

TOWNSHIP OF CHERRY HILL

2025
OPEN SPACE &
RECREATION
PLAN



Mayor and Township Council

David Fleisher, Mayor
William Carter, Council President
Michele Golkow, Council Vice President
Jennifer Apell
Daniel V. DiRenzo, Jr.
Sangeeta Doshi
Jill Hulnick
Carole Roskoph

Department of Community Development

Kathleen Cullen, Director
Mara Wuebker, PP, AICP
Jacob Richman, PP, AICP
Sam Opal, Assistant Planner

Department of Engineering

Steven T. Musilli, CPWM

Department of Recreation

Megan Brown, Recreation Director

Department of Law

Cosmas P. Diamantis, Esq., Director

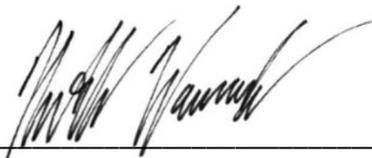
Department of Administration

Brian Bauerle, Business Administrator

Planning Board

Sam Kates, Chair
Sheila Griffith, Vice-Chair
Daniel DiRenzo, Jr., Councilman
Marlyn Kalitan
Ann Madden Tufano
John S. Osorio
Alise Panitch
Rowena Ripa
Earle Seneres
Tina Truitt-O'Neal

The document original was signed and sealed in accordance with N.J.A.C. 13:41-1.3



Matthew Wanamaker, PP, AICP
New Jersey Planner License #033LI00650500
Pennoni Associates



Geoffrey Gray-Cornelius, PP, AICP
New Jersey Planner License #33LI00649000
Pennoni Associates

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	4
Purpose.....	8
Cherry Hill Master Plan.....	9
Regional and Local Setting.....	9
Land Use	9
Population	10
Impact on Plan.....	10
Park Benefits.....	11
POLICIES.....	12
Public Purpose.....	12
Cherry Hill Advisory Environmental Board	13
Cherry Hill Township Open Space Assessment.....	13
Camden County Open Space Preservation Trust Fund.....	13
Camden County Open Space and Farmland Preservation Plan.....	14
Camden County Open Space Preservation Trust Fund Advisory Committee	14
NJ Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2023-2027	14
RESOURCE ASSESSMENT	15
Linkages and Greenways	15
Streams and Waterways.....	19
Soils	23
Agricultural Lands.....	23
Historic Sites	24
Open Space and Land Use Development	26
Public Access	26
Park Access	27
Parking Availability	28
OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION GOALS	30
Public Input	30
Public Meeting and Survey Feedback.....	30
Goals and Objectives	36
Goals.....	36

Objectives	36
OPEN SPACE & RECREATION ASSESSMENT	38
Federal	38
State of New Jersey	38
Camden County	38
Municipal.....	41
Neighborhood Parks.....	41
Community Parks	43
Educational Facilities	43
NEEDS ANALYSIS	46
Standards of Service	46
Condition of Existing Facilities	47
Analysis.....	48
Land Use Regulations	52
Planning and Technical Assistance	53
Management of Public Lands	53
Preservation Tools and Funding	53
Education and Outreach.....	54
2024 Recreation Open Space Inventory	55

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE

An Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) is defined by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection’s (NJDEP) Green Acres Program as “... a local government’s vision of open space and recreation. It should establish a philosophical and practical justification for the protection and preservation of open space and recreation opportunities. An OSRP provides a framework for implementation.” Contained herein are Cherry Hill Township’s preservation, conservation and recreation goals. The plan was prepared in accordance with the guidelines and requirements of the New Jersey Green Acres Program and includes an inventory of existing conditions, a discussion of the regional setting, a resource assessment, and sets goals, objectives, and actions to direct the Township’s policies and decision making regarding open space and recreation. In order to be eligible for NJDEP Green Acres funding, a municipality must have a Green Acres approved OSRP that is adopted as part of the master plan by the local unit’s Planning Board.

PLANNING PROCESS

In 2024, Cherry Hill Township engaged the community and stakeholders in a process to update the 2011 Open Space and Recreation Plan. The process included a review of the 2011 goals, an assessment of how well the Township achieved the prior goals, and engagement with stakeholders to establish goals and policies for the next decade.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Building upon the 2011 plan, the following goals and objectives are established for the 2024 OSRP:

Goal 1: To preserve open space for preservation, conservation and/or recreation.

Objective 1: Identify parcels for preservation that are contiguous to other open space parcels and/or are part of the larger greenway systems, such as the River to Bay Greenway or the Camden County Greenway.

Objective 2: Consider the use of conservation easements on private property that is environmentally vulnerable or may be part of a possible greenway.

Objective 3: Identify potential historic sites which present opportunities for open space, conservation or recreational use.

Goal 2: To preserve sensitive land areas through acquisition of environmentally sensitive areas, such as steep slopes, woodlands, aquifer recharge areas, and areas containing unique environmental features.

Objective 1: Maintain an updated list of the most environmentally vulnerable lands and those most susceptible to development. These parcels should be considered for acquisition by the Township before other less sensitive land areas.

Objective 2: Acquire fee simple ownership or create conservation easements along the major stream corridors of Cooper River tributaries and South Pennsauken Creek for preservation, recreational opportunities and /or to link existing open space areas.

Objective 3: Acquire sites in key locations in imminent danger of development.

Goal 3: To preserve and enhance greenways.

Objective 1: Continue to work closely with Camden County Open Space Committee, regional entities (DVRPC, Camden County Soil Conservation, etc.), and non-governmental organizations (Trust for Public Lands, Sustainable Jersey, Cherry Hill Advisory Environmental Board (CHAEB), etc.) to improve and expand existing greenways and provide opportunities for active recreation, wildlife habitat, and historic preservation.

Objective 2: Acquire smaller properties to be added in coordination with other municipal, county, state, or non-profit open space initiatives.

Objective 3: Identify privately owned parcels that may provide an opportunity to expand existing greenways and consider the use of conservation easements to preserve these lands in perpetuity.

Goal 4: To improve the existing open space system throughout the Township and provide adequate passive and active recreation opportunities for all ages.

Objective 1: Work with the schools to improve recreation facilities and open space owned by the Cherry Hill Public School District.

Objective 2: Ensure that parks and recreation facilities are accessible to people of all ages and varying mobility throughout the Township. Review ease of travel to locations and opportunities for participation among all residents.

Goal 5: To improve maintenance and maximize the use of existing active recreation parcels.

Objective 1: Continue to engage in regular inspections of all park and recreation facilities to assure the operation and safety of all equipment.

Objective 2: Look for opportunities to increase the number of multi-use fields.

Goal 6: Promote the importance of and maintenance of passive open space parcels.

Objective 1: Work with local organizations to establish parcels that contain the most environmentally sensitive conditions and limit access to these open space parcels.

Objective 2: Create a comprehensive signage program to identify open space parcels preserved by the Township.

Objective 3: Consider promoting a memorial bench program to increase the number of benches at passive recreation sites across the Township.

Goal 7: To promote health and wellness through active recreation.

Objective 1: Work with local schools to promote use of public recreation parcels and their amenities that are located throughout the Township.

Objective 2: Evaluate accessibility to local parks to determine levels of walkability from local neighborhoods and make improvements where needed. Ease of access to recreation amenities may promote use of such facilities, particularly by groups that cannot drive.

Objective 3: Develop signage that encourages the use of trails and walkways, such as mileage markers.

Objective 4: Identify opportunities to activate trails.

Goal 8: To balance environmental conservation with economic development.

Objective 1: Review local ordinances to determine where improvements can be made to development regulations.

Objective 2: Consider offering density bonuses or parking requirement reductions to developers for an increase in open space set asides.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

An analysis of the inventory of existing open space finds that Cherry Hill Township has a significant level of lands devoted to recreation and conservation purposes. Since the last OSRP in 2011, Cherry Hill Township has shown significant progress with the acquisition and conservation of 190.6 acres of land. In total, the Township has preserved approximately 1,392 acres of open space that provide varying degrees of recreation opportunity. An analysis shows that the vast majority (74%) of residential parcels within the Township are within 0.25 miles of a park, while 99% of residential parcels are within 0.5 miles of a park.

