



ISSUES REPORT

APPENDIX B: PLANNING STUDIES 1998 - 2008

Prepared by
*Lower Merion Township Planning Staff and
Montgomery County Planning Commission Staff, 2010*

Funded by
*Community Development Block Grant
in conjunction with the Issues Report*



APPENDIX B: PLANNING STUDIES 1998 - 2008

HISTORIC PRESERVATION, OPEN SPACE AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE PROTECTION

Township of Lower Merion Conservationist Agenda (1998)

Prepared and funded by: Lower Merion Township

Purpose

Convey recent accomplishments and future plans in three interrelated areas—open space conservation, environmental protection, and historic preservation.

Goal/Objective

- Develop a process to solicit community input.
- Consider development and implementation of a Geographic Information System (GIS).
- Complete and implement master plans for all Township parks to ensure maximization of their use.
- Continue search of open space for potential acquisition.
- Create a mandatory recreation dedication ordinance.
- Develop a trail feasibility study to accommodate multiple uses.
- Update the Comprehensive Plan.
- Reduce emissions by converting light-duty fleet to compressed natural gas.
- Ensure new residences fit and blend into existing neighborhoods.
- Implement integrated pest management.
- Proactively identify and stabilize deteriorating stream banks.
- Educate public on environmental and historic preservation issues.
- Revise and improve Natural Features Code.
- Map natural and scenic resources.
- Develop Historic Documentation and Preservation Ordinance.
- Stabilize Historic Resources.
- Continue documentation and addition of historic resources and districts.
- Preserve historic roadways.

Outcome

- The Township instituted the use of Geographic Information System (GIS) to identify natural and man-made features.
- The Millworker's Houses at Rolling Hill Park and the Roberts Grist Mill Wall on Old Gulph Road were stabilized.
- 1999: A moratorium was approved on demolitions to preserve historic resources.
- 1999: Four historic neighborhoods were nominated to the National Historic Register— All were denied.
- 2000: The Historic Preservation Ordinance was adopted.
- 2001: The last four of 10 Park Master Plans were completed - Wynnewood Valley Park; Penn Wynne Park; Ashbridge Park; and Gladwyne Park.
- 2004: Completed Feasibility Study for Township-wide Pedestrian and Bicycle Network.
- 2006: An ordinance was adopted requiring the dedication of land for recreation or a fee-in-lieu.
- 2006: The Open Space Element of Comprehensive Plan was completed.
- 2007: The Haverford Station Historic District was created.

Conservationist Agenda 1999-2002: A Progress Report (2001)

Prepared and funded by: Lower Merion Township

Purpose

Document recent accomplishments in areas identified in "Township of Lower Merion Conservationist Agenda" (1998), identify new goals and develop a blueprint for coming years.

Goal/Objective

- Continue efforts to convert two Township sites to athletic fields.
- Implement 1996 Natural Areas Management Study and continue efforts of Natural Areas Stewardship Program.
- Expand open space preservation efforts by partnering with local non-profits and private property owners.
- Continue working with Montgomery County to implement the Schuylkill River Greenway Stewardship Study.
- Study the feasibility of developing a multiple use trail system.
- Develop a Giving Program to encourage private donations towards Township park system.
- Conduct 'skate park' and 'off-leash dog area' feasibility studies.
- Continue partnership with Lower Merion Conservancy to conduct Preservation Area Monitoring.
- Continue working with Darby-Cobbs Watershed Partnership to protect the watershed through restoration projects, education and development of Act 167 Stormwater Management Plan.
- Ensure County's Comprehensive Plan incorporates Township's goals and objectives and determine whether a local plan is needed.
- Ensure new residences fit into existing neighborhoods.
- Implement integrated pest management at Ashburn Field.
- Proactively identify and stabilize deteriorating stream banks.
- Revise wooded lot and minimum planting requirements of the Natural Features Code
- Use GIS to map natural and scenic resources.
- Continue to develop programs to preserve historic resources, roadways, bridges, streams, fords.

Outcome

- The Ashbridge Park stream bank stabilization project was completed.
- 2004:** Completed Feasibility Study for Township-wide Pedestrian and Bicycle Network.
- 2006:** An ordinance was adopted requiring the dedication of land for recreation or a fee-in-lieu.
- 2006:** The Open Space Element of Comprehensive Plan was completed.
- 2007:** The Haverford Station Historic District was created.
- 2007:** The Darby-Cobbs Creek Act 167 ordinance amendments were adopted.
- Present:** An update of the Comprehensive Plan is presently underway.

Open Space and Environmental Resource Protection Plan (2006)

Prepared by: The Township of Lower Merion
with Natural Lands Trust, Campbell Thomas & Associates and acquireVisual.com

Funding Source: Green Fields/Green Towns Grant
through Montgomery County and Lower Merion Township

Purpose

Update the Township's 1995 Open Space and Natural Resource Protection Plan and establish a comprehensive preservation strategy for the next decade.

Goal/Objective

- Improve or create pedestrian and bike links between neighborhoods and Township amenities.
- Create a continuous multi-use trail along the Lower Merion side (west side) of the Schuylkill River and create access to the Schuylkill River Trail.
- Improve the landscaping of streets and parks in residential and commercial areas.
- Create or enlarge public spaces in commercial districts and create pocket parks in the most developed residential neighborhoods of the Township.
- Permanently protect historic properties and large (5 or more acres) residential and institutional properties, using conservation easements and selected fee purchases.
- Implement the findings of the 1996 Parks and Recreation Plan.
- Use Township land use regulations to preserve open space, protect natural resources and create recreational opportunities.

Outcome

- 2006-Present:** Due to the preparation of this plan the Township was eligible to obtain Montgomery County Green Fields/Green Towns funding that largely financed many of the projects listed below.
- 2006-Present:** Prepare the Cynwyd Trail Master Plan, acquire under utilized or vacant properties along the trail and develop the Cynwyd Heritage Trail.
- 2007:** Improvements to the Warner Avenue Park were completed.
- 2007-2010:** Acquire a 1-acre parking lot for a pocket park in Ardmore, prepare a Master Plan for Linwood Park and develop the park.
- 2008:** Improvements were made to the walking trails at Ashbridge Park and Flat Rock Park.
- 2008-Present:** The *Township of Lower Merion Shade Tree Inventory Management Plan* was completed in 2008 and is presently being implemented.

**Township-Wide Stormwater Program: Township of Lower Merion,
Montgomery County, Pennsylvania (2007)**

Prepared by: Office of the Township Engineer, Pennoni Associates, Inc.

Funding Source: Lower Merion Township

Purpose

- Identify areas where stormwater improvements are feasible and appropriate in order to lessen the frequency and severity of surface flooding for the severe as well as the more frequent storm events, providing an overall benefit.

Goal/Objective

- To investigate the reports of flooding that occur throughout the Township during periods of heavy rainfall;
- To identify the cause and extent of the flooding;
- To identify potential solutions in concept form;
- To establish recommended priorities for further action; and
- To identify eligibility as a public project based on current policy.

Outcome

The lists of identified issues are actively being corrected by the Township in order of priority.

The Township of Lower Merion Shade Tree Inventory Management Plan (2008)

Prepared by: Davey Resource Group

**Funding Source: Montgomery County Green Fields/Green Towns Program and
Lower Merion Township**

Purpose

To provide a five-year plan of action for the inventoried tree population of Lower Merion. To inventory and evaluate the current condition of its trees to draw attention to immediate problems and provide the basis for designing a long-term management plan. The management plan, in turn, provides guidelines for the future, allows for more effective use of tree care funds, and allows for more accurate budget projections.

Goal/Objective

- To gain an overall understanding of the inventoried tree population in terms of genus and species composition.
- To identify and take remedial action for trees with structural or other defects that could cause them to be or to become potential risks to citizens, vehicles, and property.
- To analyze the individual and overall health (condition) of the inventoried tree population.
- To establish a tree safety pruning and removal program that will alleviate all identified potential high-risk conditions by 2009.
- To establish a five-year cyclical tree pruning program beginning in 2010.
- To establish a new Training Pruning Program for all newly planted trees beginning in 2010.
- To develop a Public Tree Planting Plan designed to maintain or better the current stocking level and increase species diversity.

Outcome

Over 300 trees have been planted by the Public Works Department in locations identified by the Management Plan. Maintenance of shade trees has been completed using the recommendations of the Plan. 80-90% of all in-house and outside contracts regarding tree removal have been done as a result of recommendations contained in the Plan.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

TOWNSHIP-WIDE

Office of Economic Development Plan (1998)

Prepared by: The Office of the Township Manager and the Office of Economic Development

Funding Source: Lower Merion Township

Purpose

Identify an economic development plan for the Township's business districts.

