER 1

COMMUNITY PROFILE

The Community Profile Chapter of the Rockledge Borough Open Space Plan is designed to provide residents, planners and officials the necessary background information to make well-informed decisions regarding the future preservation of natural and cultural resources within their community. It consists of three parts: 1) the Community Context section, which examines the community's historical background and regional setting, 2) the Existing Land Use Analysis, which details the use of each property in the Borough, and 3) the Community Demographic Analysis, a study of the demographic trends in Rockledge Borough.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Adapted from "Montgomery County: the Second Two Hundred Years," 1983; and "Rockledge Borough: Parks, Open Space and Recreation Plan," 1995

Rockledge borough, an area rich in historical significance, has contributed to the growth of Montgomery County and the Philadelphia region.

The borough of Rockledge was formed on January 9, 1893, from 250 acres of Abington Township. The borough was formed primarily as a result of in-migration from the Fox Chase area of Philadelphia. As the area developed, building associations bought the few farms located along what is now Huntingdon Pike and subdivided the tracts into lots for housing. Throughout its existence Rockledge has served

primarily as a residential area, with commercial uses concentrated along Huntingdon Pike.

The inhabitants of this area came to feel the Abington Township government was too distant for both school attendance and other local governmental operations, and therefore petitioned Montgomery County courts to separate from the township and form a new municipality.

Originally, the area where Rockledge now stands was known as "Shady Dell". As the community began to grow it became known as "Sylvania", after one of the building associations (the Sylvania Mutual Land Association). However, with the incorporation of the area as a borough, the name Rockledge was adopted.

Rockledge probably acquired its name from an old stone quarry that was located on the south side of the 200 block of Huntingdon Pike (which tapered back toward Lynnwood Road and Jarrett Avenue). This quarry was most active between 1916 and 1920; at one point it reached a depth of over 100 feet. By 1925 the quarry was filled in with truckloads of junk and coal ashes brought in as landfill from Philadelphia.

By 1900, the borough's population was 512, with most development still lying south of Huntingdon Pike. Many of the original homes in the borough were built adjacent to Lawnview Cemetery and Fox Chase Road on the south side of what is now Huntingdon Pike. This neighborhood was named "Strockville" after the subdivider of the property.

Rockledge was the site of a toll station for the Fox Chase and Huntingdon Valley Turnpike, a private road owned by a group of farmers to facilitate transporting their livestock and produce to Philadelphia markets. The toll station was located opposite the entrance to Lawnview Cemetery. Tolls were collected until the 1920s, when the state took over control of the road.

During the days of the toll road, it was not an uncommon sight for large herds of cattle, sheep, pigs and other livestock to pass through the borough on their way to the slaughterhouses in Philadelphia. Harper Dean's coal yard in Fox Chase was the origin of many trips, as teams of horses pulled carts with 100-pound bags of coal to various points in eastern Montgomery County.

This daily flow of commercial traffic fostered the growth of the borough's retail facilities. Numerous corner grocery stores and small shops were built during this era to cater to the commercial traffic. In addition, traveling salesmen came into Rockledge on the Pike, selling their rice, feed, meats, and other groceries door-to-door to borough residents.

The Newtown branch of the Reading Railroad also had some impacts on the borough's development. This rail line, one of the many attempts to provide a rail link between Philadelphia and New York City, was chartered in 1860. Due to financial troubles, however, its organization was delayed until 1872, and the first tracks reached what is now Rockledge in 1876. Further financial difficulties halted the construction of the railroad at Newtown in Bucks County.

A small station was established in Rockledge at the end of Robbins Avenue. This station was later closed due to its proximity to the more accessible Fox Chase station. At that time, the cost of a train ride to Philadelphia was 10 cents.

Although the Newtown line played an important role in the development of the Bethayres portion of Lower Moreland Township and the eastern portion of Abington Township (including Rockledge), it did not exert the same impact as some of the other rail lines in central Montgomery County.

Later transportation influences on Rockledge included bus lines (the first were operated by Reading Co.) and, of course, the automobile.

Later, the Huntingdon Valley Transportation Company served the borough. The Fox Chase and Huntingdon Valley Turnpike was discontinued in the 1920s. By 1931, the Pike was fully paved and stop signs had been erected because of the increase in automobile traffic. The automobile and truck quickly replaced the horse-drawn wagon as the best means of transporting goods from Montgomery County to Philadelphia.

Secession from Montgomery County and annexation by Philadelphia gained much support in Rockledge from 1916 to 1923. The close local identification with Fox Chase was primarily responsible for the strength of this movement. A petition to the County Court of Quarter Sessions was initiated, but resulted in a refusal by the judges. After the court's rejection, borough residents reconsidered and the movement was abandoned. This was primarily because of Philadelphia's higher taxes and the distant location of its high schools.

The Rockledge Volunteer Fire Company was formed in 1903, and the first firehouse was located on Sylvania Avenue below Huntingdon Pike. One of the fire company's major tests occurred before World War I, when the Jarrett Avenue Knitting Mill burned down, briefly threatening the entire borough. Later, the Infanta Knitting Mill was established on the site but it too burned down. Rockledge Volunteer Fire Company #1 celebrated its centennial in 2003.

The original Rockledge Elementary School building was erected at the northeast corner of Huntingdon Pike and Robbins Avenue in 1889. The building had a wood frame structure, and was destroyed by fire in 1902. In 1903, a new stone school opened on the same site, and a four-room expansion was completed in 1917. The new school served eight to ten grades and employed four teachers. The borough's children were sent to high schools in neighboring districts, including Cheltenham High, after completing

the highest grade offered at the school. In 1968, following the Pennsylvania School Consolidation Law of 1965, the Abington-Rockledge School District served all Rockledge students. With declining enrollment, the Rockledge School closed in 1977. The building now serves as the borough's community center.

The construction of sewer lines in the borough was completed in 1960, which required extensive blasting. Earlier, water and gas pipes had been laid with difficulty.

Rockledge's first building code was adopted in 1931. Its zoning ordinance was adopted in 1940 and updated in 1993. The zoning ordinance regulates the location and intensity of new development in the borough. The borough's subdivision and land development ordinance was adopted in 1948. This ordinance served to regulate the development of land, new streets and other improvements (sewers, water pipes, drainage facilities, sidewalks, etc.).

The Rockledge Borough Council appointed the first borough planning commission in 1972, and adopted its first comprehensive plan in 1973. The comprehensive plan served as a policy guide for the subsequent decades. It analyzed existing conditions, established revised borough goals and objectives, and prepared plans for future land uses, provision of community facilities and services, and transportation improvements in the borough.

The first Rockledge Parks, Open Space, and Recreation Plan was completed in 1995. It formulated goals for enhancing recreation and open space areas in the borough, and pursuing funding for tree planting.

In 1997, Rockledge and the adjacent Fox Chase neighborhood of Philadelphia formed a joint business association to foster cooperation and begin several economic and aesthetic initiatives to improve both communities. In 2001 Rockledge formed a Revitaliza-

tion Task Force that produced “A New Vision for Huntingdon Pike”, the Rockledge Revitalization Plan. Rockledge and Fox Chase are currently conducting further joint revitalization initiatives and collaborative funding efforts to implement goals the Revitalization Plan recommended.

REGIONAL SETTING

Rockledge borough is a .35 square-mile community located along Montgomery County’s southeastern border with Philadelphia. The borough borders Abington Township to the north, west, and southwest, and the Fox Chase neighborhood of Philadelphia to the east and southeast, as indicated in Figure 1. In addition to Philadelphia, its regional location places it close to several major employment centers in Montgomery County, such as Fort Washington and Willow Grove.

Convenient access to these and other areas is made possible by several major area roads, including PA 232 (Huntingdon Pike-Oxford Avenue), PA 611 (Old York Road-Easton Road), U.S.1 (Roosevelt Boulevard), and I-276 (Pennsylvania Turnpike). PA 232 provides access to Philadelphia and Roosevelt Boulevard to the south, and Huntingdon Valley in Upper Moreland Township to the north. PA 611 provides access to Willow Grove and the Pennsylvania Turnpike to the north, and Cheltenham Township to the south. Public transit service is available via SEPTA’s 24 bus (Bethayres to Frankford Transportation Center via PA 232), SEPTA’s 28 bus (Tacony to Fern Rock Transportation Center via Rhawn Street), and the Abington Link Bus (stops include shopping centers, apartment complexes, and health care facilities in Rockledge, Abington, Cheltenham, Jenkintown, Lower Moreland, and Upper Moreland). SEPTA’s R-8 Regional Rail has a station in Fox Chase; this line provides service to Center City via Wayne Junction and Temple University).

There are no major natural features in the Borough. The nearest water body is the Rockledge Branch of the Pennypack Creek, the source of which is located just north of the Borough. This creek flows eastward, draining into the main branch of the Pennypack Creek in Pennypack Park in Philadelphia. Major borough parks or preserved land include Cegielkowski Park, Jarrett Avenue Playground, the Mill Park (27 Jarrett Avenue), Rockledge Park, and the Rockledge Community Center.

Significant natural features proximate to the borough include Lorimer and Alvethorpe Parks in Abington, and Pennypack and Burholme Parks in Philadelphia.

EXISTING LAND USE ANALYSIS

The Existing Land Use Analysis is the second part of the Community Profile Chapter for the Rockledge Borough Open Space Preservation Plan. This analysis focuses on the current land uses within the municipality, enabling a more in-depth focus of municipal land use patterns. In addition to the Existing Land Use Map (Figure 2), Figure 3 details the acreage of each category and the percent change from 1990 to 2004. The assigned land use categories are derived from board of assessment parcel data. These numbers are useful in understanding changes in land use patterns and help to identify potential open space and/or recreational needs.

RESIDENTIAL

The borough of Rockledge has traditionally contained a mixture of land uses, with residential uses predominant off Huntingdon Pike and nonresidential uses predominant on Huntingdon Pike. Overall, residential land uses are by far the largest category, as shown in Figure 3. This figure shows that approximately 70% of Rockledge’s land is used for residential purposes.

Figure 1.1
Regional Setting

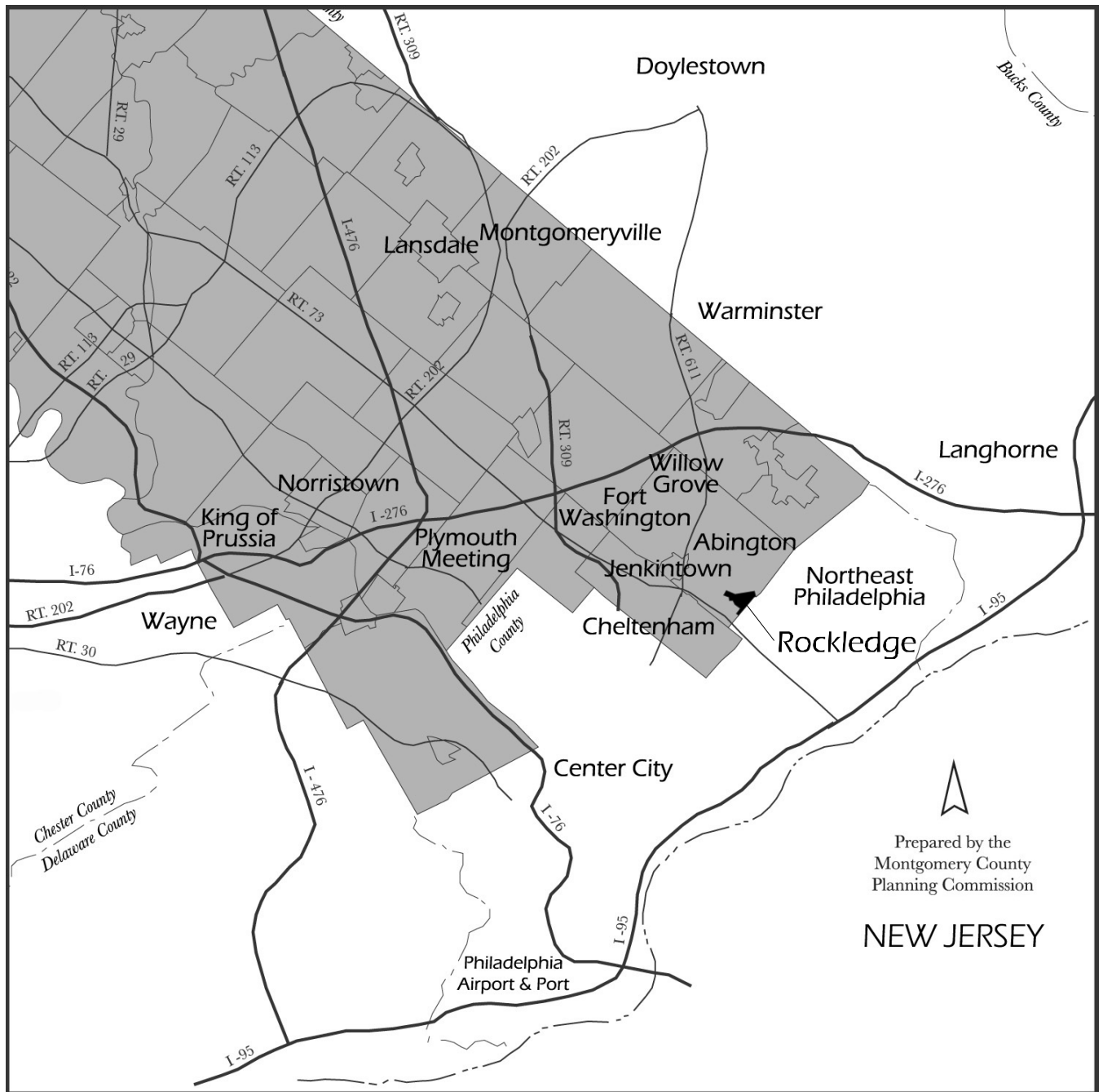


Figure 1.2
Existing Land Use

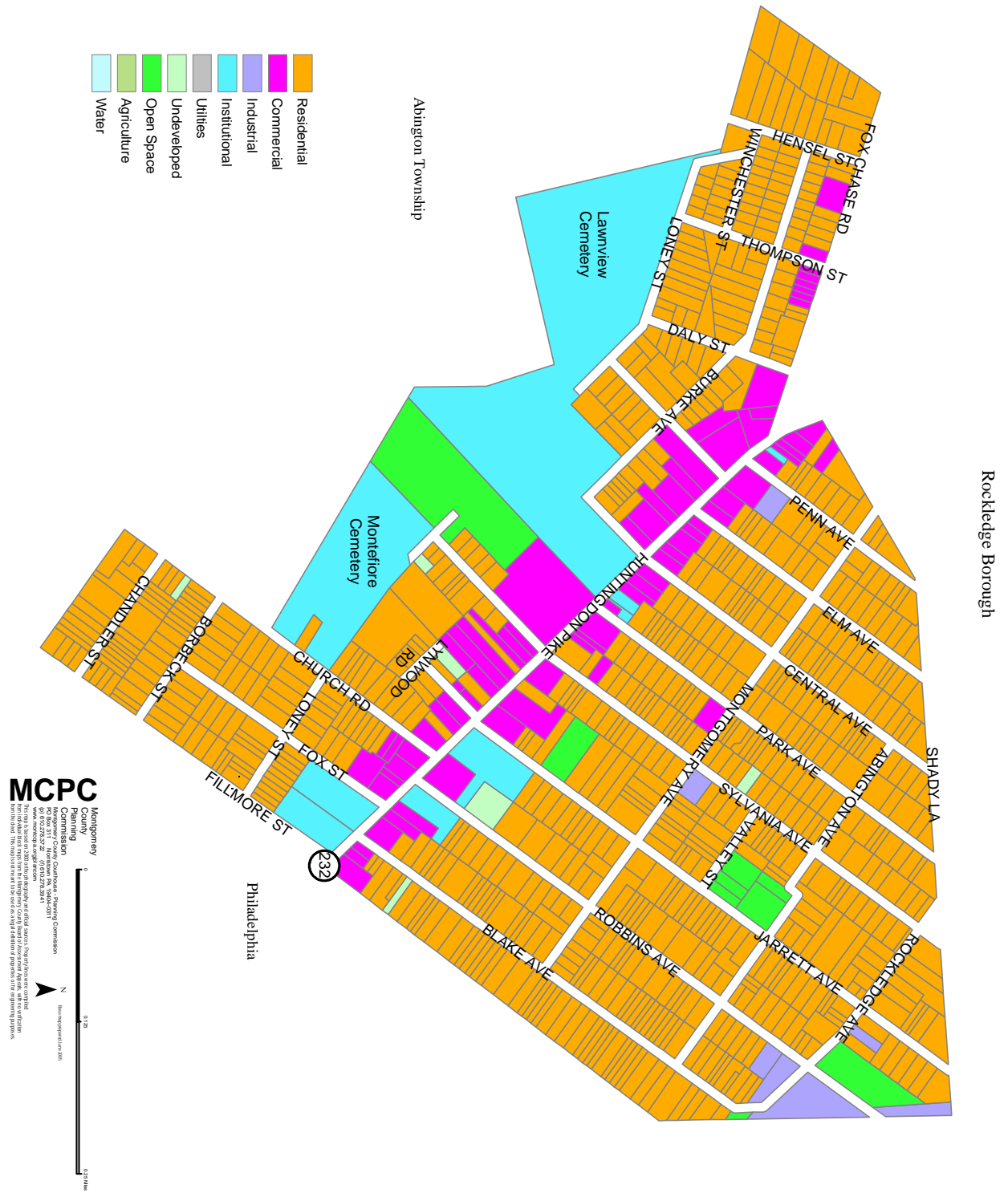
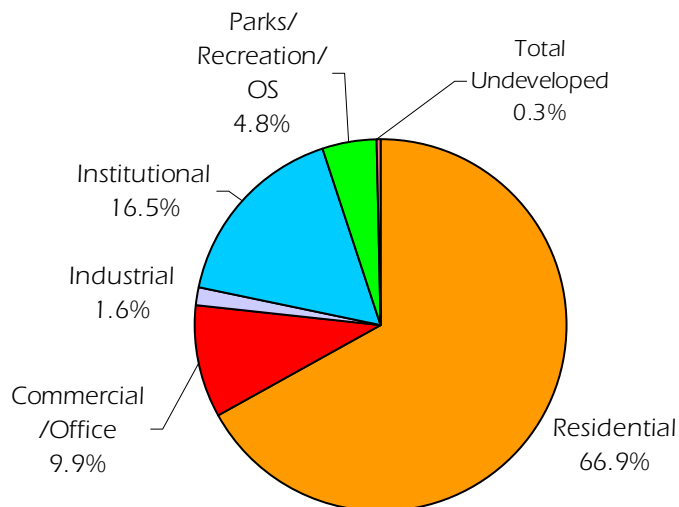


Figure 1.3
Existing Land Use

Land Use	1990		2004		% Change 1990-2004
	Acres	% Total	Acres	% Total	
Residential	135	73.0%	124	66.9%	-8.0%
Commercial/Office	18	10.0%	18	9.9%	-0.9%
Industrial	N/A	N/A	3	1.6%	N/A
Institutional	26	14.1%	31	16.5%	17.7%
Parks/Recreation/OS	5	2.9%	9	4.8%	68.6%
Utilities	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.0%
Agriculture	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.0%
Water	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.0%
Total Developed	184.7	100.0%	185	99.7%	0.1%
Total Undeveloped	N/A	N/A	1	0.3%	N/A
Total Acreage*	185	100%	186	100%	0.5%

Notes: (1) Industrial Land Use was not reported as a Separate Category in the 1995 Open Space Plan, (2) it is assumed the "Community Services" category from the 1995 Open Space Plan is equivalent to Institutional Land Uses, and



Source: Montgomery County Planning Commission Land Use Maps, 2004 (Discrepancies due to digitalization of parcels).

COMMERCIAL/OFFICE

Commercial and office uses comprise about 10% of the borough. Most of these uses are centered on Huntingdon Pike.

INDUSTRIAL

Less than two percent of Rockledge's land is used for industrial purposes. These uses are low-intensity, low impact uses.

INSTITUTIONAL

Institutional uses comprise 16.5% of the borough. Some of these uses are: government facilities (e.g., borough hall, the fire station, Rockledge Community Center and day care center, and the borough maintenance garage), a church, and cemeteries.

PARKS/RECREATION

Approximately 5% of the borough consists of parks and recreational activity areas. This category includes community parks and open space, sports fields, and playgrounds (It does not count the recreational space in the basement of the community center since that is counted in the institutional land use category).

UNDEVELOPED LAND

Less than one percent of Rockledge's land is undeveloped. These are comprised of small, scattered undeveloped parcels that have been subdivided from an adjacent parcel but not developed.

CONCLUSION

Since 1990 Rockledge's land use allocation has not changed dramatically. Parks, recreation, and open space uses, however, did show a large increase (69 percent), although they still only comprise five percent of the borough's land. Institutional land uses increased by 18 percent since 1990. Some of the changes shown in land use in institutional and other categories from 1990 to 2004 resulted from reclassification of parcels.

COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

The Community Demographic Analysis consists of information relating to Rockledge's population, housing, and economics. With few exceptions, the source of the information is the decennial U.S. Census and other reports of the Census Bureau.