A review of recreation facilities show that the Township has an extensive variety of facilities, encompassing community and neighborhood parks, playground equipment, courts, fields and trails. These facilities are in addition to those owned by Camden County. While an assessment of parks and facilities show that there are areas of opportunity to improve and enhance open space and recreational facilities, surveys found that overall, 81% of residents are satisfied with existing passive and active open space and recreation facilities.

In comparison with like-sized communities, Cherry Hill ranks favorably in a review of parks and open space. Utilizing the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) benchmarks¹, Cherry Hill exceeds the metric of “Acres of Parkland per 1,000 Residents” for similarly sized communities, with 16.36 acres per 1,000 residents (*excluding school acreage*) and 20.89 acres per 1,000 residents (*including school acreage*). The median benchmark for this characteristic is 10.2 acres per 1,000 residents. For the “Residents per Park” metric, for similarly sized communities, Cherry Hill, with 1,885 residents per park, exceeds the median of 2,386 residents per park. Note that these metrics do not include the two Camden County Parks located in Cherry Hill: John Adler Memorial Park at Challenge Grove (17.7 acres) and Maria Barnaby Greenwald Memorial Park (47.21 acres), which further reduces the calculation of residents per park. In addition, the recently acquired Holly Ravine Farm, which will be preserved for passive recreation and agricultural uses, is also pending inclusion into this inventory.

“The vast majority of residential parcels within the Township (74%) are within 0.25 miles of a park while 99% of residential parcels are within 0.5 miles of a park.”

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2024 Open Space and Recreation Plan recommends the following top priorities:

1. Continue to provide both passive and active recreational amenities to meet the needs of all Cherry Hill residents.
 - a. Assess current facilities for accessibility and mobility and plan to make improvements where needed.
 - b. Develop plan for future capital improvements.

¹ 2024 NRPA Agency Performance Review, <https://www.nrpa.org/publications-research/research-papers/agency-performance-review/>, November 2024.

2. Support the preservation of open space.
 - a. Evaluate opportunities to acquire open space parcels listed on the 2024 Open Space Ranking Results.
 - b. Pursue grant funding for acquisition of parcels on the priority list.
 - c. Work with developers to promote clustering of development and conservation easements.

3. Encourage the use of open space and recreational facilities in support of healthy lifestyles.
 - a. Work with School District to promote use of public recreation parcels and amenities.
 - b. Promote activation of trails.
 - c. Develop trailhead signage indicating trail distances to encourage use.
 - d. Educate residents about the benefits of regular activity.

In addition to the public meetings and community engagement undertaken during the development of the Open Space and Recreation Plan, the completed draft plan was posted online and made available for public comment. In accordance with the Municipal Land Use Law (40:55D-28) process of adopting or amending a master plan or component part thereof, the OSRP was presented at a Cherry Hill Planning Board meeting open to the public and ultimately adopted by the Cherry Hill Planning Board as an element of the Cherry Hill Master Plan.

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The primary intent of a municipal Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) is to identify existing open space and recreation facilities, establish goals and objectives, analyze needs and deficiencies, and provide a guide to conservation, preservation and acquisition of parks and open space, environmentally sensitive lands and greenways. The New Jersey Green Acres Program defines it as "... a local government's vision of open space and recreation. It should establish a philosophical and practical justification for the protection and preservation of open space and recreation opportunities. An OSRP provides a framework for implementation." The OSRP is a tool that provides direction in achieving a systematic and cost-efficient approach to open space preservation that meets both the passive and active recreation needs of the community.



Figure 1 - Barclay Farmstead

An OSRP also provides an opportunity to establish priorities across the Township through public participation and collection of data. Community involvement is important in determining locations of open space to be protected and in suggesting creative ways in which to attain and maintain identified parcels. Prioritizing locations based on data collection and public input will also ensure that the Township

acquires properties that provide the greatest benefit to the community based on an established set of goals and guidelines.

Providing open space is an identified goal of the State Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL). The stated purposes of the MLUL note the following open space goals:

- provide light, air, and open space (NJS 40:55D-2.c.); and
- provide sufficient space in appropriate locations for a variety of agricultural, residential, recreational, commercial and industrial uses and open space, both public and private, according to their respective environmental requirements in order to meet the needs of all New Jersey citizens (NJS 40:55D-2.g.); and
- promote the conservation of historic sites and districts, open space, energy resources and valuable natural resources...and to prevent urban sprawl and degradation of the environment through improper use of the land (NJS 40:55D-2.j.).

The creation of this OSRP will guide the Township in balancing land uses to ensure that these stated purposes of the MLUL are supported throughout Cherry Hill Township.

Cherry Hill Master Plan

While the Cherry Hill Master Plan update was adopted in 2018, it did not contain a new Open Space and Recreation Plan. This document is intended to replace and supersede the 2011 Open Space and Recreation Plan.

Regional and Local Setting

The Township of Cherry Hill, located in Southern New Jersey, is an inner-ring suburban community of the Philadelphia metropolitan area. It is the largest populated municipality in South Jersey, covering over 24 square miles, and home to approximately 77,000 residents, 28,600 homes, and over 4,000 businesses. It is traversed north to south by the New Jersey Turnpike and Interstate 295. These highways link Cherry Hill with other regions of the state, New York, and Delaware. Cherry Hill is traversed east to west by New Jersey State Highway (NJSH) Route 70 and NJSH Route 38, providing direct access to Philadelphia.

Cherry Hill is located in Planning Area 1 (PA 1), a Metropolitan Planning Area, in the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (SDRP). These areas are defined by their proximity to and the development influence of major metropolitan centers. Many of the communities in these areas are fully developed with scarce vacant land available. The PA 1 Planning Area is intended to provide for much of the state's future redevelopment; revitalize cities and towns; promote growth in compact forms; stabilize older suburbs; redesign areas of sprawl; and protect the character of existing stable communities. In regard to open space and recreation planning, the SDRP goals include conserving New Jersey's natural resources and systems, protecting the environment while preventing and cleaning up pollution, providing adequate public facilities at a reasonable cost, preserving and enhancing areas with historic, cultural, scenic open space and recreational value, and increasing energy efficiencies and reducing greenhouse gas emissions².

Land Use

There are 27,443 parcels of land on roughly 13,000 acres in the Township, which excludes roadways, highways, and other similar infrastructure. Single-family detached residential dwellings are the dominant land use type within the Township. Over 85% of parcels and 75% of total land area is classified as

² The New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan, March 1, 2001

residential (Class 2).³ The second largest amount of land is in the Institutional (IN) zone at 21.5%, which is likely considering the number of parcels in this zone that are schools, churches, parks, etc. that require large amounts of land. With 13,047 acres of land in the Township (excluding roadways) and a population of 77,315,⁴ this equates to 5.9 persons per acre. The 30,669 housing units in the Township result in an average of 2.3 units per acre.⁵ These values are generally consistent with other communities of similar character and size.

Population

Over a fifth of the Township (20.6%) consists of children under the age of 18; while more than a fifth of the Township (20.5%) consists of adults aged 65 and over.⁶ The Township's median age is 43.3 years.⁷ Almost a third of the Township's 28,650 households (29.4%) contain one or more people under 18 years old, with an average household size of 2.58 persons.⁸

The racial and ethnic composition of the Township has continued to diversify in recent years, while remaining predominantly white. The number of Asian residents, which had increased from just over 3% in 1980 to around 9% at the time of the preparation of the previous Open Space and Recreation Plan in 2011, now comprise 13.5% of the Township.⁹ Black and Hispanic or Latino populations have also continued to increase to 6.6% and 8.5%, respectively.¹⁰ The diversification of Cherry Hill is also reflected in the nearly quarter of households (23.9%) that speak a language other than English at home, an increase from 17.6% in 2011.

Impact on Plan

Land use development patterns, population size and demographics are factors which impact the goals and objectives of an Open Space and Recreation Plan. Criteria such as density, median age, lifestyles and desire for certain amenities are weighed against available open space, environmentally sensitive lands and natural resource preservation to shape the Township's priorities for the upcoming decade. The cost-benefit analysis of development versus land conservation and preservation are continuous considerations in a Township with increasing constraints on open space inventory. The benefits of parks and open space are well documented, as noted in *Figure 2*.

