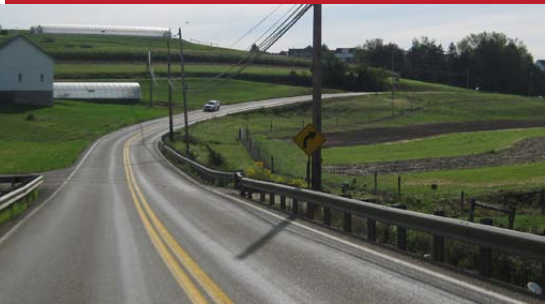




**PLAN
PETERS
2022**



Community Snapshot
November 12, 2012

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INTRODUCTION

This document represents an overview of Peters Township as it is today, how it has changed over time and how it compares with other communities and regions. Information about the people of the community, the physical character of the Township and its systems and services are combined to offer a snapshot of the overall community. Much of this information will serve as a foundation for the Township's comprehensive plan.

In addition, to understanding the community of today, it is important to consider how the Township has changed over time, and in particular since 2001 when the last comprehensive plan was adopted. At that time, a long range vision (at right) was articulated as a framework for the plan. Key components of the vision statement are measured in this report to determine the extent to which progress has been made in the past 10 years toward achieving the vision. The vision is a long-term look at the ideal community. Change takes time and while noticeable progress has been made toward some elements of the vision, others remain essentially unchanged since 2001. It is important to note, however, that responsibility for change cannot rest solely with township government. The private sector, residents and others must come together to make Peters Township the community that the plan envisioned.

2001 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN VISION

*"Our vision for Peters Township is for a thriving, proactive and cohesive community with **UNIQUE AND VIABLE NEIGHBORHOODS**. The residents have access to and extensive system of safe and well-maintained neighborhood and community **PARKS**, active recreation areas and linear open space trails that meander through the Township's wooded hillsides and valleys. These open space trails serve several purposes by providing interconnecting wildlife corridors, buffers between developments and safe pedestrian linkages. **HOUSING STYLES CONSIST OF A DIVERSE MIX** that range from multi-acre estates/mini-farms and traditional single-family homes to innovative multi-family design concepts; affording housing opportunities to all citizens including seniors and young families.*

*The **DIVERSITY IN THE TOWNSHIP'S STRONG ECONOMIC BASE** ensures that business and industry strike a balance between opportunities and needs, in turn providing the community with economic security and stability. Development patterns include "**SMALL TOWN CONCEPTS**" OR **ACTIVITY NODES** to ensure that development is efficient and that all members of the community have access to goods and services.*

*The **ROUTE 19 CORRIDOR IS KNOWN AROUND THE REGION AS THE GATEWAY INTO PETERS TOWNSHIP AND AS A PREMIER SHOPPING AND OFFICE DESTINATION POINT**. Through the combined efforts of the Township, the*

development community and PennDOT, Route 19 has become an efficient boulevard that comfortably facilitates pedestrian and vehicular travel. Quality and diverse architectural building styles are now the standard.

***COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES HAVE KEPT PACE** with the growth and development as a result of the partnerships formed among community groups and associations, the Township and the school district. These partnerships are a source of pride in the community and add to the many quality of life amenities that Peters Township has to offer.*

*The public/private **TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM IS EFFICIENT**, meets the needs of the community, and is designed to facilitate the joint use of streets. The Township's streetscapes within the town center and commercial areas are well maintained and include a comprehensive system of sidewalks, human scale lighting, landscaping and shade trees, while the residential areas contain pedestrian pathways, landscaping and shade trees.*

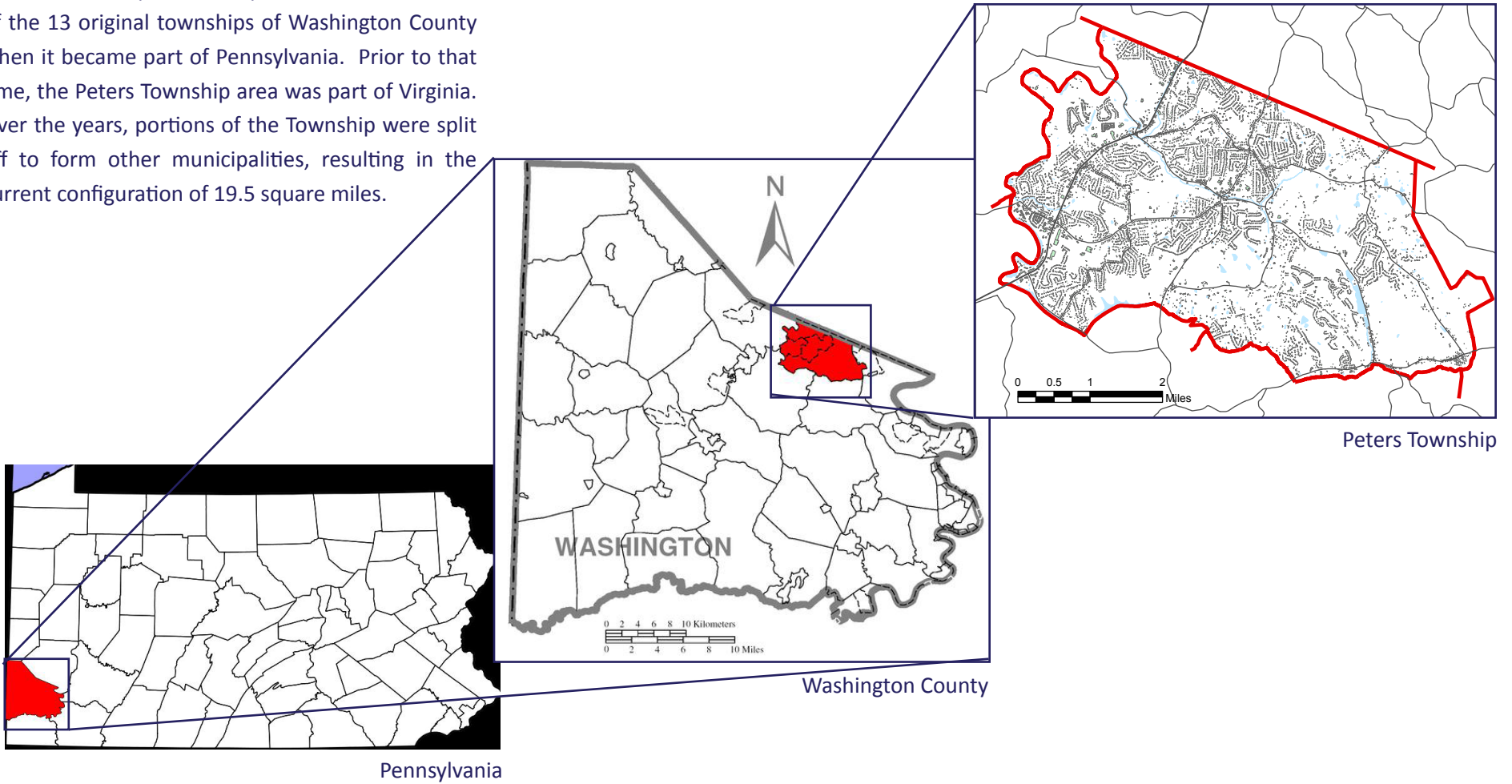
*Overall, the citizens of Peters Township are proud of their community, the **BALANCE STRUCK BETWEEN COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT**, and the public/private partnerships that have formed over the years."*

Source: Peters Township Comprehensive Plan 2001



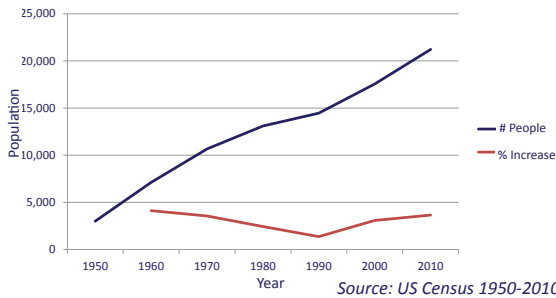
HISTORY

Peters Township was incorporated in 1781 as one of the 13 original townships of Washington County when it became part of Pennsylvania. Prior to that time, the Peters Township area was part of Virginia. Over the years, portions of the Township were split off to form other municipalities, resulting in the current configuration of 19.5 square miles.

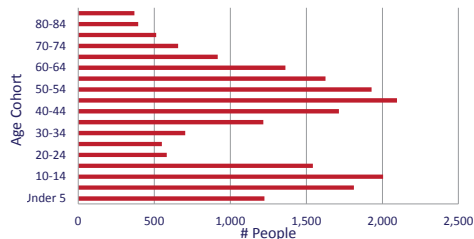


PROFILE AND TRENDS

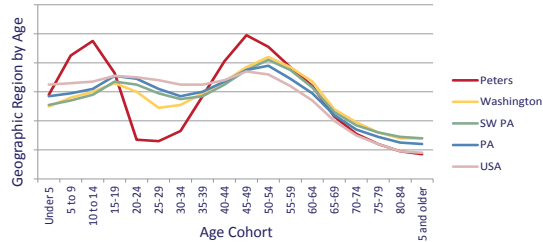
HISTORIC POPULATION GROWTH



AGE DISTRIBUTION



COMPARATIVE AGE DISTRIBUTION



DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE AND TRENDS

Analysis of community demographics is essential to understanding the Township today; how it has changed over time and how it will evolve in the future. Understanding the demographic character and trends is critical to public policy decisions with regard to future community facilities, housing, transportation, recreation and other needs. Growth requires infrastructure and services. However, the type of services needed will depend on the proportion of population within various age groups – young, old or in between. This may also influence land use patterns relative to commercial services, employment opportunities and housing choices. The availability of and need for transportation alternatives is also influenced by the character of the population, lifestyle preferences and physical needs.

Population

Peters Township is a growing suburban community that has expanded significantly over the past six decades. In 1950 the Township was a sparsely populated rural community, with a total population of 3,004. With suburbanization, Peters Township more than doubled in size from 1950 to 1960 to a population of 7,126 (137.2%). That decade witnessed the greatest increase, both numerically and as a percentage. Since then the population has continued its steady climb to the current (2010) population of 21,213.

Even with the nation in recession for much of the past decade, the Township population significantly exceeded projections prepared by the Southwestern Pennsylvania Regional Planning Commission which forecasted a 2015 population of 18,275. As shown in the table below on the left, the Township surpassed

	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Population	3,004	7,126	10,672	13,104	14,467	17,556	21,213
Number Increase		4,122	3,546	2,432	1,363	3,089	3,657
Percent Increase		137.2%	49.8%	22.8%	10.4%	21.4%	20.8%

Source: US Census 2010

that projection by approximately 3,000 persons in 2010.