Demographic characteristics provide insight when planning for open space preservation and recreational development. They can assist in determining not only how much land should be preserved, but also where. Additionally, this information can further assist a municipality in determining what type of recreational facilities, if any, should be placed in the preserved land.

POPULATION TRENDS

The rate of municipal population change (relative population increase or decrease) is an important measure of the magnitude of population change that has occurred over time. Figure 5 shows population trends in the Borough.

In 2000, the borough's population was 2,577, a decline of 3.8 percent since 1990. This trend reversed the trend of increased population (5.6% growth) experienced by the borough from 1980 to 1990. The longer term trend, however, is one of stability; Rockledge's population in 2000 was virtually identical to that of 1970 (2,564).

The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) serves as the region's metropolitan planning organization (MPO). Among other reports, it provides population and employment forecasts through the year 2025. These projections will be addressed in further detail in Chapter 7. According to these reports, during the next 20 years the population of Rockledge borough is projected to stabilize at approximately 2,480 people (from 2005 to 2025 the borough's population is projected to decline by 100 people, or 3.9% of its population). In general, projections are based on several factors, including past levels of development, recently proposed development, proximity to employment centers, available land, and public facilities.

POPULATION CLASSIFICATION

Population classification refers to those segments of the population either in households or in group quarters (institutions). Figure 1.4 shows that all of the Borough's population continues to reside in households. This was unchanged since 1990.

AGE

A community's age profile over time can be an important measure of growth and change. Among other things, shifts in the distribution among age groups can have significant impacts on the provision of social services, housing, school enrollments, park and recreation needs, and the labor force. Figure 1.5 summarizes changes in the Borough's age profile from 1990 to 2000. It shows the median age in the borough increased from 34.2 to 38.0. The fastest growing age group is middle-aged adults

Figure 1.4
Population Classification

Population Type	1990		2000		% Change
	Number	% Total	Number	% Total	1990 to 2000
Household Population	2,679	100.0%	2,577	100.0%	-3.8%
Group Quarters Population	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0.0%
Total Population	2,679	100%	2,577	100%	-3.8%

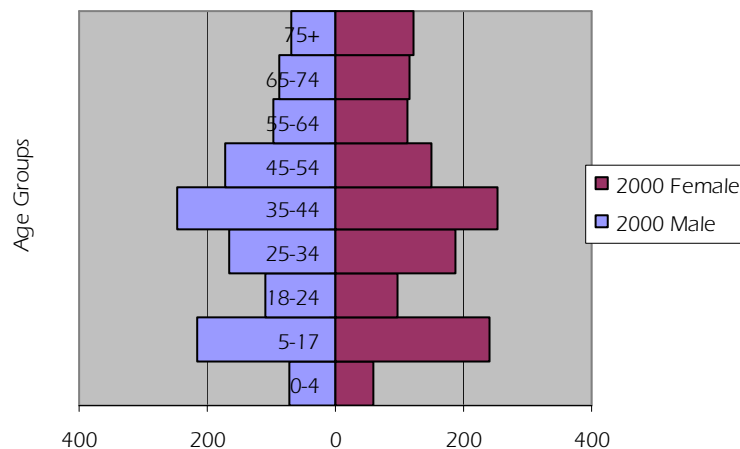
Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 1990, 2000.

Figure 1.5
Age Profile

Age	1990	% Total	2000	% Total	%Change 1990-2000
	Number		Number		
0-4	193	7.2%	133	5.2%	-31.1%
5-17	437	16.3%	474	18.4%	8.5%
18-24	211	7.9%	196	7.6%	-7.1%
25-34	546	20.4%	345	13.4%	-36.8%
35-44	373	13.9%	488	18.9%	30.8%
45-54	225	8.4%	336	13.0%	49.3%
55-64	250	9.3%	206	8.0%	-17.6%
65-74	238	8.9%	206	8.0%	-13.4%
75+	206	7.7%	193	7.5%	-6.3%
Total	2,679	100%	2577	100%	-3.8%
Median Age	34.2		38.0		

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 1990, 2000.

Age/Sex Pyramid



together indicates a demand for trails to provide an alternative to automotive transport. The age diversity in the borough indicates the park and open space plan should accommodate a variety of users of different ages.

INCOME

Figure 1.6 shows changes in per capita and household incomes for 1989

(35-54). The borough's population decreased in the following age groups: young adults (25-34), children (0-4), and older adults (55-74).

The ramifications of the borough's age profile are that there is a need to provide parks, recreational and open space needs for a variety of age groups. The presence of a sizeable proportion of youths in the community may indicate the continued need for active recreation fields and courts. The borough's youths and elderly taken

and 1999 (in 1999 dollars). Among other factors, changes in income reflect the state of the economy overall (recession or growth) and social changes such as the maturation of the baby boom generation (expanded labor force).

Per capita income is a per person average computed for every man, woman, and child in a given area. Per capita income also accounts for persons living alone, a growing segment of the population that is excluded from family income tabulations. As the percentage of the population earning income

Figure 1.6
Income Levels (1999 \$)

Income	1989	1999	% Change
Per Capita	\$14,428	\$ 21,232	47.2%
Median Household	\$32,824	\$ 47,958	46.1%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 1990, 2000.

has increased, so has the per person average. In Rockledge, per capita income was \$21,232 in 1999, a 47 percent increase since 1989. When adjusted for inflation, the increase was 10 percent.

Median household income refers to the income of the primary householder and incomes from all other persons over the age of 15 in the home, regardless of their relationship to the householder. Because households of unrelated individuals can be a fairly large proportion of all households, this measure may be a better indicator of the typical income for an area than the family income measure. Also, since many households consist of only one person, this measure is usually lower than median family incomes. Rockledge's median household income grew 46 percent from 1989 to 1999 to \$47,958 (when adjusted for inflation, the median household income increased by 9 percent).

SPECIAL NEEDS GROUPS

Certain groups within Rockledge borough have special needs that should be considered in determining how much open space is needed, the type of open space that is needed, and the specific design of the open space development. In particular, the very young, the very old, those with incomes below the poverty level, and people with disabilities have special needs that will affect the need for and development of open space. Because definitions of persons with disabilities have changed between the 1990 and 2000 censuses, a direct comparison for these groups could not be made. However, in 2000 approximately 20 percent of Rockledge's population between the ages of 16 and 64 had some type of disability (see Figure 1.7). Over the past decade, the number of people over age 65 has declined by 10 percent, while the number of people under age 18 has decreased by four percent. The number of people with incomes below the poverty level has decreased by 26 percent.

EDUCATION

Residents of Rockledge are generally more educated than the national average, but not as educated as the Montgomery County average.

Figure 1.7
Special Needs Groups

Special Needs Group	1990		2000		% Change
	Number	% Total	Number	% Total	1990-2000
Persons 16-64 with Disabilities			505	19.6%	N/A
Persons 16-64 with Mobility and Self Care Limitations	65	2.4%			N/A
Over 65 Years of Age	444	16.6%	399	15.5%	-10.1%
Under 18 Years of Age	630	23.5%	607	23.6%	-3.7%
Income Below Poverty Level	104	3.9%	77	3.0%	-26.0%
Total Population	2,679		2,577		-3.8%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 1990, 2000.

Figure 1.8
Education Level

Educational Level	1990		2000		% Change
	Number	% Total	Number	% Total	1990-2000
Less than 9th grade	63	3.4%	34	1.9%	-46.0%
9th through 12th grade, no diploma	319	17.4%	251	14.1%	-21.3%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	663	36.1%	642	36.0%	-3.2%
Some college, no degree	308	16.8%	345	19.4%	12.0%
Associate degree	107	5.8%	176	9.9%	64.5%
Bachelor's degree	218	11.9%	259	14.5%	18.8%
Graduate or Professional degree	160	8.7%	75	4.2%	-53.1%
Total Pop. 25 years and older	1,838	100%	1,782	100%	-3.0%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 1990, 2000.

Of Rockledge residents 25 years of age and older, the proportion having at least a high school degree was 84 percent in 2000, as compared to 80 percent in the nation and 89 percent in the County. The proportion of Rockledge residents 25 years and over having advanced education (a bachelor's, graduate or professional degree) increased from 26.4 percent to 28.6 percent from 1990 to 2000 [See Figure 1.8].

HOUSEHOLD TYPES

A household profile is defined by the Census Bureau as a person or persons occupying a

single housing unit. A household can be broken down into two categories. A family household is two or more related persons living in a single housing unit, and a non-family household is occupied by a single person or a group of unrelated persons. Nationally, as well as locally, households are changing. There has been an overall increase in non-family and single person's households since the 1970's. Fragmentation of the family unit through divorce, death of a spouse, or children leaving home to form their own households has contributed to an increase in the number of households and a decrease in the size of households. For example, although still representing a low proportion of the

Figure 1.9
Household Types

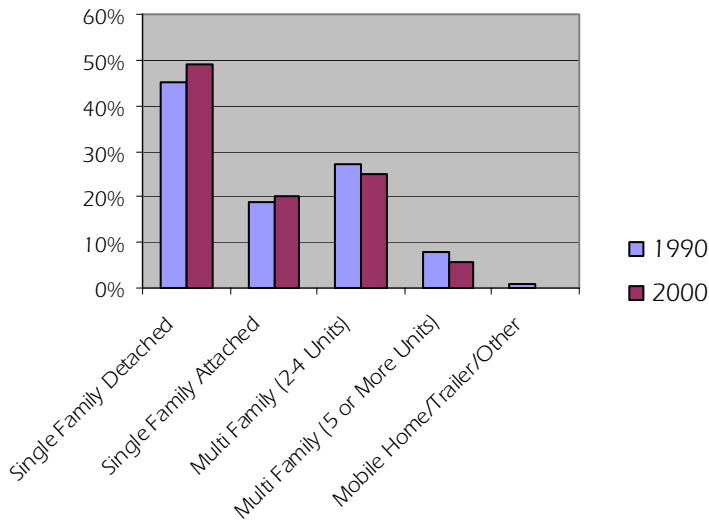
Household Types	1990	% Total	2000	% Total	% Change
	Number		Number		1990 to 2000
Married Couples with Children	269	24.6%	249	23.5%	-7.4%
Married Couples with No Children	310	28.3%	284	26.8%	-8.4%
Single Parent	46	4.2%	53	5.0%	15.2%
Other Family	60	5.5%	60	5.7%	0.0%
1 Person Non-Family Households	377	34.5%	367	34.6%	-2.7%
2+ Person Non-Family Household	32	2.9%	47	4.4%	46.9%
Total No. of Households	1094	100%	1060	100%	-3.1%
Average People per Household	2.45		2.43		-0.7%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 1990, 2000.

Figure 1.10
Housing Types

Housing Types	1990		2000		% Change
	Number	% Total	Number	% Total	1990-2000
Single Family Detached	504	45.0%	536	49.1%	6.3%
Single Family Attached	213	19.0%	221	20.3%	3.8%
Multi Family (2-4 Units)	304	27.2%	274	25.1%	-9.9%
Multi Family (5 or More Units)	86	7.7%	60	5.5%	-30.2%
Mobile Home/Trailer/Other	12	1.1%	0	0.0%	-100.0%
Total Housing Units	1,119	100%	1,091	100%	-2.5%

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 1990, 2000.



households in the borough, Figure 1.9 shows that Single Parent Households in Rockledge have increased by 15 percent between 1990 and 2000. The traditional household of married couples with children account for fewer than one in four households (23.5%) in the Borough.

The average household size is the number of persons in households divided by the number of occupied housing units. This too has seen a national decline as households continue to diversify. Rockledge's average household size declined only slightly from 1990 to 2000, from 2.45 people to 2.43 people.

HOUSING TYPES

Figure 1.10 shows a breakdown of the residential land use category by housing types. Although there is a predominance of single-family detached dwellings, a range of housing types is available. Multifamily units comprise nearly a third of all housing units in the borough, and single-family attached units comprise one-fifth of all housing units in Rockledge.

EMPLOYMENT AND LABOR

As used here, employment figures refer to the number of jobs (not workers) in a given area, and can serve a variety of purposes. As one aspect of the economy, they serve to inform the public of current and anticipated future economic conditions and may serve as decision-making input for current and potential employers and investors in the region. Because an area's growth and activity is related to its economy, employment data can also be tied to land use and transportation planning.

In recent years, Montgomery County has experienced a significant change as it has gone from being principally a bedroom suburb for Philadelphia commuters to an area that is a major source of jobs. The county's central location in the region and its major road network that permits direct access from surrounding counties are major reasons for this transformation. Evidence of this is found in

Figure 1.11
Labor Force by Occupation

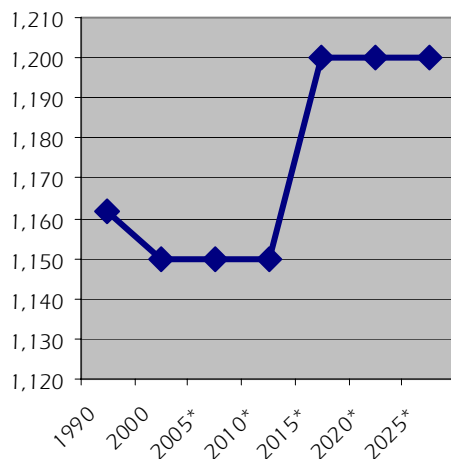
Occupation	2000	
	Number	% Total
Management	180	12.9%
Professional	322	23.0%
Sales	112	8.0%
Clerical/Office	345	24.7%
Construction	158	11.3%
Production/ Transportation	166	11.9%
Farming	0	0.0%
Services	115	8.2%
Total	1,398	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; Census of Population and Housing, 2000.

Figure 1.12
Employment Forecast

Year	Total Employment	Years	% Change
1990	1,162	1990-2005	-1.03%
2000	1,150	2005-2010	0.00%
2005*	1,150	2005-2020	4.35%
2010*	1,150	2005-2025	4.35%
2015*	1,200		
2020*	1,200		
2025*	1,200		

*Source: DVRPC Forecasts



the office, industrial, and commercial development in Willow Grove, Fort Washington, Plymouth Meeting, and King of Prussia– areas easily accessible from Rockledge.

OCCUPATIONS

The types of occupations held by residents in 1990 and 2000 are shown in Figure 1.11. The wide range of occupations listed have historically been classified as being “white collar” (managerial), “blue collar” (operative), or “other” (farm workers). Although this has generally been a useful distinction in terms of income, educational requirements, etc., the lines of distinction have become less marked as the nation’s economy has moved from being industrially based to information and service based. This change is evident nationally with the proportion of the U.S. labor force in white collar jobs increasing from 37 percent in 1950 to 60 percent in 2000. Approximately 77 percent of Rockledge’s working residents held white-collar jobs in 2000. Due to this shift, the census has implemented a new system for compiling labor force statistics, making it difficult to draw a comparison between categories from 1990 and 2000.

EMPLOYMENT FORECAST

As with population, the DVRPC provides employment forecasts for the area. Employment is projected to grow from approximately 1,150 jobs in 2000 to 1,200 jobs in 2025, representing an overall increase of about 4.4 percent over 20 years (see Figure 1.12).

MAJOR EMPLOYERS IN MUNICIPALITY

Only five employers in Rockledge have more than ten employees [see Figure 1.13]. The largest employers in the borough are the Fox Chase Cancer Center, which employs 49 people, and the American Oncologic Hospital, which employs 38. Other

Figure 1.13
Major Employers (includes part-time employees)

	Employer	Industry	Employees
1	Fox Chase Cancer Center	Medical	49
2	American Oncologic Hospital	Medical	38
3	Rockledge Borough & Police	Government	27
4	Austrian Village Restaurant	Dining	23
5	Orthopedic Surgery & Rehab Assoc	Medical	19
6	Kantor Curley Pediatric Associates	Medical	9
7	Acker's Hardware	Retail	8
8	Emberey Outtersen Fuges Attorneys	Legal	7
9	Barbin & O'Connell	Legal	7
10	Blake Florists, Inc.	Retail	7

OPEN SPACE AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE PROTECTION PLAN—ROCKLEDGE BOROUGH

The first Open Space and Environmental Resource Protection Plan was developed in accordance with the Montgomery County Open Space Preservation Program Guidelines and adopted in 1995. For the past nine years it has

Source: Berkheimer Tax Administrator, 2004

major employers include the borough and its police force, Austrian Village restaurant, other medical offices, legal offices, Ackers Hardware and Blake Florists.

STATUS OF RELEVANT PLANS

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, ROCKLEDGE BOROUGH

The primary existing planning document for the Borough is its 1973 Comprehensive Plan. The plan is based on 1970 census data and analyzes demographics, housing, transportation, community facilities, economic conditions, revitalization, and existing and potential land uses. Unlike a plan for a less developed community, a plan for a developed community like Rockledge is less concerned with shaping future growth and development through comprehensive land uses decisions than it is with maintaining and improving upon existing conditions. The key open space recommendations from this plan included:

- Rockledge should begin to investigate the acquisition or joint use of the portion of Lawnview Memorial Cemetery that fronts on Huntingdon Pike adjacent to the borough recreation field. An easement for use of this space should also be considered.
- Borough Council should encourage donations of land for open space and recreation purposes.

served as a guide for Borough open space preservation activities, enabling the Borough to use its open space acquisition funding allocation included in the County Program. This plan serves as the basis for this 2004 update, and contains many of the same sections. Among the key recommendations from this plan were:

- To provide recreation opportunities and open space experiences for all neighborhoods in Rockledge.
- Establish open space linkages within the Borough and between the Borough of Rockledge and adjacent municipalities and public open space.
- Make application to Montgomery County, Tree Planting Grant Program.

As part of the update of this plan, these and other recommendations were reviewed in detail as part of an audit process.

TOOKANY CREEK WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Tookany Creek Watershed Management Plan was developed with the communities of Rockledge, Abington, Cheltenham, and Jenkintown and was adopted in 2003.

CHAPTER 2

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

THE 1995 ROCKLEDGE OPEN SPACE AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE PLAN

Rockledge Borough completed the Open Space and Environmental Resource Plan in 1995. At that time a series of goals and objectives were developed to address issues regarding the preservation of open space and the protection of environmental resources. As a part of the update process required by the Montgomery County Open Space Program, Rockledge has evaluated its previous goals and objectives to address whether the goals are still valid and to evaluate why some of the last plan's recommendations were not implemented. Below are listed the previous goals and objectives with accompanying explanation of their status.

- **GOAL:** Provide recreation opportunities and open space experiences for all neighborhoods in Rockledge. Objectives within this goal included acquiring certain parcels prioritized for open space acquisition, achieving a balance of recreation facilities in the neighborhoods in the Borough, and improving existing recreation facilities in the Borough.

STATUS: With the acquisitions of Rockledge Park (1.5 acres of passive open space) and Mill Park (.75 acres of passive open space), virtually all part of the Borough are within 1/4 mile of parks or open space. The western part of Strockville is the only part of Rockledge not within 1/3 mile of parks or open

space. The Borough has improved existing recreation facilities at Jarrett Avenue Playground with new play equipment, and at the basketball court at Cegielski Park.

POTENTIAL FUTURE ACTION: The Borough should consider whether it is feasible to provide better access from Strockville to Cegielski Park. Acquisition of land in or near Strockville, and acquisition of unused cemetery land in the Borough for parks or open space might also be considered.

- GOAL: Establish open space linkages within the Borough and between the Borough of Rockledge and adjacent municipalities and public open space.

STATUS: The Borough acquired the 1.5 acre Vogt Property in 1996 (now Rockledge Park), and a small parcel where Blake Avenue and Rockledge Avenue meet. These acquisitions facilitate future connections to Montgomery County's proposed Pennypack Trail along the abandoned Newtown Branch of the former Reading Railroad. The Borough



Rockledge Park, purchased by the Borough with County Open Space Funds

has not established open space linkages within the Borough, or between Rockledge and adjacent municipalities' trails or public open space.

- GOAL: Make application to Montgomery County Tree Planting Program. Objectives within this goal included appointing a Shade Tree Committee and developing a landscaping ordinance.

STATUS: The Borough appointed a shade tree committee and made application to Montgomery County Tree Planting Program. Borough was awarded \$26,910 authorization for tree planting. The Borough did not utilize these funds because they needed to be spent on trees planted by 2004. The timelines of the Huntingdon Pike Revitalization Project precluded this.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR 2005 OPEN SPACE PLAN

The Open Space Committee has evaluated the goals and objectives of the previous plan and revised them to reflect what was discussed during the audit process. This section will serve as the framework for Rockledge's plan for open space preservation and protection of natural resources. Goals are provided regarding retention of open space, enhancement of existing facilities, coordination of open space, and protection of natural and cultural features followed by a series of objectives. Action items related to these goals and objectives will be created throughout the open space planning process and included in the recommendations and implementation chapters of this plan.

GOAL: IMPROVE EXISTING PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

OBJECTIVE:

- Make improvements to existing parks and public open space.

Action Steps:

- Rockledge Park—Improve with walking path, benches, landscaping, lighting, waste receptacles, water fountain, water spigot.
- Mill Park—Create master plan and improve with walking path, benches, lighting, landscaping, waste receptacle, water fountain, and water spigot.
- Cegielski Park- Upgrade recreation equipment, plant trees, add benches at tennis court, pave tennis and hockey court, add play piece, improve ball field, picnic table, make drainage improvements.
- Jarrett Avenue Playground– Upgrade recreation equipment, add benches and picnic tables, and plant trees

GOAL: IMPROVE PUBLIC ACCESS TO EXISTING PARKS AND OPEN SPACE**OBJECTIVES:**

- Establish linkages among existing Borough parks and open space.
- Establish linkages to parks and trails outside the Borough.