³ MOD-IV taxation data provided by the New Jersey Division of Taxation

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, 2023 American Community Survey 1-year Estimate, DP05 ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates

⁵ *ibid*

⁶ *ibid*

⁷ *ibid*

⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, 2023 American Community Survey 1-year Estimate, DP02 ACS Selected Social Characteristics in the United States

⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, 2023 American Community Survey 1-year Estimate, DP05 ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates

¹⁰ *ibid*

Park Benefits

Community Revitalization

Parks that serve as central walking, resting, and meeting places can revive failing or threatened commercial areas.

Renewal takes leadership, vision, and time; with these three ingredients, revitalization tends to attract more investment.

Community residents and the municipality, working together on a neighborhood park project, can turn around a distressed residential area.

Parks don't automatically lead to neighborhood revival; before investing, the municipality should make sure the relation of a park to its surrounding neighborhood will allow revitalization.

Green Infrastructure

Creating an interconnected system of parks and open space is manifestly more beneficial than creating parks in isolation.

Towns can use parks to help preserve essential ecological functions and to protect biodiversity.

When planned as part of a system of green infrastructure, parks can help shape urban form and buffer incompatible uses.

Towns can use parks to reduce public costs for stormwater management, flood control, transportation, and other forms of built infrastructure.

Safer Neighborhoods

Time spent in nature immediately adjacent to home helps relieve mental fatigue, reducing aggression.

Green residential spaces are gathering places where neighbors form social ties that produce stronger, safer neighborhoods.

Barren spaces are more frightening to people and are more crime prone than parks landscaped with greenery and open vistas.

To make the best use of greenery and open space, it must be positively incorporated into a community's design.

Children Learning

Parks offer children the daily benefits of direct experience with nature - the motivation to explore, discover, and learn about their world and to engage in health-promoting physical activity.

Parks offer children a sense of place, self-identity, and belonging as an antidote to social alienation, vandalism, and violence.

Parks engage children in informal, experiential learning through play and shared experiences with peers, laying the foundation for effective formal education.

Parks provide a valuable resource for closing the educational achievement gap in communities and offer a vehicle for children's participation in community development.

Public Health

Parks provide people with contact with nature, known to confer certain health benefits and enhance well-being.

Physical activity opportunities in parks help to increase fitness and reduce obesity.

Parks resources can mitigate climate, air, and water pollution impacts on public health.

Towns need to provide all types of parks, to provide their various citizen groups with a range of health benefits.

Promote Tourism

Parks provide sites for special events and festivals that attract tourists.

Parks provide sites for sports tournaments, which can be major sources of tourism and economic benefits.

Large parks with zoos, memorials, museums, cultural and heritage artifacts, and historical sites can attract tourists.

Parks with landscape planting and design that are recognized as "living works of art" can be tourist attractions.

Smart Growth

Parks have voter support to direct public funds toward growth management strategies.

Parks enhance mixed development and redevelopment strategies, offsetting higher density concerns with accessibility to greenspace.

Parks can both strengthen the urban core and protect the fringe from overdevelopment.

Economic Development

Real property values are positively affected.

Municipal revenues are increased.

Affluent retirees are attracted and retained.

Knowledge workers and talent are attracted to live and work.

Homebuyers are attracted to purchase homes.

Community Engagement

Parks are one of the quickest and most effective ways to build a sense of community and improve quality of life.

Parks provide places for people to connect and interact in a shared environment.

Parks channel positive community participation by getting diverse people to work together toward a shared vision.

Figure 2 - Park Benefits (Source: City Parks Forum - American Planning Association (APA))

POLICIES

Public Purpose

“ . . . accumulating evidence indicates that open space conservation is not an expense but an investment that produces important economic benefits.” Will Rogers, The Trust for Public Land¹¹

Open space is essential to the vitality, health and culture of our community. Open space serves as a way to preserve our connection with the natural world, provide tranquility, ensure the health and diversity of flora and fauna, and to help lessen pollution by absorbing contaminants from our air and water. Parks and open space provide social, economic, environmental, and health benefits essential to the quality of life and well-being of our community.

The multi-pronged benefits of parks and open space have been well documented across the nation. Property values increase, quality of life improves, and, in some cases, crime decreases due to close proximity to open, green spaces. Long term decreases in taxation may also be realized as land is conserved against future development that may eventually lead to the necessity for large infrastructure improvements. Open space provides natural stormwater management saving municipalities millions of dollars constructing stormwater retention facilities.¹²

The health benefits of open space are also integral to improving quality of life and combating the rising costs of health care in the United States. Access to parks is essential to increasing the physical activity of most Americans. Suburban patterns of development, auto oriented and sprawling, have had an adverse impact on the amount of physical activity most Americans engage in. The lack of, or unsafe, pedestrian and cycling facilities have led to the use of automobiles for every daily errand. Unsafe streets mean children are kept from walking or riding to schools and parks.

“Conversely, incorporating parks and greenways into communities can support increased exercise and healthier lifestyles. Parks, greenways, and trails make

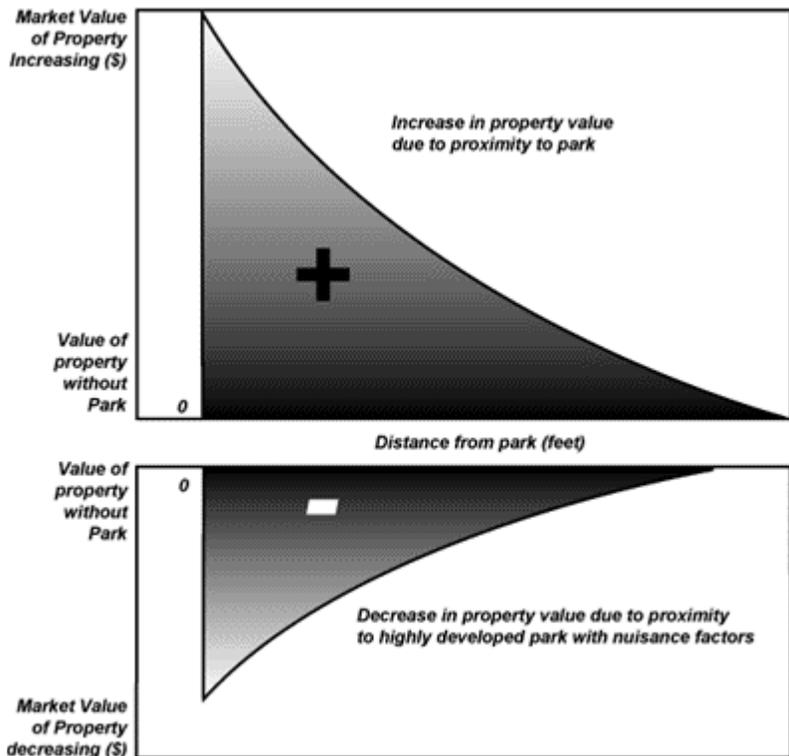


Figure 3 – Relationship of property values and proximity to parks

¹¹ Economic Benefits of Open Space, Miller Stephen, printed in The Benefits of Open Space, Hamilton, Leonard, PhD., Rutgers University; Great Swamp Watershed Association; 1997.

¹² Lerner, Steve and Poole William. Economic Benefits of Parks and Open Space. San Francisco: The Trust for Public Lands, 1999.

transportation corridors to shops, schools, and offices more attractive and pedestrian friendly. Greenways support dedicated exercise programs; incidental exercise; and healthy, human-powered transportation. To the extent that greenways decrease the number of cars on the road, they reduce air pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and the accidents and stress that are by-products of driving.”¹³

The importance of open space and parks for our economy, health and environment cannot and should not be dismissed and should be incorporated into all planning and long-term visioning plans created by the Township.

Since the development of the 2011 plan, the Township has supported specific policies and priorities in furtherance of open space and recreation opportunities, including a newly adopted tree ordinance, open space tax assessment, partnership with the Cherry Hill Advisory Environmental Board, an updated stormwater management ordinance and collaboration with Camden County on several initiatives.