Age

Compared to the nation as a whole, Peters Township has a fairly high median age (43 years vs. 37.2 years), but is not significantly different from that of Washington County or Southwestern Pennsylvania. Interestingly, the percent of the Township's population under 18 is much higher than any of the comparative regions; while those persons 65 years and older make up a smaller proportion than any of the Pennsylvania comparisons. This confirms the obvious. Peters Township is a family oriented community whose residents are attracted to the high quality school system. Other data, however, (see Age Distribution charts on previous page and table at left) reveal an imbalance in the age profile. There is a pronounced drop in the 20 to mid 30 age group and a generally lower than average (compared with the region) senior population. This suggests many people are leaving the community after high school or upon retiring.

	Peters Township	Washington County	Southwestern Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania	United States
Median age (years)	43.0	43.6	42.5	40.1	37.2
Under 18 years	29.0%	20.3%	20.1%	22.0%	24%
65 years and over	13.4%	17.6%	17.2%	15.4%	13.0%

Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, US Census 2010

Age Groups	Peters Township	Washington County	Southwestern Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania	United States
Total Population	21,213	207,820	2,574,959	12,702,379	308,745,538
Under 5	5.8%	5.0%	5.1%	5.7%	6.5%
5-9	8.5%	5.6%	5.4%	5.9%	6.6%
10-14	9.5%	6.0%	5.8%	6.2%	6.7%
15-19	7.3%	6.6%	6.7%	7.1%	7.1%
20-24	2.7%	6.0%	6.5%	6.9%	7.0%
25-29	2.6%	4.9%	5.9%	6.2%	6.8%
30-34	3.3%	5.1%	5.5%	5.7%	6.5%
35-39	5.7%	5.9%	5.7%	6.0%	6.5%
40-44	8.1%	6.7%	6.5%	6.7%	6.8%
45-49	9.9%	7.7%	7.5%	7.5%	7.4%
50-54	9.1%	8.4%	8.2%	7.8%	7.2%
55-59	7.7%	7.7%	7.5%	6.9%	6.4%
60-64	6.4%	6.7%	6.3%	5.9%	5.4%
65-69	4.3%	4.8%	4.6%	4.4%	4.0%
70-74	3.1%	3.9%	3.7%	3.4%	3.0%
75-79	2.4%	3.2%	3.2%	2.9%	2.4%
80-84	1.9%	2.8%	2.9%	2.5%	1.9%
85 and older	1.7%	2.8%	2.8%	2.4%	1.8%

Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, US Census 2010

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE AND TRENDS

Household Type	Peters Township	Peters Township	Southwestern Pennsylvania	Southwestern Pennsylvania
Total number of households	7,292	100.0%	1,088,482	100.0%
Single person households	1,034	14.2%	344,505	31.7%
Households with children under 18	3,059	42.0%	287,932	26.5%
Households with persons over 65	1,794	24.6%	320,854	29.5%

Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, US Census 2010

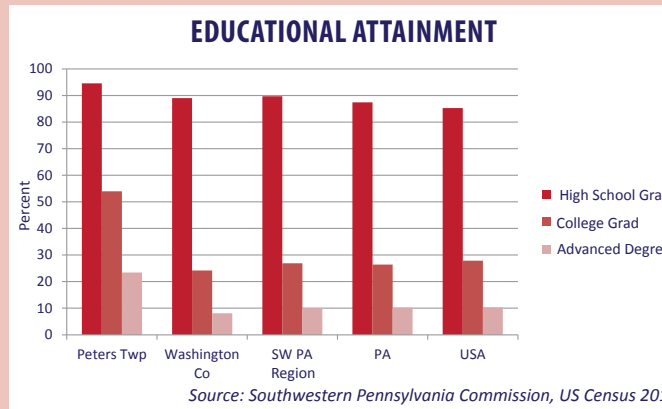
Understanding this age distribution pattern is important when planning for future demands on transportation, housing, schools, park and recreational facilities and programs, and social services. However, it may also signal a one-dimensional character that could detract from the long-term sustainability of the community.

Household Type

Not surprisingly, given its predominant single family character, the average household size in Peters Township is high (2.91 persons). For Washington County, the average is 2.49; in Southwestern Pennsylvania it is 2.45; and for the entire State of Pennsylvania it is 2.45. The average household size for the United States is 2.58 persons. The Township average was 2.87 in 2000 and 2.67 in 1990. This rise in household size is opposite national trends caused by lower birth rates, increased single parent households, and delayed family formation.

Education

Peters Township residents are highly educated, almost twice as likely as those in the county, region,



Attainment	Peters Township	Washington County	Southwestern Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania	United States
Percent high school graduates	94.6%	89%	89.7%	87.4%	85.3%
Percent college graduates	54.0%	24.2%	26.9%	26.4%	27.9%
Percent graduate or professional degree	23.4%	8.1%	10%	10.2%	10.3%

Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, US Census 2010

HOUSING

or state to hold a bachelor's degree or higher. More than 23% of Peters Township residents held graduate or professional degrees, which is also more than double the rates for the comparison areas. (See chart and table at left).

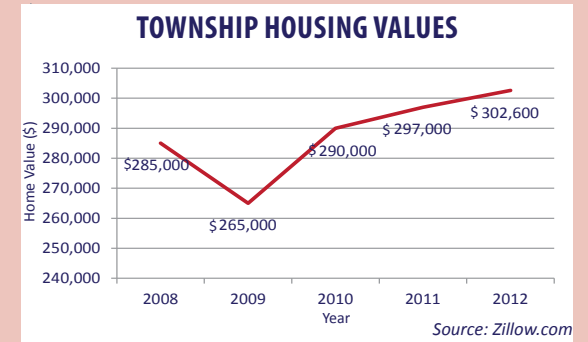
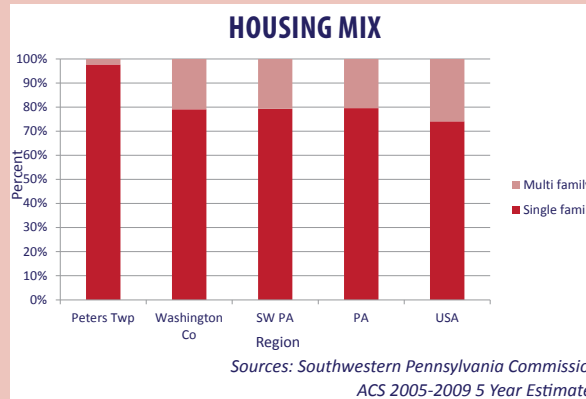
HOUSING

Type

For the most part, Peters Township is a bedroom community, largely comprised of single family detached homes. The predominance of single family dwellings is clearly evident in comparison with county, regional, state and national figures. Multi-family dwellings comprise at least 20% of the housing stock in each of the comparison regions, but just over 2% of the housing in Peters Township.

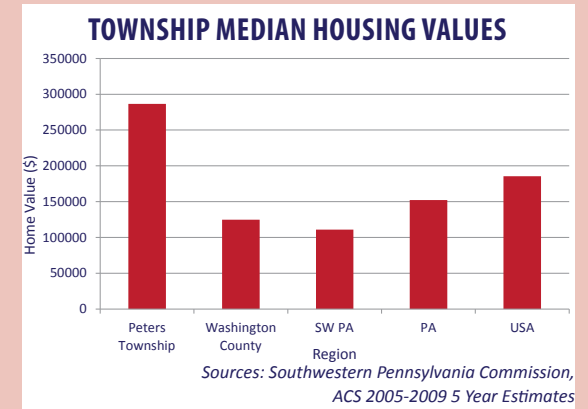
Value

In 2000, according to the US Census, the median home value in Peters Township was \$186,100, with most homes in the \$150,000 to \$300,000 range. In 2010 that value had increased to \$286,600, with most homes in the \$200,000 to \$500,000 range.



Value	2000		2010	
	Number	%	Number	%
Less than \$50,000	32	.6%	75	1.2%
\$50,000 – 99,000	554	10.0%	210	3.3%
\$100,000 – 149,000	1,115	20.4%	370	5.8%
\$150,000 – 199,999	1,302	23.8%	928	14.6%
\$200,000 – 299,999	1,303	23.9%	1,869	29.3%
\$300,000 – 499,999	1,010	18.5%	2,034	31.9%
\$500,000 – 999,999	137	2.5%	845	13.3%
\$1,000,000 or more	9	.2%	42	.7%
Total	5,462		6,373	

Sources: SW Pennsylvania Commission, ACS 2005-2009 5 Year Estimates



	Peters Township	Washington County	Southwestern Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania	United States
Median Value of Owner Occupied Units	\$286,600	\$124,700	\$111,024	\$152,300	\$185,400
Median Rent	\$922	\$557	\$630	\$716	\$817

Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, ACS 2005-2009 5 Year Estimates, Released December 2009

HOUSING

VISION DASHBOARD: DIVERSE HOUSING MIX



"Housing styles consist of a diverse mix..."



Photo Source: Peters Township

According to the 2010 Census, approximately 98% of the housing in Peters Township is single family detached, built for families with children. During the period 2001 to 2011, 95.7 percent of all new dwellings constructed in the Township were single family homes. In other words, of the 1,398 new dwellings built during that period only 60 units were multiple family (4.3%).

This lack of variety in the housing stock continues to pose limitations for several age groups. As the young adults of Peters Township move out of their parents' homes, they have few, if any, options that fit their income, needs and lifestyle choices in their own hometown. Likewise, as seniors and empty-nesters choose to downsize, their housing choices, regardless of financial ability, are extremely limited.

In the 2012 resident survey, 39.7 percent of respondents indicated the possibility that they would be moving from their current residence in the next five years. Of those, 39.3 percent stated it was likely they would move out of the Township. Over 40 percent (41.5) of those who might move in five years indicated a desire for a smaller residence.



Single family housing is not a good fit for everyone!

The conventional indicator of housing affordability in the United States is the percent of income spent on housing, which includes rent or mortgage, utilities, taxes and insurance. Housing expenditures that exceed 30 percent of household income have historically been viewed as an indicator of a housing affordability problem. In Peters Township, one-quarter of all households (24.9%) in owner occupied housing and 40.5 percent of households in renter occupied housing spend 30 percent or more of their income on housing.

Despite the community's relative affluence, the proportion of owner-occupied households whose housing costs exceed 30% of income is comparable, even slightly higher, than that of the county and southwestern Pennsylvania.