Goal/Objective

- Develop program guidelines and criteria to determine eligibility for funding support from the Township.
- Consider a five-year plan/budget for the City Avenue Special Services District and Ardmore 2000 (Ardmore Initiative).
- Assist the business districts in completing three 1998-99 CDBG funded planning studies.
- Assist business districts in staffing needs and marketing efforts.
- Create public/private partnerships to leverage program funding for physical improvements.
- Examine parking/pedestrian access issues.
- Conduct business retention activities to maintain low vacancy rates in the business districts.
- Consider requests to install gateway signage and banners to create a sense of identity for the business districts.
- Improve the variety and mix of businesses in business districts.

Outcome

- The plan was a blueprint on how to improve coordination among the various commercial areas.
- Many of these goals are evidenced via subsequent reports and outcomes for the commercial areas.

CDBG Eligibility and Fundability Study (1998)

Prepared by: Mullin & Lonergan Associates, Inc.

Funding Source: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program

Purpose

Determine the areas of the Township and types of projects that qualify for CDBG funding.

Goal/Objective

- Only a sub-area of Ardmore qualifies directly for CDBG funding based on "slum and blight" criteria.
- All of the Township business districts would benefit from improvements to commercial building facades. The study suggests a Façade Improvement Program be developed.

Outcome

The Façade Improvement Program is evidenced via subsequent reports and outcomes.

Township of Lower Merion Economic Development Program Plan 2002-2004 (2002)

Prepared by: Office of Economic Development, Lower Merion Township

Funding Source: Lower Merion Township

Purpose

To monitor the progress made towards implementing the 1996 CUED and 1997 HyettPalma studies and develop program goals and effectiveness measures.

Goal/Objective

- Improve the general appearance of rights-of-way and building facades so that the commercial districts better reflect the vitality of the surrounding residential community.
- Support the implementation of a comprehensive parking management plan in the commercial districts to make better use of the public parking spaces available.
- Implement traffic and pedestrian improvements to minimize congestion at signalized intersections in the business district.
- Work with the commercial districts to balance the mix of businesses and facilitate the retention of successful businesses in the Township to help ensure the shopping/service needs of residents are met and help maintain a low vacancy rate.
- Review the Township's rules, regulations and review/approval processes to see where opportunities exist for being more flexible and for creating "one-stop shopping" application processes.

Outcome

Many of these goals are evidenced via subsequent reports and outcomes.

Lower Merion Township Design Guidelines, Business District Signage Program (2002)

Prepared by: Cloud & Gehshan Associates

Funding Source: PA Department of Community and Economic Development

Purpose

Develop gateway/entrance signage, parking signage, way finder signage and banner identification signage for the Township's business districts.

Goal/Objective

- Entail the design, fabrication and installation of readily visible signs that will:
- Create a better sense of identity for the Township and its individual business districts;
- Reduce/mitigate traffic congestion, vehicular/pedestrian conflicts and accidents.
- Four primary components:
- Gateway signs and street banners for 10 of the Township's business districts;
- Township gateway signs;
- Way finder signs; and
- Identification signs for Township-owned buildings and public parking lots.

Outcome

- The Business District Signage Program is underway
- Gateway signage was individually designed to promote a sense of identity for each of the business districts.
- The signage program also works to instill a greater sense of community pride and improves the physical appearance of the entrance areas.
- The business district signage program was implemented with funding available through the Transportation Enhancements portion of the Federal TEA-21 program (CIP 4029). The way finding portion was completed in 2008. The Township identification portion of this program is on hold at this time.

ARDMORE**Ardmore 2000 Business District Enhancement Plan (2000)****Prepared by: Ardmore 2000 Business District and Township of Lower Merion****Purpose**

Creation of an annually updated five-year implementation plan for improvements to the Ardmore Business District through the public/private partnership established with the Township.

Goal/Objective

Allocate funds and prioritize projects to improve the business district.

Outcome

- Completion of Rittenhouse Place/Station Avenue Streetscape Project;
- Improvements to sidewalks and curbs on Cricket Avenue;
- Installation of over 80 hanging flower baskets;
- Planting of ground cover flowers in Ardmore;
- Placement of trash cans and benches throughout the district; and
- Development of a street tree program.

Ardmore Revitalization Plan (2001)

Prepared by: Lincoln Property Company

Funding Source: Montgomery County Revitalization Program and Lower Merion Township

Purpose

The plan was prepared to respond to Montgomery County's participation requirements related to the Montgomery County Community Revitalization Program (Program). The Program was adopted by the County Commissioners at their June 2000 meeting. The Program was created to strengthen and stabilize older communities located within the County and is intended to help communities become more vibrant and attractive places to work, live and visit.

Goal/Objective

Economic Development:

- Improve building facades;
- Develop and implement a Business Tutor/Mentor Program; and
- Expand the entrepreneurial training program.

Housing:

- Create a program to promote development of affordable housing units within upper stories of commercial buildings; and
- Provide funding for non-profits to purchase land and/or housing units.

Transportation:

- Improve traffic calming/ pedestrian safety;
- Enhance the physical appearance and safety of the train station and alleyway connections to parking;
- Install a bus shelter; and
- Provide street furniture to promote bicycle usage.

Urban Open Space:

- Provide facilities for meetings, celebrations and other events; and
- Provide funding for Vernon V. Young Park improvements.

Outcome

The Ardmore Revitalization Plan has been implemented through a number of projects with the use of County Revitalization funding.

The county funding was matched by various organizations and private individuals to undertake the following projects:

- Commercial Facade Program;
- Improvement of 15-17 West Lancaster Avenue pedestrian alley connections;
- Vernon V. Young Memorial Park Improvements;
- Ardmore Streetscape Improvements;
- Schaufele Plaza bus shelter; and
- Conversion of upper story commercial buildings to affordable housing.

Ardmore Transit Center Conceptual Master Plan (2003)

Prepared by: Hillier, Econsult Corporation, Chance Management, Inc., and
Gannett Fleming, Inc.

Funding Source: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, Community Development
Block Grant Funds and Lower Merion Township Capital Improvement Program

Purpose

The plan was prepared to create a comprehensive vision for development of the station area; identify needed parking and transit facilities; and assist the Township in identifying conceptual public-private funding sources.

Goal/Objective

- Develop a long-term comprehensive parking plan for the Ardmore Business District;
- Revitalize the Ardmore Business District into a successful commercial destination for area residents, workers and visitors; and
- Create an attractive pedestrian-oriented transit station and area.

Outcome

2003: The plan was accepted thereby completing Phase 1 of the plan.

2004: Due to public opposition of elements of the plan the Township requested the Urban Land Institute assess the situation and make recommendations as to how the Township can best use its limited resources to achieve revitalization goals.

2004: Phase 2 concluded when the area was designated as an area in need of redevelopment.

2005: To advance the process and bring the Ardmore Transit Center Plan to fruition, the Ardmore Redevelopment Area Plan was prepared.

Ardmore, Pennsylvania: An Advisory Services Panel Report (2004)

Prepared by: Urban Land Institute

Funding Source: Lower Merion Township

Purpose

To examine the revitalization strategies for the Ardmore business district, and in particular, the Ardmore Transit Center Master Plan and its proposed Town Center Gateway project. To make recommendations as to how the township can best use its limited resources to achieve its revitalization goals.

Goal/Objective

Recommendations:

- Identify key changes that will enhance assets already in place;
- Focus on five high-priority projects that can be accomplished within five years;
- Construct a new train station and public plaza, new mixed-use residential development on the Cricket and Ruby's parking lots and a new shared-use parking facility at Bernicker/Honda site;
- Create a new village green at the current Schaufele parking lot;
- Improve circulation, pedestrian connections, parking availability;
- Delegate primary responsibility for development projects to stakeholders to avoid overextending the Township's resources;
- Phase projects over time to create momentum for revitalization; and
- Direct considerable effort into harnessing the energy, ideas, and commitment of the Ardmore community to support the revitalization program.

Outcome

The findings and recommendations of the report were incorporated into the 2005 Ardmore Redevelopment Area Plan.

Ardmore Redevelopment Area Plan (2005)

Prepared by: Hillier Architecture, Econsult Corporation, Gannett Fleming, Chance Management Advisors, and Desman Associates

Funding Source: Lower Merion Township Capital Improvement Program

Purpose

The Ardmore Redevelopment Area Plan was a necessary step in obtaining designation as an area in need of redevelopment by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development. The plan was created to bring the Ardmore Transit Center Plan to fruition.

Goal/Objective

Revitalize Lancaster Avenue to improve the competitiveness of the area; and
Identify the project area, the proposed uses following redevelopment, existing and proposed zoning, street changes, relocation measures, a preliminary cost estimate and proposed standards and controls.

Outcome

The Plan fulfilled the required step necessary in receiving redevelopment area designation. The Township and Montgomery County certified parts of downtown Ardmore as a redevelopment area in 2005.

Ardmore Revitalization Plan Update (2005)

Prepared by: Hillier Architecture

Funding Source: Montgomery County Revitalization Program funds and Lower Merion Township

Purpose

The Ardmore Revitalization Plan was originally developed in 2001 to respond to Montgomery County's participation requirements related to the Montgomery County Community Revitalization Program (Program). To receive implementation grants through the Program a revitalization plan is required to be completed, adopted and reassessed every five years. The Program was created to strengthen and stabilize older communities located within the County. The plan developed an updated list of actions to promote the revitalization of Ardmore.