Cherry Hill Advisory Environmental Board

The Cherry Hill Advisory Environmental Board (CHAEB) is a voluntary advisory board dedicated to protecting and improving the natural environment for all Cherry Hill residents. The Board researches and develops strategies and plans geared towards protecting, improving and utilizing the Township’s natural resources.

Cherry Hill Township Open Space Assessment

The Open Space Assessment, consisting of one cent of every one hundred dollars of property taxes, was passed by referendum in 2000. A dedicated open space fund has enabled Cherry Hill Township to acquire five of thirteen priority sites established by the Cherry Hill Advisory Environmental Board and maintain existing sites throughout the Township.

Camden County Open Space Preservation Trust Fund

The Camden County Open Space Preservation Trust Fund was established in 1998 by referendum. The trust fund is overseen by the Camden County Open Space Preservation Trust Fund Advisory Committee, which was “established for purposes of ensuring that our children, and their children, will have the benefit of enjoying the remaining open space that exists in Camden County for years to come.”¹⁴ Since 1998, the Trust Fund, which raises nearly \$2 million per year, has preserved 1,174.55 acres in over 13 municipalities.

The Trust Fund has been used to preserve over 167 acres of land in Cherry Hill Township consisting of the following:

1. Browning Lane (433.01/8 & 9), 42 acres
2. Bridge Hollow (513.51/1 & 2, Cropwell Road), 38.66 acres
3. Brunetti Tract (263.01/1.02 & 4, Lenape Road & 1700 Overbrook Drive), 11.70 acres
4. Hillman Schoolhouse (526.07/1 & 5, 1304 Kresson Road), 4.21 acres
5. Jonathan Katz Property (463.09/1, 1600 Frontage Road), 15.18 acres
6. Springhouse Farm (510.02/1, Springdale Road), 44.1 acres
7. Willow Way (404.02/15, Rear of Willow Way), 0.37 acres
8. Zarinnia Property (528.01/3, 1798 Berlin Road), 1.23 acres
9. Brick-Salvage (282.01/33, Delwood Road / Church Road), 5.25 acres
10. Masonic Lodge (431.16/7, Haddonfield-Berlin Road), 4.34 acres

¹³ Gies, Erica. The Health Benefits of Parks; How Parks Help Keep Americans and Their Communities Fit and Healthy. San Francisco: The Trust for Public Lands, 2007.

¹⁴ [Open Space & Farmland Preservation | Camden County, NJ](#)

Camden County Open Space and Farmland Preservation Plan

The Camden County Open Space and Farmland Preservation Plan, prepared by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, was adopted in May of 2004. The plan developed four objectives:

1. To support the development of a public system of open space which forever preserves the valued environmental, cultural, historic and scenic features of the County and provides sufficient lands to accommodate a variety of active and passive recreational activities.
2. To aim high by identifying all the lands that should possibly be preserved to meet the County's overall goal, even if the complete vision may not be achievable due to competing interests and funding limitations.
3. To prioritize which areas of the proposed system need attention first, based on key factors in meeting the County's goals, as well as the measured threat of conversion to other uses.
4. To offer a multi-pronged approach to preserving the system, since one size does not fit all, and no single entity can do it all.¹⁵

In order to achieve these goals a Five-Point Action Plan was created:

1. Acquire large remaining open space lands in highly threatened areas first.
2. Invest in open space enhancement in densely populated areas to promote urban livability.
3. Formalized proposed greenways through planning and negotiations.
4. Offer subsidized funding for municipal open space and greenway planning through the County Open Space Trust Fund.
5. Develop facilities in recently acquired County parks, and market them to County residents.

This plan has instigated action since its adoption. From lands purchased with funds from the Preservation Trust and through partnership with Camden County, Cherry Hill Township is committed to working towards these same goals and objectives.

Camden County Open Space Preservation Trust Fund Advisory Committee

The Camden County Open Space Advisory Committee, created in 1998, has followed through with the five-point action plan developed in the 2004 Open Space and Farmland Preservation Plan, acquiring open space across the County and continually working with non-profit groups like Camden Greenways, Inc. and Trust for Public Land to continue to identify unique and collaborative projects to link open space across Camden County and, one day, across the state. Since the creation of the 2004 Plan, the County has succeeded in reaching its goal of 2,000 acres of preserved land in Camden County.

NJ Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, 2023-2027

The New Jersey Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is prepared every five years by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Green Acres Program to maintain New Jersey's eligibility to receive funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, administered by the National Park Service. The SCORP serves as a framework for open space and recreation planning in the State. The 2023-2027 Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan is the most recently published version.

The 2023-2027 SCORP includes the following goals:

1. To assess the amount of open space for current and future public recreational use and for the conservation of natural resources important to protecting New Jersey's biodiversity and quality of life;

¹⁵ Camden County Open Space and Farmland Preservation Plan, May 2004, prepared by Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

2. To provide close-to-home park and recreation opportunities for residents statewide;
3. To present current information on the supply and demand for recreation and open space in New Jersey;
4. To implement open space and recreation planning policies and projects that are consistent with the State's environmental missions and goals;
5. To encourage open space and recreation planning by local governments and conservation organizations; and
6. To effectively use funds from the Garden State Preservation Trust, LWCF, Forest Legacy Program, and other sources of funding which may become available.

The 2023 SCORP is also guided by the following principles:

1. Expanding high-quality, open space and recreational opportunities for all New Jersey residents and visitors;
2. Enhancing climate resilience and sustainability through acquisition and development of open and green space;
3. Empowering communities through investments in ecotourism and outdoor recreation;
4. Embracing the role of technology in conservation and outdoor recreation;
5. Furthering equity and environmental justice through outdoor recreation; and
6. Continuing commitments to stewardship and the conservation and restoration of biodiversity.

The principles outlined in the SCORP serve as a vision for moving open space, recreation and conservation forward for future generations. Reflecting the SCORP's focus on equity, environmental justice and climate resiliency, the Township recognizes the importance of incorporating these principles into open space, conservation and recreation planning. Meeting the needs of all residents, including those in overburdened communities, will continue throughout all planning processes, to ensure inclusive, high-quality recreational and open space opportunities for all.

As with all plans identified above, the Cherry Hill Open Space and Recreation Plan seeks to maintain continuity in goals and objectives and be guided by the goals set forth by State and County plans.

RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

Linkages and Greenways

Greenways are an interconnected system of open space parcels managed for recreation and conservation purposes. Greenways often follow land or water features and can connect a multitude of community assets such as historic sites, parks, nature reserves, and urban centers. The benefits of greenways are numerous. They provide a safe environment for active recreational endeavors that promote healthy living, provide habitat corridors, preserve historic sites and provide a community building asset that spans multiple municipalities. Proximity to open space features like greenways has even been shown to increase property values.¹⁶

The River to Bay Greenway is an initiative started in 2001 to link the Delaware River to Barnegat Bay through a multi-use recreation route that spans 70 miles through southern New Jersey (Camden,

¹⁶ National Trails Training Partnership, Benefits of Trails and Greenways

Burlington, and Ocean counties).¹⁷ Cherry Hill is a key linkage in this Greenway. Two “spines” are proposed to run through the Township, Spine A and B. Spine A generally follows the North Branch of the Cooper River, while Spine B encompasses the Cooper River through the Woodcrest section of the Township. In the past few years, the Trust for Public Land has helped to increase local funding for elsewhere in the County. Prior municipal planning studies, such as the 2007 Cherry Hill Township Master Plan Reexamination Report, identified the need for the Township to consider acquisition of parcels identified in the River to Bay Greenway, as a significant number of parcels in Cherry Hill provide a key link in the completion of the Greenway.

The Camden County Link is a planned 34-mile multi-use, off-road trail designed to serve as a primary route for a County-wide trail network. The County completed a feasibility study in 2017, which determined the likely trail locations throughout a number of municipalities in Camden County, which will ultimately connect the Ben Franklin Bridge in Camden City to the Gloucester County line in Winslow Township. Municipalities should consider building bike and pedestrian connections to the Link where possible, to build out a wider trail network in Camden County and beyond. The Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) supports the 750-mile Greater Philadelphia Circuit Trail network connecting the nine (9) counties in New Jersey and Pennsylvania under DVRPC jurisdiction. With Philadelphia as the central spoke in the network, DVRPC Circuit Trails continue into Cherry Hill along the Cooper River, with further trail expansion in progress and planned in surrounding communities.