Monthly Housing Costs as Percentage of Household Income				
Percent of Income	Owner Occupied		Renter Occupied	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
Less than 20%	3,181	49.9%	71	22.8%
20 – 24.9 %	971	15.2%	38	12.2%
25 – 29.9%	610	9.6%	11	3.5%
30 – 34.9 %	368	5.8%	84	27.0%
35% or more	1,217	19.1%	42	13.5%
Not computed	26	0.4%	65	20.9%
Total units	6,373	100%	311	100%

Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, ACS 2005-2009 5 Year Estimates, Released December 2009

Housing cost burdened households	Peters Township	Washington County	Southwest Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania	United States
Owner Occupied Units	24.9%	21.2%	23.0%	26.9%	30.4%
Renter Occupied Units	40.5%	41.2%	42.9%	44.4%	47.0%

Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, ACS 2005-2009 5 Year Estimates, Released December 2009

2010	Peters Township	Washington County	Southwest Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania	United States
Median Value of Owner Occupied Units	\$286,600	\$124,700	\$111,024	\$152,300	\$185,400
Median Rent	\$922	\$557	\$630	\$716	\$817

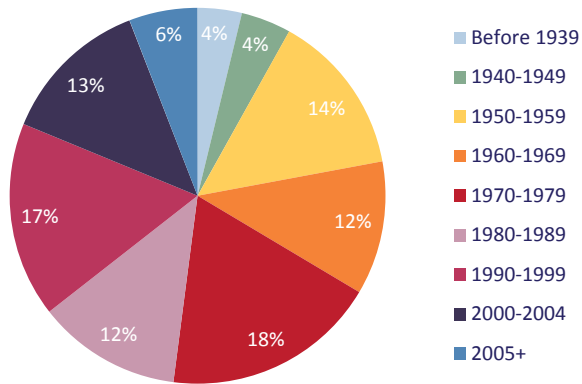
Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, ACS 2005-2009 5 Year Estimates, Released December 2009



CONCLUSION: It appears that little progress has been made toward achieving the housing mix envisioned in the 2001 Plan. Single family homes continue to comprise a disproportionate number of dwelling units overall and account for over 95 percent of all new units constructed since 2001. There appears to be a desire among many persons contemplating a change in residence for a smaller home. In addition, there is no indication that affordable units are being introduced, based on the relative housing cost and the percent of income paid for housing, especially for rental units. Small group discussions during the data gathering stage of this planning effort affirmed this issue. Empty-nesters who want to downsize are compelled to leave the Township; young families seeking good schools can't afford the high cost; students who leave the community for higher education are unable to return.

HOUSING

PERCENT BY YEAR CONSTRUCTED



Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, ACS 3 Year Estimates, 2010

Age of Housing Stock

Age of Housing Stock	Total	Percentage
Total	6941	100.00%
2005 or later	409	5.90%
2000 - 2004	892	12.90%
1990-1999	1,163	16.80%
1980-1989	861	12.40%
1970 - 1979	1,285	18.50%
1960 -1969	801	11.50%
1950- 1959	969	14.00%
1940 - 1949	297	4.30%
Before 1939	264	3.80%

This is more than double the median reported in Washington County and Southwestern Pennsylvania and at least \$100,000 more than the median for both the State of Pennsylvania and the nation.

Age of Housing Stock

Nearly half (47.7%) of the Township’s housing was constructed in the 29 year period between 1970 and 1999. Less than 10% of the housing within the community was built prior to 1950.

Vacancy

Peters Township has retained a comparatively low vacancy rate in both owner occupied and renter occupied housing stock. These statistics are especially encouraging in the midst of a weak housing market nationally.

Vacancy/Occupancy	Peters Township	Washington County	Southwestern Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania	USA
Percent occupied housing units	96.5%	91.5%	90.1%	90.1%	88.6%
Percent vacant housing units	3.5%	8.5%	9.1%	9.9%	11.4%
Percent owner occupied units	94.2%	77.3%	69.8%	69.6%	65.1%
Percent renter occupied units	5.8%	24.1%	30.2%	30.4%	34.9%
Vacancy rate for ownership units	1.6%	6.7%	2.8%	1.8%	2.4%
Vacancy rate for rental units	2.9%	10.6%	5.0%	8.1%	9.2%
Average household size owner occupied units	2.91	2.49	2.45	2.57	2.65
Average household size renter occupied units	2.31	2.02	1.96	2.16	2.44

Source: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, US Census 2010

VISION DASHBOARD: UNIQUE AND VIABLE NEIGHBORHOODS



Source: Peters Township

"...a thriving, proactive and cohesive community with unique and viable neighborhoods."

Overall, Peters Township residents are very pleased with their community. In the recent (2012) resident survey, 66.8 percent ranked the quality of life in the Township as "very good" or "excellent," while only 8.5 percent considered it to be "poor" or "fair".

In the earlier 2009 National Citizen Survey, similar results were noted. In that survey 96 percent of respondents rated quality of life in the Township as "excellent" or "good" while four percent rated it "fair".

Home value may be another indicator of the "viability" of neighborhoods. In 2000, the median home value in Peters Township was \$186,100, with most homes in the \$150,000 to \$300,000 range. In 2010 that value had increased to \$286,600, with most homes in the \$200,000 to \$500,000 range.

According to Zillow.com, the June 2012 median home value for Peters Township was \$302,600 and the median sales price was \$342,000 (\$130 per square foot). Home values in Peters Township took a dip in 2009 but are, once again, on the increase.

Quality of Life	1 Poor	2 Fair	3 Good	4 Very Good	5 Excellent
	1.23%	7.27%	24.69%	43.07%	23.73%

Source: 2012 Resident Survey

	June 2008	June 2009	June 2010	June 2011	June 2012
Median Value	\$285,000	\$265,000	\$290,000	\$297,000	\$302,600
Increase or Decrease		(\$20,000)	\$25,000	\$7,000	\$5,600
% Increase or Decrease		(7.0%)	9.4%	2.4%	1.9%

Source: US Census 2010



CONCLUSION: *The terms "unique" and "viable" are open to interpretation. But, based on the high degree of resident satisfaction with their community and the continued rising value of homes in the Township, it seems the viability of the neighborhoods remains strong.*

Since the adoption of the 2001 Comprehensive Plan, several accomplishments have further contributed to the viability of neighborhoods in the community. A property maintenance code was adopted to bring abandoned, unkempt and deteriorating properties into compliance with community standards. Street tree requirements have been added to the Township development regulations. Woodland protection zoning regulations have been adopted to retain significant open space features in exchange for lot and setback reductions.

ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Income

One of the benefits of educational attainment is economic success. Among all workers, higher educational attainment is generally associated with higher earnings. According to the US Census, in 2010 median earnings for a worker with a bachelor's degree were 77% higher than median earnings for a worker with a high school diploma, and median earnings for an advanced degree were 31% higher than earnings for a bachelor's degree.

The median income in Peters Township is more than double that of the county, region and state, and nearly double that of the nation as a whole.

	Peters Township	Washington County	Southwestern Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania	United States
Median Household Income	\$100,109	\$49,687	\$49,184	\$49,737	\$51,425

As of December 31, 2010		As of December 31, 2001	
Name	Type of Business	Name	Type of Business
Peters Township School District	Education	Peters Township School District	Education
Giant Eagle Markets, Inc.	Grocery Store	Peter Scozios Food LLC	Grocery Store
Heartland Employment Service	Nursing Home	Sears Roebuck & Co	Service Center
Sears Roebuck & Co	Service Center	Trigon Inc.	Manufacturing
Valleybrook Country Club	Country Club	American Health Foundation	Nursing Home
Trigon Holdings	Manufacturing	Manor Health Care	Nursing Home
American Health Foundation	Nursing Home	Giant Eagle Markets, Inc.	Grocery Store
Peters Township	Government	Kmart	Retail
Kmart	Retail	Laidlaw Transit	Transportation
Atria Peters Township LLC	Restaurant	Valleybrook Country Club	Country Club

Sources: Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, ACS 5 Year Estimates 2010, Peters Township 2012 Budget

Employment

Despite the high educational and income levels of its residents, Peters Township is not a significant center for high paying jobs. Most people who live in the community work elsewhere. Within the township, the major employment sectors are retail, hospitality and healthcare. Geographically, the center of employment is Route 19.

In the past ten years, the major employers have not changed significantly, though corporate names may have changed. Two organizations (Peters Township and Atria Peters Township LLC), however, that were not in the top ten in 2001 are currently among the major employers. One retailer, Sears, is no longer in business in the township.

The Pennsylvania Center for Workforce Information and Analysis states that Washington County had an unemployment rate of 7.4% in June 2012 (most recent data), well below the national average at that time. Specific data for Peters Township are not available.

VISION DASHBOARD: DIVERSE ECONOMIC BASE

By all indicators – land use mix, commuting patterns, employment outside of Peters Township – this continues to be an elusive goal. The Township remains, as it was in 2001, a predominately single family residential bedroom community. The majority of non-residential development has been in the retail and service sectors, not the type of business that is likely to tip the balance of opportunities for residents of the community. At best, this economic development provides relatively low paying, unskilled opportunities, not the types of jobs available in Southpointe.

In the 2009 National Citizen Survey, 56 percent of respondents rated the employment opportunity in the Township as “fair” or “poor,” while only seven percent rated them as “excellent.”



CONCLUSION: *It does not appear that any measurable progress has been made toward this element of the vision. The Township has not changed significantly relative to its economic base from what existed in 2001.*



“The diversity in the Township’s strong economic base ensures that business and industry strike a balance between opportunities and needs ...”