Goal/Objective**Action Items:****Economic Development**

- Ardmore redevelopment area economic incentives;
- Ardmore Redevelopment Plan implementation;
- Commercial Façade Program; and
- Business Assistance Program.

Housing

- Conversion of upper story commercial buildings into affordable residential units; and
- Non-profit purchase of housing units.

Infrastructure and Transportation

- Anderson Avenue underpass enhancements;
- Ardmore and Lancaster Avenues intersection improvement,
- Bicycle facility installation;
- Bus shelter installation/bus prioritization;
- Church Road and Lancaster Avenue intersection improvements;
- Pedestrian connections;
- Township Pedestrian and Bicycle Trail Program;
- Traffic calming/pedestrian safety;
- Transit center mixed-use development;
- Ardmore Avenue pool;
- Community Center improvements;
- Schuffele Green;
- Township Square; and
- Transit Center streetscape improvements.

Outcome

County Revitalization funds have been allocated to Ardmore to implement the projects set forth in the Ardmore Revitalization Plan Update. Such projects include: continuing the successful commercial façade program; and realigning the Ardmore Avenue and Lancaster Avenue intersection.

Ardmore Retail Strategy (2006)

Prepared by: **Economics Research Associates**

Funding Source: **Lower Merion Township**

Purpose

The purpose of the retail strategy is to develop retail recruitment and a retention plan and also a strategy for implementation.

Goal/Objective

The goals of this project are to:

- Create a Merchandising Mix Plan;
- Recommend a strategy for implementation;
- Identify existing impediments and suggest modifications to promote revitalization;
- Make general merchandising recommendations to existing businesses;
- Hire and train a Downtown Retail Coordinator to recruit retailers to implement the retail strategy; and
- Assist in developing the retail requirements of the RFP for redevelopment and review and evaluate submissions.

Recommendations:

- Improve the pedestrian environment by seeking street and sidewalk improvement funding;
- Simplify the steps required to improve upper-story residential and first floor retail spaces;
- Facilitate improvement to the physical condition of buildings;
- Require that applicants sign maintenance agreements before receiving Township funds;
- Explore the creation of a low interest loan pool from local banks to fund building improvements;
- Utilize incentives and bonuses geared towards new projects or renovations in the Mixed-Use Special Transportation district.
- Provide storeowners/property owners with guidelines to appropriately design and merchandise retail storefronts;
- Require high standards of operation and maintenance; and
- Address building and fire code related obstacles to renovating upper-stories of buildings as high quality residential units.

Outcome

The Ardmore Merchandising Mix plan was created and is currently being implemented by the Retail Recruiter. The following merchandizing mix recommendations were made:

- Prepared/specialty foods;
- Restaurants;
- Home furnishings;
- Sportswear;
- Bookstore;
- Stationery and gifts;
- Coffee/cafes;
- Interior design;
- Luggage and leather goods; and
- Arts, crafts, fabrics, linens.

The following tenants have since been recruited and placed:

- Nurture (childrenswear and accessories);
- A La Maison (French Bistro) ;
- Gould (home accessories);
- Dereks (specialty meats);
- Auspicious (Asian Fusion);
- Cucina Design Studio (kitchen and bath design showroom); and
- Marvin Windows (home showroom).

Ardmore Storefront Guidelines (2006)**Prepared by: Kiku Obata & Company****Funding Source: The Township of Lower Merion****Purpose**

To create well-designed, dynamic and upscale storefronts throughout the Ardmore Commercial Center Historic District, to enhance the historic character of the District, and define the area as an attractive destination for shopping, entertainment, and socializing.

Goal/Objective

- Identify, retain, and preserve the form and detailing of architectural features;
- Protect and maintain important architectural features;
- Repair rather than replace deteriorated physical features where possible; and
- Replace rather than reconstruct.

Outcome

- Illustrative Guidelines have helped to provide additional design guidance in other traditional commercial areas, such as Bryn Mawr.
- Guidelines were an important element to expand the Ardmore County Revitalization Grant Program to allow up to \$20,000 matching grants to eligible applicants.

BALA-CYNWYD**Bala Avenue Master Plan (2000)****Prepared by: Wallace, Roberts & Todd****Funding Source: Community Development Block Grant funds awarded to the Neighborhood Club of Bala Cynwyd and administered through the Office of Economic Development****Purpose**

To enhance the image of the Bala Avenue corridor through specific design recommendations to achieve a “memorable unifying concept”.

Goal/Objective

- Improve the quality and safety of the pedestrian experience;
- Improve connections between the Bala Avenue commercial core, the adjacent neighborhood and other amenities including the SEPTA station, the Bala Gym and the post office;
- Provide design guidance for future developments through architecture and site design guidelines and amendments to the Zoning Code; and
- Provide estimated costs for improvements and an implementation strategy.

Outcome

- Additional business district identification signage has been provided at the recommended locations.
- The majority of the Bala Gym Parking Area Renovation Project as recommended in the Plan was completed in 2006 to better connect the gym to the commercial district using funds received from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development.

Rock Hill Road/Belmont Avenue Corridor Master Plan (2000)

Prepared by: Wallace, Roberts & Todd, LLC

Funding Source: CDBG funds awarded to the Neighborhood Club of Bala Cynwyd and administered through the Office of Economic Development

Purpose

To create a plan for the Rock Hill Road/ Belmont Avenue Corridor. The specific elements addressed included the creation of a “gateway” to the Township, mitigation of traffic congestion, environmental enhancement, development growth management, upgrading community amenities and economic feasibility.

Goal/Objective

Recommendations:

- Establish a Transportation Service Area;
- Connect new development to the rate of improvement of the transportation and infrastructure system;
- Adopt the Capital Improvement Program in this report as a basis for funding improvement of the corridor;
- Enhance the gateway by creating a green corridor and/or a parkway entrance and protection of natural features;
- Accommodate private improvement and adjustments of Rock Hill Road to permit larger parcels with enhanced potential for superior design; and
- Establish new zoning and design guidelines for the corridor to support the physical design of the streetscape.

Outcome

- 2004:** The Rock Hill Road Transportation Service Area and associated impact fees were adopted which established a per trip cost for new developments to improve the transportation and infrastructure system.
- 2006:** The Rock Hill Overlay District (ROHO) was adopted which provides for a mix of uses along the corridor and includes design guidelines to improve the aesthetics of developments within this gateway area.

City Avenue Mapping Report (2001)**Prepared by: Cope Linder Architects****Funding Source: City Avenue Special Services District****Purpose**

Assessment of existing conditions and recommendation of a plan for implementation.

Goal/Objective

- Consider zoning changes that would allow the area to transform from a suburbanized auto-oriented highway to a pedestrian and transit friendly corridor;
 - “Gateway” pedestrian bridge at Presidential Boulevard;
 - Ornamental plantings at I-76;
 - Pedestrian lighting between Presidential Boulevard and 63rd Streets;
 - 63rd Street “Gateway”; and
 - Monumental fountain in Belmont Reservoir.
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Outcome

- Completion of the Gateway Pedestrian Bridge at Presidential Boulevard.
- Installation of ornamental plantings at Presidential Boulevard near the Schuylkill Expressway (I-76) exit.
- A \$10M pedestrian lighting and streetscape project has been placed on the state’s capital budget through the Capital Redevelopment Assistance Program managed by Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development and the City Avenue Special Services District is working to secure matching funds.
- The City Avenue Special Services District entered into public/ private partnership with St. Joseph’s University to complete a demonstration project along 54th Street.
- In November of 2008 the City Avenue Corridor Zoning Recommendations was completed proposing uniform guidelines for future developments in both Philadelphia and Lower Merion Township.

Bala Cynwyd Retail Strategy (2006)

Prepared by: Economics Research Associates

Funding Source: Lower Merion Township

Purpose

To evaluate several calculation factors affecting the Bala-Cynwyd retail district and to recommend critical steps to encourage retail revitalization.

Goal/Objective

Recommendations:

- The four major steps needed to revitalize the Bala Avenue retail district are:
- Work with the Township Retail Recruiter to expand duties to include Bala Avenue;
- Establish a close working relationship with building owners and encourage compliance with the strategy;
- Establish storefront and design guidelines to ensure cohesive retail design; and
- Consider mixed-use development for the area to eventually connect Montgomery Avenue and City Avenue.

Outcome

The City Avenue corridor was analyzed in 2008 for a potential rezoning. The Township is presently working with a consultant team to draft ordinance provisions that would affect Bala Avenue from City Avenue to Montgomery Avenue.

The following merchandizing mix recommendations were made:

- Children's and teen apparel;
- Art/framing;
- Bookstore/newsstand;
- Card/gift;
- Optical;
- Personal care(specialty lotions and soaps);
- Pharmacy/convenience;
- Shoes;
- Delicatessens;
- Full service restaurants; and
- Quick service food.