In considering future locations of recreation facilities, both passive and active, Cherry Hill Township intends to engage neighboring communities in regard to shared facilities and linking open space parcels across municipal boundaries.

¹⁷ [River to Bay Greenway - Our Work in NJ \(tpl.org\)](http://www.tpl.org)



Figure 4 - DVRPC Circuit Trails (Region)

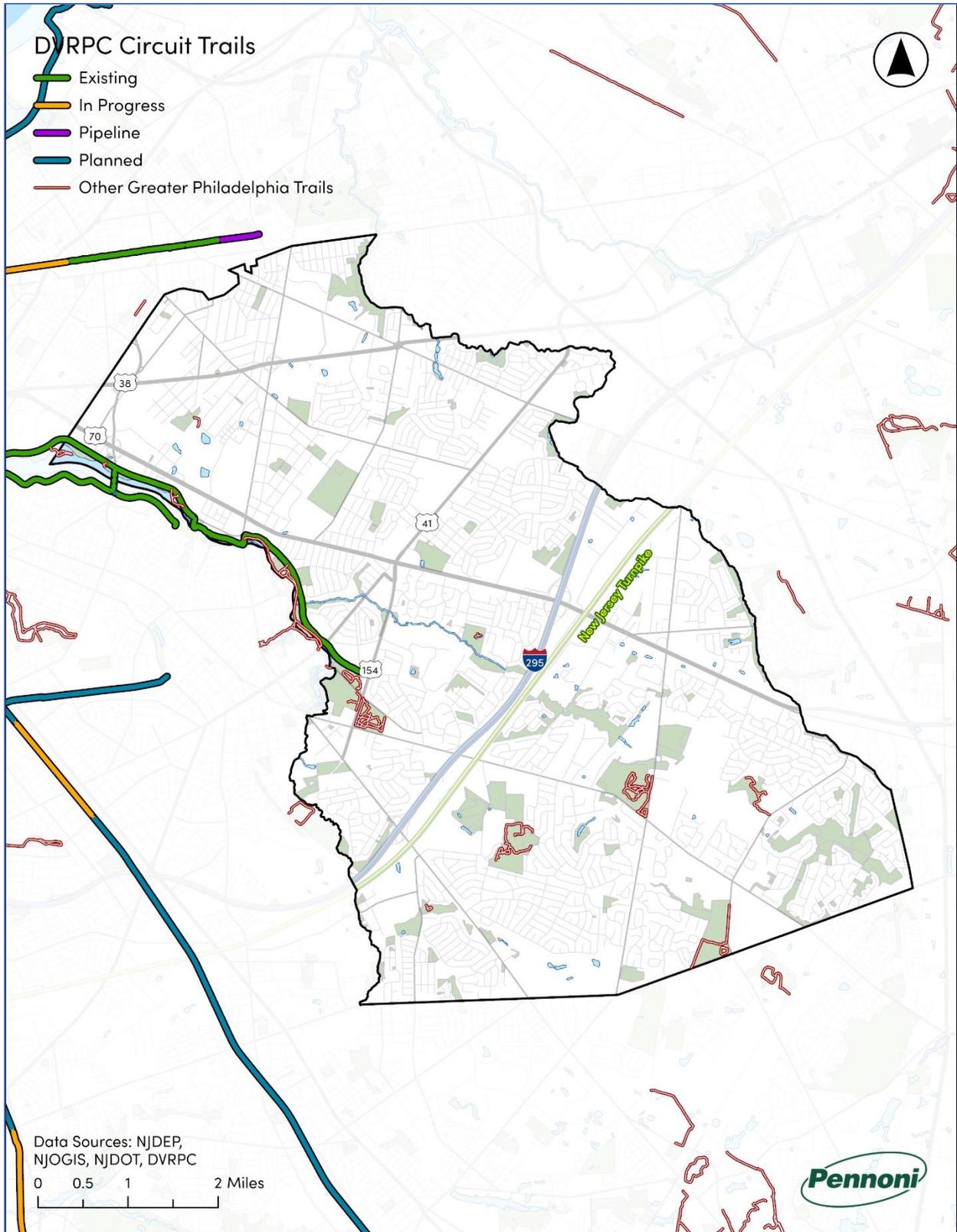


Figure 5 - DVRPC Circuit Trails (Township) Inset

Streams and Waterways

Cherry Hill is located within the Delaware River Basin, which covers parts of four states – New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware. Although the watershed covers one percent of the U.S., it supplies water to 10 percent of the nation’s population. In addition to the large cities of Philadelphia and New York City, Cherry Hill also obtains its water from the headwaters of the Delaware River. Further subdivided into areas for NJDEP planning purposes, Cherry Hill is located within the Lower Delaware Water Management Area.

The Cooper River serves as the Township boundary with Haddon Township and Haddonfield Borough to the southeast. The river is 16 miles in length and empties into the Delaware River. The North Branch of the Cooper River flows northwest through Cherry Hill. Other large tributaries include the South Branch of the Pennsauken Creek, Woodcrest Creek and Tindale Run, as well as Evans Pond and Wallworth Lake.

The Pennsauken Creek and the Cooper River are the basis of the two watersheds in Cherry Hill. A watershed is the area of land that drains into a body of water such as a river, lake, stream or bay separated from other systems by high points in the area such as hills or slopes. The Cooper River watershed is 40 square miles in size and drains from 72 percent of the Township. The North Branch of the Pennsauken Creek is 33 square miles and covers the remaining 28 percent. There are six sub-watersheds within the Township, and the Cooper River North Branch (below Springdale Road) is centrally located almost completely within Cherry Hill.

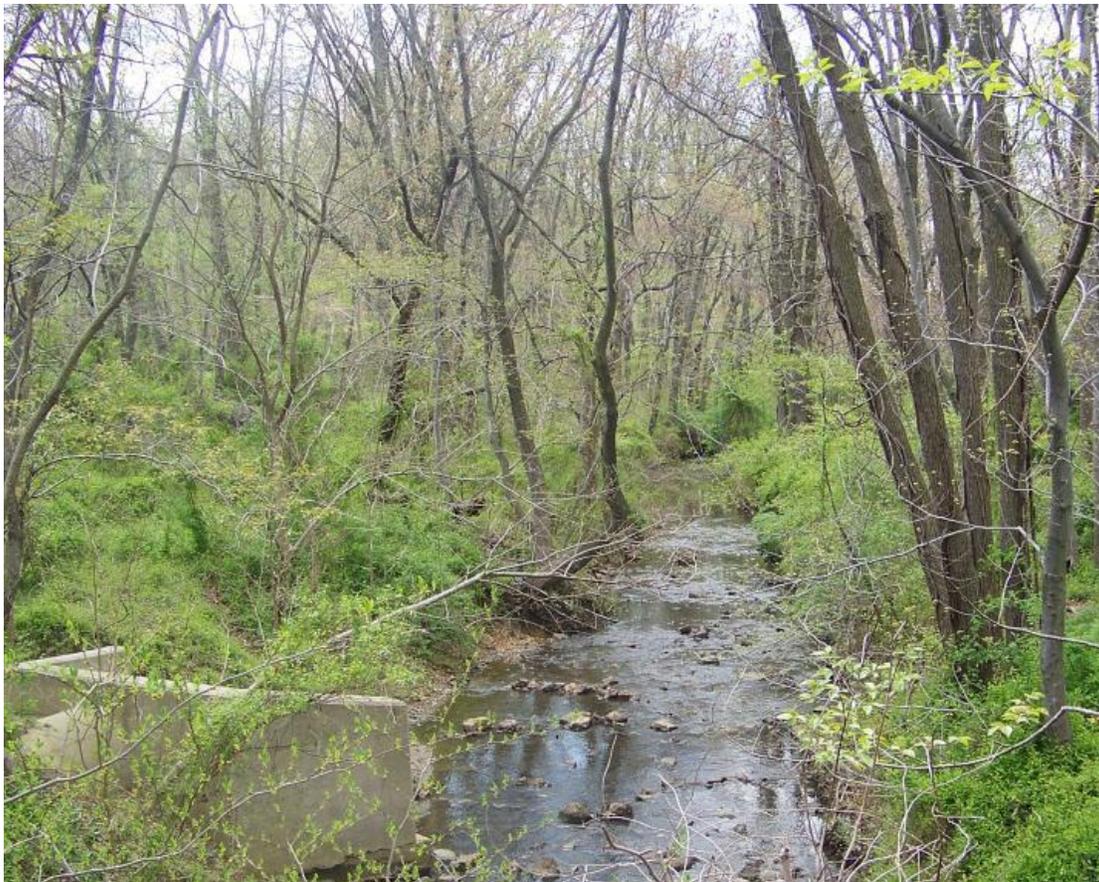


Figure 6 - Mill Creek, Kenilworth Neighborhood.