Industry Classification	Number of Establishments	Sales	Number of Employees
Wholesale	41	\$236,214,000	190
Retail	105	\$428,171,000	1,592
Information	7	n/a	31
Real Estate Rental and Leasing	22	\$17,328,000	93
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	81	\$27,003,000	287
Administrative Support and Waste Management Services	30	\$32,122,000	356
Educational Services	14	Data withheld	100-249
Healthcare and Social Assistance	126	\$102,439,000	1,169
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	13	\$13,749,000	180
Accommodations and Food Service	50	\$36,630,000	1,138
All Other Services	58	\$33,351,000	612

Source: 2007 Economic Census

LAND USE

LAND USE

Existing Land Use

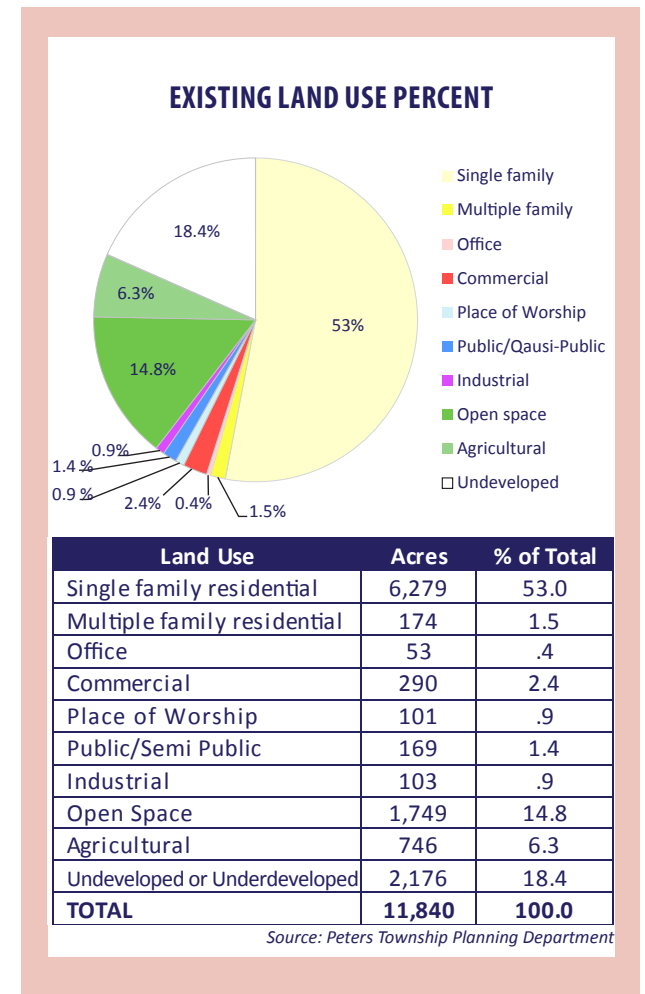
Before 1950, Peters Township largely consisted of farms and woodlands. Over the past sixty years, the Township has become attractive for residential developments which have consumed a relatively large portion of land, roughly 53%, though rural open space and active farms can still be found in the eastern third of the community, often surrounding islands of residential subdivisions. Development pressure has been strong with continuous growth ranging from a growth rate of 137% in the 1950s, to a low of 10.4% in the 80s to the current rate (2000 to 2010) of 20.8%. Although the nation's economic downturn has slowed development, subdivisions are still being planned and homes are being built.

Residential neighborhoods are distinctly separate from other uses within the Township. The majority of office, retail, and commercial uses are found along Route 19 and in the McMurray Town Center. Route 19 is the major north-south arterial connecting Peters Township with Upper St. Clair, Mt. Lebanon, Dormont, and Pittsburgh to the north and the City of Washington to the south. It serves both

Peters Township residents, as well as commuters. Development along Route 19 is classic commercial strip, characterized by automobile oriented businesses, services and offices. The McMurray Town Center, located in the geographic center of the Township, is built at a smaller scale and serves primarily local needs with a variety of office and commercial uses.

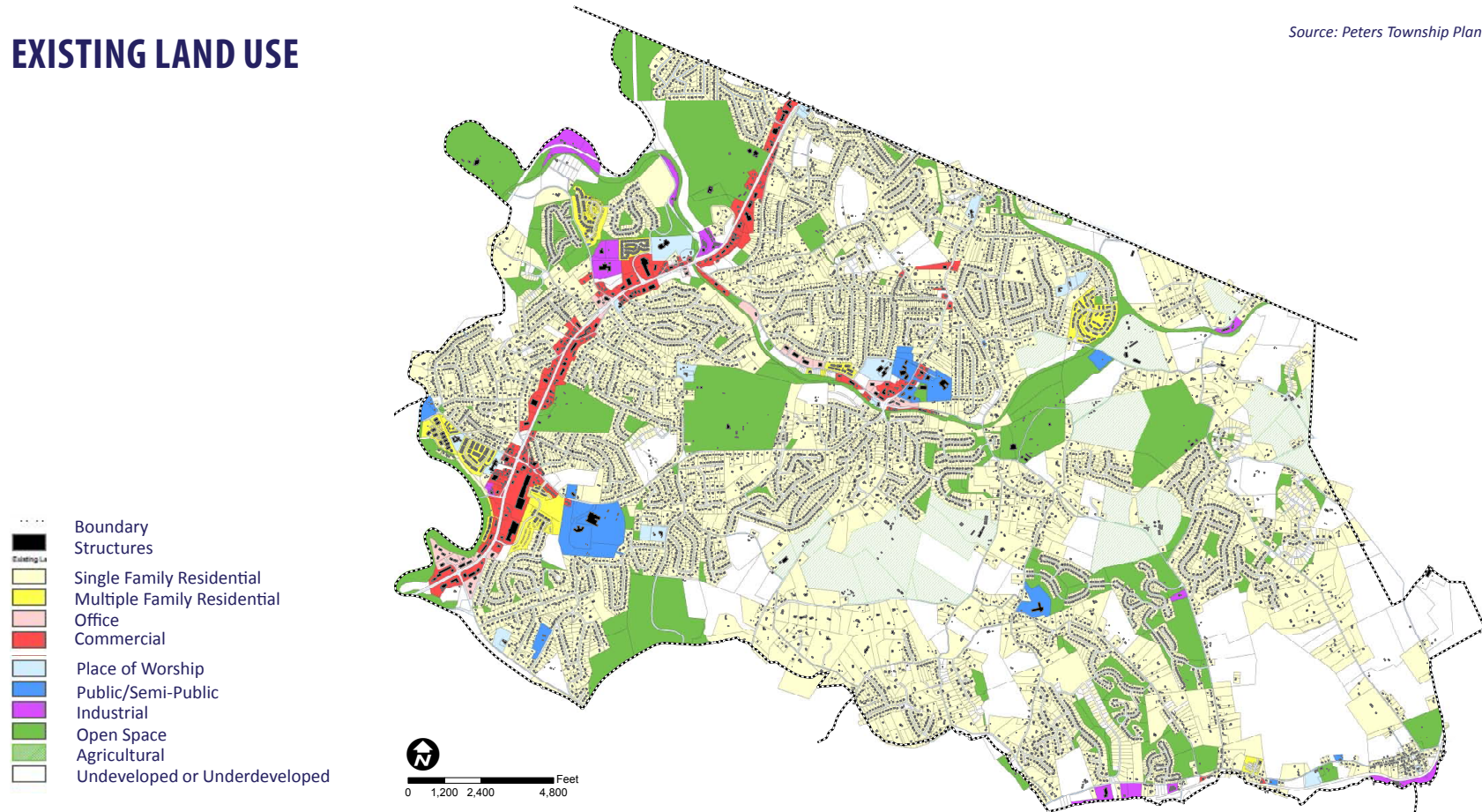
Among the Township's many amenities are two public golf courses, two private country clubs, the Montour Trail/Arrowhead Trail (a successful rails-to-trails project that connects with surrounding communities), working farms, multiple parks, including Peterswood Park and Peters Lake Park, a public library and community recreation complex. The community is also home to the Peters Township High School, Peters Township Middle School, and three elementary schools.

According to the 2012 inventory of Township land use, more than half the land is occupied by single family homes, while all other forms of development comprise less than 8% of the total land area. Preserved open space accounts for nearly 15% of the Township's land. However, nearly 25% of the land is devoted to agricultural use or is undeveloped, but potentially available for future development.

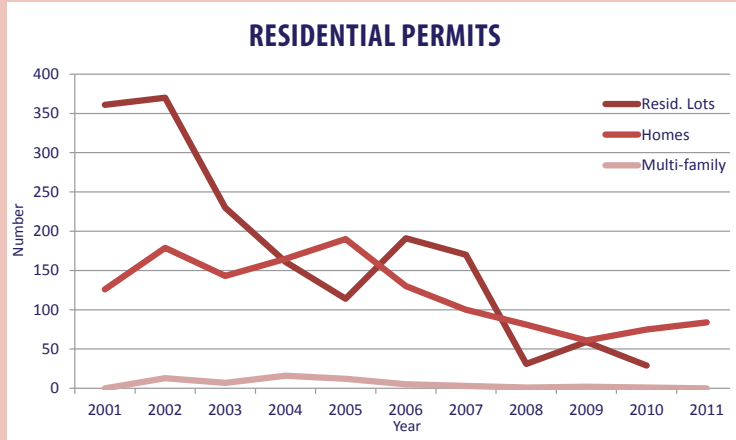


EXISTING LAND USE

Source: Peters Township Planning Department



LAND USE



Year	Number of New Residential Lots	Number of New Single Family Permits	Number of New Multi-Family Permits
2001	361	126	0
2002	370	179	13
2003	230	143	7
2004	161	161	16
2005	114	190	12
2006	191	130	5
2007	170	100	3
2008	31	81	1
2009	59	69	2
2010	29	75	1
2011	111	84	0
2012 *	121	99	0
TOTAL	1837	1437	60
Annual Avg.	172	122	5

* As of October

Source: Peters Township

Development Trends

In the past 11 years, residential development has slowed but not stopped. The accompanying table and chart illustrate the significant decline in residential permits, following the peak year of 2005. The drop in new housing permits seems to have bottomed out in 2009 and has begun to rise since then. In fact, partial data for 2012 already shows that 99 new home permits were issued through October.

Balance

There is no “formula” for what constitutes “balance.” However, based on input received during the early stages of the planning process, as well as the market study and assessment of existing land use, the clear consensus is that Peters Township is a single

family residential community whose commercial opportunities are not in balance with the needs of its 20,000 plus residents. Large “gaps” exist among the retail and service offerings, forcing residents to seek many goods and services elsewhere. In addition to the unavailability of those goods and services within the community, there is also an issue of geographic distribution or proximity. Because the commercial development is largely located near the western edge of the Township, many people apparently prefer other alternatives, more conveniently located, to trekking across the Township and enduring the Rte. 19 traffic.

Despite the presence of the Rte. 19 commercial corridor, Peters Township remains a bedroom community. The Rte. 19 corridor is an auto-oriented strip that serves a much broader market than the Township. Employment opportunities are limited and there is little, if any, neighborhood convenience commercial available throughout the community where residents could walk or bike, take care of daily needs and socialize.

VISION DASHBOARD: ACTIVITY NODES

Currently, as in 2001, the Township contains one primary location that offers a variety of goods and services – Rte. 19. The town center is, at best, a secondary location with limited choices and the commercial offerings available on the east end of the Township are limited to a few convenience items. Input from the community suggests that even the extensive commercial activity found along Rte. 19 does not serve the community well. Due to traffic congestion and the location of the corridor on the far west end of the Township, many residents apparently seek other options in nearby communities.

In addition, the resident survey conducted this summer revealed that nearly half the respondents (49.45%) still consider the “shopping options” within the Township to be poor or fair. While slightly more than a third ranked shopping as “good,” only a little more than 15 percent consider the options to be “very good” or “excellent”.

“Development patterns include ‘small town concepts’ or activity nodes...”