Action Steps:

- Acquire, preferably via fee simple purchase, land to facilitate a linkage between Church Road and Cegielski Park including the vacated Loney Street right-of-way. Improve by clearing vegetation, paving, landscaping and adding lighting and signage. Erect bollards to prevent motorized vehicle access.
- Negotiate an access easement located between Strockville and Cegielski Park over the Lawnview Cemetery. Pave trail and add lighting.
- Establish a Borough Trail that would link all Borough parks and open space, traverse attractive tree-lined portions of the Borough, and connect with

Lorimer Park and the Abington Township trail system. The Trail would be enhanced by signage, beautification/landscaping, and new or more visible crosswalks.

GOAL: ESTABLISH A PEDESTRIAN LINKAGE TO LORIMER PARK**OBJECTIVE:**

- As a short-term objective, establish a linkage with Lorimer Park as soon as possible. This trail or pathway might require an access easement from a nearby property owner, and will require adequate protection for pedestrians to cross Shady Lane. The linkage could exit the Borough at North Jarrett Avenue. Another possible route would take the trail over the railroad tracks and through a neighboring property.
- As a long-term objective, work with the various stakeholders (including the County, Abington Township, SEPTA, County Parks Department, and the Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust) to ensure the best trail option linking Rockledge with Lorimer Park is established as early as possible.

GOAL: IMPROVE THE BOROUGH'S NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**OBJECTIVES:**

- Enhance important Borough gateways

Action Steps: Enhance the following gateways to the Borough with attractive welcome signage, landscaping, and other features:

1. On Huntingdon Pike at boundary with Abington Township (while ensuring consistency with Huntingdon Pike revitalization project).
2. On Church Road at boundary with Abington Township.
3. On Huntingdon Pike at the boundary with Philadelphia (provided it is consistent with the Huntingdon Pike Revitalization project). The Borough would

support any improvement of the gateway monument posts by the Fairmount Park Commission.

- Revise Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SLDO) to incorporate tree replacement requirements.
- Plant shade trees in key locations

Action Steps:

1. Establish Huntingdon Pike Re-Greening Program to plant shade trees with co-operation of local property owners.
2. Plant shade trees in areas of the Borough where there are gaps in the shade tree canopy, particularly along the proposed Borough Trail system linking parks and open space.

central Rockledge (NE of Huntingdon Pike and NW of Park Avenue).

2. Acquire the vacant portion of the parcel bounded by Blake Avenue, Rockledge Avenue, and Robbins Avenue.
3. Establish endowment and/or gift giving program to encourage donations of open space or park amenities and recognize donors for their contributions.
4. Investigate joint acquisition opportunities with Abington Township.
5. Protect unused cemetery land in the Borough via conservation easement or acquisition.

GOAL: PRESERVE AND ENHANCE HISTORIC RESOURCES

OBJECTIVE:

- Preserve and enhance sites of historic significance and tell their story.

Action Steps:

1. Support any effort by Fairmount Park Commission to improve condition of monuments on Huntingdon Pike near Fillmore Street.
2. Link selected existing historic properties to the proposed Borough Trail.
3. Erect historic marker on former site of Huntingdon Turnpike toll house (at Lawnview Cemetery near Huntingdon Pike).

GOAL: ACQUIRE OR PROTECT ADDITIONAL PARKLAND

OBJECTIVE:

- Acquire properties via fee simple acquisition (purchase). These purchases would be targeted to provide parks for residents living farthest from existing parks.

Action Steps:

1. Acquire property to provide more pocket parks in Strockville and north-

CHAPTER 3

EXISTING PROTECTED LAND

A key component of the open space plan is a review of existing protected land. An inventory of existing conditions, along with an assessment of future needs, is necessary for formulating many of the plan's goals and objectives. Existing protected land refers to land preserved for active or passive recreation use and/or for environmental



Mill Park was purchased by the Borough with County Open Space Funding

conservation purposes. In addition to municipally-owned areas, it can include land preserved by private conservation groups, farmland, schools sites, and private open space preserved as part of residential or non-residential development.

This chapter identifies existing open and recreational land in Rockledge and separates it into two categories of protection - permanently- and temporarily-protected land. The latter category makes an important contribution to the overall recreation base of a community by preserving open space, conserving significant natural features, and/or providing recreation facilities that do not require municipal involvement in maintenance. However, temporarily protected land can easily be lost. In evaluating open space needs, this distinction is important, as is the goal of increasing the amount of permanently protected land so that future generations can also benefit from open space.



Rockledge Community Center

PERMANENTLY PROTECTED LAND MUNICIPAL OPEN SPACE

Rockledge Borough's existing system of parks and open space is comprised of both active and passive open space areas. Four parks or open space areas are owned and maintained by the Borough. The Borough also owns

and maintains the Rockledge Community Center. The Borough's parks and open space comprise a total of 7.5 acres of land, 5.3 acres of which is considered active space. The active open space includes amenities such as a softball field, volleyball court, tennis courts, basketball court, playground, gym, and picnic tables. Each offers community residents important recreational opportunities and scenic amenities.

Outside the Borough, there are five active recreation areas to note which may be used by Borough residents:

- Lorimer Park, Abington
- Burholme Park, Philadelphia
- Pennypack Valley Park, Philadelphia
- Fox Chase Recreation Center, Philadelphia
- Fox Chase Farm Park, Philadelphia/ Abington

TEMPORARILY PROTECTED PRIVATE

The undeveloped portions of Lawnview and Montefiore Cemeteries are private open space which are temporarily protected from development. These undeveloped sections of the cemeteries in the Borough are lands considered temporarily protected since it is possible they could eventually be developed.

In total, Rockledge Borough has a significant amount of protected land, with 7.5 acres being permanently protected and the cemetery land temporarily protected. This park and open space network provides Borough residents with many opportunities to enjoy all that open space can offer – recreation, tranquility, beauty, and a sense of community. However, approximately half of this land is comprised of temporarily protected

land—the undeveloped portion of the cemeteries. This could be lost to development in time if the land owners or land use changes. For this reason, the Borough should consider acquisition, or if too expensive, non-acquisition methods of gaining control of some or all of this land to benefit the overall Borough parks and open space system. With careful open space planning, residents may be assured the Borough will be able to offer them the same or greater level of active and passive open space in the future as they enjoy today.

CHAPTER 4

INVENTORY OF POTENTIALLY VULNERABLE RESOURCES

A key component of the open space plan is a review of existing protected land. An inventory of existing conditions, along with an assessment of future needs, is necessary for formulating many of the plan's goals and objectives. Existing protected land refers to land preserved for active or passive recreation use and/or for environmental conservation purposes. In addition to municipally-owned areas, it can include land preserved by private conservation groups, farmland, schools sites, and private open space preserved as part of residential or non-residential development.

GEOLOGY

Except for surface outcrops, bedrock geology is unseen, and as a result its influence on natural features is not always acknowledged. However, the influence is both strong and pervasive, for bedrock geology is the foundation of an area. Bedrock, along with the hydrologic cycle, is responsible for the changes in elevation, steep slopes, location of watercourses, and orientation (orientation, in turn, will influence vegetative communities,

soils, and availability of sunlight). The bedrock or parent material has a great influence on the type of soil formed. For example, hard, igneous bedrock has resulted in soils with a high stone and boulder content. Groundwater yield differs from one bedrock formation to the next. In Montgomery County, the difference ranges from under 1 gallon per minute (gpm) to over 30 gpm.

Montgomery County is located in the Triassic Lowland and Piedmont Upland section of the Piedmont Physiographic Province. The Piedmont Uplands are located in the eastern part of the county and include Rockledge. They are comprised of older metamorphic and igneous rock (granite and schist), although there is a band of carbonate rock that stretches east from Chester County to Abington Township.

Rockledge's soils are underlain by the Wissahickon Schist geologic formation, which covers most of Abington and the far eastern portion of Montgomery County. Schist is soft rock and is highly weathered near the surface. Joints through which groundwater flows are moderately abundant, making groundwater yields variable, though generally moderate (usually less than 20 gal/min).

Although Rockledge is completely served by a piped water system, in more rural communities the underlying geologic formations can significantly affect the potential for adequate well-water yields. The Wissahickon Schist formation only yields small well-water supplies unless well depths exceed 250 feet. The intensity of development in the borough, however, precludes the use of well-water to serve community needs.

TOPOGRAPHY

STEEP SLOPES

Slope, or frequency of change in elevation, is an important environmental condition. When expressed as a percentage, slope is defined as the amount of change in vertical elevation over a specified horizontal distance. For example, a three foot rise in elevation over a one hundred foot horizontal distance is expressed as a three percent slope. These changes in elevation throughout a community contribute a great deal to its appearance and natural diversity.

This is especially true of the steep slope areas of a community, which also cause limitations

to development. The slope and soils present on steep slopes are in balance with vegetation, underlying geology and precipitation levels. Maintaining this equilibrium reduces the danger to public health and safety posed by unstable hillsides.

Steep slopes often have a combination of vegetation, climate, soil and underlying geology that differs from the surrounding area. Frequently this means that the environmental sensitivity of the steep slope are different as well. Susceptibility to erosion and mass movement may be greater than the surrounding area, especially if vegetation is removed. Increased runoff and sedimentation from disturbed slopes require increased public expenditure for flood control and stormwater management. Also, different species of plants and the associated wildlife that depends on these plants may be present only on the slopes, creating unique recreation opportunities.

Overall, Rockledge is characterized by relatively flat terrain with no areas of steep slopes. Some of the steepest slopes in the borough slope down to the Rockledge Branch of the Pennypack Creek, along Blake Avenue, Robbins Avenue, and Jarrett Avenue. The borough recently acquired two parcels with modest slopes: Mill Park at 27 North Jarrett (4 to 12 percent slopes), and Rockledge Park on Rockledge Avenue (4 to 8 percent slopes).

WATERSHEDS AND DRAINAGE AREAS

Soils are a natural assortment of organic materials and mineral fragments that cover the earth and support plant life. The composition of soils changes slowly over time, due to weathering of rock and activity of soil organisms. As a consequence, soils vary with respect to depth to bedrock, depth to groundwater, color, mineral characteristics, fertility, texture, and erodibility. One of the most influential natural features, soils are a result of the hydrology and

the weathering capacity of the underlying geology in a given area. They are also influenced by the orientation of the land and the types of vegetation that grow in them. Conversely, the type of soil influences the vegetative cover of the land, which effects the quality and quantity of surface and groundwater, wildlife diversity, rates of erosion, and the aesthetic quality of the landscape.

Though soils are diverse, soil scientists have classified the soils found in Montgomery County into several groups called soil series. Soils listed within the same series will display similar subsurface characteristics. The surface characteristics of soils within a particular series can vary in slope, degree of erosion, size of stones, and other easily recognizable features.

The majority of the soils in and around Rockledge are classified as fill or “made land” of Wissahickon Schist origin. Made land is simply areas where earthmoving during development has removed or altered the characteristics of the original soils.

In addition to the soil mapping units, soils can also be divided into prime and important agricultural soils, hydric components, and

alluvial soils. The groups of soil pertinent to the Borough are described below.

SOILS

HYDRIC SOILS

These are periodically wet soils in an undrained condition that often support the growth of wetland vegetation. There are no hydric soils in Rockledge. The closest area with hydric soils is just west of the borough, south of Fox Chase Road in Abington.

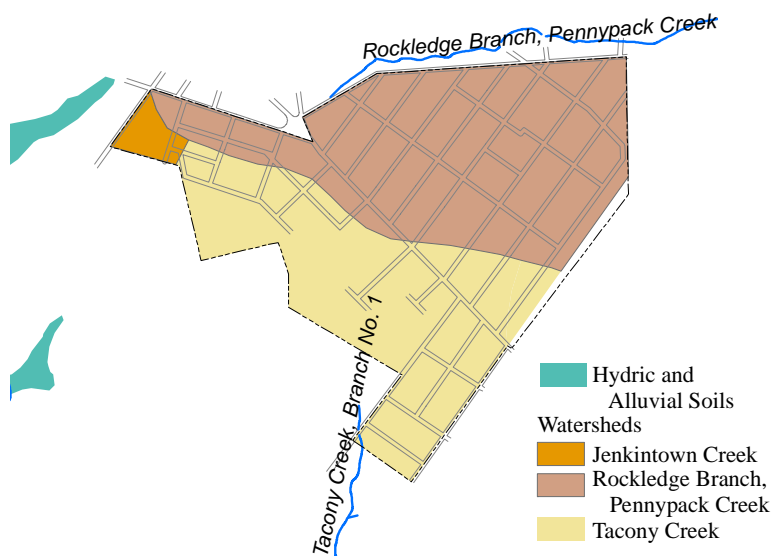
ALLUVIAL SOILS

Alluvial soils are frequently, but not always, located within a floodplain. They have been deposited by flowing water and are not stable as a result of their texture and composition. The presence of alluvial soils is only one indicator of a floodplain. An important aspect of alluvial soils is that they often form aquifer recharge areas. There are no alluvial soils in Rockledge. However, there is an area of alluvial soils which overlaps with the hydric soils area just west of the borough, south of Fox Chase Road in Abington.

SURFACE WATERS AND HYDROLOGY

Water is a valuable resource, consumed by people and industry, enjoyed at recreation facilities, employed in the assimilation of treated sewage, and integral to the landscape. The average rainfall in the county varies from 43 inches in Lower Merion near City Avenue to 47 inches in the vicinity of the Green Lane Reservoir. It should be noted that in any given year, annual precipitation can vary from the average by as much as ten inches. Generally speaking, in a natural setting 25 percent of precipitation becomes direct runoff, 50 percent evaporates or is transpired by plants, and 25 percent replenishes groundwater.

Figure 4.1
Soils & Watersheds



The surface water that falls on or is carried through Rockledge affects the topography, soils, vegetation, and groundwater and comes from two natural sources: direct runoff and groundwater. A third, manmade source, may also contribute to stream flow: effluent from sewage treatment plants, which tends to dampen the variation between high and low flow periods.

WATERSHEDS AND STREAM CORRIDORS

The borough drains toward the Delaware River. As shown in Figure 4.1, this occurs within the Pennypack and Tookany Drainage Basins, which also cover parts of Abington Township, Bryn Athyn Borough, Cheltenham Township, Hatboro Borough, Horsham Township, Jenkintown Borough, Lower Moreland Township, and Upper Moreland Township.

These basins are comprised of a series of smaller basins. For example, the Rockledge Branch is within the Pennypack Creek Watershed, while the Jenkintown Branch is within the Tookany Creek watershed.

FLOODPLAINS

There are no floodplains in Rockledge.

GROUNDWATER AND PUBLIC WATER SERVICE

Groundwater behaves much like surface water, flowing like a stream, only much slower. Groundwater is tapped as a source of drinking water and for industrial purposes where surface water is unavailable.

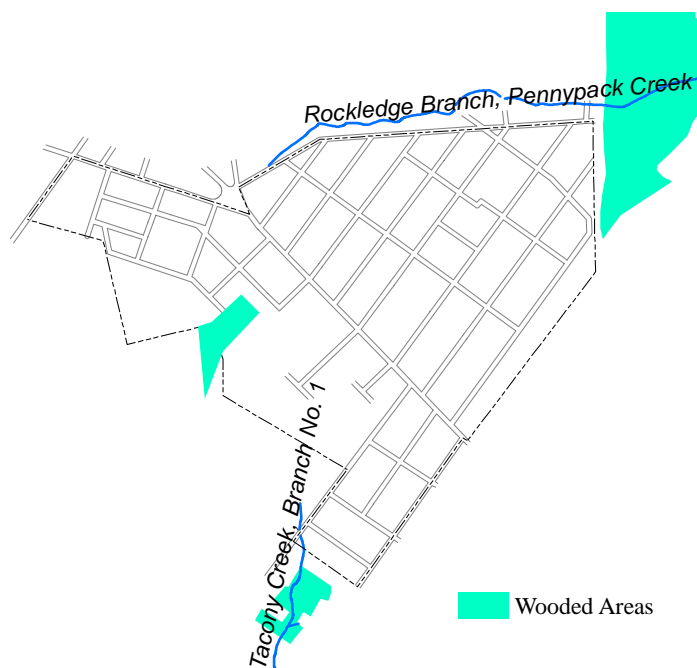
Groundwater replenishment occurs slowly, as precipitation and in some cases stream water seeps through the soil, down to the aquifer. Open, undisturbed land is essential to groundwater recharge, since vegetation serves to retain precipitation where it falls, allowing it to soak into the soil rather than run off the surface. Impervious surface from development prevents infiltration of precipitation.

Rockledge is serviced by public water mains provided by Aqua Pennsylvania. Water service in Rockledge should continue to be adequate in the future. Aqua Pennsylvania operates a public water supply system that services Rockledge as well as the southeastern portion of Montgomery County from Upper Merion to Lower Moreland. The water is drawn from the Schuylkill River, Neshaminy Creek, Pickering Creek, Perkiomen Creek, and wells. In addition, the system is integrated with other public water companies.

VEGETATION AND WILDLIFE WOODLANDS

The original vegetation of Montgomery County was a dense forest of hardwoods which covered over 99 percent of the county. Oaks were the dominant species, but chestnut, tulip poplar, hickory, ash, red maple, and dogwoods were also present. Several hundred years of clearing and cultivation, and in more recent times the rapid development of houses and

Figure 4.2
Wooded Areas



commercial facilities, have reduced woodlands to a shadow of their former extent. The principle types of woodlands remaining in the county are:

Red Oak - About 60% of all remaining woodlands. Northern Red Oak is predominant, but Black, Scarlet and Chestnut Oak are also abundant.

Ash/Maple/Elm - About 19% of all woodlands. Local mixtures will vary, and include minor species, such as the Slippery Elm, Yellow Birch, Black Gum, Sycamore, and Poplar.

Eastern Red Cedar - 18% of the county's wooded acres are covered with this species and associated species: Gray Birch, Red Maple, Sweet Birch, and Aspen.

Sugar Maple/Beech/Yellow Birch - The



Montgomery Avenue, One of Many Attractive Tree-Lined Streets in the Borough

remaining three percent of woodlands is comprised of this association. Associated species include Red Maple, Hemlock, Northern Red Oak, White Ash, and Tulip Poplar.

Woodlands and hedgerows serve many purposes, both functional and aesthetic. Woodlands prevent erosion, provide habitat

for wildlife, provide buffers for creeks, and offer recreational opportunities for residents. Hedgerows and wooded corridors also prevent erosion, and provide cover for wildlife movement, shelter, and migration.

The distribution of woodlands in Montgomery County can be described in three different patterns. Small, widely scattered stands can be found east of the central county ridge, often strung along alluvial soils. Long, linear stands along streams and on alluvial soils are typical in the central part of the county. Large forested blocks of land, often hundreds to thousands of acres in size, are found on ridges in the central and northern areas of the county.

Forested areas, however, are less common in the eastern part of the county. Some of the most significant stands in this region include those in Lorimer Park and Alvethorpe Parks (Abington Township), Bryn Athyn Borough, and Pennypack Valley Park (Philadelphia).

The borough of Rockledge is a built-out area with no woodlands. However, parts of the borough, including Rockledge Park, the cemeteries, residential lots, and streets are partly wooded or tree-lined. This adds to the borough's character and produces an attractive shade canopy in the summer. Rockledge borders wooded areas along Shady Lane and the abandoned Newtown Branch of the Reading Railroad line in Abington Township. The latter area is notable since it is the site of the proposed Pennypack Greenway County Trail.

SCENIC ROADS AND VISTAS

Scenic resources are elements of the natural and/or built environment that stand out among all the attributes of a community. They tend to be the most pleasant and interesting places, such as historic sites, natural features like lakes or creeks, and recreation areas.