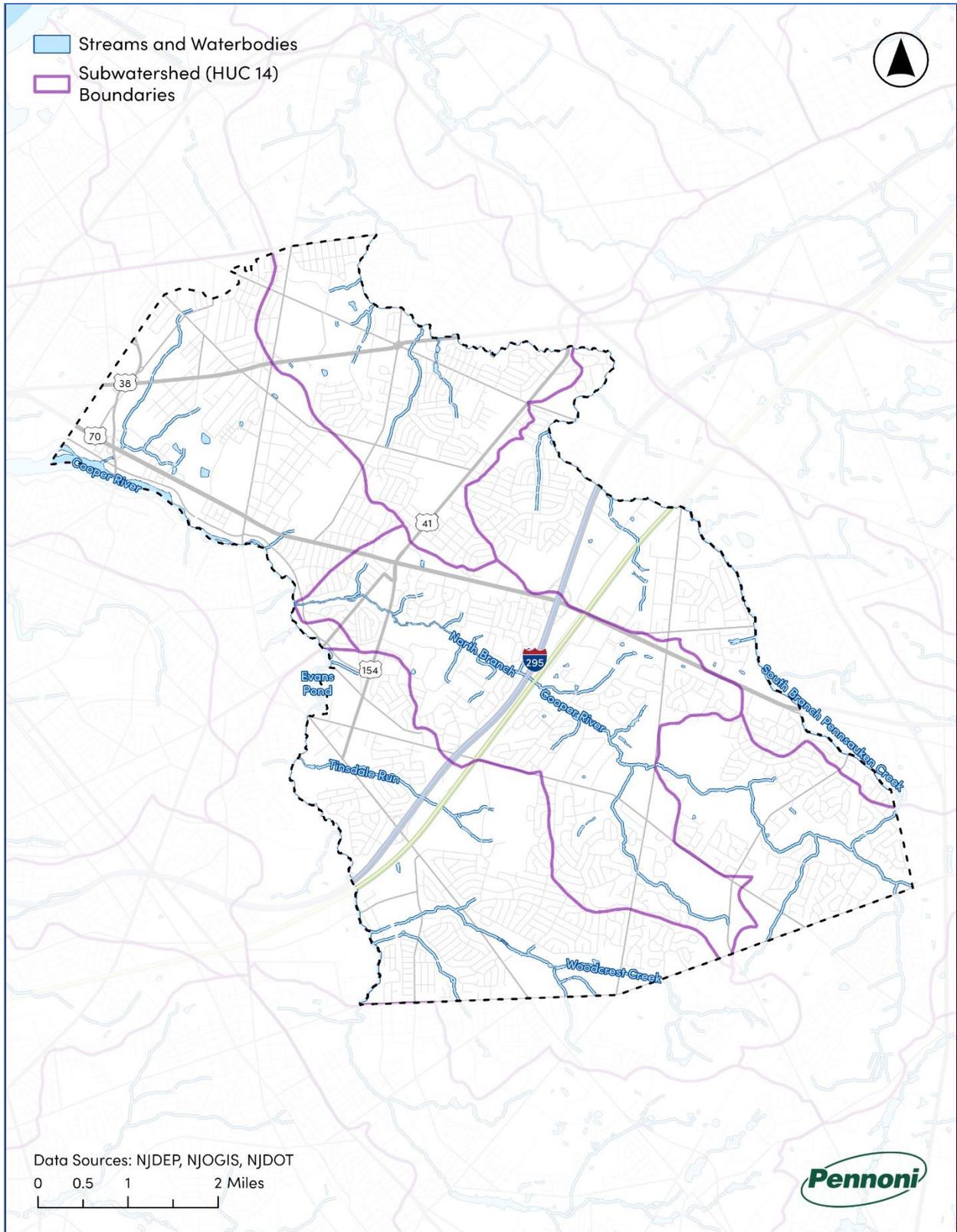


Figure 7 - Township Streams & Waterways

The Township has many riparian corridors that run east to west and eventually empty into the Delaware River. Riparian corridors are narrow strips of land located along streams and rivers that provide environmental benefits. A natural riparian corridor provides the ability to decontaminate water as it drains towards larger watercourses. Preserving these corridors and providing limited access for residents should be encouraged through easements, deed restrictions, land purchases and development reviews.

There are approximately 1,567 acres of flood-prone areas in Cherry Hill Township; however, they range in the likelihood of flood events as defined below:

- “A” Flood Zones - Areas with a 1% annual chance of flooding and a 26% chance of flooding over the life of a 30-year mortgage, also known as a 100-year flood zone or floodplain. Because detailed analyses are not performed for such areas, no depths or base flood elevations are shown within these zones. Flood insurance is required in this zone.
- “AE” Flood Zones - Areas with a 1% annual chance of flooding and a 26% chance of flooding over the life of a 30-year mortgage. In most instances, base flood elevations derived from detailed analyses are shown at selected intervals within these zones. Flood insurance is required in this zone.
- 0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard – includes areas with a 0.2% chance of flooding, also known as a 500-year flood zone or floodplain. This area is slightly more susceptible to flooding than the “X” flood zone but does not require flood insurance.
- “X” Flood Zones - Areas outside the 1% annual chance floodplain, areas of 1% annual chance sheet-flow flooding where average depths are less than one foot, areas of 1% annual chance stream flooding where the contributing drainage area is less than one square mile, or areas protected from the 1% annual chance flood by levees. No base-flood elevations or depths are shown within this zone. Insurance purchase is not required in these zones.

Areas within the “A” and “AE” flood zones may have severe floods from spring thaws or above average spring rains. These areas tend to occur where there are alluvial soils and where the seasonal high-water table is within one foot of the ground surface. Not all of these flood prone areas are adjacent to stream corridors; however, FEMA does not typically recognize flood prone areas outside of existing stream corridors. These areas can be defined by poorly drained soils and high seasonal water tables.