The following tenants have since been recruited and placed:

- Avril (French restaurant).

City Avenue Corridor Zoning Recommendations (2008)

Prepared by: Kise, Straw & Kolodner

Funding Source: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

Purpose

To evaluate zoning regulations on either side of the City Avenue Corridor and prepare recommendations necessary to maximize development opportunities, attract high-quality regional tenants to contribute to the tax base, provide competitive amenities, create a state-of-the-art integrated transportation system and encourage the development of a walkable environment where residents can work, live, play, shop, and learn.

Goal/Objective

Prepare zoning regulations that encompass properties on both the Lower Merion and Philadelphia sides of City Avenue to:

- Encourage development that combines residential, institutional and commercial uses in close proximity thus decreasing auto dependency;
- Encourage pedestrian access, transit-use and shared parking and accessways;
- Mitigate the effects of congestion and pollution;
- Promote pedestrian-friendly development;
- Ensure that new construction along the corridor in Philadelphia and Lower Merion will be consistent in form and scale; and
- Enhance the economic stability of the Township by promoting the growth, attractiveness, convenience and stability of the City Avenue area.

Outcome

Philadelphia adopted the City Avenue District in 2009. Lower Merion Township is presently studying the potential traffic impacts of the proposed district. The new district is anticipated to be brought forth for discussion and consideration in 2010.

BRYN MAWR

Bryn Mawr Streetscape Enhancement Plan (1999)

Prepared by: Carter Van Dyke for Bryn Mawr Beautiful

Funding Source: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program

Purpose

Establish a conceptual plan and streetscape design standard for the enhancement of the entire Lancaster Avenue streetscape corridor within Bryn Mawr.

Goal/Objective

The streetscape plan is intended to reinforce and clarify the unique identity of Bryn Mawr, celebrate and enhance the special places that make it worth visiting and better enable pedestrians and visitors in cars to orient themselves and find essential resources within the community.

Outcome

- Purchase of streetscape furniture throughout Bryn Mawr including benches, trash receptacles, and pedestrian lighting;
- Improvement of Hayden Lane pedestrian connection between Lancaster Avenue and Central Bryn Mawr Municipal Lot 10; and
- Purchase and installation of Bryn Mawr Gazebo and park furnishings.

Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania: An Advisory Services Panel Report (2004)

Prepared by: Urban Land Institute

Funding Source: Contributions from Main Line Health and Lower Merion Township

Purpose

To assist in forming a plan for the future of Bryn Mawr as pressures for new development and for the expansion of existing facilities and institutions mount and specifically, to review the proposed expansion plans of the Bryn Mawr Hospital campus and to also review the proposed Mixed Use Special Transportation (MUST) Ordinance.

Goal/Objective

Recommendations:

- Strengthen retail areas to capitalize on the proximity to nearby neighborhoods;
- Improve the retail district by constructing structured parking and community facilities;
- Create a Township-wide parking authority to plan, finance, develop, manage and operate the Township's parking system;
- Update the 1979 Lower Merion Township Comprehensive Plan with input from the community;
- Create a sector plan for Bryn Mawr clearly identifying land uses, recommended densities and building height and establishing design guidelines to ensure compatibility with existing and planned development; and
- The hospital should take the views of stakeholders into consideration, improve their relationship with the community and engage in dialogue with the community prior to formal submission of development applications.

Outcome

- 2005:** The Bryn Mawr Parking Study was completed to analyze parking needs in the area;
- 2006:** The Bryn Mawr Master Plan was developed to create a vision for the future of the district;
- 2007:** The Bryn Mawr Merchandising Mix Plan was completed to establish a plan for improvements to the commercial district; and
- 2008:** The Bryn Mawr Village District was adopted by the Board of Commissioners which created four new zoning districts and established design guidelines.

Bryn Mawr Master Plan (2006)

Prepared by: Sasaki, ERA and Civic Visions

Funding Source: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program and Lower Merion Township

Purpose

Develop a comprehensive vision and strategy that takes into account the hospital's plans, the presence of other institutions and retail, underutilized lots, and transit and parking issues in the village center.

Goal/Objective

- Build strong communities;
- Strengthen the village center;
- Improve accessibility while balancing vehicular traffic with pedestrian needs; and
- Accommodate existing and new parking demand.

Outcome

The Bryn Mawr Village District ordinance was adopted by the Board of Commissioners on June 19, 2008 creating four new zoning districts within Bryn Mawr and creating design guidelines for improvements to existing or new buildings within the district.

Bryn Mawr Merchandising Mix Plan (2007)**Prepared by: Economics Research Associates (ERA/Downtown Works)****Funding Source: Lower Merion Township****Purpose**

To establish a merchandise mix plan for Bryn Mawr. Assess current conditions and make recommendations for two distinct areas in Bryn Mawr.

Goal/Objective

To promote high end fashion, furniture and service stores to capitalize on the high-income residential area which surrounds Bryn Mawr.

Outcome

The following merchandizing mix recommendations were made:

- Jewelry (guild and fashion);
- Shoes;
- Handbags;
- Hats;
- Sweaters;
- Sport, resort, and beachwear;
- Bridal and formal wear;
- Women's, men's and children's apparel;
- Artisan jewelry/galleries; and
- Home accessories.

The following tenants have since been recruited and placed:

- Knit Wit (women's apparel);
- Stiletto (women's shoes);
- Ashton Whyte (home accessories);
- Robertson's (home accessories, flowers); and
- ADAM (women's apparel).

MERION-CYNWYD

Merion-Cynwyd Business District Master Plan (2004)

Prepared by: Kise, Straw & Kolodner with Chance Management Advisors

Funding Source: Community Development Block Grant Funds (CDBG) and other funds administered through Lower Merion Township's Office of Economic Development

Purpose

To recommend solutions for improving the function, safety, and aesthetics of the physical environment of the business district. Also, to recommend solutions for improving the supply and management of parking.

Goal/Objective

Recommendations:

- Improve vehicular traffic flow by implementing a 'demonstration' two-lane with TWLTL cross section for Montgomery Avenue;
- Improve pedestrian circulation and safety by: widening sidewalks and installing curb extensions; creating a visible new pedestrian crossing; eliminating the right turn at Old Lancaster Road; and minimizing driveway conflicts;
- Improve the streetscape by: improving sidewalks, the center lane, and public spaces; installing street trees, new lighting, way finding signage; and street furniture;
- Improve parking operations and management by: instituting a shared parking system; improving off-street parking lots;
- Improve physical off-street parking conditions by: installing physical improvements to parking lots; improving pedestrian access between Montgomery Avenue and off-street parking lots; enhancing parking lot edges; improving the appearance of commercial building façades; and
- Institute design guidelines.

Outcome

- Design and installation of Municipal Lot 12 along Old Lancaster Road;
- Creation of an art mural and the installation of other hardscaping improvements in Merion-Cynwyd Municipal Lot 18; and
- Gateway and other landscaping improvements to the Ford Road Municipal Lot 17.

Merion Cynwyd Retail Strategy(2006)**Prepared by: Economics Research Associates****Funding Source: Lower Merion Township****Purpose**

To develop a retail strategy and implementation recommendations for the Merion-Cynwyd business district.

Goal/Objective**Recommendations:**

- Expand the Township's Retail Coordinator role to include Merion-Cynwyd;
 - Create a Merion-Cynwyd edition of the Storefront and Signage Design Guidelines (created for Ardmore) to capitalize on strengths and create a streamlined approval process;
 - Explore a concentrated façade grant program in concert with design guidelines; and
 - Explore a shared parking program and potential solutions to parking difficulties.
-

Outcome

The following merchandizing mix recommendations were made:

- Apparel (children's, teen, men's, unisex, women's);
- Art/framing;
- Bookstore/newsstand;
- Card/gift;
- Cosmetics;
- Home accessories;
- Optical;
- Personal care (specialty lotions and soap); and
- Cafés.

The following tenants have since been recruited and placed:

- Town Hall Coffee (café).

HOUSING

Five-Year Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development (2000)

Prepared by: S. Huffman Associates and Housing Strategies Group

Funding Source: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program

Purpose

Identify housing and community development needs and develop specific goals and objectives to address the needs over a five year period. The Consolidated Plan allows the Township to continue to receive federal housing and Community Development Block Grant funds (CDBG). The Township receives an annual allocation of approximately \$1.4M in CDBG funding.

Goal/Objective

- Increase the supply of affordable rental housing units for elderly and low-income households;
- Preserve the supply of rental units for the elderly and other low-income households;
- Improve the safety of housing units in the Township;
- Preserve and improve the condition of homes occupied by low-income homeowners;
- Increase house ownership opportunities for low-income households;
- Increase understanding and compliance with fair housing laws;
- Improve and expand public facilities which serve low-income families;
- Improve the infrastructure in low-income areas to increase safety and accessibility and to spur investment;
- Support and expand affordable childcare services;
- Increase availability of transportation services for elderly and low-income youth;
- Improve outreach for homeless persons and families;
- Prevent premature institutionalization of elderly and physically disabled renters;
- Improve accessibility for frail elderly and physically disabled renters;
- Increase the viability of Township's commercial corridors; and
- Provide planning services and develop strategies to implement housing and community development objectives.