Shopping Options	1 Poor	2 Fair	3 Good	4 Very Good	5 Excellent
	15.71%	33.74%	34.97%	12.16%	3.42%



CONCLUSION: *This aspect of the 2001 vision has yet to be achieved. The ideal of creating concentrated activity nodes dotted throughout the Township has not been realized, though the potential does exist. Both the market analysis and community opinion indicate that the overall needs of the community are not being met and significant “leakage” is occurring as residents patronize locations outside of Peters Township for many purchases. The town center could make a significant contribution toward creating an activity node in the midst of the community, but its lack of identity, poor physical layout and random business mix inhibit the realization of that potential. Likewise, an area in or near the village of Hackett offers some potential to become a node serving current and future residents in the eastern half of the Township who currently seek opportunities outside the Township. But, again, this potential has yet to be realized. Rte. 19, while the center of activity in the Township, is not what would typically be considered a “node.” In fact, its clutter, sprawl and congestion illustrate why smaller, dispersed nodes are desirable. They can be walkable, serve as social gathering places and offer convenience items close to neighborhoods.*

LAND USE

VISION DASHBOARD: ROUTE 19 AS PREMIER SHOPPING AND OFFICE DESTINATION, GATEWAY TO PETERS TOWNSHIP



Source: Peters Township

"...Route 19 corridor is known around the region as the gateway into Peters Township and as a premier shopping and office destination point."



Source: Peters Township

Rte. 19, while a busy commercial corridor, is essentially indistinguishable from other commercial strips found in communities across the nation. It is lined with parking lots crowding the edge of the street, multiple and closely spaced curb cuts, intermittent landscaping, signs competing for attention and a mix of newer and aging buildings.

Many improvements are evident as properties are redeveloped, new architecture is introduced and landscaping is added. However, both the commercial offerings and the image of the parking lot-lined corridor fall short of being either a "premier" destination or a representative example of Peters Township. Furthermore, the market analysis conducted for this plan has revealed many gaps in both retail and services, including:

- Automotive parts and accessories stores
- Furniture stores
- Household appliance stores
- Radio, television, and other electronics stores
- Computer and software stores
- Home centers
- Convenience stores
- Fruit and vegetable markets
- Food (health) supplement stores
- Gasoline stations with convenience stores
- Men's clothing stores
- Women's clothing stores
- Hobby, toy, and game stores
- Musical instrument and supplies stores
- Book stores
- Discount department stores
- Warehouse clubs and supercenters
- Used merchandise stores
- Formal wear and costume rental
- Graphic design services
- Computer systems design services
- Computer facilities management services
- Research and development in the social sciences and humanities
- Full-service restaurants
- Limited-service restaurants
- Cafeterias, grill buffets, and buffets



CONCLUSION: *This vision has yet to be achieved, though some progress is evident as a result of new developments. However, the character of the corridor is inconsistent with the perception of Peters Township as a high quality, affluent community. The concept of a tree-lined boulevard corridor representative of Peters Township as a distinctive community remains an unfulfilled element*

NATURAL FEATURES

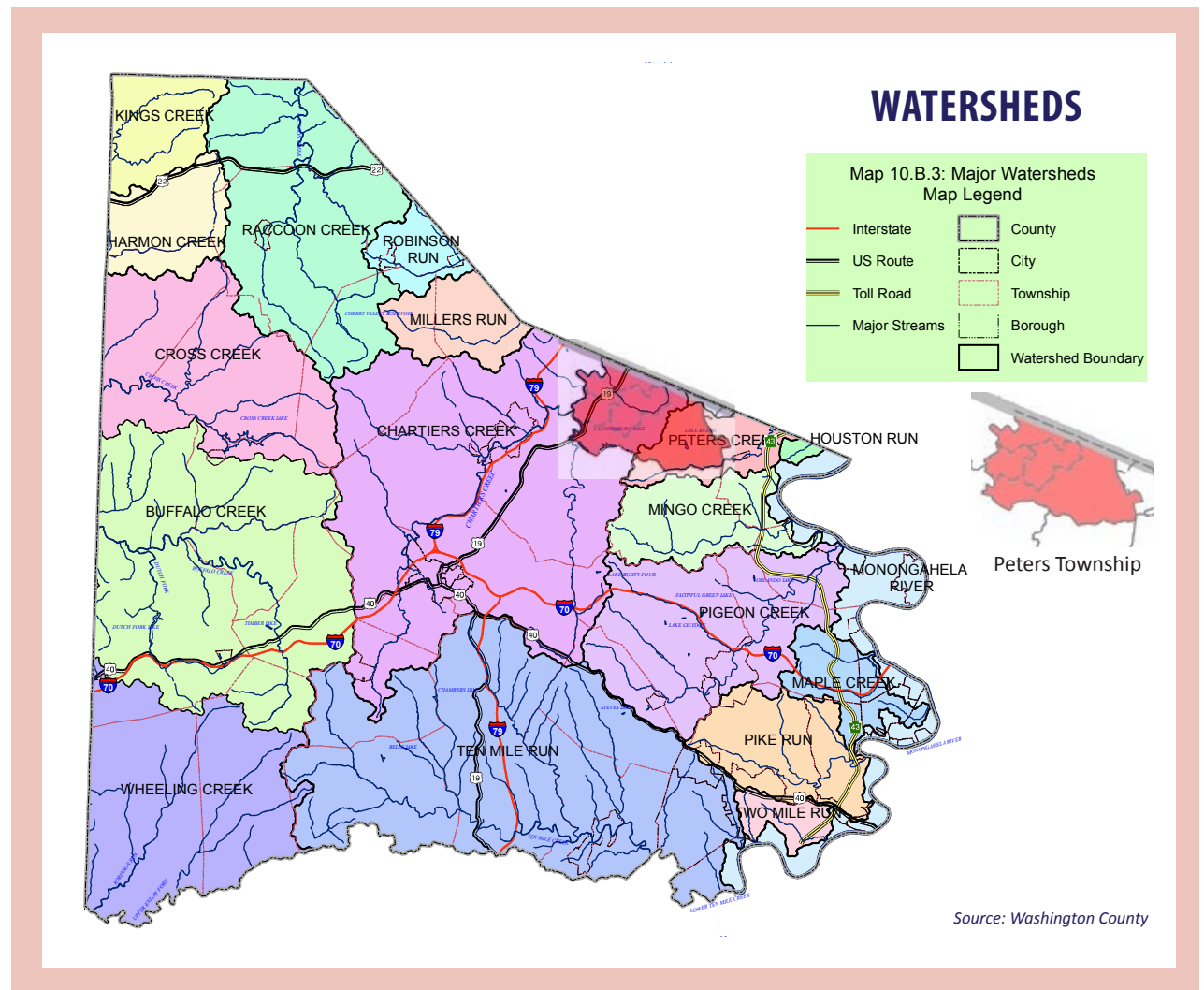
NATURAL FEATURES

Watersheds

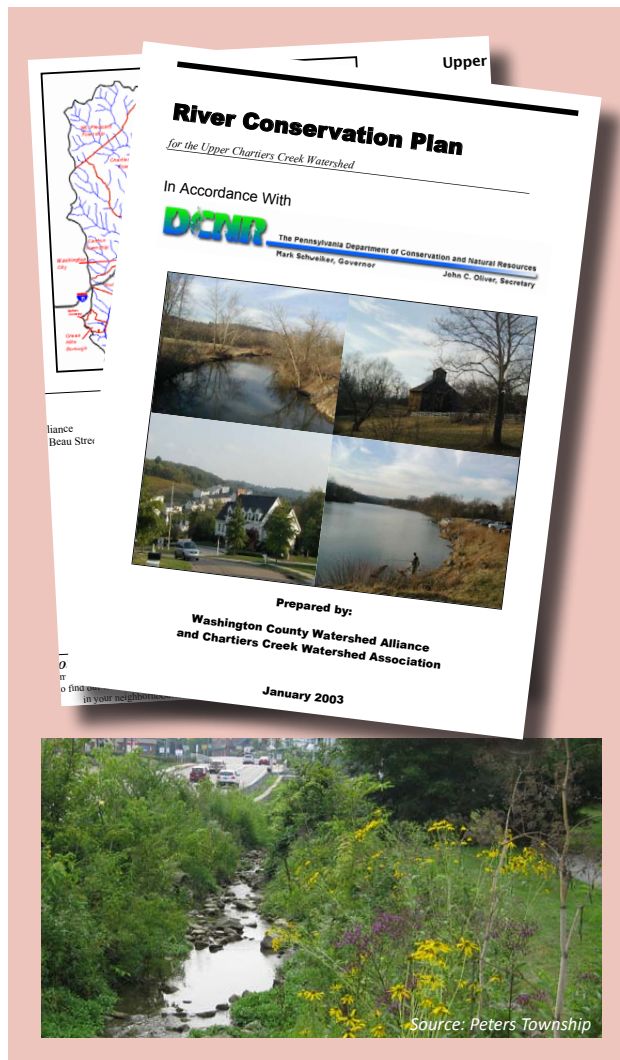
Peters Township is part of two watersheds: the Chartiers Creek and Peters Creek watersheds. Chartiers Creek is the western boundary of the Township and Peters Creek forms part of the southern boundary. Each watershed is made up of the creek for which it is named and all of the tributaries that feed into the creek and the surrounding land.

Chartiers Creek watershed is the larger of the two watersheds with a drainage area of 181 square miles. It originates near the City of Washington in South Franklin Township and flows north/northeast for approximately 30 miles until it empties into the Ohio River in Allegheny County near McKees Rocks at river mile 978.6.

The upper reaches of the watershed encompass agricultural lands and rural areas that rely on septic systems south of Washington. Upon entering Washington, the stream is degraded by industrial pollution, treated sewage, and urban runoff. North of Washington, the stream passes through suburban



NATURAL FEATURES



commercial and residential areas, as well as through several old and current industrial sites. Acid mine drainage (AMD) first becomes a major problem around Canonsburg. The lower portion, approaching Pittsburgh, is lined with woods.

A River Conservation Plan for Upper Chartiers Creek was developed in 2001 and 2002. That plan was focused on improving water quality; preparing for future growth; promoting sustainable and compatible development; enhancing existing recreational opportunities; fostering communication among stakeholders; protecting natural, historic and scenic beauty; and advocating environmental education programs.

A total of 381.79 miles of streams flow in this watershed, with 306.43 miles or (80.26%) of the flowing waters listed as impaired for one of their designated uses. For the entire watershed, the largest impacts stem from agriculture, habitat modification, and abandoned mine drainage. In Peters Township, the largest impacts are from construction, habitat modification and runoff.