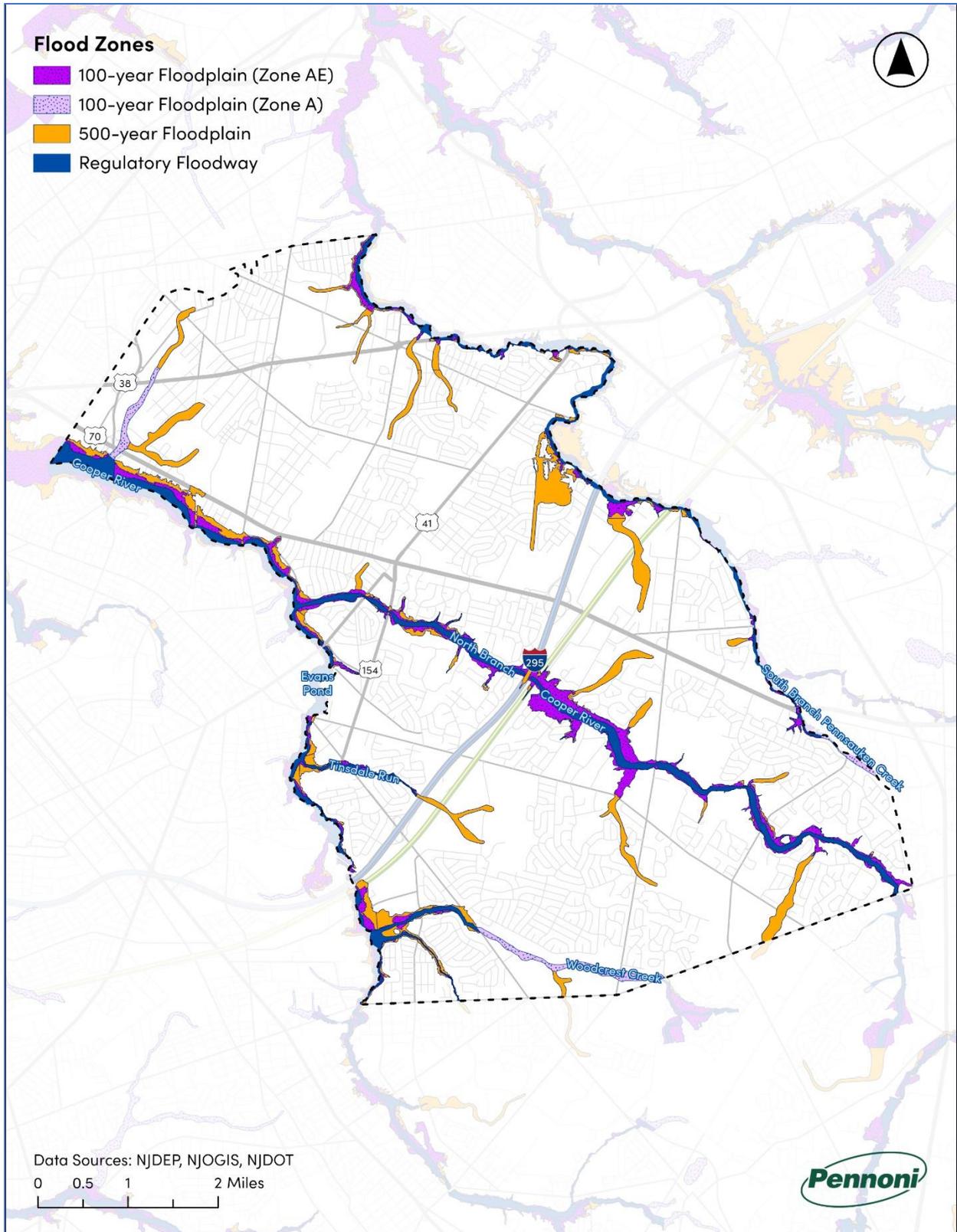


Figure 8 - Township Flood Zones

Soils

The soils in a majority of the Township are generally clay-like and therefore difficult for stormwater percolation. The soils tend to become sandier towards the Pine Barren area, further south and east in the Township. There are approximately 43 types of soils in the Township, with the most common being Freehold-Downer-Urban Land Complex, which are common in suburban areas with residential land uses.

A soil association is a landscape that has a distinctive proportional pattern of soils, consisting of one or more major soil types and at least one minor type¹⁸. Five soil associations dominate in Cherry Hill:

- Howell-Urban Land Association: Mainly present along the western side of the Township, near Merchantville and Pennsauken, closest to the Delaware River. The brown silty and clayey soils are common in gently sloping areas. It has a slow permeability rate and consequential high-water table. It is acidic in nature, which may produce algae growth when adjacent to streams.
- Freehold-Homdel-Collington: Common along the Cooper River and in the Kingston Estates and Barclay Farms area. It is from greensand and varies from gently to strongly sloping in nature. These soils are fertile and slow to moderately permeable. The Freehold-Collington soils are well drained, while Holmdel soils are well to poorly-drained with a seasonal high-water table.
- Marlton-Kresson Association: A narrow, wavy band of soils that are olive clay-like with varying slopes. Traditionally harboring fertilizing material, they are fertile despite their high content of clay. The Marlton soils drain better than the Kresson soils.
- Westphalia-Nixonton-Barclay Association: More present along the eastern edge of the Township Generally consist of fine sandy soils with varying slopes; they are present in a wide band parallel to the Delaware River. The topsoil is subject to quick permeability, slowing at subsurface levels making it subject to erosion.
- Muck-Alluvial Association: Subject to flooding due to their consistent location adjacent to the Cooper River and its tributaries. Often unbuildable due to a high-water table and flood hazards. They are common in parks and open space.



The mission of the Camden County Soil Conservation District is to conserve the natural resources for the citizens of Camden County, and be recognized leaders in resource conservation by providing technical assistance, conservation education, watershed planning and effective regulatory enforcement.

Agricultural Lands

While Cherry Hill was originally an agrarian community, very few acres of large-scale agricultural land remain. However, much of the Township is still comprised of fertile soils good for the backyard gardener or localized neighborhood gardens.

¹⁸ Camden County Soil Survey Series, 1961, No. 42

Cherry Hill Township facilitates Plant-A-Patch, a community gardening program at the Barclay Farmstead. Each season (April - October), gardeners maintain and harvest their own garden plots on original farm fields. The program also features an annual orientation lecture and the popular Harvest Dinner, held each August. The Township provides water hook-ups and free leaf compost. Gardeners are responsible for maintaining their individual plots, as outlined in the Plant-A-Patch Memo of Understanding, received upon registration.

Springdale Farm is a large, operating farm in the Township, located south of Route 70 on Springdale Road.



Alan Ebert purchased the farm in 1949 and the farm and market continues to be operated by his family. Springdale Farm provides a look back in history to the agrarian roots of the Township and a look into the future as more communities begin to embrace local agriculture to support environmental sustainability.

In 2024, the Township completed the purchase of Holly Ravine Farm, with a goal to preserve the farming legacy of the Gilmour Family. Subsequently, the Township amended the Zoning Ordinance to adopt an Agricultural-Horticultural Commercial (AHC) Overlay Zone at the Holly Ravine Farm, with the intention to maintain it as open space and allow agriculture as a permitted use.

Figure 9 - Barclay Farmstead Plant-a-Patch

Historic Sites

In 1997 the Township utilized Community Development Block Grant funds to document existing structures constructed before 1931 that are still standing and identify which of those structures and districts are deemed historic and worthy of preservation. The survey identifies over 600 existing properties in the Township constructed before 1931. Among these, the survey identified thirty-eight (38) pre-1900 and thirteen (13) post-1900 properties potentially eligible for the State and National Register of Historic Places, a number of historically significant industrial structures and sites, five historic cemeteries and grave sites and several transportation structures and sites of historical or archeological significance. The survey also identifies six (6) potential historic districts based on significant groupings of historic homes. Historic sites which also contain agricultural and/or open space components also present future opportunities for preservation.



Figure 10 – Top: Croft Farm (c. 1700's) and Bottom: Barclay Farm (c. 1816)

Open Space and Land Use Development

Given the historic development patterns of Cherry Hill, much of the Township is developed, making conservation of open space more challenging. Open space and land use development are linked by consideration of community objectives for conservation and preservation, including open space which buffers or defines developed areas, open space which preserves scenic or distinctive landscape features, and open space with development-limiting characteristics such as floodplains and steep slopes.

In consideration of these community objectives, Township ordinance requires all new non-residential development in the Township meet a 25% open space requirement. Where possible, the Township requests this open space to be contiguous with existing open space to provide for larger tracts of conserved land. The Township's stream buffer overlay zone also limits development in sensitive stream corridors by limiting activity within 75 feet of all perennial and intermittent streams, lakes and ponds within the Township. Consideration should be given to requiring all new development along stream corridors to enter into conservation easements with the Township that preserves the 75-foot stream buffer (if the property boundary ends at the stream) or the 150 feet corridor (if the entire stream traverses the property). The Township may also wish to consider identifying parcels that abut streams and other spaces to place conservation easements, thereby creating opportunity to create greenway linkages for pedestrians and cyclists.

"The vast majority of residential parcels within the Township (74%) are within 0.25 miles of a park while 99% of residential parcels are within 0.5 miles of a park."

Public Access

While a majority of parks in the Township are serviced by parking areas, the primary mode of access to most parks in the Township, considering that most parks are neighborhood or mini-parks, is by foot. The map below shows park locations and the residential parcels (property classification 2 and 4C) serviced by those parks. The buffers around the park locations are 0.25 miles and 0.5 miles, the likely distance a person will walk to access a park. As the map illustrates, the vast majority of residential parcels within the Township (74%) are within 0.25 miles of a park while 99% of residential parcels are within 0.5 miles of a park.