Outcome

The following accomplishments were completed by 2005:

- The number of Section 8 households increased from 48 to 60;
- 15 units were rented to very low-income elderly households with assistance;
- Five affordable rental units were created on the second stories of commercial properties;
- A lead-based paint abatement program for low-income households was created;
- 75 housing units owned by low-income households were rehabilitated;
- 10 low-income first time homebuyers were assisted;
- A housing counseling program for first time homeowners was developed; and
- A home modification program for frail, elderly, and physically disabled renters was created.

Township of Lower Merion FY 2005-2009 Consolidated Plan (2005)

Prepared by: The Township of Lower Merion

Funding Source: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program

Purpose

To identify housing and community development needs and develop specific goals and objectives to address these needs over a five-year period. The preparation of the plan allows the Township to continue to receive federal housing and community development funds.

Goal/Objective

- Affordable housing rehabilitation, construction partnerships, and support programs;
- Increased communication between Township and homeless support organizations;
- Enhance non-housing services to increase accessibility and improve public facilities and services for lower income population, seniors, the disabled and those with HIV/AIDS or alcohol or drug abuse.

Outcome

The following accomplishments were completed by 2008:

- 53 units for low- to moderate- income seniors were created;
- 63 units for low- to moderate- income seniors were maintained;
- Five affordable rental units were created on the second stories of commercial properties;
- A lead-based paint abatement program for low-income households was continued;
- 45 housing units of low-income homeowners were rehabilitated;
- 7 low-income first time homebuyers were assisted;
- A housing counseling program for first time homeowners was continued through approved non-profit organizations; and
- The Residential Rehabilitation Program assisted with accessibility and home modifications for frail elderly and physically disabled homeowners.

American with Disabilities (ADA) Self Evaluation Report (2005)

Prepared and funded by: Lower Merion Township

Purpose

Township-wide audit of its programs, services and facilities to identify physical barriers to be removed or improved to comply with the goals of the Americans with Disabilities Act to provide barrier free access to public facilities.

Goal/Objective

To provide barrier free access to public facilities and to provide leadership in providing universal accessibility to all of its citizens and extended community through internal improvements as well as providing reviews on new facilities by adopting the International Building Code.

Outcome

Barriers that have been identified as a result of this plan have been or are in the process of being removed or improved through the Township's Capital Improvement Program. The International Building Code has been adopted and enforced by the Township.

Fair Housing Analysis (2006)

Prepared by: The Township of Lower Merion

Funding Source: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program

Purpose

To evaluate the housing characteristics, to identify blatant or defacto impediments to fair housing choice, and to arrive at a strategy for expansion of fair housing opportunities throughout the Township. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development requires that Lower Merion Township affirmatively further fair housing.

Goal/Objective

Identify impediments to fair housing in the Township and create an action plan to address the following impediments that were identified:

- Fair housing law violations;
 - Zoning restrictions;
 - Lack of credit or poor credit history;
 - Obscure Residential Rehabilitation guidelines; and
 - Shortage of affordable housing in the Township.
-

Outcome

- The Township continues to fund the Montgomery County Fair Housing Council, which provides fair housing education and outreach;
- The definitions of 'family' and 'community residential program' have been clarified;
- Local credit and budget counseling is now available to residents through Genesis Housing Corporation;
- The Township has redrafted the housing rehabilitation informational brochure and program guidelines to include more information on the use of Community Development Block Grant funds to promote accessibility options; and
- The Township has continued to use its entitlement funds for housing rehabilitation and continues to seek opportunities to expand the promotion of housing rehabilitation ensuring it is accessible to residents in need.

Lower Merion Affordable Housing Corporation Strategic Plan (2007)**Prepared by: Genesis Housing Corporation****Funding Source: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program****Purpose**

To review the mission of the organization and to develop a framework for exploring future programs and projects and to provide goals to help the corporation be more effective, to improve organizational capabilities and to improve communication with the community.

Goal/Objective

- Develop a mission statement;
 - Develop Board information to be disseminated to new Board members;
 - Expand Board membership;
 - Improve the identity of the organization by developing brochures, creating a new website, and by expanding relationships with the Township and other community agencies; and
 - Establish a framework for improving project development.
-

Outcome

- The plan established a clear vision for the organization.
- The non-profit organization continues to work closely with Lower Merion Township to facilitate, coordinate and develop affordable rental and owner-occupied housing to combat community deterioration and to increase opportunities for lower income families to live in Lower Merion Township.

TRANSPORTATION

TOWNSHIP-WIDE

Township-wide Parking Study (2001)

Prepared by: Lower Merion Township and Chance Management, Inc.

Purpose

A comprehensive review of the Township's various parking policies and existing parking infrastructure to develop recommendations to enhance and improve parking throughout the Township.

Goal/Objective

- Find a balanced approach to parking meters between traffic regulation and revenue generation;
- Set parking meter rates to encourage the use of long term or infrequently used meters without significantly reducing revenue;
- Identify current non-metered spaces for meter installation;
- Implement improvements to current meter time-limit configuration;
- Partner with business districts to reduce employee parking costs while encouraging a better use of remote parking spaces;
- Advertise and/or market parking programs and locations;
- Introduce new promotional programs; and
- Address residential parking permit issues.

Outcome

- All parking management functions have been consolidated into one Township Department;
- Enforcement programs have been increased to ensure parking compliance;
- Three permit parking lots were created in Ardmore, Bryn Mawr and Bala Cynwyd;
- Continue to improve the condition and appearance of the Township's 23 municipal parking lots; and
- A parking ordinance was adopted.

Lower Merion Township Multi-modal Transportation Study, Lancaster Ave/Montgomery Avenue (2001)

**Prepared by: McMahon Associates, Inc. in association with
Simone Jaffe Collins Landscape Architecture**

Funding Source: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program

Purpose

To conduct a transportation study to address multi-modal transportation issues along Montgomery Avenue and Lancaster Avenues and develop both short-term and long-term recommendations for enhancing the flow and safety of vehicles, pedestrians, bicycles and mass transit.

Goal/Objective

- Enhance vehicular progression and provide for left-turn movements;
- Increase bicycle safety and mobility;
- Increase pedestrian safety;
- Enhance on-street and off-street parking access, efficiencies and opportunities; and
- Accommodate mass transit usage.

Outcome

The plan was not accepted by the Board of Commissioners.

Feasibility Study for Lower Merion Township: Township-wide Pedestrian and Bicycle Network (2004)

Prepared by: Campbell Thomas & Co. and RBA Group

Funding Source: Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund under the administration of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation and Lower Merion Township

Purpose

This report is the first planning step towards the realization of a Township-wide pedestrian/bike network for Lower Merion Township. This feasibility report attempts to estimate the cost and prioritize key routes and projects at an overall planning level.

Goal/Objective

- Gather information and input for a potential path, bike, and trail system;
- Present the initial findings to the public and Township officials;
- Report on final study results and develop a conceptual Pedestrian and Bicycle Network and a Greenway Trail Plan.

Outcome

The findings of the study were incorporated into the 2006 Open Space and Environmental Resource Protection Plan. The study was recommended for implementation.

BRYN MAWR

Bryn Mawr Parking Study (2005)

Prepared by: Chance Management Advisors, Inc.

Funding Source: Lower Merion Township

Purpose

To perform a parking study for downtown Bryn Mawr, focusing on public parking demand in lots and in on-street spaces and to determine whether additional parking spaces are needed to serve the downtown area.

Goal/Objective

Findings:

- Parking demand in downtown Bryn Mawr is met by parking supply at any given time. During the peak period parking spaces may be found on nearly every block;
- As long as parking demand is at current levels, changes in parking regulations are unlikely to generate more parking in most locations;
- Development plans for downtown Bryn Mawr do not appear substantial and thus will not have an appreciable effect on parking demand in the near future; and
- Developments associated with the Bryn Mawr Hospital will be substantial and will affect parking demand in the area.

Outcome

The findings of the parking study were incorporated into the Bryn Mawr Master Plan.

Traffic Analysis: Bryn Mawr Master Plan Area (2007)

Prepared by: Gannett Fleming, Inc.

Funding Source: Lower Merion Township Capital Improvement Program

Purpose

Study the traffic impacts of potential development in the Bryn Mawr Village District and analyze proposed traffic improvements outlined in the Bryn Mawr Master Plan.

Goal/Objective

Findings:

- The Bryn Mawr Village District Master Plan capitalizes on the SEPTA Train Station by focusing development around the station which will minimize impacts to the roadway network;
- The type of development promoted in the proposed Bryn Mawr Village District ordinance coupled with low-impact transportation improvements provides the opportunity for Bryn Mawr to grow with minimal impacts to its existing character; and
- As the area undergoes redevelopment, pedestrian traffic will also increase requiring the implementation of low-impact improvements, such as those focused around the Morris Avenue underpass.