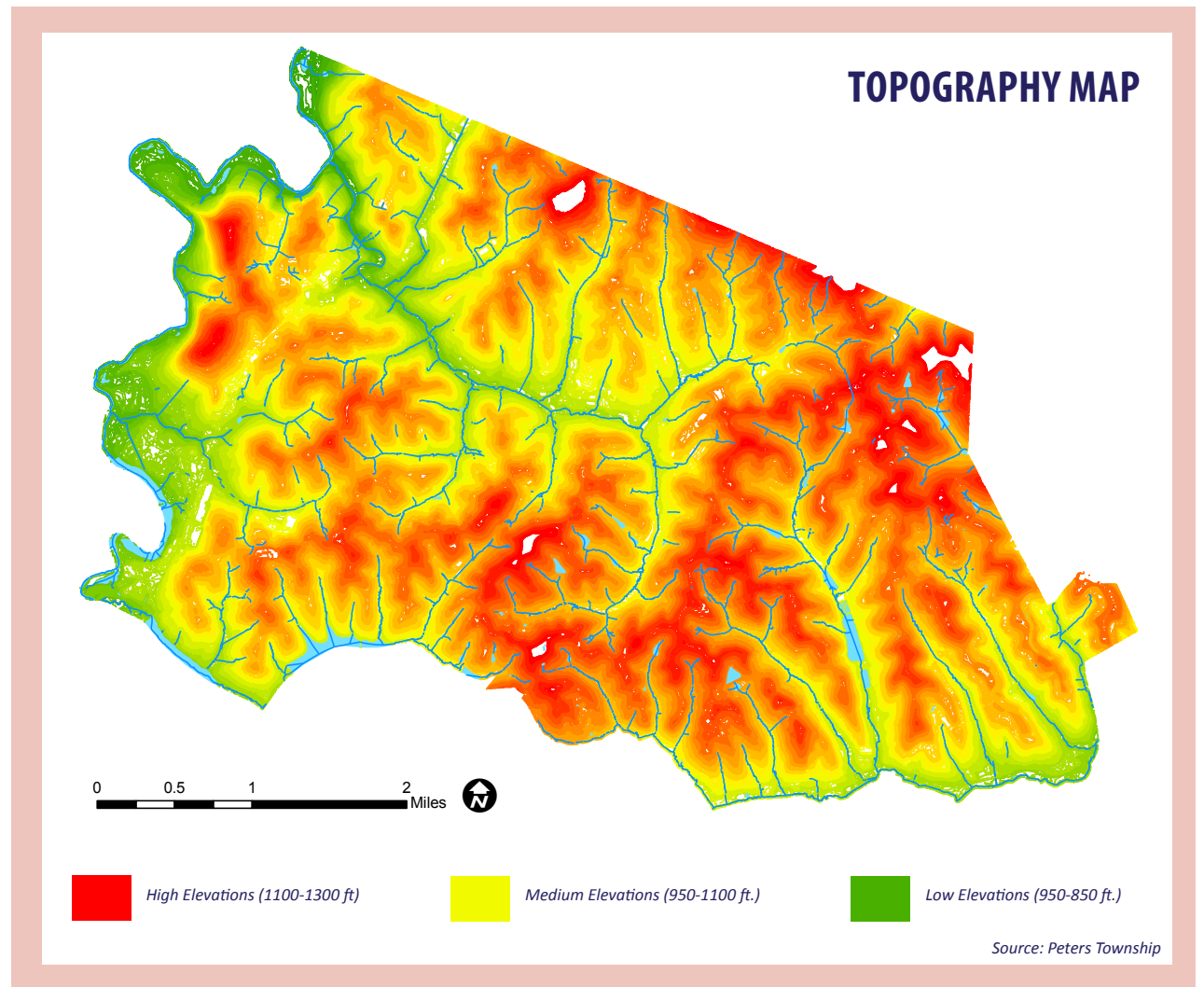
The Peters Creek Watershed encompasses an area of approximately 50 square miles in southwestern Allegheny County and northeastern Washington County. Peters Creek, the major surface stream in the watershed, is 16.2 miles long. Its elevation is about 1200 feet above sea level at its headwaters near Thomas in Washington County and 719 feet at Clairton in Allegheny County where it discharges into the Monongahela River. Most of the watershed is underlain with high-quality, easily-mined coal deposits that outcrop on the slopes of many of the stream valleys. The close proximity of these valuable deposits to the many Pittsburgh area coke ovens and steel mills has led to extensive mining throughout the watershed.

In addition, the presence of the Marsella shale gas deposits in the eastern half of the township presents both a potential economic development opportunity and concerns about environmental consequences and land use implications.

Topography/Steep Slopes

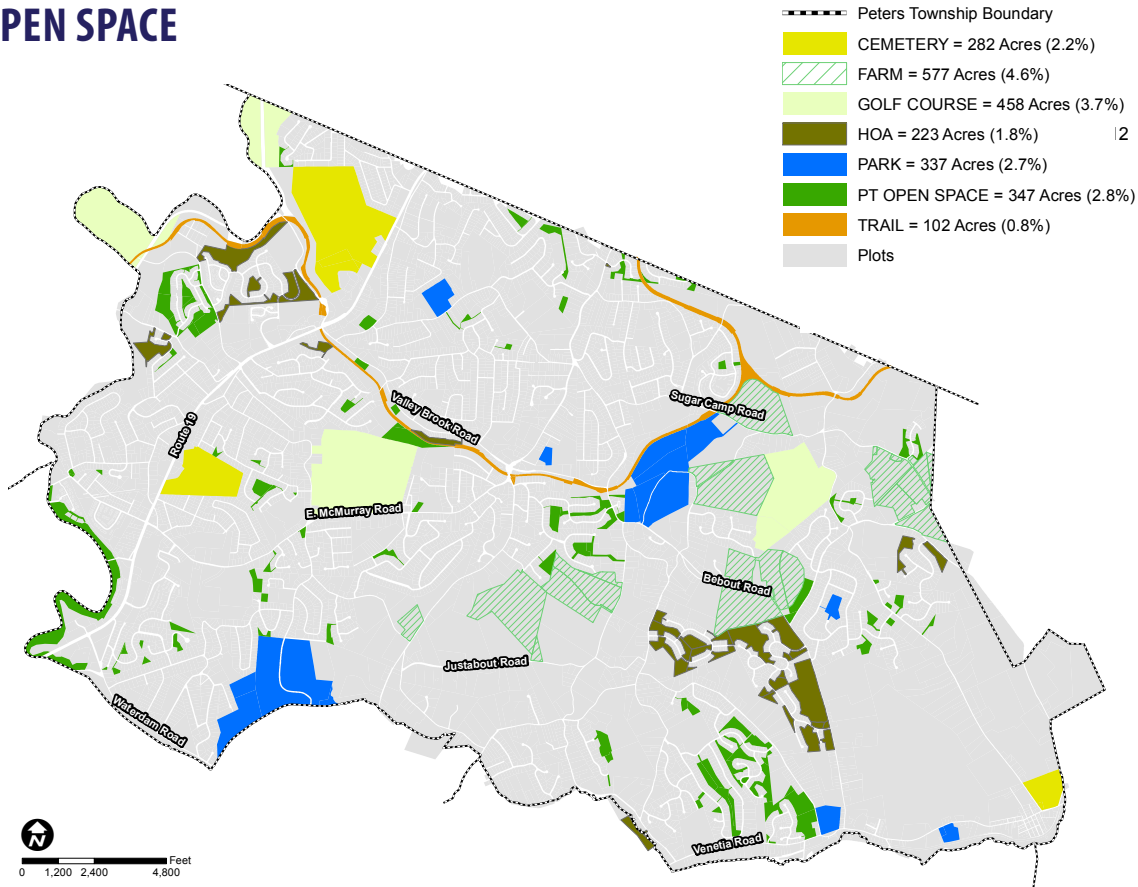
Peters Township is characterized by wide topographic variation. Many areas exhibit steep slopes that inhibit development or add significantly to its cost. Other parts of the Township are more pastoral where the land undulates in less severe and abrupt shifts, contributing to the sense of rural serenity amidst a bustling metropolitan region.

This severe topography certainly contributes to community character. Dramatic views from hilltop homesites, acres of rolling farmland and winding roads through wooded slopes offer interest and charm. However, the rugged terrain is also a constraint to development, adding significantly to the cost, and makes improving roads or adding sidewalks and paths physically challenging or cost prohibitive in many locations.



PARKS AND RECREATION

OPEN SPACE



Source: Peters Township

PARKS AND RECREATION

Peters Township has over 470 acres of outdoor recreational land, including some enviable facilities. The Township operates 7 parks and the Arrowhead Trail. A wide array of active and passive recreational opportunities is provided including: picnic areas and shelters; playgrounds; facilities for basketball, baseball, soccer, football and tennis; walking tracks; special event areas; hiking and horse trails. All parks have restrooms at or near the shelters.

Township Facilities

- *Peterswood Park* : 90+ acre park
- *Peters Lake Park*: 189 acre site
- *Elm Grove Park*: 14 acre neighborhood park
- *Old Trail Park* :7 acre neighborhood park
- *Rees Park*: 15 acre park
- *Skate Park*
- *Venetia Park*: 7 acre park

The Community Recreation Center is a source of pride for the community and offers a double gymnasium, a multi-purpose room, fitness studio, classroom, concession stand, parks and recreation offices and track. Outside facilities include a ball field and skate park.

Arrowhead Trail and Montour Trail comprise a total 7.8 miles of paved and unpaved paths for walking, biking and running. The Township purchased 100 acres of railroad right-of-way in 1985. With the help of state funds, the first phase was developed as a recreational multi-use trail, as well as to preserve and reinstate the natural surroundings with native trees and wildflowers. With the aid of a DCNR grant the original section of Arrowhead Trail was resurfaced in 2002. Arrowhead Trail is 3.5 miles in length. The trail runs from Route 19 to Brush Run Road.

The much anticipated opening of another section of hiking trail in Peters Township occurred in 2009. The Montour Trail follows the former railroad right-of-way used to transport coal from the Montour 4 Mine on the eastern end of Peters Township. This section of trail crosses a scenic high level bridge and through the “double tunnel” area near Valley Brook Country Club. Unlike the original asphalt Arrowhead Trail, the Montour trail surface is a tightly compacted stone.

Peters Township Tennis Center offers professional instruction, clinics, leagues and tournaments daily.

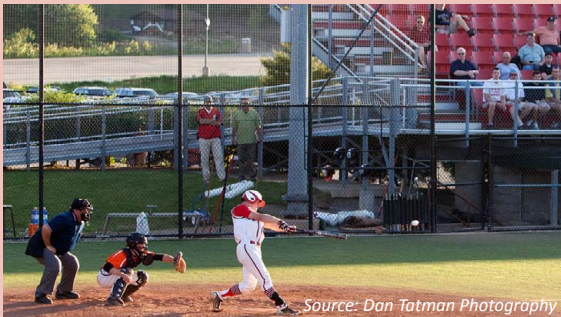
The Tennis Center consists of 4 clay tennis courts, 5 hard courts and a pro shop, all located in the Peters Township Municipal Complex. In the winter, the Peters Township Tennis Association erects a bubble and operates the facility by lease agreement.