Although the process of identifying a scenic resource is largely dependent on the observer's

Figure 4.3
Historic Resources

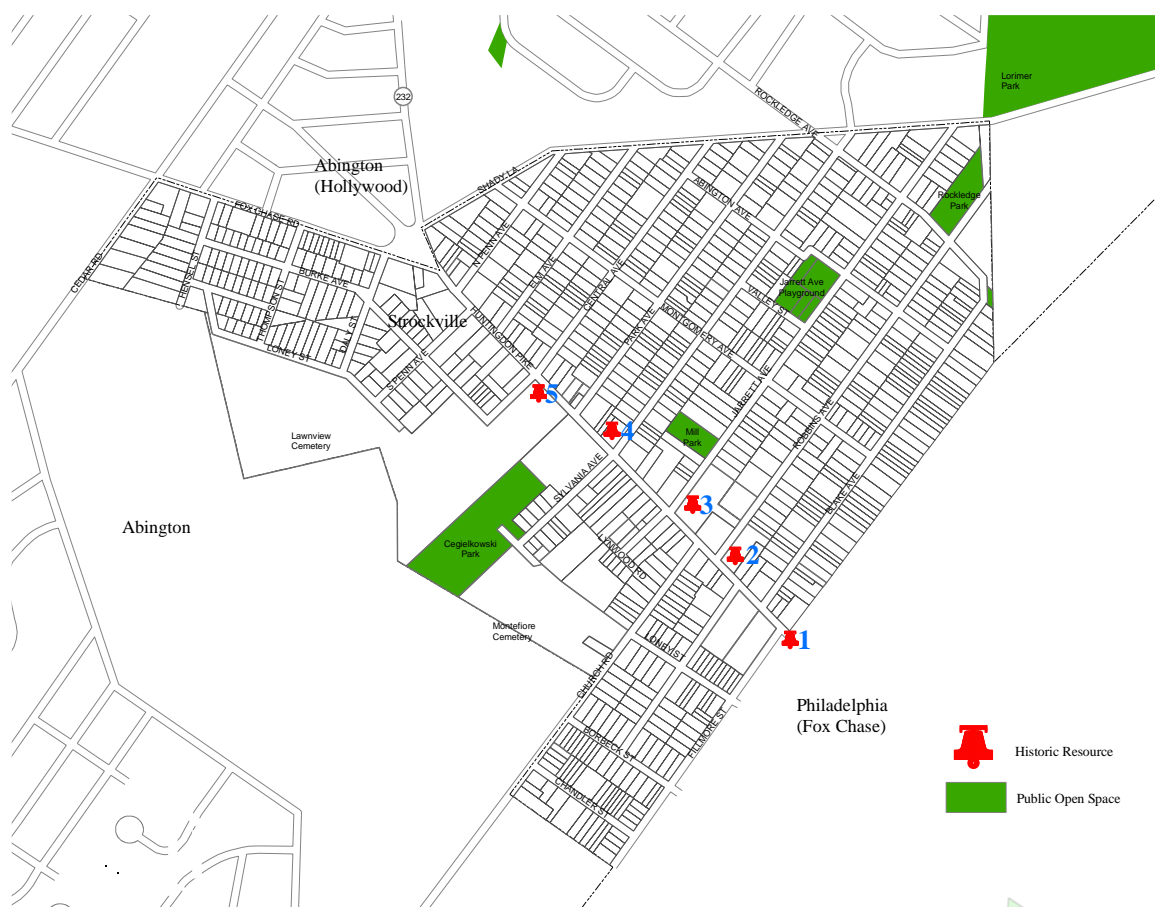
Address/Site	Number on Map	Construction Date	Historical Significance
Huntingdon Pike (boundary with Philadelphia)/Gateway Monuments	1	c.1921	Rockledge Gateway—This location contains two stone war memorial monuments marking the gateway to Rockledge. The monuments lie on the Philadelphia side of the boundary and are under the jurisdiction of the Fairmount Park Commission.
121 Huntingdon Pike/former Rockledge Elementary School	2	1903-1917	The original Rockledge Elementary School building was erected at the northeast corner of Huntingdon Pike and Robbins Avenue in 1889. The building had a wood frame structure, and was destroyed by fire in 1902. In 1903, a new stone school opened on the same site, and a four-room expansion was completed in 1917; the school closed in 1977.
205 Huntingdon Pike/Church of the Holy Nativity	3	1893	This church was constructed in 1893-1898, having been funded by the Ryers family. It was modeled after St. Neott's Church in England and the architects were the renowned firm of Milligan & Webber of Philadelphia. It was built by the respected Fox Chase builder, Joseph Ashly. The first building on the site was constructed in 1893 for the then-Mission Parish of the Holy Nativity.
501 Huntingdon Pike/First Firehouse	4	1910	Was the first firehouse constructed for that purpose in the borough. The current firehouse, at 505 Huntingdon Pike, was constructed in 1953. Rockledge's Fire Company No. 1 was organized in 1903.
400 block of Huntingdon Pike (at Lawnview Cemetery)/Former Site of Tollhouse	5	Unknown	The Fox Chase and Rockledge Turnpike Company operated the Rockledge Tollhouse near the current entrance to Lawnview Cemetery until the 1920s. At that time the state took over maintenance of the road and the Tollhouse was moved to 208 Central Avenue in 1935. [Source: "Images of America: Abington, Jenkintown, and Rockledge", Old York Road Historical Society, 2000]

Source: "Rockledge Borough Parks, Open Space and Recreation Plan," 1995 (Lord, Anderson, Worrell & Barnett, Inc., Consultant).

own opinions and preferences, information collected from a community group, such as a planning commission, can provide a relatively broad inventory. Wherever possible, these areas should be preserved and linked to the community's open space and recreation system. Scenic resources in Rockledge are generally considered to include the borough's residential tree-lined streets, which feature a pleasant shade canopy and well-kept, attractive homes.

Roadways with scenic attributes contribute to a community's open space system because they provide a way to view its scenic resources and in some cases also serve as recreation routes for walkers, bicyclists, and joggers. In Rockledge there are many areas that have scenic qualities, including streets lined with large, mature shade trees and well-kept, attractive homes.

Figure 4.4
Historic Resources



HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

As Rockledge is an older, developed borough, it has historic resources located within its borders. Although there are no sites on or designated as eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places, there are sites of local historic and cultural significance.

Rockledge was part of the Waterman Plantation, first settled c.1688, by Captain Humphrey Waterman of Barbados. He died c. 1695 and the lands went into a trust until his son Isaac reached his maturity c. 1707. The oldest homes within the Borough can be traced to this family.

Huntingdon Pike (PA 232) is the Borough's "Main Street". It originated as an Indian path before the arrival of William Penn, and was used by the first settlers to homestead parts of Montgomery and Bucks Counties. It became a turnpike (toll road) in 1846, and remained as such well into the 20th century.

Many Philadelphians sought to move out of the city in the 1880's seeking a suburban lifestyle. This migration generally followed the rail service at that time. Some of these newcomers were very wealthy businessmen, who established large country estates in the surrounding area. Joining the exodus from the city were members of the middle class. These are the

people who settled around the Village of Fox Chase, and founded the Borough of Rockledge in 1883.

Figures 4.3 and 4.4 (Historic Resources) describe the location and styles of important structures. Figure 4.5 is an 1877 map showing the future site of Rockledge (circled).

Figure 4.5
1877 Map of Abington & Cheltenham



From ATLAS OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY by J. D. Scott, 1877

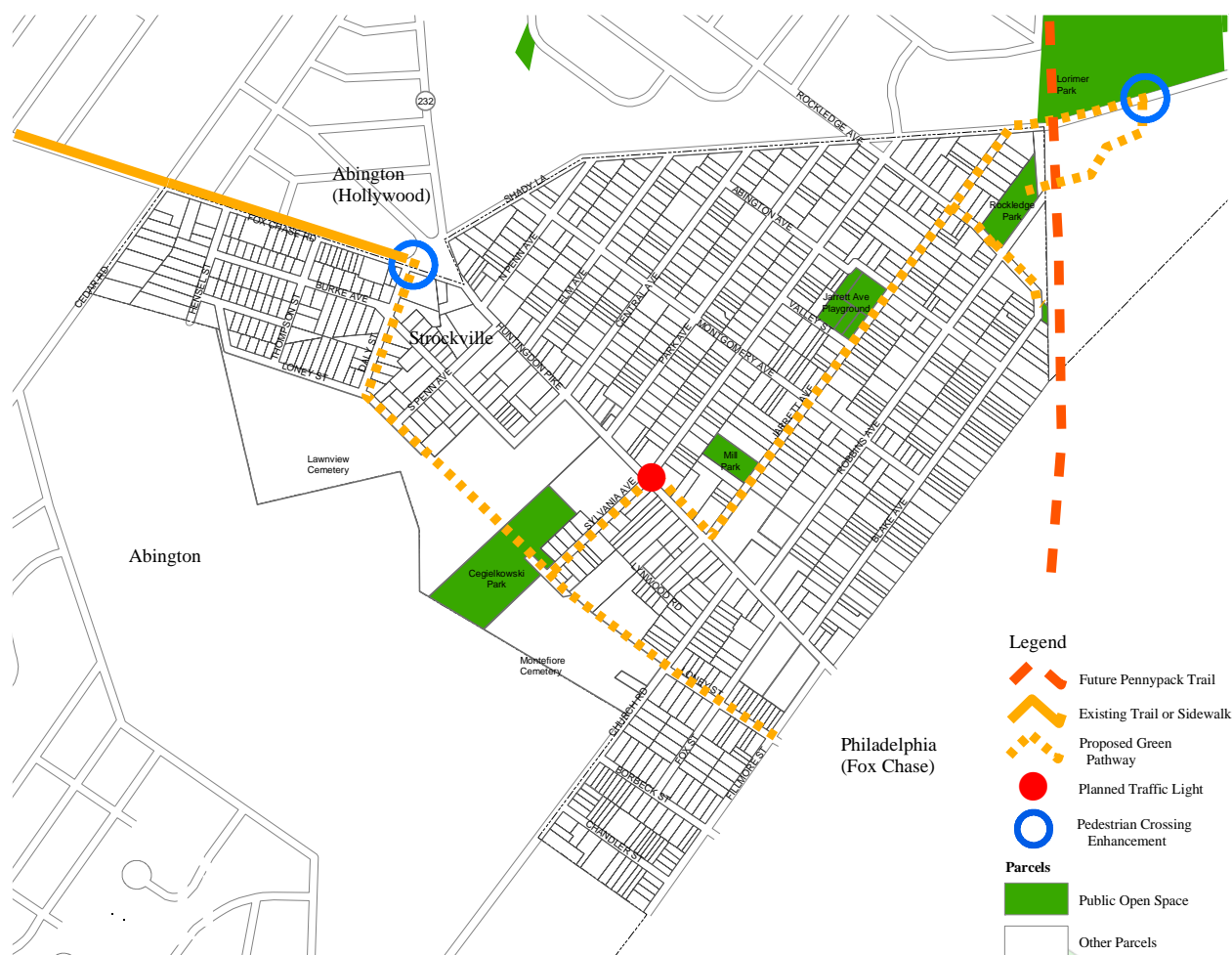
CHAPTER 5

POTENTIAL OPEN SPACE LINKAGES

An important aspect of open space is the accessibility of that space to community residents and to the region as a whole. This section of the plan identifies potential open space linkages that can tie together open space sites within the Borough and connect to open space in adjacent communities. Such connections help form a more comprehensive open space system for residents and contribute to the creation of a more effective and enjoyable regional network. They can increase the accessibility of parks by allowing off-street pedestrian and bicycle access and can offer recreational opportunities in and of themselves as passive, natural recreational space. Examples of potential linkages include abandoned rail lines, stream valleys, utility corridors, sidewalks, and similar linear features.

Identification of potential linkages on a regional level will help to contribute to Montgomery County's vision of a Countywide Trail System. Recommended connections for Rockledge are described in this chapter and shown in Figure 5.1. Trails can be developed in conjunction with County trail standards, which are flexible. Depending upon the context, and what users the trail is anticipated to serve (e.g., walkers, joggers, bicyclists, rollerbladers, equestrians) trails may be constructed of various materials or may utilize different engineering standards.

Figure 5.1
Proposed Trails, Pathways, and Street Crossing Enhancements



BOROUGH PEDESTRIAN LINKAGES

BOROUGH TRAIL AND OTHER PEDESTRIAN LINKAGES

The Borough Trail would connect various parks and points of interest in Rockledge with each other, as well as connect to parks and trails in Abington Township and Philadelphia. The Borough Trail would be established by installing wayfinding, identification and map signage; implementing strategically-placed trail or path connections; and making improvements to sidewalks and crosswalks. Acquisition of strategic linkages would facilitate this system's creation, and the planting of shade trees at gaps in the system would make it more

attractive for trail users. Recommended acquisitions #1, 3, and 4 in Figure 10.2 illustrate how certain acquisitions are critical to the development of the proposed Rockledge Borough Trail system. Recommended acquisition #4 is on the proposed trail route and recommended acquisitions of pocket parks in Strockville would be located near the trail (which comprises the western half of the larger area #2 shown in Figure 10.2).

LONEY STREET LINKAGES

As discussed in Chapter 2, the borough is interested in acquiring the vacated portion of Loney Street between South Sylvania Avenue and Church Street. This would be a key link in the Borough Trail system and would provide improved access to Cegielkowski Park. The borough is also interested in investigating the possibility of acquiring an easement that would allow pedestrians to travel over part of Lawnview Cemetery. This would link South Sylvania Avenue and Cegielkowski Park to the borough's Strockville neighborhood.

The following are specific recommended improvements to create a Borough Trail system:

SIDEWALKS

The existing borough sidewalk system is quite extensive. Minor improvements and modifications could be made to the sidewalk network along the proposed Borough Trail route. Sidewalks in poor condition could be repaired.

CROSSWALKS

Enhancing crosswalks along the Borough Trail route would help identify the Trail, make it safer for users, and make it more attractive. Pedestrian safety at crosswalks can be enhanced by repainting crosswalks with highly-visible ladder-style or hatched markings, by using pavement treatments (e.g., stamped concrete), by installing signs or blinker lights calling drivers' attention to the crosswalk, or by installing speed humps (speed humps have a more moderate rise and flatter top than speed "bumps"). Any crosswalk enhancement would utilize a design compatible with crosswalks enhanced as part of the Huntingdon Pike Revitalization Project.

There will soon be a traffic light at Huntingdon Pike and Sylvania Avenue to facilitate pedestrians crossing at that location. However, pedestrian crossings of Church Street at Loney Street and Fox Chase Road at Daly Street should be tar-

geted for improvement. These improvements should be coordinated with Abington Township and PennDOT.

STREET TREES

Parts of the proposed Borough Trail have generous shade tree coverage. However, the sections without trees could be aesthetically improved by planting street trees along them. Areas that lack shade trees include Huntingdon Pike, parts of Strockville and Loney Street (for a map of these and other streets in the borough with shade tree gaps, see Figure 11.2). Where the sidewalk is not wide enough to plant shade trees (such as on Huntingdon Pike), property owners should be encouraged to assume responsibility for trees paid for and planted by the borough.

WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

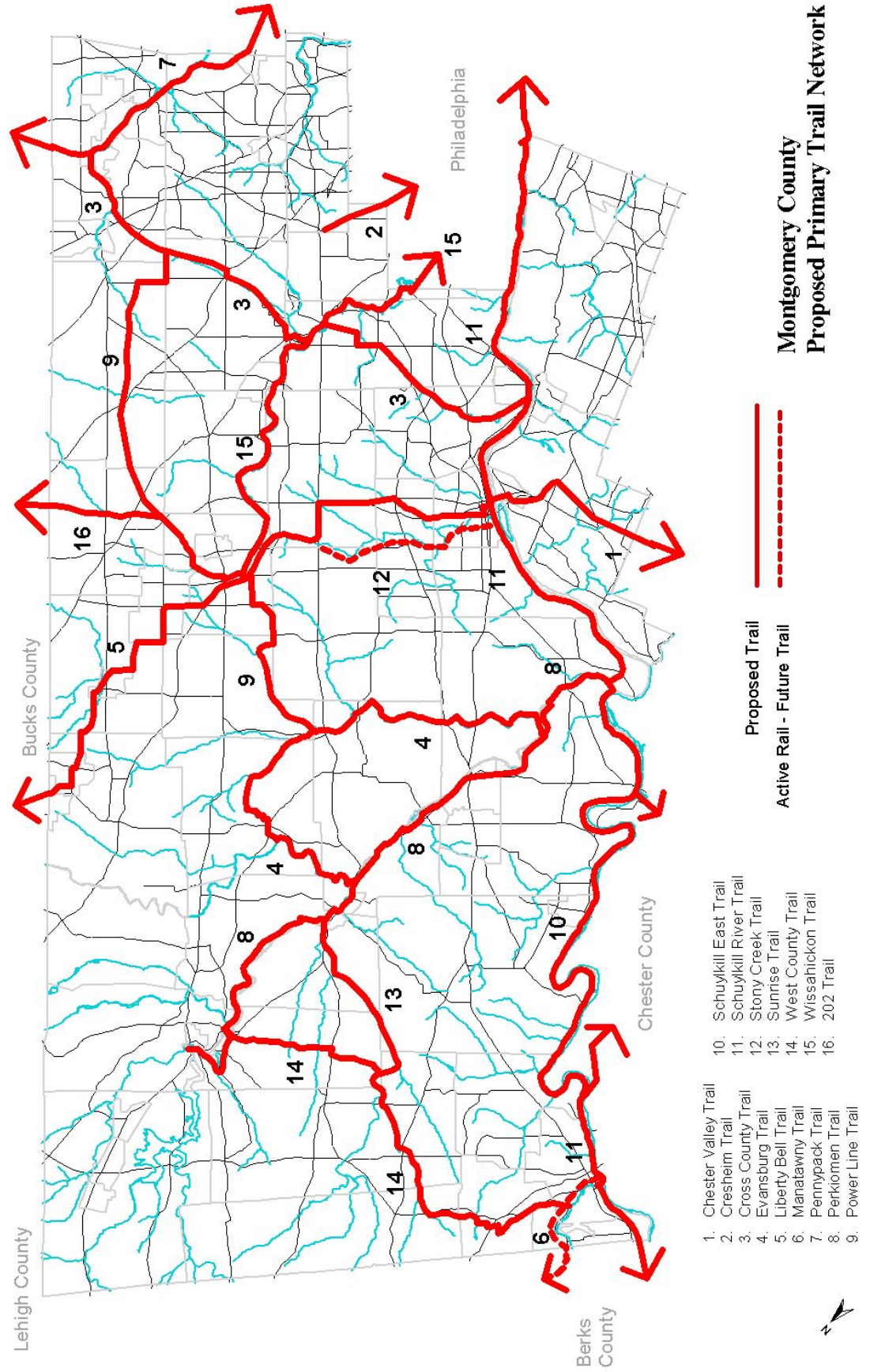
The borough could install wayfinding signage to identify the Borough Trail route and provide directions and distances to parks and open space along the Borough Trail. The signage will use colors, size, design, and placement that is aesthetically pleasing, that does not detract from the appearance of the surrounding neighborhood, and is compatible with signage of adjacent municipalities.

EXTERNAL LINKAGES

LINKAGE TO LORIMER PARK

The borough is interested in creating a connection to Lorimer Park. The future Montgomery County Pennypack Trail is planned to be constructed sometime after 2007 [see Figure 5.2]. This Trail would be constructed along the abandoned Newtown Branch of the former Reading Railroad; this rail line lies along the borough's boundary. The borough recently purchased a small parcel that would provide access to the trail from Blake Avenue; the borough also recently acquired Rockledge Park which could provide access to the trail.

Figure 5.2
Proposed County Trail Network



The borough is interested in constructing a segment of the Pennypack Trail ahead of schedule. Such a segment would connect Rockledge with Lorimer Park to the north-east. However, there is currently a two-year feasibility study of rapid bus service being undertaken in the Bux-Mont area of Montgomery County north of Rockledge and adjacent parts of Bucks County. Depending on the outcome of this study, SEPTA may pursue re-establishing passenger rail service on the former Newtown Branch of the Reading Railroad. After the study is complete and a final use is determined for the rail line, planning for the future Pennypack County Trail in the Rockledge area may resume.



Lorimer Park (a Montgomery County park)

The main challenge in developing a trail or other pedestrian linkage with Lorimer Park would be how to cross Shady Lane. The existing railroad bridge over Shady Lane ends in a dead end high over the ground, so constructing a new pedestrian bridge may be the best option. However, since this is the site of a future County trail and would link to a County park, most or all of the funding for a bridge might come from the County Open Space Program (state and federal funding could also be pursued).

The borough will work with the various stakeholders (including the County, Abington Township, SEPTA, Lorimer Park, and the Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust) to ensure land or access easements are acquired for public use of the rail line right-of-way as a trail.

Since Rockledge would like to construct a pedestrian connection to Lorimer Park as soon as possible, a short-term alternative for accessing Lorimer Park should be investigated. This might involve the purchase or acquisition of an access easement in Abington adjacent to the borough's Rockledge Park. This would be used for constructing a trail from the borough through a wooded area in Abington Township to reach the access point to Lorimer Park on Shady Lane. An easement with SEPTA would also need to be negotiated (preferably for a limited duration pending the determination of the final use for the rail line). A pedestrian crossing would need to be established on Shady Lane that provides adequate protection to pedestrians from automobile traffic. This might require a flashing blinker light, a push-button crossing light, signs, stamped concrete, rumble strips, or an elevated speed table.

An alternative method of establishing a connection to Lorimer Park would be to construct a pedestrian crossing of Shady Lane at North Jarrett Avenue. A path would need to be established to the Lorimer park entrance on Shady Lane. If and when a new rail bridge is constructed over Shady Lane, Rockledge should advocate for a wide enough clearance to be established to accommodate pedestrian traffic so a trail could be constructed alongside Shady Lane to the Lorimer Park entrance.

LINKAGE TO ABINGTON SIDEWALK/TRAIL NETWORK

Rockledge should work with PennDOT and Abington to establish or improve a crosswalk on Fox Chase Road at Daly Street. This would facilitate a safer pedestrian linkage from the Rockledge Borough Trail to the Abington Township trail network (based on site distance

and traffic considerations, Daly Street is considered to be the safest crossing point in this vicinity).

LINKAGE TO FOX CHASE

The borough's sidewalk system already interconnects with the Fox Chase neighborhood. Signage along this route would direct users to points of interest in the adjacent Fox Chase neighborhood. Directional signage could be used to direct pedestrians or bicyclists south to the Fox Chase business district, Burholme Park, Ryers Mansion, SEPTA's R8 Fox Chase Regional Rail line station, and other points of interest.