ROCK HILL ROAD TRANSPORTATION SERVICE AREA

Rock Hill Road/Belmont Avenue Transportation Service Area Land Use Assumptions Report (2003)

Prepared by: Transportation Service Area Advisory Committee and Township staff

Funding Source: Lower Merion Township

Purpose

Developed in accordance with Act 209 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code in the preparation of a Traffic Impact Fee Ordinance for the Rock Hill Road/Belmont Avenue Transportation Service Area (TSA) in Lower Merion Township.

Goal/Objective

- Describe existing land uses, highways, roads and streets located therein; and
- To the extent possible project future land use and density over a period of at least the next five years which may affect the level of traffic within the designated area.

Outcome

- 2004:** In accordance with Act 209 the report was followed by a Roadway Sufficiency Analysis and a Capital Improvement Plan and eventually the passage of the actual Transportation Impact Fee Ordinance.
- 2009:** The first development to apply the transportation impact fee was approved by the Board of Commissioners.

**Rock Hill Road/Belmont Avenue Transportation Service Area
Roadway Sufficiency Analysis (2003)**

Prepared by: Pennoni Associates Inc., Consulting Engineers

Funding Source: Lower Merion Township

Purpose

Developed in accordance with Act 209 of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code in the preparation of a Traffic Impact Fee Ordinance for the Rock Hill Road/Belmont Avenue Transportation Service Area (TSA) in Lower Merion Township.

Goal/Objective

- Establish existing level of infrastructure sufficiency and future traffic engineering needs of the TSA based on the Preferred Level of Service for the area; and
 - Identify incremental traffic improvements to accommodate existing, ongoing regional growth and the expected future traffic demand.
-

Outcome

- In accordance with Act 209 the report was followed by a Capital Improvement Plan and eventually the passage of the actual Transportation Impact Fee Ordinance in 2004.
- The first development to apply the transportation impact fee was approved by the Board of Commissioners in 2009.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND RECREATION

PARKS AND RECREATION PLANS

South Ardmore Park Master Plan (1998)

Prepared by: Simone Jaffe Collins Landscape Architecture

Funding Source: A grant from the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund under the administration of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation and Lower Merion Township

Purpose

Implement the 1996 Comprehensive Recreation, Parks and Open Space Plan. The master plan recognizes the integrity of the original park design and proposes minor improvements to renovate park features and sustain current uses.

Goal/Objective

Recommendations:

- Construct new asphalt walkways to improve circulation, maintenance and access;
- Install a timber entry arbor with possible associated intersection improvements to create an enhanced entry and reduce vehicular conflicts;
- Grade and renovate the play fields, and add an irrigation system;
- Install park identification, regulatory and interpretation signs;
- Provide site furnishings including security lighting for the park structures, game tables, picnic tables, water fountains, benches, trash receptacles, and bike racks;
- Install a timber-framed pavilion;
- Begin a tree replacement program and the replanting of ornamental flowering trees and shrubs, based on the original Thomas Sears plan; and
- Renovate the tennis court and replace the fencing.

Outcome

- 2000: Converted a 90' baseball diamond to a 60' youth baseball field; installed yard hydrants for irrigation at athletic fields;
- 2002: Replaced a baseball field and two softball field backstops;
- 2003: Installed a macadam path around two-thirds of the park's perimeter;
- 2005: Planted over 80 trees to replace those lost in severe windstorm and began to replace declining trees;
- 2007: Installed ADA walkways to the comfort station and landscaping in front of the building; renovated the tennis courts, including new fencing; and
- 2008: Expanded and re-surfaced the basketball courts.

Vernon V. Young Memorial Park Master Plan (1998)**Prepared by: Simone Jaffe Collins****Purpose**

Plan for future needs of the heavily utilized 5.2-acre park and create a framework for a flexible recreation facility.

Goal/Objective

- Rehabilitate the baseball diamonds;
 - Install a tennis court and three basketball courts;
 - Rehabilitate the tot lot;
 - Relocate the picnic area with permanent picnic tables and landscape improvements;
 - Install a walking path around the baseball diamonds;
 - Replace and install furnishings; and
 - Plant new trees throughout park.
-

Outcome

- 2003:** A regulation size basketball court was reconstructed; the volleyball court and a smaller basketball court were resurfaced; court lighting was replaced; rotten wood seating and steps were replaced; and ADA access was provided to the park and the picnic area.
- 2007:** The softball field was renovated; the backstop was replaced; protective fencing, player benches, and bleachers were installed; perimeter fencing was installed around the park's boundary; and ADA accessibility and a separate access for trucks and maintenance vehicles were provided.

Flat Rock Park Master Plan (1998)

Prepared by: Simone Jaffe Collins Landscape Architecture

Purpose

Implement the 1996 Comprehensive Recreation, Parks and Open Space Plan. Maximize the use of existing park sites, address management issues through park design and provide recreation facilities that support the needs and interests of citizens year-round.

Goal/Objective

Recommendations:

- Improve and reconfigure parking areas to create additional spaces;
- Enlarge open play area;
- Plant a 75' wide riparian buffer along the river;
- Redesign boating facilities and provide 2 boat ramps;
- Issue permits for boat ramp use to ease congestion;
- Install docks for short term tie-up and boardwalks to provide ADA accessible access to waterfront;
- Install dam overlook and trees;
- Construct fish ladder at Flat Rock Dam to enable River Shad to migrate upriver;
- Construct paved walkways and a loop walking trail;
- Develop a township-wide trail system, providing safe pedestrian access to the park;
- Improve the picnic areas by the northern parking lot to distribute park users;
- Reconfigure the main parking lot; and
- Install appropriate furnishings (benches, trash receptacles, etc).

Outcome

2005: The PA Bureau of Mine Reclamation and DEP built fish ladder at Flat Rock Dam.

2008: The Park was expanded by 1.27 acres using Montgomery County Open Space Funding; the boat ramp was replaced and enlarged; and a rigging area was provided for boaters to prepare their boats for launch.

2009: A boardwalk will be constructed at the boat launch area and the dock will be expanded; the first phase of a project to build an internally looped walking path and plant many trees in the park and along River Road was completed. The path will loop around the parks' perimeter and eventually run from Mill Creek Road to Flat Rock Dam. The first phase went from Mill Creek Road to the park's comfort station. The second phase will be completed in fall 2009 and will continue on from the comfort station to the Hollow Road parking area.

McMoran/L. Smith/Eco-Valley Park Master Plan (1998)**Prepared by: Simone Jaffe Collins Landscape Architecture****Purpose**

Implement the 1996 Comprehensive Recreation, Parks and Open Space Plan. Maximize the use of existing park sites, address management issues through park design and provide recreation facilities that support the needs and interests of citizens year-round.

Goal/Objective**Recommendations:**

- Re-grade and seed the baseball fields;
- Repave the basketball and tennis courts;
- Create a picnic area with shade trees and seating;
- Install a grass volleyball court;
- Construct a new play area;
- Install a second removable hockey rink in the parking area;
- Maintain and install landscaping;
- Install a walking trail loop and a sidewalk parallel to Mary Watersford Road;
- Install a gravel trail to loop Eco-Valley;
- Re-grade the parking area; and
- Install appropriate site furnishings such as benches and trash receptacles.

Outcome

- 2006:** A macadam walking path was built around the perimeter of the park from the park's Mary Waters Ford Road entrance to Madison Avenue and also down to the Belmont Hills Pool and the Roller Hockey Rink.
- 2008:** The softball field backstop was replaced and the baseball field backstop was renovated and re-painted; and fifteen trees were planted in the park.
- 2009:** The re-building of the Belmont Hills Roller Hockey Rink with improved lighting was completed.
- 2009-2010:** The Park's comfort station will be completely renovated and made fully accessible.

Wynnewood Valley Park Master Plan (2001)

Prepared by: Simone Jaffe Collins Landscape Architecture

Funding Source: A grant from the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund under the administration of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation and Lower Merion Township

Purpose

Implement the 1996 Comprehensive Recreation, Parks and Open Space Plan. Maximize the use of existing park sites, address management issues through park design and provide recreation facilities that support the needs and interests of citizens year-round. This master plan intends to preserve the park's existing landscape character – the mature woodland stream valley.

Goal/Objective

Recommendations:

- Install park identification signage;
- Install an ornamental metal gate with a pedestrian bypass, a black chain link fence and split rail fencing;
- Construct a stabilized turf pathway;
- Enlarge and resurface the basketball court and resurface the tennis court;
- Supplement the playground safety surface and maintain the open lawn for informal play;
- Renovate the blind garden to meet ADA accessibility standards;
- Construct stairs with bluestone treads, black metal railings and native stone cheekwalls;
- Renovate toilets and the pavilion to match the existing facilities and add security lighting at facilities and on the paths;
- Develop a meadow recharge basin and install a catch basin;
- Plant a riparian buffer along the stream and shrubs and ground cover on the embankments to control erosion;
- Construct stream access points and large flat boulders set into the stream bank; and
- Plant canopy trees and restore the woodland understory.