Programs

The Parks and Recreation Department provides programming for residents of all ages, from preschool through seniors. Preschool programs include art, dance and athletic activities. Youth and teen programs include art, dance, theater and athletic activities, as well as other health related classes. Adult programs include dance, fitness, health and landscaping and gardening classes. There are also family activities where persons of varying ages can take classes together.



PARKS AND RECREATION



Though separate from the Township’s recreational programs, many organized sports activities are sponsored by other groups:

Baseball: Peters Township Baseball Association (PTBA)

Basketball: Peters Township Basketball Association (PTBBA)

Cheerleading: Peters Township Youth Cheerleading Association (PTYCA)

Football: Peters Township Junior Football Association (PTJFA)

Lacrosse: Peters Township Boys Youth Lacrosse Association (PTBYLA)

Soccer: Peters Township Soccer Association (PTSA)

Softball: Peters Township Girls Softball Association (PTGSA)

Swimming: Peters Township Swim Club (PTSC)

Wrestling: Peters Township Youth Wrestling Association (PTYWA)

Trails

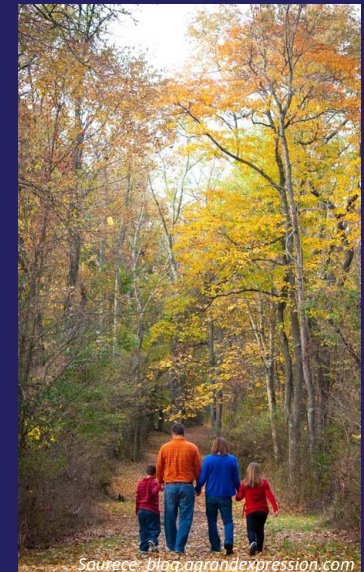
Among the Township’s distinctive recreational attributes are its bike paths. Both the Arrowhead and Montour trails are heavily used and prized by local residents. Ironically, among the “complaints” expressed both in resident surveys, as well as in small group discussions providing input to the comprehensive plan, the community is not viewed as walkable or bikable due to the general absence of sidewalks and lack of connectivity between neighborhoods and major attractors such as schools, parks, shopping areas, Town Center, etc.

PARKS AND TRAILS

Peters Township has over 470 acres of parks and 112 acres of trails, which does not include Township owned open space acreage and Peters Township School District owned properties (180 acres) both of which are components in the standard advocated by the National Recreation and Park Association. This comprises a ratio of 23.9 acres of parkland per 1,000 Township residents. The NRPA guidelines recommend 23.5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. While the Township's ratio is slightly over the national standard, it has been declining over time as the population has increased faster than the acquisition of parkland. One factor that has helped to offset this is the Township's requirement that open space be dedicated as part of new residential developments. Approximately 570 acres have been preserved as a result of this requirement; 223 acres are private and 347 are open to the public.

While the Township boasts a high quality trail, connectivity and walkability remain concerns among residents. More needs to be done to accommodate bicycle and pedestrian movement throughout the Township.

"...extensive system of safe and well-maintained neighborhood and community parks, active recreation areas and linear open space trails..."



CONCLUSION: *The Township's parks, trails and leisure activities are impressive and a source of pride in the community. Great strides have been made toward realizing this aspect of the vision. However, more needs to be done relative to trails and pathways. In addition, the improvement of existing parks and acquisition of more park land will likely be needed to keep pace with the continued population growth of the community.*

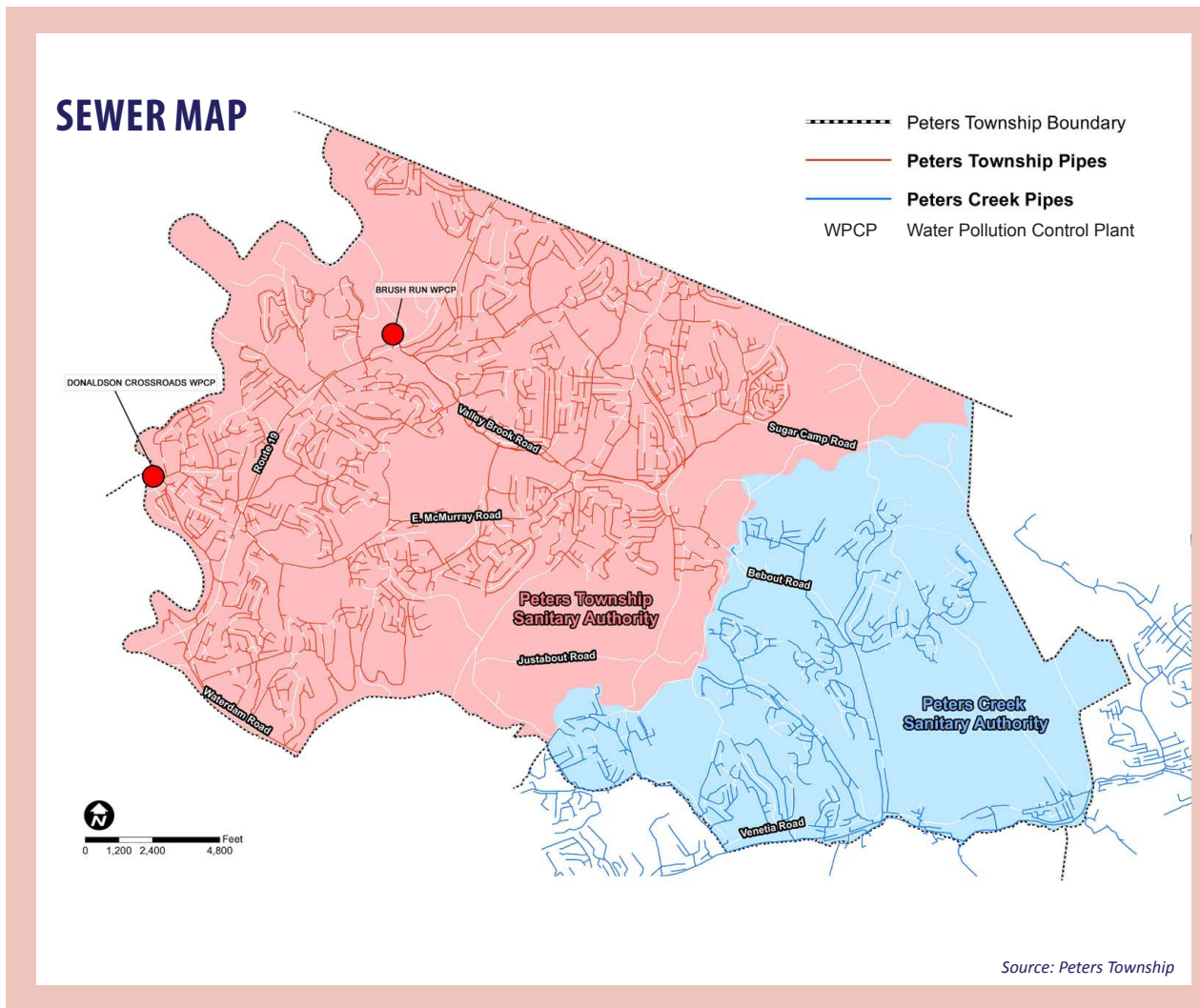
UTILITIES

UTILITIES

The Peters Creek Sanitary Authority is a joint authority formed by Peters Township, Nottingham Township, Union Township and Finleyville Borough. Peters Township Council appoints 3 members to this 10-member authority board. Each member serves a 5-year term. The authority provides sewage service for a majority of the eastern portion of the Township. The authority has its own staff and is responsible to maintain the sewer lines that serve the Peters Creek Watershed.

The Peters Creek Watershed is currently under tap restrictions due to the overload of the Peters Creek Interceptor located in Allegheny County. As development pressures increase, Sewerage District #19, Upper Peters Creek, which includes Finleyville Borough and locations within Union Township will need to consider an update to its Act 537 Plan.

Western Peters Township is served by the Peters Township Sanitary Authority which encompasses approximately 13 square miles and serves some 6,000 customers. The sewerage facilities are comprised of two treatment plants – the Brush Run Water Pollution Control Plant (BR WPCP) and the Donaldson



Crossroads Water Pollution Control Plant (DC WPCP) – eight pumping stations, and approximately 126 miles of sewer. A sanitary authority board is responsible for overseeing the operations and consists of five township residents appointed by the Township Council.

Year	Storm Sewers Installed/Replaced (feet)
2001	1,017
2002	136
2003	236
2004	881
2005	1,460
2006	1,375
2007	1,852
2008	1,215
2009	2,581
2010	135
TOTAL	10,888

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES KEEP PACE WITH GROWTH

Peters Township is committed to updating and maintaining its infrastructure. Both road and sewer maintenance and improvements are township priorities. The Township maintains 106.5 miles of roads. Its goal is to resurface every road every 15 years. This requires that approximately seven miles of roads be improved every year. In 2012, five to seven miles were repaved and eight miles were otherwise rejuvenated. However, as maintenance costs rise and more roads are added, meeting this goal within budget constraints becomes increasingly challenging. A similar and equally ambitious program is in place for storm sewers.

Public water service throughout the Township is provided by Pennsylvania American Water. The 70 miles of township-owned storm sewers are the responsibility of the Township’s Public Works Department. A major concern is the approximately ten miles of corrugated metal pipe that is deteriorating and needs to be replaced. In the past ten years, the Township has installed or replaced over two miles of storm sewers throughout the community. Annually, over \$200,000 is spent by the Township to repair and maintain storm sewers. In addition, developers are responsible for other installation and improvements which total several hundreds of thousands of dollars each year in private investment.