Another linkage to Fox Chase is proposed via the future Pennypack Trail on the unused Newtown Branch of the Reading railroad; this would connect Rockledge (at Blake Avenue) with the Fox Chase neighborhood at Rhawn Street near the SEPTA Rail station. Streetscape improvements to that part of Rhawn Street are planned in conjunction with the Rockledge/Fox Chase Revitalization project. This would make SEPTA's regional rail system more accessible to residents of Rockledge and nearby Abington.

CHAPTER 6

ANALYSIS OF UNPROTECTED RESOURCES

As outlined in chapter four, important vulnerable resources in Rockledge include scenic roads and historic structures. This chapter identifies areas where these resources are not permanently protected, proposes priorities for their future preservation, and establishes specific protection goals. Generally, the priority categories are based on the extent of resources found in a given area (particularly where a concentration exists), their location and contribution to community identity, and the open space goals established in chapter two. Figure 29 shows the locations of each site.

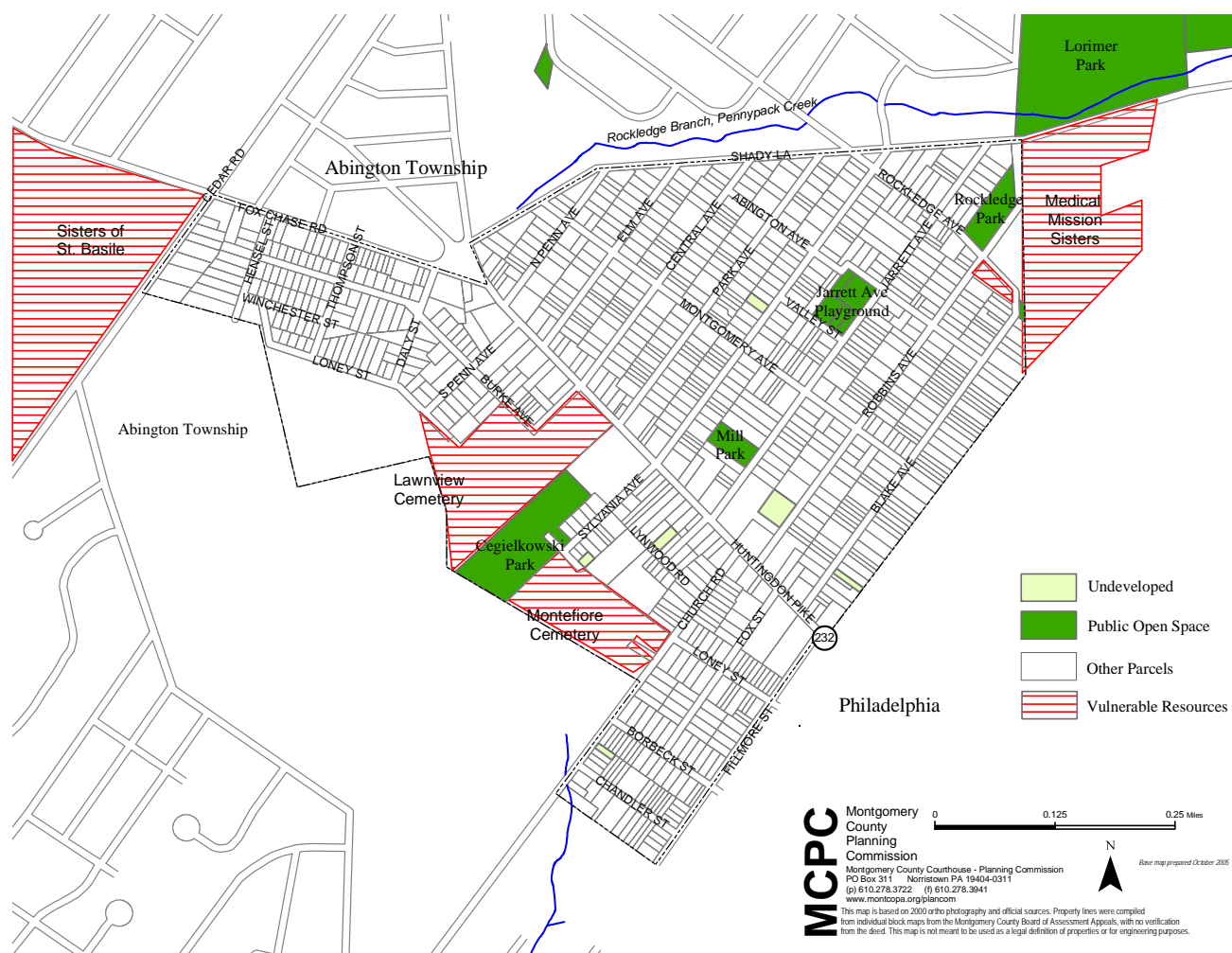
VULNERABLE RESOURCES ANALYSIS

Historic sites are one important vulnerable resource in a community. Individually and taken together, they provide a link to a community's past and thereby can make a valuable contribution to its current educational, cultural, and social environment. In the case of historic structures, often their architectural significance and/or uniqueness create visual interest by contrasting with surrounding development. Of course, the number and type of historic resources varies

from place to place, dependent largely upon the particular mix of political, social, cultural, and archeological factors.

At the national level, the National Register of Historic Places contains a record of properties considered worthy of preservation. This list contains a number of sites in Montgomery County, such as Valley Forge National Park. There are no such sites in Rockledge.

Figure 6.1
Vulnerable Resources



Scenic resources are elements of the natural and/or built environment that stand out among all the attributes of a community. They tend to be the most pleasant and interesting places, such as historic sites, natural features like lakes or creeks, and recreation areas.

PRIORITIZATION OF AREAS FOR PRESERVATION

HIGHEST PRIORITY AREAS

- **LONEY STREET LINKAGE EAST**—South Sylvania Avenue to Church Road (via easement or acquisition)—This area is located along the vacated Loney Street right-of-

way. It is currently a wooded area with an informal path. The fee simple acquisition (purchase) of this important area would enable the Borough to establish a more formalized path and improve access to Cegielski Park from Church Road.

- **STROCKVILLE LINKAGE**—Strockville Section of Rockledge to Cegielski Park (via easement over Lawnview Cemetery property)—An easement over the undeveloped portion of Lawnview Cemetery would allow a linkage to be established between the Strockville section of Rockledge (at Burke Avenue or West Loney Street) to Cegielski Park. This would improve access to Cegielski Park from

the Strockville section of Rockledge. The western portion of Strockville is virtually the only part of Rockledge that is more than one-quarter mile from a Borough park.

HIGH PRIORITY AREA

- **PENNYPACK TRAIL LINKAGE TO LORIMER PARK**—An easement on or adjacent to the unused Newtown Branch of the Reading Railroad would allow Rockledge residents and other members of the public to access the future Pennypack trail (after it is constructed) between Rockledge and Montgomery County's Lorimer Park in Abington.

The Pennypack Trail is planned for construction sometime after 2007, but the Borough would like to expedite development of this section of the trail to provide a linkage from the Borough to Lorimer Park for pedestrians, joggers, and bikers. The Pennypack Trail could be accessed from Rockledge Park and the small parcel of land the Borough owns where Rockledge Avenue meets Blake Avenue.

A key component of any such linkage would almost certainly be a new bridge crossing Shady Lane to provide a safe way of crossing that road (the existing railroad bridge dead ends high above the ground on the northern side of Shady Lane).

CHAPTER 7

EVALUATION OF GROWTH AREAS

In addition to establishing open space preservation areas, it is important to identify areas that can accommodate any projected community growth. While virtually all of Rockledge is built out, there is some room for both residential and non-residential infill development. This chapter examines the direction of population and employment changes expected in Rockledge and evaluates whether the municipality needs to identify specific growth areas.

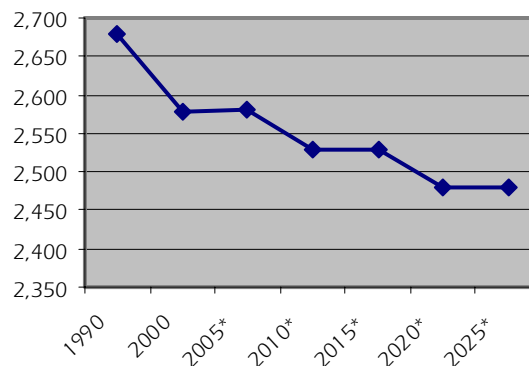
POPULATION, HOUSING, AND EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS

From 1990 to 2000 the Borough's population declined by 3.8 percent to 2,577. The drop in population is part of a larger pattern of declining population in the region's urban areas and Boroughs. By the year 2025, DVRPC projects Rockledge's residential population will decrease modestly to 2,480 persons, or 97

fewer than the Borough had in 2000 (Figure 7.1). In addition, it is expected to have about 1,200 people employed, up from 1,150 in 2000 (Figure 7.2). As population is projected to decline by 2025, so will Rockledge's average household size; however this is not expected to make up for the decrease in new units

Figure 7.1:
Population Projection

Year	Population	Years	% Change
1990	2,679	1990-2000	-3.8%
2000	2,577	2000-2010	-1.8%
2005*	2,580	2010-2020	-2.0%
2010*	2,530	2000-2025	-3.8%
2015*	2,530		
2020*	2,480		
2025*	2,480		

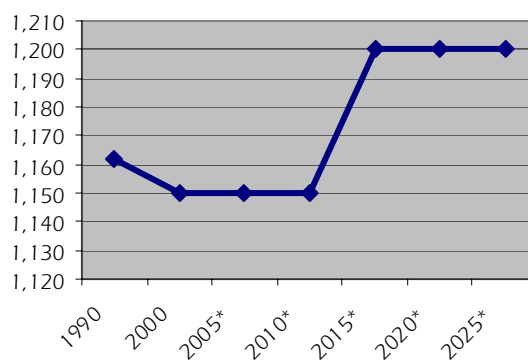


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population and Housing, 2000; DVRPC Projections

* Projected Populations

Figure 7.2:
Employment Forecast

Year	Total Employment	Years	% Change
1990	1,162	1990-2000	-1.0%
2000	1,150	2000-2010	0.0%
2005*	1,150	2010-2020	4.4%
2010*	1,150	2000-2025	4.4%
2015*	1,200		
2020*	1,200		
2025*	1,200		



***Source:** DVRPC Forecasts

Figure 7.3
Residential Build-out Estimate

Residential	2025
Projected Population in HHs	2,480
Projected Average HH Size	2.36
Vacancy Rate	1.6%
Projected Future Housing Units Needed	1,068
Existing Housing Units (2000)	1,091
New Housing Units Needed	-23

needed (Figure 7.3). Therefore, no particular future growth area needs to be delineated for Rockledge.

Rockledge is expected to experience revitalization rather than growth. While the number of residents in Rockledge may not increase over the next twenty years, changes in demographics are likely to occur. For example, the Borough's homes are relatively affordable compared to the rest of Montgomery County. This may make the Borough increasingly attractive to age groups that contain first-time homebuyers looking for affordability and "empty-nesters" seeking to downsize to the type of home found in Rockledge (smaller on average than the larger homes typically found in the newer suburbs). New and existing residents will come to expect advances in the Borough, such as a revitalized Huntingdon Pike commercial area, and upgrades to housing, municipal facilities, and passive and active open space areas.

VULNERABLE AREAS

As stated in Chapter 6, there are a few sizable areas considered vulnerable to potential future development. This includes the undeveloped portions of the Lawnview and Montefiore Cemeteries within the Borough

itself. Adjacent to the Borough, in Abington Township, are two other vulnerable areas: the relatively undeveloped properties of Medical Mission Sisters to the east, and the Sisters of St. Basile to the west.

RESIDENTIAL BUILD-OUT POTENTIAL

There are three areas designated vulnerable to development in the Borough (see Figure 6.1). The two larger parcels are undeveloped portions of cemetery properties which lie in the IN-Institutional zoning district. If these areas are developed in the future under current zoning, uses that could be built include: institutions for the care of the aged or children, or schools and other educational facilities (including boarding). No residential uses are permitted. The undeveloped portion of Lawnview Cemetery that lies in the Borough is approximately 10.4 acres. The undeveloped portion of Montefiore Cemetery which lies in the Borough is approximately 6.2 acres.

If the lowest-density housing currently permitted in the Borough was permitted on these parcels, up to 75 homes could be built on the parcel on Huntingdon Pike and up to 45 homes could be built on the smaller parcel on Church Road. The density used in these calculations is one home per 6,000 square feet (the density permitted in the SUR-Single-Family Urban Residential District).

The other vulnerable area in Rockledge (.44 acres) lies in the Limited Industrial District; residential uses are not permitted in this district.

CHAPTER 8

EVALUATION OF OPEN SPACE NEEDS

RECREATION STANDARDS

This section of the plan examines the amount of existing public open space and types of recreation facilities in relation to current and expected future needs. Recreation-oriented organizations such as the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) recommend that municipalities strive to meet their open space needs independently of other providers, such as schools and private developments. Therefore open space provided by quasi-public establishments is considered only peripherally. An analysis of recreational public open space considers how open space land is distributed in addition to showing if a deficit exists or will occur in the future. The results of the analysis should help guide decisions concerning future open space preservation and facilities planning.

THE SELECTION OF A STANDARD

The NRPA has developed national standards for recreation, parks, and open space (Recreation, Park and Open Space Standards and Guidelines; 1983). Its standards are

widely accepted and used, although they should be viewed only as a guide for planning, not as absolute criteria. In addition, these standards mainly apply to recreational

uses, rather than passive or natural open space (of which there is no standard minimum or maximum). The commonly used standard is the population ratio method, or the number of acres of parkland per 1,000 people. The NRPA estimates that a total of 6.25 to 10.5 acres of municipally owned and developed open space per 1,000 people is a useful guide. Generally speaking, the more densely populated an area is, the higher the ratio should be. Therefore, a more developed municipality like Rockledge might apply a higher ratio than a rural municipality such as Worcester Township.

For the purposes of this plan, both the low and high ratios are used to create a range for evaluating existing conditions and to

perhaps establish an acreage goal for the community. For example, the midpoint value of the recommended range may be a good target.

Further, the NRPA recommends that the developed open space consist of a core system of parkland, distributed among neighborhood parks and community parks. Each of these components are of a certain size, have a defined "service area", and provide for certain uses (active and/or passive). Figure 8.2 shows a .25 and .5 mile service area for each public park. Generally people are able and willing to walk up to a maximum of one-quarter to one-half of a mile to reach a destination. Open space acreage in Rockledge has been broken down and com-

Figure 8.1
Minimum Open Space Needs

Projected Population*	2000		2010		2025	
	2,577		2,530		2,480	
Range	From	To	From	To	From	To
	Recommended Acreage**					
Community	13	21	13	20	12	20
Neighborhood	3	6	3	6	3	6
Total	16	27	16	27	16	26
	Existing Acreage					
Community	4.0		4.0		4.0	
Neighborhood	3.5		3.5		3.5	
Total	7.5		7.5		7.5	
	Difference					
Community	-9	-17	-9	-16	-8	-16
Neighborhood	1	-2	1	-2	2	-2
Total	-8	-19	-8	-19	-8	-18

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; MCPC; NRPA

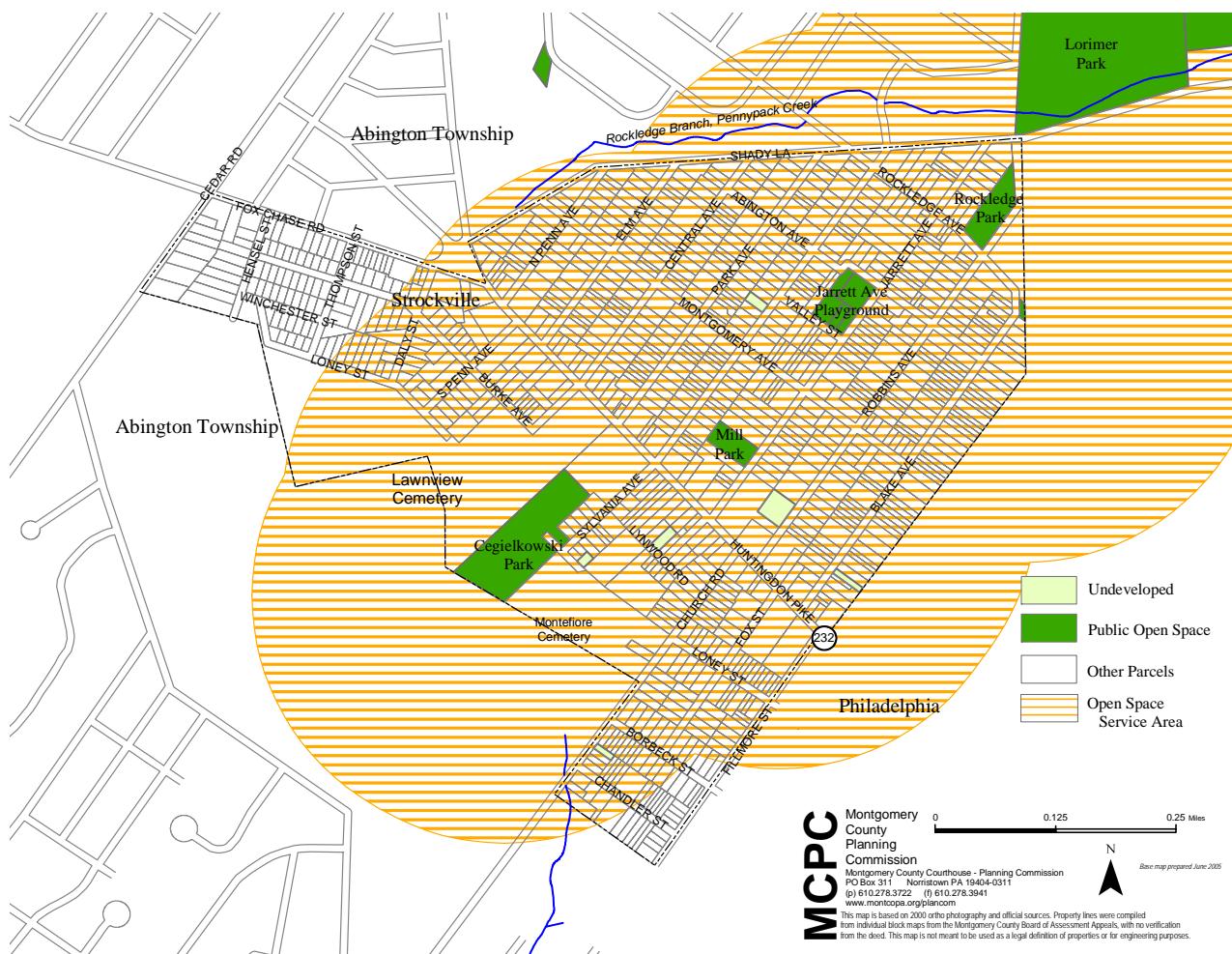
* Projected Population

** Recommended Acreage - Range per 1,000 persons as follows:

Community Level = 5.0 - 8.0 acres; Neighborhood Level = 1.25 - 2.5 acres;

Total = 6.25 - 10.5 acres

Figure 8.2
Open Space Service Area



pared to the NRPA standards to determine if a particular need exists now or may develop in the future. Figure 8.1 shows the results of applying these standards.

PARK TYPES

As shown, Rockledge's current total open space falls short of the recommended minimum acreage. However, this calculation fails to account for the proximity and benefit to the Borough's residents of nearby Lorimer Park. If the acreage of this park were added to the calculation, the Borough would more than meet the standards for minimum open space.

EXISTING PARKS AND FACILITIES

Rockledge's parks can be placed into two main categories: Community-level and Neighborhood-level. Typical characteristics of community-level parks are large size (serving more than one neighborhood), a central location, a good range of facilities or amenities (creek and woodlands corridor, ball fields, playground equipment, etc.), and parking.

Only one site in the Borough - Cegielkowski Park (4 acres)— meets the criteria of a community-level park. However, Lorimer Park also functions as a community-level park.

Although it is not in the Borough it is very close and Borough residents have access to it. If Lorimer Park were considered as part of the Borough's community-level open space system the Borough would meet the minimum NRPA standards for community-level open space. This makes the establishment of safe pedestrian linkages between Rockledge and Lorimer Park all the more important.

Since the Borough is virtually built-out, it is difficult for Rockledge to add community-level open space in the municipality itself. The one potential area within the Borough that might conceivably be acquired for community-level open space in the future is the undeveloped portion of the cemeteries. However, high real estate prices may discourage such a scenario. Therefore, improvements to existing community parks and increased accessibility of these areas through open space linkages

are more realistic goals related to community parks for the Borough.