Outcome

- 2001:** A sidewalk along Remington Road was built beginning just past Haverford Road and running all the way to the park's entrance just past Crosshill Road.
- 2003:** The existing comfort station was razed and a new, fully accessible facility was built in its place.
- 2005:** A rustic wooden gazebo was renovated.
- 2010:** The Garden for the Blind will be completely re-built as a fully accessible sensory garden.

Ten Lower Merion Parks Overview Document (2001)

Prepared by: Simone Jaffe Collins Landscape Architecture

Purpose

The document compiles the recommendations and proposed implementation of park improvements of each of the park master plans into a single resource document.

Goal/Objective

- Provide an overview of ten of the Township parks;
- Guide improvements in a coordinated and efficient manner;
- The report may be used to seek out and allocate funding for specific park improvements;
- The matrix will allow for a coordination of the installation of similar improvements in several parks under the same contract allowing the Township to take advantage of larger quantity pricing discounts and cost effective implementation; and
- Prioritize proposed projects based on: (1) user safety; (2) maintenance; and (3) park amenities.

Next Planning Steps:

- Complete park master plans for the remaining open spaces;
 - Evaluate potential acquisitions for future open space; and
 - Prepare a Township-wide Trail System.
-

Outcome

2000: Ashburn Field, a 60' youth baseball field and playground was completed. The improvements were built on what was previously the Township's "stump dump".

2004: The Feasibility Study for a Township-wide Pedestrian and Bicycle Network was prepared.

Penn Wynne Park Master Plan (2003)

Prepared by: Simone Jaffe Collins Landscape Architecture

Funding Source: A grant from the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund under the administration of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation and Lower Merion Township

Purpose

Implement the 1996 Comprehensive Recreation, Parks and Open Space Plan. Maximize the use of existing park sites, address management issues through park design and provide recreation facilities that support the needs and interests of citizens year-round.

Goal/Objective

- Construct an asphalt pedestrian trail to the park facilities and along Manoa Road;
- Install woodchips on the existing trail;
- Resurface the tennis courts and install new fencing;
- Resurface and enlarge the basketball court and install fencing;
- Reorient the playing fields into two little league fields and one soccer field;
- Install players' benches, backstop and baseline fencing; and
- Install native woodland understory plants; remove invasive plants; plant riparian buffer along the stream; reforestation project; plant a buffer; and improve area drainage to the creek.

Outcome

- 2002:** The softball field backstop was replaced.
- 2003:** Macadam paths were installed from Manoa Road down to the playground and a concrete sidewalk was installed along entire length of the park from one end of Wiltshire Road to the other.
- 2005:** The tennis courts were renovated, including new fencing.
- 2007:** The comfort station was renovated.

Gladwyne Playground Master Plan (2003)

Prepared by: Simone Jaffe Collins Landscape Architecture

Funding Source: A grant from the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund under the administration of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation and Lower Merion Township

Purpose

Implement the 1996 Comprehensive Recreation, Parks and Open Space Plan. Maximize the use of existing park sites, address management issues through park design and provide recreation facilities that support the needs and interests of citizens year-round.

Goal/Objective

Goals:

- Maximize use of the park;
- Address neighborhood and community needs; and
- Minimize maintenance.
- Recommendations:
 - Remove the old shuffleboard;
 - Enlarge and resurface the basketball court to meet high school standards;
 - Resurface the tennis courts;
 - Reorient the baseball fields;
 - Install new bleachers, players' benches, backstop, and baseline fencing;
 - Create a maze/education garden;
 - Install new picnic tables, BBQ grills, and trash receptacles;
 - Renovate the existing stone fireplaces;
 - Extend the fence and install an ornamental gate with a pedestrian bypass;
 - Reconfigure the parking lot, install curbs, and concrete car stops;
 - Install park, school, and directional identification signage;
 - Repair and waterproof the storage building;
 - Plant ornamental flowering and canopy trees;
 - Terrace the slope for spectator seating with natural stone walls with grass terraces;
 - Install an irrigation system; and
 - Repair the existing trails and erosion control.

Outcome

2003: The softball backstop was re-built.

2005: The picnic pavilion was built.

2006: The basketball court was enlarged and resurfaced; the tennis courts were re-renovated, including new fencing and the parking lot was expanded and renovated, with landscaping.

2008: The building containing the comfort station and cell tower equipment was completely renovated consistent with HARB recommendations.

Warner Avenue Park and Playground Master Plan (2007)

Prepared by: Pennoni Associates, Inc.

Funding Source: A grant from the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund under the administration of the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation and Lower Merion Township

Purpose

Implement the 1996 Comprehensive Recreation, Parks and Open Space Plan. Maximize the use of existing park sites, address management issues through park design and provide recreation facilities that support the needs and interests of citizens year-round. The plan prioritized the concerns of the residents; analyzed park elements to remain to determine whether they could be improved or required replacement; and interviewed members of the Township staff.

Goal/Objective

Recommended Park Programming:

- Basketball Courts: Improve the courts to meet safety standards, convert the half-court for use by younger children, provide seating for players, and install new fencing;
- Playgrounds: Provide ADA access to the play structure, add a play component for children less than two years old, fix broken equipment, remove graffiti, mulch under the equipment, provide separate areas for different ages, provide benches and fencing of adequate height with gates;
- Sidewalks and Entrance Steps: Provide ADA compliant sidewalks and stairs;
- Site Furniture: Match Bryn Mawr street furniture, and replace the fountain;
- Lighting: Add pedestrian-scale light fixtures to match Bryn Mawr;
- Landscaping: Rehabilitate the lawn area, and save as many existing trees as possible;
- Drainage: Improve poor drainage conditions; and
- Retaining walls: Repair the masonry wall at the small basketball court, replace/remove the landscape tie at the large basketball court, and add a new wall at the Warner Avenue entrance.

Outcome

2008: The Warner Avenue Playground was demolished and re-built as per the park master plan.

Master Plan Update for Ashbridge Memorial Park (2007)

Prepared by: Campbell Thomas & Co.

Purpose

To update the Ashbridge Memorial Park Master Plan, to perform a structural analysis of the historic buildings located on the property and to determine their potential for adaptive reuse.

Goal/Objective

- Incorporate “Green Architecture” design, concepts, building systems and technologies into rehabilitation work at the park; and
- Identify site improvements that will enhance the public use and enjoyment of the buildings and the grounds.

Outcome

- **2008:** The Township applied for a \$200,000 Montgomery County Green Field/Green Towns open space grant to begin improving the walking trails and landscaping throughout Ashbridge Park as set forth in the Plan.

Master Plan for Linwood Park: A Community Park in Ardmore, PA (2008)

Prepared by: Studio Gaea and SALT Design Studio

Funding Source: Members of the Ardmore community through private fundraising and administered through the Parks and Recreation Department

Purpose

The Master Plan was prepared in compliance with the Montgomery County Green Fields/Green Towns Program grant requirements. This report serves as documentation of the planning process for the development of a new community park—Linwood Park—in Ardmore.

Goal/Objective

- Provide a community gathering space driven by the needs and interests of the neighborhoods; and
- Create a park that was uniquely suited to Ardmore and this community.

Outcome

- 2009:** Phase I construction began. Work included demolishing the parking lot, grading the park, installing new curbs and sidewalks and street-side parking, stormwater improvements, hardscaping, planting trees and shrubs and installing site amenities such as benches and trash receptacles.
- 2010:** The improvements to the park were completed and the grand opening occurred in May.

A Feasibility Study for the Schuylkill River West Trail for Lower Merion Township, West Conshohocken Borough and Bridgeport Borough, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania (2008)

Prepared by: Campbell Thomas & Co. Architects with Arora and Associates, Consulting Engineers and Brenton Associates, Inc., Landscape Architects

Funding Source: Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Community Conservation Partnerships Program

Purpose

Investigate the feasibility of constructing a multi-use trail in Montgomery County and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on the west side of the Schuylkill River between Valley Forge National Historical Park and Fairmount Park at the Falls Bridge.

Goal/Objective

This study assesses the feasibility of a recreational trail along the west side of the Schuylkill River in Upper Merion Township, Bridgeport Borough, West Conshohocken Borough, Lower Merion Township, and Philadelphia.

Outcome

The Board of Commissioners included the portion of the proposed alignment east of Flat Rock into the Capital Improvement Program. The alignment will link Flat Rock Park to the Pencoyd Bridge via the Harry Olson Trail identified in the 2006 Open Space Plan along with waterfront trails privately constructed as part of the redevelopment of the Righters Ferry waterfront identified in the Cynwyd Heritage Trail Master Plan.

LIBRARY PLANS

A Facilities Master Plan for the Lower Merion Library System: Volume I (2004)

Prepared by: Himmel & Wilson Library Consultants

Funding Source: Community Development Block Grant Funding through the US Department of Housing and Urban Development and Lower Merion Township

Purpose

Analyze space utilization of library facilities in the context of future public service needs.