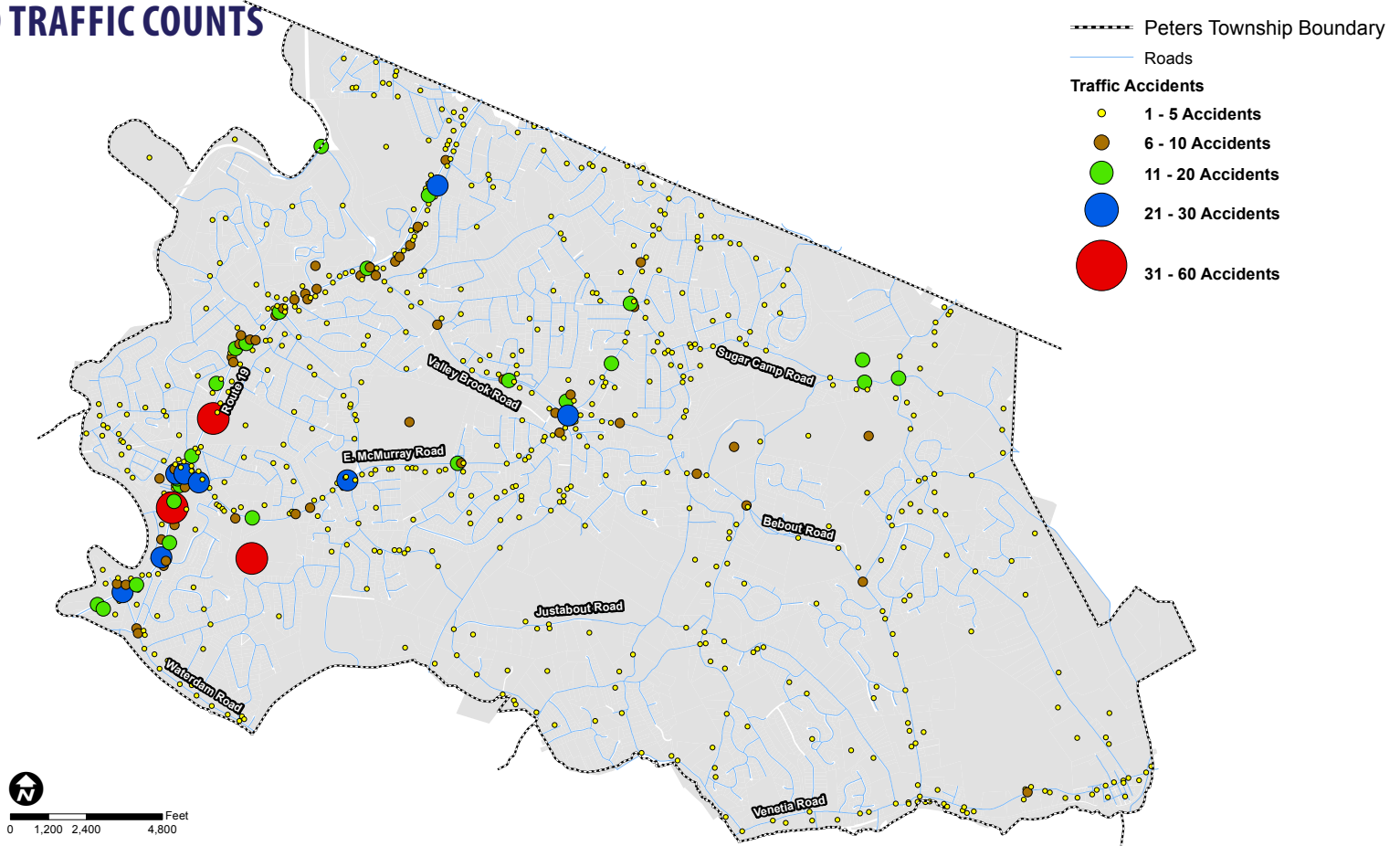
Storm Sewer Improvements In Dollars	Year	In-House Improvements	Contract Improvements	Installed by developers	Total
Source: Peters Township	2009	\$ 55,690.00	\$ 165,253.60	\$ 360,960.00	\$ 581,903.60
	2010	\$ 28,500.00	\$ 188,475.00	\$ 1,235,601.00	\$ 1,452,576.00
	2011	\$ 52,915.00	\$ 177,922.00	\$ 326,731.00	\$ 557,568.00



CONCLUSION: *The Township has been proactive in its commitment to maintaining its infrastructure. A formal process of programming improvements to streets, sidewalks, storm sewers and other elements of infrastructure has been in place and actively pursued for the past several years. However, as population grows and maintenance costs increase, the Township’s goals for maintenance and replacement of deteriorating facilities will be more difficult to achieve without added revenue.*

TRANSPORTATION

CRASHES AND TRAFFIC COUNTS



TRANSPORTATION

Traffic Volumes

Route 19 is the most heavily travelled road in Peters Township and the main commercial corridor of the community. The 2001 Comprehensive Plan identified problems with US Route 19 that include excessive curb cuts, lack of signal coordination, and lack of defined access at intersections. It noted that Rte. 19 serves as the primary commercial district, which is an important economic base for the Township. It also noted the challenges of curb cuts, lack of innovative design, sign clutter, lack of consistent streetscape, landscaping, and lack of parking flexibility. The transportation goal in the 2001 plan was to improve safety, traffic flow, and reduce congestion by promoting Rte. 19 as a premiere commercial corridor that includes managing access points and intersection conflicts.

A Rte. 19 Land Use Study was completed by the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission in 2004. The study included a detailed list of projects to address: congestion, access management, signalized intersection spacing criteria, signal coordination, aesthetics, PennDOT/local coordination, management of development, funding, and design

of specific road sections and intersections. A project to address congestion and safety improvements for Rte. 19 is now included in the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission's Plan 2040.

In addition to Rte. 19, other heavily travelled roads are listed below with Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) information included:

- Rte. 19 north of Donaldson's Crossroads 24,000, south of Donaldson's Crossroads 21,000
- Valley Brook Road (SR 1010) between US 19 and McMurray Road 7,400, between McMurray Road and Justabout Road 10,000, east of Justabout Road 4,600
- McMurray Road (SR 1002) 18,000 between US 19 and Valley Brook Road
- Venetia Road (SR 1006) from Venetia west to the Township line 5,300

Crashes

In general, the frequency of crashes corresponds to the volume of traffic on a given street. However, other factors come into play as well. Spacing and frequency of driveways, intersection design and sight distances also contribute to the number and type of vehicular crashes. The accompanying map shows the location of crashes for the three year period between 2009 and 2011. While reported crashes

occurred throughout the Township, certain locations have experienced the highest concentrations, including:

- Rte. 19/McMurray intersection
- Rte. 19/ Valley Brook intersection
- Rte. 19/Waterdam intersection
- Valley Brook/E. McMurray intersection
- Venetia/Bebout intersection
- Venetia/Church Hill intersection
- Valley Brook, west of the Town Center
- E. McMurray/Church Hill Road intersection
- Rte. 19, south of McMurray
- Rte. 19, north and south of Valley Brook
- Waterdam Road

Commuting

As noted previously, Peters Township is a bedroom community with relatively little employment within the Township. Most of the employment opportunities that do exist tend to be low paying retail and service jobs. Therefore, most residents commute to their jobs. Average commuting time for Peters Township residents (28 minutes) is slightly higher than that of all the comparison regions. Not surprisingly, most (87%) of Township commuters drive alone. This also is higher than the rates for the comparison regions.

TRANSPORTATION

	Peters Township	Washington County	Southwestern Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania	United States
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	28	25.6	24.9	25.5	25.2
Drive alone (car, truck, or van)	87%	85.4%	79.8%	76.4%	76%
Carpool	5.5%	9.2%	9.6%	9.4%	10.4%
Transit	4.3%	1.3%	5.6%	5.4%	4.9%
Bike	0%	.1%	.2%	n/a	n/a
Walk	1.9%	3.2%	3.9%	4.0%	2.8%
Motorcycle, Taxi, or other	1.2%	.9%	.8%	1.3%	1.7%
Worked at home	7.6%	3%	3.1%	3.5%	4.1%

Source: US Census Bureau



Source: Peters Township

	2001	2011
Township owned	88	110
State owned	29	29.1
Private	5	7
Total miles of streets	122	146.1

Source: Peters Township



Source: Peters Township

Transit

There is a limited public transit service area within Peters Township, primarily along US 19. In addition, the Washington County Transportation Authority (WCTA) provides human service transportation to individuals eligible for its programs. WCTA's primary services are shared-ride and door-to-door, requiring reservations the business day before. Actual operation of service is provided by one of three subcontractors depending on geographic area. All of the services provided by WCTA are intended for specific populations, although anyone may take advantage of the services at the full fare. The type of services provided by WCTA, such as advance reservation, demand-responsive, and door-to-door are sometimes referred to as Para-transit.

EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION

One of the most frequent issues cited in surveys, interviews and small group discussions involves traffic congestion. Much of this relates to peak hour commuting and is focused on specific street segments and intersections. Traffic volumes continue to increase and addressing the problem is more likely to rely on solutions other than more and wider roads. Potential “fixes” could involve providing shopping and employment opportunities closer to residential concentrations, improving transit service, considering traffic capacity as part of land use decisions and making the Township more walkable and bikeable.

In the 2009, National Citizen Survey, 62 percent of Township residents indicated that “ease of bicycle travel” was “fair” or “poor” and 54 percent expressed the same view regarding “ease of walking” in the Township.

“...public/private transportation system is efficient, meets the needs of the community, and is designed to facilitate the joint use of streets...”



At present, the Township is mainly reliant upon automobiles as the travel mode of choice. Little has changed in that regard since 2001. Given the fact that there is only one street, Rte. 19, in the Township that is wider than two lanes, the need for an efficient transportation system is as critical as ever. Results of the 2009 National Citizen Survey highlighted the one dimensional transportation system.



CONCLUSION: *This aspect of the vision may be further from attainment than it was in 2001, though likely to remain an important part of a high quality of life in the community. While the Township has implemented several recommended changes since the 2001 plan was adopted – traffic impact fee structure, Rte. 19/Valley Brook interchange alignment, E. McMurray/Center Church Road improvements, and a traffic calming ordinance – traffic congestion continues to be among the major community issues. As long as the family automobile and large lot single family development is the norm, congestion and delays will continue to be the norm. Non-motorized modes, as noted frequently in public input, are needed to connect activity centers/destinations in the community to provide a viable alternative to motorized vehicles. Transit also has the potential to be a viable option, but is all but ignored in the Township. Service is limited; routes are not user-friendly and current densities are too low to support an efficient system.*

CONCLUSION

Peters Township has many enviable attributes as a place to live. Its school system is excellent; recreational opportunities abound; taxes are relatively modest; township government is proactive; and the quality of life is considered to be very good. In addition, the community has weathered the economic storm of the last few years considerably better than much of the rest of the country. As a result, growth and development have continued. New businesses are locating along the busy Rte. 19 corridor and housing starts are increasing.

Maintaining Peters Township as a healthy community with a prosperous future is the ultimate goal of the comprehensive plan. Despite all the positive qualities, however, there are needs and challenges. In 2001, a long-term vision was established to address those challenges and create a more diverse and balanced community. As noted in this report, some elements of that vision have been realized, while others may be no closer to attainment than they were more than ten years ago.

This report is simply a snapshot, a progress report, to help the community evaluate how it measures up against the vision that it set for itself a decade ago. During the course of the current comprehensive planning effort, that vision will be reexamined. It may be affirmed; it may be fine-tuned; or it may be significantly altered. Whatever form the vision in the 2013 plan takes, it should be a vision that the community can rally around, support and act on.