Neighborhood-level open space refers to smaller areas that serve a particular area of the community (typically one neighborhood), a concentrated or limited population or specialized group such as elderly residents or young children, and provide for quiet, informal recreation as well as facilities for short term, frequent and active use. Good examples are playgrounds (such as Jarrett Avenue Playground), tot lots, pocket parks (small green space within a highly developed area, such as Mill Park), and dog parks (areas where residents walk their dogs). These parks are most valuable in areas that are not conveniently served by larger sites because of distance or a barrier (cemeteries, heavily traveled roads, train tracks, etc.). Also included in this category are larger areas of open

Figure 8.3
Recreational Facility Needs

Standard Per 1,000 Pop.		2000 Population	2025 Population*	Permanently Protected Facilities	2025 Deficit	Additional Facilities Provided Near Borough
		2,577	2,480			
		Recommended Facilities				
Basketball Courts	0.2	0.5	0.5	1		
Tennis Courts	0.5	1.3	1.2	2		
Volleyball Courts	0.2	0.5	0.5	0	-0.5	
Baseball/Softball Fields	0.4	1.0	1.0	1		Burholme Park
Soccer Fields	0.1	0.3	0.2	0	-0.2	Burholme Park
Football Fields	0.3	0.8	0.7	0	-0.7	Fox Chase Park
Running Track (1/4 mile)	0.05	0.1	0.1	0	-0.1	Lorimer Park
Swimming Pools	0.05	0.1	0.1	0	-0.1	Fox Chase Park
Playgrounds	0.6	1.5	1.5	2		
Picnicking Areas	0.24	0.6	0.6	2		Lorimer Park
Multipurpose Fields	0.3	0.8	0.7	1		Burholme Park
Nature Areas	0.24	0.6	0.6	1		Lorimer Park
Golf Courses	0.04	0.1	0.1	0	-0.1	Ashbourne C.C. Foxcroft C.C. (pay per use)

* Projected

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, MCPC; NRPA

space with few amenities and less centrally located, such as Rockledge Park.

The Municipality has four neighborhood-level sites that are well located to serve residents' needs (see Figure 8.2). These sites account for 4.6 acres of permanently protected open space, which is below the range recommended by the NRPA. However, the high level of community-level open space in and near Rockledge makes the neighborhood-level open space critical primarily in areas farther away and with less access to open space, such as the western portion of Strockville.

PASSIVE OPEN SPACE

As mentioned earlier, unlike active open space needs, there is no standard to determine how much acreage to devote to passive open space. Currently, Rockledge owns approximately 2.8 acres of passive open space at Rockledge Park and Mill Park. It should also be noted that although it is not what is typically considered passive open space, the cemetery land in the southwestern portion of the Borough occupying 18.4 acres of land, and the portion of the cemeteries outside the Borough but along the

Borough's boundary act as passive open space to some degree. These areas do not have public access, but they do serve as a visual and noise buffer from surrounding residential areas and roads.

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Figure 8.3 summarizes the results of applying specific recreational facility standards to Rockledge and compares the results to the supply of existing municipal facilities. As can be seen, Rockledge falls short of the recommended levels for six of the facilities. However, it should be noted that due to Rockledge's small size, all the projected deficits are fractions of a number between 0 and 1. The highest projected deficits are for multipurpose fields (an open area suitable for a variety of active recreation uses) and football fields. In reality, the demand for athletic fields in Rockledge might be different than the national average. For example, due to the increasing demand for soccer fields in the region from both boys and girls' athletic leagues, these may have a higher priority than that designated by NRPA when that group formulated its standards.

Since these are national standards and are not tailored to regions or individual localities, the Borough needs not try to meet all of these standards, but rather should focus on several that can more realistically be accomplished. These include adding linkages to Lorimer Park and among its own parks, providing pocket parks in targeted areas of the Borough, and ensuring the active recreation areas provide amenities and sports fields attuned to the needs of the Borough. In addition, Rockledge may want to upgrade its playground facilities pending the results of a needs analysis.



Lorimer Park's passive open space would be made more accessible to Rockledge residents by the establishment of a pedestrian connection

CHAPTER 9

EVALUATION OF COUNTY AND ABUTTING MUNICIPAL PLANS

The preceding chapters investigate the resources, needs, and opportunities that exist within the municipal boundaries of Rockledge. With this information, recommendations can be made to effectively serve the Borough's residents. However, the land use decisions that Rockledge makes affect the larger region just as decisions made in neighboring municipalities affect the Borough. Therefore, this open space planning effort should not be performed exclusively within the Borough's borders, but should consider surrounding planning efforts as well.

This chapter compares the recommendations of this plan with those in the County comprehensive plan and the comprehensive, open space, and revitalization plans of abutting Boroughs/townships/counties. The intent is to prevent conflicts between plans and to encourage collaboration of efforts. By gaining an understanding of how Rockledge's plan will fit into the larger open space and trail linkage picture, partners can optimize both the quantity and quality of future open space preservation and management.

COMPARISON TO MONTGOMERY COUNTY LAND USE AND OPEN SPACE PLANS

In 2001, Montgomery County began updating its Comprehensive Plan. Although not yet complete, this plan will help guide the growth of housing; transportation; economic development; and natural and cultural resource management through 2025 and beyond. Each of these factors could potentially bear great significance on open space needs and opportunities in Rockledge.

Within this plan is the Vision of the County in 2025. This Vision sets up four issues as the highest priority for action:

- Controlling sprawl
- Controlling traffic congestion
- Preserving open space/natural areas
- Revitalizing older Boroughs and townships

Rockledge's Open Space Plan addresses all of these issues to varying degrees. It does so by increasing linkages and accessibility, preserving open space, and generally making the Borough a more attractive place in which to live, work and shop.

The draft version of the Comprehensive Plan lists 48 goals that describe and expand upon the Vision of the County in 2025. Several of these goals parallel those in this Open Space Plan, adding strength to the recommendations set forth here.

(CHAPTER 4 OF VISION PLAN)

- Guiding Vision
- Support Smart Growth and Preservation Efforts both Regionally and Locally
- Work Together to Identify and Resolve Problems and Concerns
- Implement Plans Effectively and Cooperatively

- Identify and Address Problems at the Most Appropriate Level - Local, Regional, Watershed, etc.

LAND USE

- Direct Development to Designated Growth Areas
- Enhance Older Developed Areas
- Preserve and Create Community Identity and a Sense of Place

OPEN SPACE, NATURAL FEATURES, AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

- Preserve Large Interconnected Areas of Significant Open Space
- Create a Greenway System along Rivers, Creeks, and Other Sensitive Natural and Historic Features
- Develop a Countywide Network of Interconnected Trails
- Provide Park Facilities to Meet the Public's Recreation Needs
- Protect Historic Resources and Cultural Landscapes

TRANSPORTATION

- Manage Traffic Congestion
- Improve Transportation Safety
- Increase Opportunities to Take Public Transit, Walk, Ride a Bike, or Other Nonautomotive Transportation Means

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Attract and Retain Business by Maintaining a High Quality of Life
- Retain a Skilled Workforce for County Businesses
- Revitalize the County's Downtowns and Main Streets

HOUSING

- Maintain and Conserve Existing Homes and Neighborhoods
- Promote Walkable and Well-Designed Residential Developments

At a site-specific level, the County's trail strategy identifies the former Newtown Branch of the Reading Railroad as the site of the County's planned Pennypack Trail. This trail would pass along the Borough's eastern edge and could connect to the Borough's own planned trail system. This would have the effect of enhancing the usability of the County trail and would better link the parks and open space in Rockledge and surrounding areas.

LORIMER PARK

Lorimer Park is a County Park containing more than 230 acres of woods, meadows and the Pennypack Creek corridor in Abington Township. This park virtually touches Rockledge near Shady Lane, and also connects to the City of Philadelphia's Pennypack Park and Fox Chase Farm Park. Lorimer offers hiking, horseback riding, picnicking, bird watching, fishing, and cross-country skiing.

The Park does not currently have a master plan but hopes to complete one within five years. The Park administration looks forward to the future development of the County's Pennypack Trail which would cross through it, and welcomes additional pedestrian connections to the Borough of Rockledge. There are existing unpaved (crushed stone) trails in the park which connect trails in adjacent Pennypack Park, including a 13-mile bikeway to the Delaware River.

Currently Lorimer Park is usually accessed by Rockledge residents by automobile since there are not provisions for safe pedestrian access from the Borough to the park at this time. There are two access points within walking distance of Rockledge: one on Shady Lane and one on Leona Drive. However,

both are difficult to walk to from Rockledge. In the case of Leona Drive, it is separated from the Borough by Shady Lane at a point where it is unsafe to cross due to traffic and short sight distances.

RELATION TO PLANS OF ABUTTING MUNICIPALITIES

Abington Township and the City of Philadelphia abut Rockledge. The current zoning map, open space policies and other pertinent information of each of those municipalities are summarized below. Adjacent, yet incompatible, land uses may result in conflicts while potential linkages could lead to cooperative partnerships between municipal neighbors.

ABINGTON TOWNSHIP

Based on the Montgomery County Open Space Program of 1993 (and completed shortly thereafter), Abington Township developed an Open Space Plan. In the past ten years since the last update of open space plans, parcels have been preserved, trails proposed and developed, and the needs of the community have changed. It is therefore vital that Rockledge keeps abreast of the continually evolving planning efforts of its neighbors and Montgomery County.

Abington Township adopted its Open Space Plan in 1995. Abington lies to the northeast, northwest, and southwest of the Borough, and shares a border of 2.4 miles with Rockledge.

AREAS FOR COOPERATION

Abington has constructed a paved path on Fox Chase Road extending west from the intersection of Fox Chase Road and Cedar Road. The township also constructed a path extending north on Cedar Road from the same intersection. This is important for Rockledge since this would be a logical place to connect the Borough's trail system with that of Abington's.

An area of potential cooperation between Rockledge and Abington involves the development of the County's proposed Pennypack Trail, and any short-term trail connection from Rockledge to Lorimer Park. Since Lorimer Park and approaches to it are located in Abington, Rockledge would welcome any cooperation with the Township in this regard. Such cooperation would lead to both Abington and Rockledge residents having improved access to Lorimer Park.

CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

HUNTINGDON PIKE REVITALIZATION PROJECT

Rockledge and the Fox Chase neighborhood of Philadelphia are currently conducting a joint revitalization project for Huntingdon Pike-Oxford Avenue (PA 232). This project is undertaking improvements to the road and streetscape to create a more attractive, safe, welcoming, and functional area with an improved image and revitalized business district. The two entities have also operated a combined business group for eight years (the Rockledge-Fox Chase Business Association).

TRAIL CONNECTIONS

Rockledge intends to cooperate with Philadelphia in the area of trail planning. This includes the proposed Pennypack Trail segment along the unused Newtown Branch of the Reading Railroad in Philadelphia. Rockledge also intends to cooperate with Philadelphia in planning for the Borough trail system.

The Philadelphia City Planning Commission has expressed interest in cooperating with Montgomery County on the construction of the portion of the proposed Pennypack Trail in Philadelphia (which would link Rockledge to Rhawn Street and the train station at Fox Chase. A trail extension to this area would meet Rhawn Street in an area where it is scheduled to undergo streetscape improvements. The construction of the Pennypack Trail and its connection to the R8 Regional Rail line could provide a safer, more direct way for bicyclists from Abington, Rockledge, Lower Moreland and

other municipalities along the trail to access the Fox Chase train station and help reduce automobile traffic on the region's roads.

FIVE-POINTS GATEWAY

Planning is currently underway for the construction of a war memorial at the Five Points intersection of Oxford Avenue, Cottman Avenue, and Rising Sun Avenue in nearby Philadelphia. This gateway, like the gateways for Rockledge and Fox Chase, would help give identity to the communities in the vicinity and improve their attractiveness and image. Recommendations have been made to improve the intersection so it serves as a more welcoming gateway to the Five Points neighborhood and City of Philadelphia.

OTHER PLANNING INITIATIVES

The Philadelphia City Council, City Planning Commission, and Mayor's Neighborhood Transformation Initiative has recently begun a special study and community planning process for 34 neighborhoods around the city, including Fox Chase, Burholme, and Lawnview.

FAIRMOUNT PARK SYSTEM

Consisting of 77 parks in 12 park complexes, the Fairmount Park system incorporates 9,204 acres and offers a variety of experiences including trails, gardens, woodlands, rivers and streams, day camps, ball fields and golf courses, picnic areas and playgrounds, historic homes, environmental and history centers, the Ben Franklin Parkway, the Robin Hood Dell, the Mann Center for the Performing Arts, the Zoo, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Water Works, and the Please Touch Museum.

Rockledge residents regularly access many of these facilities, and in fact the Borough is located within one-half of a mile of portions of this park system.

The Fairmount Park Commission released its latest Strategic Plan, "A Bridge to the Future," in July, 2004. The plan lays out more than 75 individual strategies for transforming and revitalizing the Park system. The Park Commission's mission is to:

- Preserve, protect, and maintain the open space, street trees, natural and cultural resources of Philadelphia’s parks for the recreation and enjoyment of residents and visitors;
- Educate the public on the environment, history, and use of the Fairmount Park system;
- Promote, celebrate, and enhance the uniqueness and value of the Fairmount park system and its economic impact to the City, region and state.

Planned improvements to the park system will benefit residents of Rockledge and other municipalities in Montgomery County, as well as residents of the City of Philadelphia.

PHILADELPHIA RECREATION DEPARTMENT

In addition to the Fairmount Park system—which mainly consists of passive, self-directed recreation; the Department of Recreation provides active recreation with emphasis on programmed activities and facilities.

TOOKANY CREEK WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Tookany Creek Watershed Management Plan was developed with the participation of Rockledge, Abington, Cheltenham, and Jenkintown and was adopted in 2003. This plan analyzes existing flooding, erosion and water quality issues in the Tookany Creek Watershed, which includes the southern half of Rockledge and parts of Abington including the Jenkintown creek (which originates just to the west of Rockledge). The plan recommends goals and management options for protecting the watershed. Funding was provided by the state’s Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

CHAPTER 10

RECOMMENDATIONS: ACQUISITION

The following are proposed target areas or parcels for the acquisition of new public open space. The areas mentioned are areas that the Borough believes should be protected. A number of acquisition methods are available to the Borough in addition to outright purchase (fee simple ownership), such as easements and leasing. The Borough will explore funding opportunities for the acquisition of open space and coordinate with neighboring communities and the County to implement these recommendations.

AREAS RECOMMENDED FOR ACQUISITION

The following areas are recommended for acquisition:

1. Loney Street (Vacated Portion)- This would extend the Borough Trail system and would improve accessibility to Cegielski Park for residents of the southernmost portion of the Borough.
2. Pocket Parks (Underserved Portions of Borough)- The acquisition of pocket parks in the northwestern section of the Borough (including Strockville) would more evenly distribute Borough open space. The parcel might be used to accommodate a small seating area, walkway, and a couple of shade trees.

3. Cemetery Land— The Borough will pursue protection of cemetery land (unused) in Rockledge Borough. This might include an protection of the cemetery land via a conservation easement or acquisition. Or it could involve obtaining an access easement

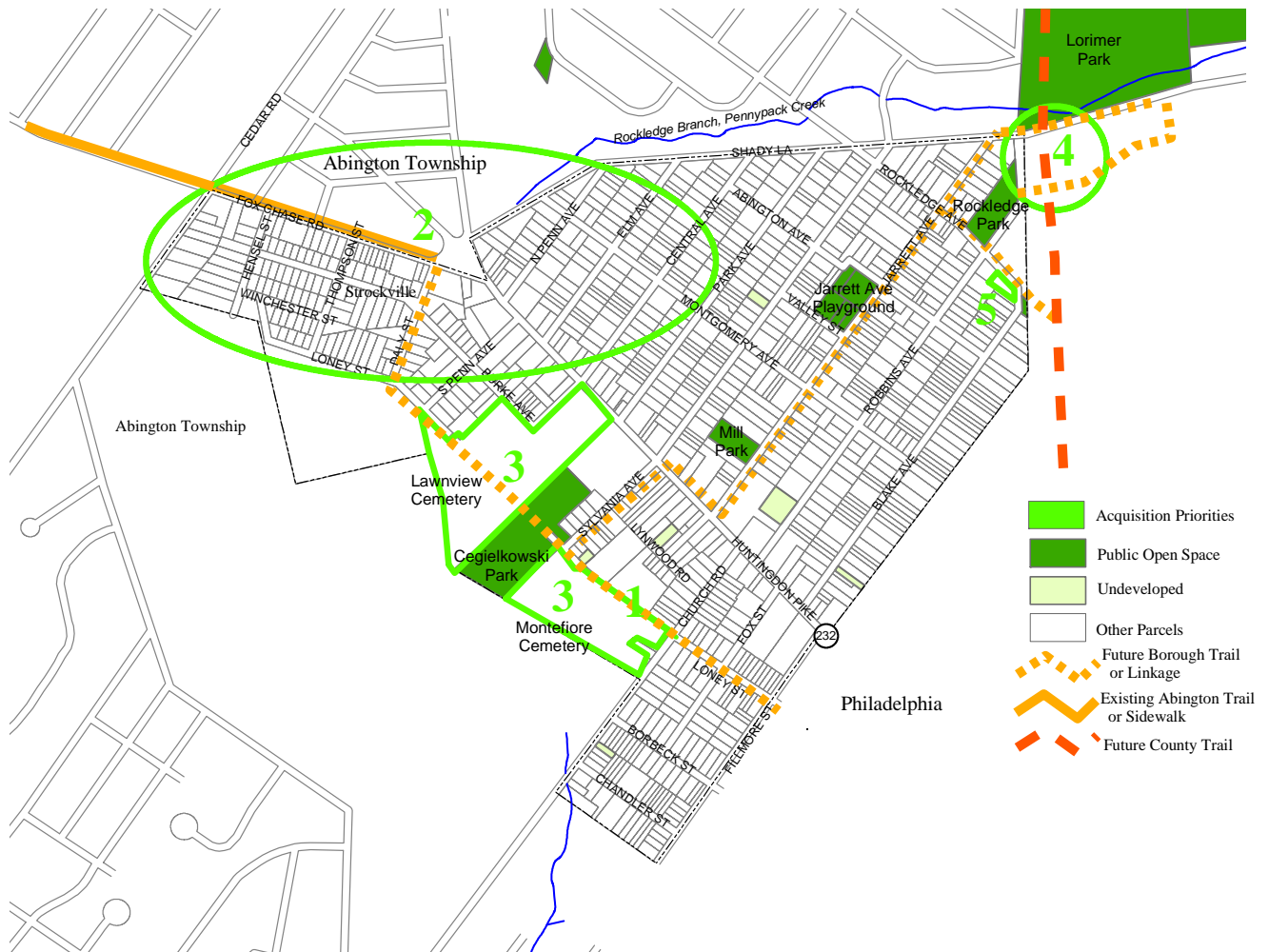
to establish a linkage from Strockville to Cegielski Park

4. Access to Lorimer Park— The establishment of a safe pedestrian connection to Lorimer Park would make it possible for residents to access the park without driving. The

Figure 10.1
Acquisition Priorities Table

Priority	Acquisition
1	Loney Street Acquisition (Church St to Sylvania Ave.)
2	Pocket Parks (Underserved Portions of Borough)
3	Cemeteries— Protection of this land will include some or all of the following options: Strockville to Cegielski Park Access Easement, conservation easement for cemetery land in Borough, or acquisition of cemetery land in Borough)
4	Access to Lorimer Park
5	Vacant Portion of the Parcel bounded by Blake, Rockledge and Robbins Avenues

Figure 10.2
Acquisition Priorities Map





Vacated Section of Loney Street (Between South Sylvania Avenue and Church Road).

Borough will pursue the construction of the Pennypack Trail at the earliest possible date. The Borough will pursue short-term connections either by pursuing an easement over the railroad tracks and through a neighboring property, or by pedestrian safety improvements to cross and walk along Shady Lane.

5. Vacant portion of the parcel bounded by Blake, Rockledge, and Robbins Avenues. This parcel would effectively expand existing Borough open space near the Pennypack Trail and is located along the proposed Borough Trail.

Although it would not be a Borough acquisition, the Borough supports the rapid development of the County's Pennypack Trail, which would, among other things, provide a permanent linkage to Lorimer Park. Currently the proposed trail route includes the former Newtown Branch of the Reading Railroad. This rail line is not being used, but is being held in reserve by SEPTA in case it is determined that passenger rail service is feasible again on this line. Consideration of passenger rail service will be affected in part on the completion of a two-year express bus feasibility study focused on the Bux-Mont area of southeastern Montgomery County and the

adjacent part of Bucks County. For more discussion of the Pennypack Trail and other trail recommendations, see Chapters 5 and 11.

EVALUATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The properties discussed have been evaluated based on the following:

- Location
- Distribution
- Balance of Types
- Diversity
- How it meets the needs and goals
- Creation of an overall network or system
- Linkages within the municipality and to outside.
- Ability to acquire or protect.
- Current vulnerability.

These factors have led to a priority ranking of high, medium, and low priorities seen in the table in Figure 10.1.

ACQUISITION METHODS

There are a number of ways a municipality can obtain land for open space. An overview of these alternatives is provided here to serve as a guide for the Borough's future open space acquisition efforts. In the long term, all of these could conceivably be used by the Borough, although at any given time one or more may be most appropriate for acquiring a specific site. More generally, however, they indicate that the Borough can be flexible in its approach to implementing the plan's goals.

INSTALLMENT BUYING

With this method, Rockledge would agree to purchase a set number of acres annually

until the full parcel is acquired. In return, the full site is removed from the tax rolls when the initial agreement is signed. The owner may choose to remain on his/her land until it is completely sold and paid for. The advantage of this method is that benefits accrue to both the Borough and the landowner. For a municipality with limited funds, installment buying spreads the cost over a period of time. The landowner in the meantime is relieved of real property responsibilities when the agreement is signed.