Goal/Objective**Recommended Strategies:**

- Weed the collections, some significantly;
- Create a central repository for materials that are used infrequently;
- Reprogram the existing space;
 - Decrease the density of the shelving at some sites;
 - Remove underutilized furnishings (i.e. study tables);
- Build modest additions to the existing facilities;
 - Larger additions to Ludington and Bala Cynwyd Libraries; and
 - Smaller additions at the Belmont and Penn Wynne Libraries.

Information Technology Recommendations:

- Relocate critical network equipment in Penn Wynne and Gladwyne;
- Plan space and policies for wireless-network capable laptops owned by the public;
- Plan additional workspace needed to accommodate technological needs and ergonomically designed furnishings and equipment;
- Create IT staff workspace; and
- Improve telephone and security systems.

Accessibility Recommendations:

- The Lower Merion Library System should take practical steps to improve accessibility and carefully consider ADA requirements as it moves forward on substantive renovation projects.
-

Outcome

2006: The property at 104 Ardmore Avenue was purchased for remote storage.

2006-07: Studies were completed at all six libraries to redesign the floor plans by function.

2008: VITETTA architects designed renovations based on all the previous studies and their own investigations.

A Facilities Master Plan for the Lower Merion Library System: Volume II (2004)

Prepared by: Himmel & Wilson Library Consultants

Funding Source: Community Development Block Grant Funding through the US Department of Housing and Urban Development and Lower Merion Township

Purpose

Intended as a companion document to *A Facilities Master Plan for the Lower Merion Library System: Volume I*. The major function of this volume is to provide guidance to decision makers as they go about implementing the study recommendations which have cost implications.

Goal/Objective

- Establish general cost estimates associated with the recommendations of the study;
- Review potential addition scenarios; and
- Assess the information technology facilities.

Outcome

- 2006: Purchased the property at 104 Ardmore Avenue for remote storage.
 2006-07: Studies were completed at all six libraries to redesign floor plans by function.
 2008: VITETTA architects designed renovations based on all the previous studies and their own investigations.

Funding Study Action Plan (2005)

Prepared by: Ad Hoc 2004 Funding Study Committee

Funding Source: Lower Merion Township

Purpose

A new clarification of roles and coordination of effort is necessary to address the current and future funding requirements of the Lower Merion Libraries

Goal/Objective

- Identify funding partners: Lower Merion Township, the Local Libraries, and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania;
- Identify ways to develop new funding sources and increase revenue from existing sources;
- Determine a predictable level of spending growth for the Library System;
- Recommend strategies for closing current and future gaps; and
- Recommend strategies for meeting long-term funding needs.

Outcome

- 2005: Higher fundraising targets were set for the local libraries.

Additions and Space Reprogramming for the Ludington Library (2006)

Prepared by: Himmel & Wilson Library Consultants and Casaccio Architects LLC

Purpose

Develop specific conceptual plans for the reprogramming and additions to the Ludington Library that were recommended in the *2004 Facilities Master Plan for the Lower Merion Library System*.

Goal/Objective

- Refine the space needs worksheet based on input of staff members and Library Board members;
 - Develop a set of separate scenarios for adding and reprogramming space; and
 - Establish probable construction costs of the conceptual designs.
-

Outcome

2008: Vitetta Architecture developed architectural plans for the six libraries.

2010: Construction of the Ludington Library renovations are expected to begin.

Addition and Space Reprogramming for the Bala Cynwyd Library (2006)

Prepared by: Himmel & Wilson Library Consultants and Casaccio Architects LLC

Purpose

Develop specific conceptual plans for the reprogramming and additions to the Bala Cynwyd Library that were recommended in the *2004 Facilities Master Plan for the Lower Merion Library System*.

Goal/Objective

- Refine the space needs worksheet based on input of staff members and Library Board members;
 - Develop a set of separate scenarios for adding and reprogramming space that will take the cost of the removal of the staircase and elevator replacement into account; and
 - Establish probable construction costs of the conceptual designs.
-

Outcome

2008: Vitetta Architecture developed architectural plans for the six libraries.

Addition and Space Reprogramming for the Penn Wynne Library (2006)

Prepared by: Himmel & Wilson Library Consultants and Casaccio Architects LLC

Purpose

Develop specific conceptual plans for the reprogramming and additions to the Penn Wynne Library that were recommended in the *2004 Facilities Master Plan for the Lower Merion Library System*.

Goal/Objective

- Refine the space needs worksheet based on input of staff members and Library Board members;
- Develop a set of separate scenarios for adding and reprogramming space; and
- Establish probable construction costs of the conceptual designs.

Outcome

2008: Vitetta Architecture developed architectural plans for the six libraries.

Space Reprogramming for the Ardmore Free Library (2007)

Prepared by: Himmel & Wilson Library Consultants and Casaccio Architects LLC

Purpose

Develop specific conceptual plans for the reprogramming of the Ardmore Free Library that were recommended in the *2004 Facilities Master Plan for the Lower Merion Library System*.

Goal/Objective

- Refine the space needs worksheet based on input of staff members and Library Board members;
 - Develop a scenario for reprogramming space that would match the specific space needs criteria;
 - Develop cost estimates based on the conceptual designs; and
 - Focus the conceptual plan on: 1) accessibility; 2) creating more usable and efficient staff workspace; and 3) user-friendliness.
-

Outcome

2008: Vitetta Architecture developed architectural plans for the six libraries.

Addition and Space Reprogramming for the Belmont Hills Public Library (2007)

Prepared by: Himmel & Wilson Library Consultants and Casaccio Architects LLC

Purpose

Develop specific conceptual plans for the reprogramming and additions to the Belmont Hills Library that were recommended in the *2004 Facilities Master Plan for the Lower Merion Library System*.

Goal/Objective

- Refine the space needs worksheet based on input of staff members and Library Board members;
- Develop a scenario for reprogramming space that would match the specific space needs criteria;
- Develop cost estimates based on the conceptual designs; and
- Focus the conceptual plan on the current deficiencies including: 1) lack of a public meeting room and 2) lack of well-designed staff workspace.

Outcome

2008: Vitetta Architecture developed architectural plans for the six libraries.

Space Reprogramming for the Gladwyne Free Library (2007)

Prepared by: Himmel & Wilson Library Consultants and Casaccio Architects LLC

Purpose

Develop specific conceptual plans for the reprogramming of the Gladwyne Free Library that were recommended in the *2004 Facilities Master Plan for the Lower Merion Library System*.

Goal/Objective

- Refine the space needs worksheet based on input of staff members and Library Board members;
- Develop a scenario for reprogramming space that would match the specific space needs criteria;
- Develop cost estimates based on the conceptual designs; and
- Focus the conceptual plan on the current deficiencies including the inaccessibility of the basement and second levels and the limited accessibility of the main level.

Outcome

2008: Vitetta Architecture developed architectural plans for the six libraries.

Renovations to the Six Libraries of the Lower Merion Township Library System (2008)

Prepared by: Vitetta Architecture, Engineering, Planning and Interior Design

Purpose

Develop architectural plans for the six libraries to implement the Additions and Space Reprogramming plans developed by *Himmel & Wilson Library Consultants and Casaccio Architects LLC* in 2006-07.

Outcome

2010: The Ludington Library renovation is expected to begin.

FIRE SERVICES

A Fire Services Study for the Township of Lower Merion, Pennsylvania (2007)

Prepared by: **Carroll Buracker & Associates, Inc.**

Purpose

Update the 1990 Fire Services Survey of the Township of Lower Merion by Burkell & Associates. Provide a comprehensive inventory of staff, volunteers and equipment and address issues such as preservation of the volunteer component of the fire service, recommendations to retain and recruit volunteer members, how to best utilize the current paid Fire Department personnel, staffing levels and daytime volunteer response to fire calls.

Goal/Objective

- Township Study Objectives:
- Provide recommendations to preserve volunteer component of fire service; retain and recruit volunteers;
- Address utilization of paid fire personnel;
- Assess Fire Department Office staffing levels, volunteer staffing levels, and daytime response;
- Evaluate apparatus fleet and replacement plan;
- Assess location and response areas of the six fire stations;
- Identify operational issues facing the Fire Department Office and fire companies;
- Recommend improvements to organizational, command and management structure of emergency services;
- Assess health, safety, and wellness programs of the firefighters;
- Evaluate training and professional development of career and volunteer firefighters;
- Assess incident command communications and procedures;
- Evaluate existing coverage and utilization of the Fireman's Relief Association funding support;
- Recommend enhancements to company fundraising activities;
- Assess Township funding;
- Identify capital and equipment needs;
- Identify and assess local district mutual aid agreements;
- Designate services of each fire company to reduce redundancy;
- Assess the Township's emergency management plan; and
- Establish the goals and objectives of the fire service.

Outcome

This study was not formally accepted by the Board of Commissioners.