LONG TERM LEASE WITH OPTION TO BUY

This method involves the negotiation of a lease price with a property owner and includes conditions for use and possible purchase of the property. The primary advantage is that it permits flexibility; if the property is not needed in the future for open space, it is returned to the owner.

MANDATORY DEDICATION

The Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (Act 247) enables municipalities to require that residential development dedicate land or fees in lieu of land for public recreation. In order to do this, municipalities must have an adopted recreation plan and an adopted ordinance relating to mandatory dedication before land or fees can be accepted. The amount of land required must be related to the demand for recreation land typically created by new development. The required fee should reflect the fair market value of the land.

PURCHASE AND LEASE-BACK

Purchase and lease-back results in buying land and leasing it back to the owner in accordance with agreed-upon policies for the use and protection of the land. Its primary advantage is that it permits

purchase of property before prices rise or before the property is lost to development. It also permits flexibility because once the land is purchased it can be used for another public purpose, sold, or exchanged for another parcel.

PURCHASE AND RESALE

This method is similar to purchase and lease-back, except that the land is purchased with the sole intent of reselling it under conditions or restrictive covenants. If the land is acquired at a low cost, the resulting profits help repay initial purchase costs and can be used to acquire additional land. Another advantage is that after resale, the municipality is relieved of ownership and maintenance responsibilities and the land is taxable.

LEASING

This method is a popular, relatively inexpensive way to acquire open space, especially if the land is unlikely to be developed (for example, reservoirs and utility land). The term of the lease usually ranges from 20 to 50 years; at a minimum, a period should be established that is long enough to finance anticipated capital improvements. The owner of the leased land prescribes conditions and terms under which the land can be used and the lessee is required to carry liability insurance covering personal injury and property damage.

EASEMENTS

Easements are a successful way to save public funds, yet receive open space benefits. An easement is a limited right over land owned by another person (often a government entity or land trust). Legally, a person has the right to use his property subject to zoning laws, subdivision regulation, etc; however, the owner may sell his/her right to use the land in specific ways.

Conservation easements are used to preserve land with relatively low cost (without acquiring the whole property).

The land remains privately owned and the easement involves the property owner voluntarily agreeing to donate or sell the right to develop the land. The property has a deed restriction on the property that is binding for future owners. It may require that there be no new buildings constructed or woodlands will be preserved and can result in tax breaks for owners.

Pedestrian easements allows access for the public to walk, hike, ride bicycles along a specific area.

EMINENT DOMAIN

Eminent domain is the condemnation of land for a public use by due process of law. It must involve the determination of a fair market value for the property and a clear definition of the public purposes for which it is being condemned. Before exercising the right of eminent domain, a municipality should study the necessity of obtaining the particular site and the feasibility of acquiring it by other acquisition methods. Only if all other methods fail and the property is essential to an open space system should eminent domain be considered.

LAND TRUSTS AND CONSERVANCIES

Land trusts and conservancies are private, non-profit tax exempt trusts, usually organized by a citizen supported, non-profit agency. Their funds can be used to provide open space and to preserve natural resources such as stream valleys. Administration and management of the land are the responsibility of the service agency. Private non-profits have an advantage in that they can often move faster to acquire property than can a government agency. Frequently a public-private partnership is formed whereby the private agency acquires land and then resells it to a government agency at a later date.

As noted previously, there are a number of existing conservation groups what will work with private landowners to conserve their land. However, such situations may or may not include provisions for public access. Because of this, a municipality should work closely with these organizations and landowners where public access is a goal. In this way, conservancies can function as an alternative method of acquiring open space.

LAND EXCHANGES

This method involves the trading of land between one owner and another to obtain mutual advantages. An arrangement can be made between landowners to exchange land that serves their interests.

VOLUNTARY AGREEMENTS

Voluntary agreements can be established between government agencies and owners of agricultural lands, industrial holdings, and utility lands for various purposes. They are strictly voluntary, with permission to use the land for public enjoyment in clearly specified ways. For example, a utility company might permit trail use of a power line right-of-way.

PURCHASE OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

If the municipality is only interested in protecting land or designated features of a property without gaining the right for public access, then this method of acquisition of partial interests rather than full fee title in land is available. In essence, a municipality could preserve significant natural, scenic, historic, or cultural resources by purchasing a landowner's right to develop the property or otherwise alter the character of the features that are deemed worthy of protection.

RIGHT OF FIRST REFUSAL AND PURCHASE OPTION

These methods involve establishing an agreement which specifies that the land may be acquired by the municipality at a future date. A right of first refusal provides the municipality with the option to match an offered purchase price within a specified time period should a landowner receive a legitimate offer to sell. A purchase option is simply a right that the municipality holds to purchase the land by a specified date at a specified price. Both rights of first refusal and purchase option can be either donated or sold to the municipality.

LIFE OR TERM ESTATES

This technique involves the acquisition of land with certain restrictions attached to the deed. A municipality may be better able to negotiate the purchase of property if certain interests in the land are reserved for the benefit of the landowner. For example, a municipality could purchase land with all rights of ownership conveyed except the right to occupy a house or a portion of the full property for a specified term (usually 25 years) or until the death of the landowner.

DONATIONS AND BARGAIN SALES

These methods of acquisition involve obtaining land at less than its full market value. Receiving donations of the full value of land is the least expensive way for a municipality to obtain land and can, in some instances, be a wise approach for a landowner to take to directly benefit from tax incentives and the shelter effects of charitable deductions. If a full donation of land is not possible or if the landowner has an immediate need for cash through sale, then a partial donation and bargain sale might be a prudent alternative. By selling land at a price that is less than its full value, a landowner can still receive tax benefits based on the difference between the fair market value of the land and its actual sale price. The

primary benefit to these techniques is that a municipality acquires land at a lower cost while the seller obtains tax deductions.

The Borough might establish a recognition for gifts program for open space, parks, and improvements. This would offer to recognize anyone who donates land or pay for improvements in a specified way. The Borough could offer to reward donors by adding their names to signs, plaques, or bricks that form part of the Borough's park and open space system (much like the wall in the Rockledge Community Center that recognizes individuals for their financial contributions). In the case of significant donations, the Borough may wish to honor the donor in a more significant way, such as offering to name a donated parcel of land after the donor.

CHAPTER 11

OPTIONAL PLAN ELEMENTS

This chapter addresses optional plan recommendations for Rockledge related to municipal trail and pathway development, green infrastructure, and heritage resources conservation. These elements are particularly important because of the Borough's desire to provide better access to parks and trails, the Huntingdon Pike Revitalization Project, and the desire to improve the Borough's identity.

MUNICIPAL TRAIL AND PATHWAY DEVELOPMENT

Under the 2003 Green Fields/Green Towns Program, communities have the option for acquisition of trail corridor land and the development of a pathway system that connects to or extends the planned county trail system. Rockledge's pathway and trail plan goals are discussed below.

BOROUGH TRAIL PLAN GOALS

The Borough's trail plan goals are as follows:

- Improve public access to existing Borough parks and open space

The Borough Trail will establish linkages among parks and open space areas inside the Borough and to trails, parks, and open space areas outside the Borough. The Borough Trail will be designated with identification and directional signage (light blue with the Borough Seal, designed to be compatible with signage of

neighboring municipalities) and crosswalks, and will be enhanced with tree planting, sidewalk repair, and landscaping.

Easements or fee simple purchase of land will be investigated to facilitate a connection between Cegielski Park and Church Road, as well as a connection between Cegielski Park and Strockville. These connections will provide better access to Cegielski Park. The connection to Church Road is important in part because it would formalize a connection already used by schoolchildren. The connection to Strockville is important because Strockville is the part of the Borough farthest from existing parks and public open space (when measured by walking distance).

- Establish a connection to Abington's trail system

Rockledge will use the sidewalk on the north side of Fox Chase Road to connect with an existing Abington Township trail at Cedar Road. This would require crossing Fox Chase Road, which forms the boundary between Rockledge and Abington Township, and which is under the jurisdiction of PennDOT. Establishing or improving the visibility of a crosswalk on Fox Chase Road (at Daly Road) would help connect these two municipalities' pedestrian networks. Rockledge should coordinate any crosswalk improvement with PennDOT and Abington Township, and should investigate sharing the project's cost with Abington.

- Construct a segment of the County's proposed Pennypack Trail, or an alternative permanent connection to Lorimer Park.

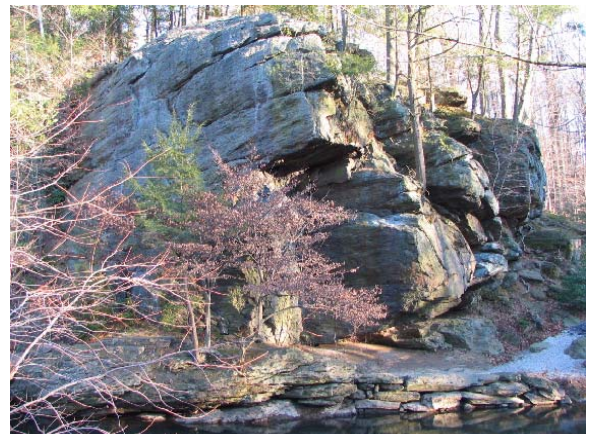
The Borough will work with various stakeholders (including the County, Abington Township, SEPTA, Lorimer Park, and the Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust) to ensure land or access easements are acquired for public use of the rail line right-of-way as a trail. Currently a two-year study of rapid bus service is being

undertaken in the Bux-Mont area of Montgomery County north of Rockledge and adjacent parts of Bucks County. Depending on the outcome of this study, SEPTA may pursue re-establishing passenger rail service on the former Newtown Branch of the Reading Railroad.

Should passenger rail service be re-established, the Borough would pursue the development of the Pennypack Trail segment connecting Rockledge to Lorimer Park as soon as possible. This might involve the construction of the trail parallel to the railroad tracks in the railroad right-of-way where space permits. However, a way of safely crossing Shady Lane would need to be established since there would not be room to cross Shady Lane over the railroad bridge. A separate bridge for the trail might need to be constructed over Shady Lane and the Rockledge Branch of the Pennypack Creek.

- If construction of this segment of the Pennypack Trail is not possible in the immediate future, provide an alternative short-term connection to Lorimer Park.

The Borough should work with Abington Township to pursue the purchase or acquisition of an access easement in Abington adjacent to Rockledge Park. This would be used for constructing a trail from the Borough through a wooded area in Abington Township to reach the access point to Lorimer Park on Shady Lane. A pedestrian crossing would need to be established on Shady Lane that provides



Lorimer Park (administered by Montgomery Co.)

adequate protection to pedestrians from automobile traffic. This might require a flashing blinker light, a push-button crossing light, signs, stamped concrete, rumble strips, or an elevated speed table.

An alternative method would be to construct a pedestrian crossing of Shady Lane at North Jarrett Avenue. A path would need to be established from the crossing to the Lorimer Park entrance on Shady Lane. If a new rail bridge is constructed over Shady Lane, Rockledge should advocate for a wide enough clearance to be established underneath the bridge to accommodate pedestrian traffic (making a trail connection from North Jarrett Avenue to Lorimer Park's entrance along Shady Lane possible).

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Communities with limited opportunities to acquire large vacant tracts of land have the opportunity to improve their “green infrastructure” under the 2003 Green Fields/ Green Towns Program. Green infrastructure may include the creation of safe, usable open space, recreation areas, or public spaces through the demolition of dilapidated property or the restoration of older industrial sites to parks, plazas, trails, or natural areas. Landscaping or improving existing open space and recreation areas are also included in this category.

The importance of green infrastructure is that it helps create a sense of place. Rockledge's revitalization goals support this effort in particular with its proposed streetscape improvements.

One aspect of green infrastructure is street trees. Street trees give relief to the urban landscape and help create a more livable, walkable environment. When strategically placed and maintained in redevelopment areas, commercial districts, parking lots, and neighborhoods, they add aesthetic appeal, filter air, provide shade, and generally improve property values.

Also, when coupled with regulation concerning façade treatments, public amenities, and building design standards, a complete streetscape aesthetic can be created. This adds continuity to a district, especially when standards are periodically reviewed. To ensure long term viability of street trees, species diversity should be part of planting considerations.

Rockledge's green infrastructure strategies are discussed below in relationship to its revitalization goals and objectives.

IMPROVE EXISTING PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

Rockledge will make improvements to all four existing Borough parks, as follows:

- Rockledge Park—Construct walking path; add landscaping, lighting, benches, water fountain, waste receptacles and spigot.
- Mill Park— Construct a walking path; add a water fountain, spigot, landscaping, lighting, benches, and waste receptacles (first a landscaping plan will need to be prepared).
- Cegielski Park—Add benches at tennis court, water fountain, picnic table, waste receptacles, and trees. Pave hockey court and tennis court, add a new play piece, improve the ball field (possibly with better seating and lights), and improve drainage system.
- Jarrett Avenue Playground—Upgrade recreation equipment, add benches and picnic tables, and plant trees.

IMPROVE THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The Borough will create or enhance its gateways at three strategic locations: Huntingdon Pike at the Borough's boundary with Philadelphia and Abington Township, and on Church Road at the boundary with



Gateways and gateway signs such as these can help improve a municipality's image and strengthen community identity. This plan proposes establishing gateways at three locations in the Borough.

Abington. Attractive gateways will identify the Borough's boundaries and create a stronger sense of community identity.

SHADE TREES

Rockledge has sufficient shade tree coverage in many parts of the Borough, especially in residential areas. However, there are sections of Huntingdon Pike, Strockville (e.g., Thompson Street, Daly Street, and parts of Burke Avenue, Hensel Street, and South Penn Avenue) and other areas (South Sylvania Avenue, parts of Loney Street, Montgomery Avenue, Fox Chase Road, Borbeck Street and Fox Street) where there is not adequate shade tree coverage or there are gaps in coverage. These gaps should be filled in with shade trees.

The Borough recommends shade trees be planted in these areas. Figure 11.1 identifies

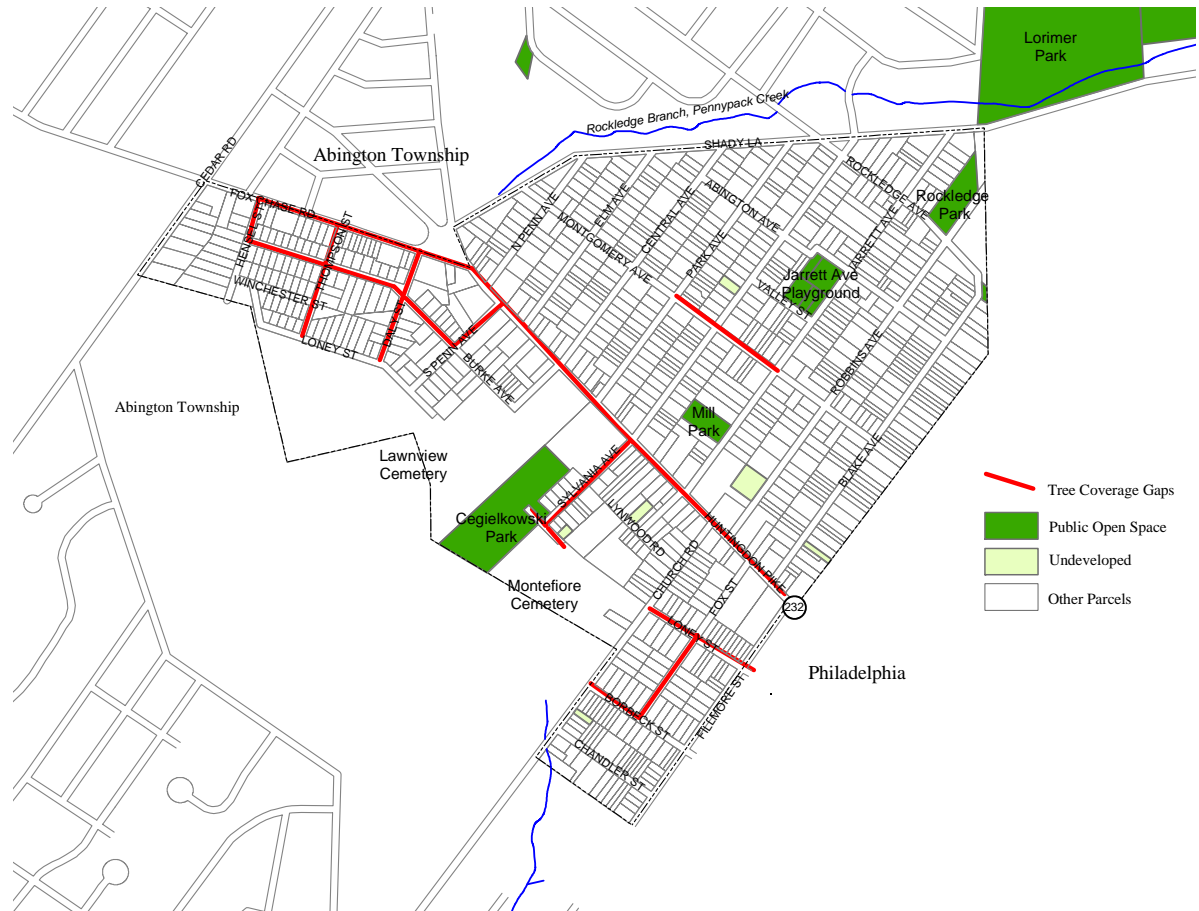
the more significant gaps, although there may be additional places where gaps exist or form over time due to trees dying or being taken down. There is a proposed program for the Borough to purchase trees to be planted on the lawns of individual property owners along the street, in exchange for the property owner to maintain the tree. This could help re-green sections of the Borough while minimizing maintenance costs.

HERITAGE RESOURCE CONSERVATION

Under the 2003 Green Fields/Green Towns Program, communities have the option for acquisition and limited stabilization of heritage resources. A heritage resource property primarily includes the land that provides an appropriate setting for the historic building.

Rockledge's heritage resource protection goals are discussed below.

Figure 11.1
Existing Shade Tree Gaps (Priority Areas for Planting)



HISTORIC RESOURCE PROTECTION GOALS

The Borough's Historic Resource Protection goals are as follows:

- Erect a historic marker sign indicating the site of the former toll gate for the Huntingdon Turnpike, which stood just off Huntingdon Pike on property now owned by Lawnview Cemetery.
- Link the most historic properties in the Borough via the Borough trail.

CHAPTER 12

RECOMMENDATIONS: NON-ACQUISITION PROTECTION METHODS

While acquisition of open space is a priority for Rockledge, there are other ways that land can be maintained as permanent open space without relying on funding sources. The techniques described in this chapter involve zoning or subdivision ordinance provisions that would protect natural features or add additional open space. The chapter concludes with a discussion of what Rockledge could include in its ordinances.

INCENTIVE ZONING

Communities can encourage developers through incentive zoning to provide public plazas, recreation facilities or amenities, and trails. The incentives are placed in specific zoning districts, and might allow a developer to get a higher height or density than otherwise permitted or a smaller lot size. The ordinances should be crafted to ensure the cost of providing the amenity does not exceed the benefit received from the incentive.

NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION ORDINANCES

Rockledge should consider implementing an ordinance protecting one of its most attractive natural features, mature trees. Some ordinances provide minimum standards that must be followed during construction for trees that will remain. Other ordinances, when existing trees are preserved, allow developers to put up fewer street trees, buffers, or individual lot trees.

Tree replacement is another requirement of some ordinances that helps ensure loss of large trees will be mitigated by requiring new trees be planted (an option may be provided for a fee in lieu of planting to be provided to the Borough to be used for tree planting).

DONATIONS OF PROPERTIES FOR PERMANENT OPEN SPACE

Landowners can preserve their land by donating the full title of their property or by donating their development rights to a nonprofit land conservation group. These two methods permanently preserve open space.

Landowners who donate development rights receive tax benefits; their land must be permanently restricted from future development. Land conservation groups that operate within Montgomery County and which may accept easements or donations include: Montgomery County Lands Trust, Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust, the Heritage Conservancy, and Conservancy of Montgomery County. The Borough itself may also accept land or easements.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION ORDINANCES

While not directly related to open space preservation, historic preservation ordinances help save historic properties that add to the character of an area. One technique for preserving historic buildings permits additional uses in historic buildings. Additional permitted uses in a residential district might include bed and breakfast establishments, home occupations, galleries, cultural studios, or antique shops. An ordinance could be written to discourage demolition of historic properties and permit alternative uses of the property to be

suggested to the owner prior to demolition. A useful tool for protecting scattered historic structures is a historic preservation overlay zone.

ROCKLEDGE ACTIONS

Rockledge recently updated its Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SLDO). This ordinance update explains in greater detail procedures for applicants proposing a subdivision or land development in the Borough. This includes explaining required plans, permits, and surveys; requiring completion of improvements or a guarantee thereof; and detailing preventive and enforcement remedies.

CHAPTER 13

IMPLEMENTATION

BACKGROUND

Implementation is perhaps the most important part of the plan. Having identified and examined the open space issues important to Rockledge, a timeframe for implementation is established here to guide the Borough toward achieving its goals. In the near term (Phase One), implementation principally involves acquiring open space using the Borough's allocation under the County open space program; basically, this means doing so over the next three years (2005 through 2007). It also means taking other, non-acquisition actions for open space preservation and recreation facility planning and development. In the longer term (Phase Two), implementation will build upon these earlier efforts. For each proposed action, primary responsibility is proposed among the following Borough groups and consultants:

- Borough (B)
- Borough Council (BC)
- Planning Commission (PC)
- Shade Tree Committee (STC)
- Solicitor (S)
- Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust (PERT)
- Montgomery County Planning Commission (MCPC)

TIME PHASING

PHASE ONE (COMPLETION WITHIN THREE YEARS)

ACQUISITION PRIORITIES

- Loney Street Cartway (30') or Right-of-Way (50'), between Church Road and terminus of paved portion of Loney Street Near South Sylvania Avenue.
- Investigate joint acquisition opportunities with Abington.

NONACQUISITION PRIORITIES

- Rockledge Park improvements- walking path, landscaping, lighting, benches, waste receptacles, water fountain, and spigot.
- Cegielski Park improvements—Add benches at tennis court, water fountain, picnic table, waste receptacles, and trees. Pave hockey court and tennis court, add a new play piece, improve the ballfield (possibly with lights and better seating). Improve drainage system.



Open Space Plan Priorities Include Upgrading Facilities at, and Improving Access to Cegielski Park.

- Jarrett Avenue Playground improvements—Upgrade recreation equipment, add benches and picnic tables, and plant trees

- Mill Park master plan and improvements—Create landscaping/improvement plan. Improve with walking path, landscaping, lighting, benches, waste receptacles, water fountain, and water spigot.
- Loney Street trail improvements (Church Road to South Sylvania Avenue)- Once acquired, improve by clearing vegetation, paving trail, adding landscaping, benches, lighting, trail map signage, and bollards to prevent motorized vehicle access.
- Loney Street Easement Acquisition and Trail Improvements (Strockville to Cegielski Park)- After access easement is acquired, pave path and add lighting.
- Enhance Borough gateways — in coordination with Huntingdon Pike Revitalization Project, enhance gateways on Huntingdon Pike at Borough boundary with Philadelphia and Abington. Also enhance gateway on Church Road at Abington boundary. Gateway improvements could include attractive welcome signage, landscaping, and shade trees, among other elements.
- Rockledge Borough Trail– Add trail identification and directional signage, add or improve visibility of crosswalks on pathway route, make any necessary repairs to sidewalks, and beautify pedestrian pathway system with landscaping.
- Add tree replacement requirements to Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SLDO).
- Create an endowment and/or gift-giving program to secure donations for the preservation of open space and park lands

Figure 13.1
Implementation Timeline

Action	Technique	Agency Responsible	Implementation Year
Acquire Loney Street connector between Church Road and terminus of paved portion of Loney Street near South Sylvania Avenue.	Acquisition	B, S	Year 1
Rockledge Park improvements.	Implementation	B, S	Year 1
Add tree replacement requirements to Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SLDO).	Planning	MCPC, B PC, BC	Year 1
Cegielski Park and Jarrett Avenue Playground improvements.	Planning and Implementation	B, STC, S	Years 1-3
Investigate joint acquisition opportunities with Abington.	Acquisition	B, S	Years 1-3
(Contingent upon acquisition) Improve Loney Street Trail and corridor between Church Road and South Sylvania Avenue (clearing, paving, landscaping, lighting, signage, benches, bollards)	Planning and Implementation	B, S	Year 2
Mill Park Master Plan and Improvements.	Planning and Implementation	B, S, STC, MCPC	Years 2-3
Negotiate access easement from Strockville across Lawnview Cemetery to Cegielski Park. (Contingent upon acquisition) pave path and add lighting.	Access Easement, Planning and Implementation	B, S	Years 2-3
Implement Rockledge Borough Trail System (Signage, Crosswalks, Tree Planting, Sidewalk Repair).	Planning and Implementation	B, STC	Years 2-3
Create an endowment and/or gift giving program to secure donations for the preservation of open space and park lands.	Public Education, Outreach, and Implementation	B, S	Years 2-3
Negotiate right of first refusal with owner of cemetery land in Rockledge.	Right of First Refusal	B, S	Years 2-3
Erect Historic Marker	Planning and Implementation	B	Years 2-3
Establish short-term access to Lorimer Park, via pedestrian crossing of Shady Lane (and potential access easement).	Planning and Implementation, Potential Access Easement	B, S	Years 2-4
Establish Huntingdon Pike Re-Greening Program to plant shade trees with cooperation of local property owners.	Planning and Implementation	B, STC	Years 2-5
Enhance Borough gateways	Planning and Implementation	B, Revitalization Committee	Year 3
Work with various groups to acquire and construct the portion of County's proposed Pennypack Trail linking Rockledge to Lorimer Park as soon as possible (County plans to construct trail sometime after 2007).	Acquisition, Planning and Implementation	B, MCPC, County Parks Department	Years 3-8
Acquire, or protect with conservation easement unused cemetery land in Rockledge	Acquisition/Conservation Easement	B, S	Years 4-8
Acquire pocket parks in Strockville and north-central part of Borough; and vacant portion of parcel bounded by Blake, Rockledge, and Robbins Avenues.	Acquisition	B, S	As Available
Acquire land to expand existing parks.	Acquisition	B, S	As Available

- Erect Historic Marker— on Huntingdon Pike by Lawnview Cemetery to indicate the site of the former Fox Chase & Huntingdon Valley Turnpike Toll Booth.
- Right of First Refusal of Sale— Negotiate from cemetery owners for cemetery land in Borough

PHASE TWO (COMPLETION AFTER THREE YEARS)

ACQUISITION PRIORITIES

- Work with various groups to acquire and construct the portion of County's proposed Pennypack Trail linking Rockledge to Lorimer Park as soon as possible.
- Acquire vacant portion of parcel bounded by Blake, Rockledge, and Robbins Avenues.
- Attempt purchase of unused cemetery land in Rockledge (or protect with conservation easement— see below).

NONACQUISITION PRIORITIES

- Lorimer Park access— Prior to construction of Pennypack Trail, establish short-term access to Lorimer Park via pedestrian crossing of Shady Lane (potentially facilitated by an access easement).
- Establish Huntingdon Pike Re-Greening program. This program would plant shade trees along street on private property in return for property owners maintaining the trees.
- Protect unused cemetery land in Rockledge from development via acquisition of conservation easement (or protect via acquisition— see above).

AS AVAILABLE

- Acquire pocket parks in Strockville and north-central part of Borough as land becomes available.
- Expand existing parks if land becomes available.

FUNDING SOURCES

In addition to the funds allocated through the County Open Space Program, Rockledge is eligible for funds from a variety of sources including grants, general revenue funds, bond issues, and donations (of cash, materials, or labor).

Rockledge will pursue other grants available from Montgomery County, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), and others. These grants can be used in conjunction with the County's Open Space grants to help defray the cost of the Township's match. A sampling of possible grant sources is described below.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY OPEN SPACE GRANTS (MCOS)

In 2003, a referendum to fund open space and green infrastructure projects was passed in Montgomery County. Known as the Green Fields/Green Towns Program, this funding was allocated to municipalities, private non-profit conservation organizations, and the county to preserve more open space and enhance the livability of existing communities throughout the county.

Rockledge is eligible to receive a total of \$2,111,244 for open space acquisition and enhancement. This grant requires matching funds equal to 20% of project costs from the municipality. The county grants come with several conditions. The most important condition is that any land purchased with grant money must be permanently preserved as open space or for active recreation. Another condition is that Rockledge must complete and adopt its Open Space Plan. This plan must be approved by the County's Open Space Board before grant money can be disbursed.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION PROGRAM (MCRP)

Initiated in 2000, this program is intended to create a strategic, economic development program that will strengthen and stabilize the county's older communities for the long term. It helps these communities become more vibrant, livable, and attractive places. Funding from this competitive program is used for projects consistent with the Township's Community Revitalization Plan.

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES (DCNR)

DCNR manages a variety of grant and technical assistance programs concerned with a variety of issues. DCNR annually awards about \$30 million in planning, acquisition, and development grants for parks, recreation, rivers conservation, trails, greenways, and protection of open space and critical natural areas. Most DCNR grants require a 50/50 match. DCNR also provides pre-application workshops to assist applicants in the preparation of their application forms.

A priority goal of these programs is to develop and sustain partnerships with communities, non-profits, and other organizations for recreation and conservation projects and purposes. With this in mind, the Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) was established. It is a combination of several funding sources and grant programs, including the Commonwealth's Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund (KEY 93, described below), the Environmental Stewardship and Watershed Protection Act (Growing Greener, also described below), Act 68 Snowmobile and ATV Trails Fund, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and the Recreational Trails component of the Transportation Equity Act for the Twenty-First Century (TEA-21).

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (DEP)

The Growing Greener program has funded

efforts to clean up Pennsylvania's rivers and streams, reclaimed abandoned mines and toxic waste sites, invested in new alternative energy sources, preserved farmland and open space, and developed watershed restoration programs. Thus far, Growing Greener has generated nearly \$1.50 in matching funds for the environment for every \$1.00 in state money. As the Growing Greener program evolves, it will focus on brownfield redevelopment, farmland and open space preservation, water quality improvements, enhanced state and community parks, and an upgraded fish and wildlife infrastructure. Growing Greener II will accomplish these goals while making critical investments in community revitalization and the promotion of the use of clean energy.

KEYSTONE RECREATION, PARK, AND CONSERVATION FUND

The Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund Act was signed into law in 1993. It directs a portion of the state's Real Estate Transfer Tax to the Keystone Fund, establishing a dedicated and permanent funding sources for recreation, parks, conservation, and other programming. Grants from this program require a minimum 50% match from the recipient municipality or nonprofit organization. As of 2002, \$144 million had been granted to more than 2,100 projects. The demand on the Keystone Fund already outstrips resources by a 4 to 1 margin.

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (DCED)

The mission of DCED is "To foster opportunities for businesses and communities to succeed and thrive in a global economy, thereby enabling Pennsylvanians to achieve a superior quality of life." Therefore there are several assistance and grant programs available to Pennsylvania municipalities. Often, local economic and community revitalization efforts are supported by the implementation of green infrastructure and open space plans. Below is a list of programs

offered by DCED through which revitalization funds may flow to implement the recommendations described in this open space plan.

- Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) - Provides grant assistance and technical assistance to aid communities in their community and economic development efforts.
- Community Revitalization Program (CR) - Provides grant funds to support local initiatives that promote the stability of communities.
- Main Street Program - This program provides assistance for revitalization planning and projects.
- Elm Street Program - Grant funds for planning, technical assistance and physical improvements to residential and mixed use areas in proximity to central business districts.
- Industrial Sites Reuse Program - Grant and low-interest loan financing to perform environmental site assessment and remediation work at former industrial sites.

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL & MUSEUM COMMISSION (PHMC)

Many communities value their historic resources and work to preserve them for future generations. These resources can then be integrated into the open space network and cultural amenities of that community to enhance local image and aesthetics. The PHMC offers several programs that aid municipalities in these efforts.

- Certified Local Government Grant Program - Provides funding for cultural resource surveys, national register nominations, technical and planning assistance, educational and interpretive programs, staffing and training, and pooling CLG grants and third party administration.
- Keystone Historic Preservation Grant Program - Funding for preservation, restoration, and rehabilitation.

- Pennsylvania History and Museum Grant Program - Funding under this program is designated to support a wide variety of museum, history, archives and historic preservation projects, as well as nonprofit organizations and local governments. There are 10 types of grants.

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (PENNDOT)

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

This category includes projects for bicyclists and pedestrians that permit safe passage for children to walk or bike to school. This includes activities that enhance the transportation system through the construction of new facilities or the improvement of existing facilities to make them more usable for pedestrians and bicyclists. Some examples of eligible activities include: sidewalk improvements, pedestrian/bicycle crossing improvements, bike lanes, traffic diversion improvements, off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities. In addition, this program may fund traffic calming measures to slow the speed of cars such as the following: curb extensions, bulb-outs, traffic circles, raised median islands, speed humps, textured or raised crosswalks. Funds cannot be used for bicycle and pedestrian facilities that are solely for recreational use.

HOME TOWN STREETS

This category includes a variety of streetscape improvements that are vital to reestablishing our downtown and commercial centers. These will include activities undertaken within a defined "downtown" area that collectively enhance that environment and promote positive interactions with people in the area. Projects may include sidewalk improvements, planters, benches, street lighting, pedestrian crossings, transit bus shelters, traffic calming, bicycle amenities, kiosks, community "gateway" plantings, signage and other visual elements.

DELAWARE VALLEY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION (DVRPC)

TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

The TCDI program is intended to assist in reversing the trends of disinvestment and decline in many of the region's core cities and first generation suburbs by:

- Supporting local planning projects that will lead to more residential, employment or retail opportunities;
- Improving the overall character and quality of life within these communities to retain and attract business and residents, which will help to reduce the pressure for further sprawl and expansion into the growing suburbs;
- Enhancing and utilizing the existing transportation infrastructure capacity in these areas to reduce the demands on the region's transportation network; and
- Reducing congestion and improving the transportation system's efficiency.

CONGESTION MITIGATION AND AIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CMAQ)

This program seeks transportation-related projects that can help the region reduce emissions from highway sources and meet National Clean Air Act standards. The program covers the DVRPC region of Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia counties in Pennsylvania; and, Burlington, Camden, Gloucester and Mercer counties in New Jersey.

TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (TE)

Transportation Enhancements is a set-aside of Federal highway and transit funds, mandated by Congress in the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) for the funding of "non-traditional" projects designed to enhance the transportation experience, to mitigate the impacts of transportation facilities on communities and the environment, and to enhance community character through transportation-related improvements.

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE RIVERS, TRAILS, AND CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The program offers technical assistance only to nonprofit organizations, community groups, and local or state government agencies. Rivers and Trails technical staff offers the following types of assistance for recreation and conservation projects:

- Building partnerships to achieve community-set goals
- Assessing resources
- Developing concept plans
- Engaging public participation
- Identifying potential sources of funding
- Creating public outreach
- Organizational development
- Providing conservation and recreation information

PECO ENERGY GREEN REGION OPEN SPACE GRANT PROGRAM

PECO Energy, a subsidiary of Exelon, is currently involved in several environmental partnerships including “TreeVitalize,” with DCNR, clean water preservation with The Nature Conservancy, and environmental education initiatives with the Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education and Green Valleys Association. Green Region grants are available to municipalities in amounts up to \$10,000. The grants can be used with other funding sources to cover a wide variety of planning and direct expenses associated with development and implementing open space programs, including consulting fees, surveys, environmental assessments, habitat improvement, and capital improvements for passive recreation.

DELAWARE ESTUARY GRANTS PROGRAM

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation administers this grant program in coopera-

tion with the Delaware Estuary Program, and other partner agencies. Grants range between \$5,000 and \$25,000, and larger amounts are awarded depending on whether the project relates directly to the action items of the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan for the Delaware Estuary or that would improve the Delaware Estuary.

WATERSHED ACTION GRANTS

These grants are awarded by the Conservation Fund for applicants in southeastern Pennsylvania and Southern New Jersey for implementation of conservation plans. Grant awards are between \$2,000 and \$20,000 for projects that protect the watershed, improve water quality, or promote watershed stewardship.

WATERSHED RESOURCES EDUCATION NETWORK

The Watershed Resources Education Network offers grants related to water resource education and training.

GENERAL REVENUE FUNDS AND BOND ISSUE

Rockledge has the option of using general revenue funds for open space and recreation purposes. It also has the option of issuing a bond to pay for the capital costs of parkland acquisition and development. The decision to pursue these options rests with the Board of Commissioners after being advised by the administration.

DONATIONS

Rockledge should encourage donations from individuals, businesses, and groups to help pay for parkland acquisition, development, and tree planting. The donations may be cash, materials, or labor. Rockledge could organize special days during which local citizens and groups could gather to participate in implementing open space projects.

SOUTHEAST PENNSYLVANIA LAND CONSERVATION ORGANIZATIONS

PENNYPACK ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION TRUST-PALTA MEMBER

2955 Edge Hill Rd.
Huntington Valley, PA 19006
Counties where acquisitions completed:
Montgomery

Mission: The mission of the Trust and its membership is to protect, restore and preserve the lands of the central Pennypack Creek valley so that they * remain an enhancement to the quality of visitors' lives, * remain a vibrant and diverse natural landscape supporting native plant and animal life, and * become the standard of excellence for innovative restoration and stewardship practices to be shared with other individuals and organizations joined in common commitment to the environment.

Founded: 1970
Phone: (215) 657-0830
Email: djrpennypack@cs.com
www.libertynet.org/pert

BRANDYWINE CONSERVANCY- PALTA MEMBER

PO Box 141
Chadds Ford, PA 19317
Counties where acquisitions completed: Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lancaster, Montgomery, Philadelphia

Mission: The mission of the Brandywine Conservancy's Environmental Management Center is to conserve the natural and cultural resources of the Brandywine River watershed and other selected areas with a primary emphasis on conservation of water quantity and quality.

Founded: 1967
Phone: (610) 388-2700
Email: emc@brandywine.org
www.brandywineconservancy.org

CONSERVANCY OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY- PALTA MEMBER

PO Box 28
Ambler, PA 19002-0028
Counties where acquisitions completed: Montgomery

Mission: The business and purpose of this organization shall be to advocate the preservation of historic and natural resources in Montgomery County to ensure their protection for future generations. The main functions of the organization shall be to identify and protect historic structures, open space and natural resources; sponsor educational preservation programs; conduct survey and planning studies; promote, assist with and accept conservation easements; and provide an information network and clearinghouse for preservation information for county residents, businesses, schools, municipalities and organizations.

Founded: 1990
Phone: (215) 283-0383
Email: cmcpreserve@hotmail.com

HERITAGE CONSERVANCY- PALTA MEMBER

85 Old Dublin Pike
Doylestown, PA 18901
Counties where acquisitions completed: Bucks, Montgomery, Susquehanna, York
Counties where acquisitions anticipated: Northampton

Mission: Heritage Conservancy is a nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving our natural and historic heritage. Founded in 1958, it was concern for the rapid loss of open space in Bucks County which led to the formation of the Bucks County Park Foundation, known today as Heritage Conservancy.

Founded: 1958
Phone: (215) 345-7020
Email: hconserv@heritageconservancy.org
www.heritageconservancy.org

LOWER MERION CONSERVANCY PALTA MEMBER

1301 Rose Glen Rd.

Gladwyne, PA 19035

Counties where acquisitions completed: Delaware, Montgomery

Mission: The Lower Merion Conservancy acts to protect our area's natural and historic resources, open space, and watersheds for area residents and future generations.

Through education, advocacy, and research, the Conservancy promotes collective responsibility for these resources.

Founded: 1991

Phone: (610) 645-9030

Email: admin@dragonfly.org

www.lmconservancy.org

MONTGOMERY COUNTY LANDS TRUST- PALTA MEMBER

PO Box 300

Lederach, PA 19450

Counties where acquisitions completed: Montgomery

Mission: " It is the mission of Montgomery County Lands Trust to permanently preserve land and to foster the wise stewardship of open space of our county by: Acquiring easements and encouraging donation of land to appropriate stewards. Helping to facilitate the creation of open space and natural amenities in existing communities. Promoting environmentally sensitive, sustainable development which preserves open space, significant natural resources and our unique sense of place. Providing educational programs that strategically advance its mission.

Founded: 1993

Phone: (215) 513-0100

Email: dflaharty@mclt.org www.mclt.org

NATURAL LANDS TRUST- PALTA MEMBER

1031 Palmers Mill Rd.

Media, PA 19063

Counties where acquisitions completed: Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, Philadelphia

Mission: Natural Lands Trust is a non-profit, regional land conservation organization working to protect the most critical remaining open lands in the greater Philadelphia region.

Founded: 1961

Phone: (610) 353-5587

Email: apitz@natlands.org

www.natlands.org

NORTH AMERICAN LAND TRUST- PALTA MEMBER

PO Box 1578

Chadds Ford, PA 19317

Counties where acquisitions completed: Chester, Delaware, Lancaster, Montgomery

Founded: 1992

Phone: (610) 388-3670

Email: info@nalt.org info@nalt.org

www.nalt.org

PERKIOMEN WATERSHED CONSERVANCY- PALTA MEMBER

1 Skippack Pike

Schwenksville, PA 19473

Counties where acquisitions completed: Montgomery

Mission: The Perkiomen Watershed Conservancy is a nonprofit organization founded in 1964 by local citizens to combat pollution in the Perkiomen Creek and its tributaries. We provide an integrated approach to environmental issues of the Perkiomen Watershed area through environmental education, Watershed stewardship and conservation programs.

Founded: 1964

Phone: (610) 287-9383

Email: pwc@perkiomenwatershed.org

www.perkiomenwatershed.org

**WISSAHICKON VALLEY WATERSHED
ASSOCIATION- PALTA MEMBER**

12 Morris Rd.

Ambler, PA 19002

Counties where acquisitions completed:

Montgomery

Mission: Since 1957, the Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association has been the leader in protecting the open space of the Wissahickon Valley, in enhancing its water quality, and in educating people of all ages about environmental concerns.

Founded: 1957

Phone: (215) 646-8866

Email: wwa@aol.com:

www.wwa.org