As noted above, a majority of parks in the Township are serviced by parking areas. However, most of the parking areas are small, in need of improvements such as re-grading or paving, and, in some locations, are a significant distance from the active recreation area of the park. Parks without parking areas are serviced by on-street parking. Most undeveloped open space areas suitable for passive recreation have no parking facilities by design, but are still accessible for bicyclists and pedestrians

Park Access

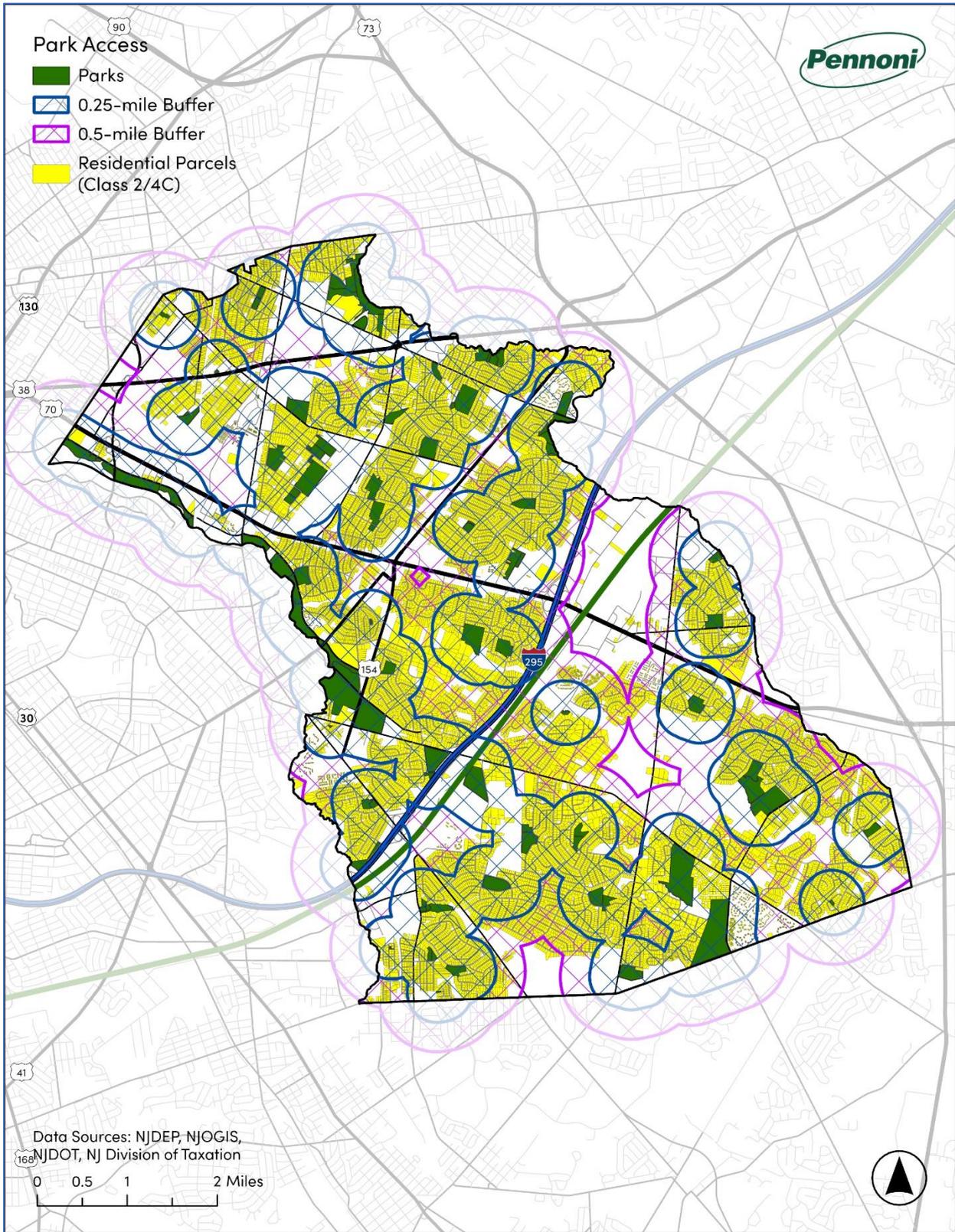


Figure 11 - Park Access

Parking Availability

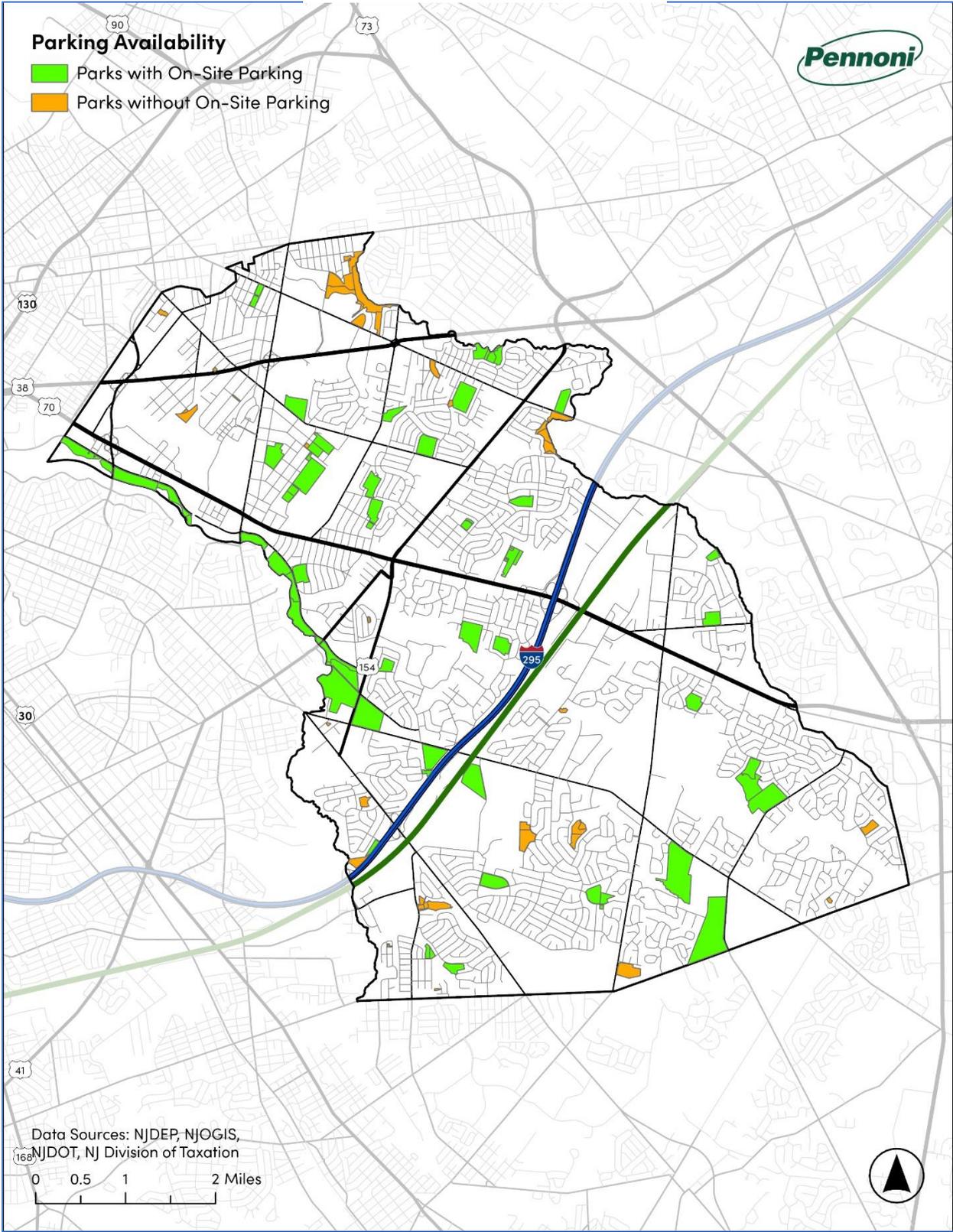


Figure 12 - Parking Availability

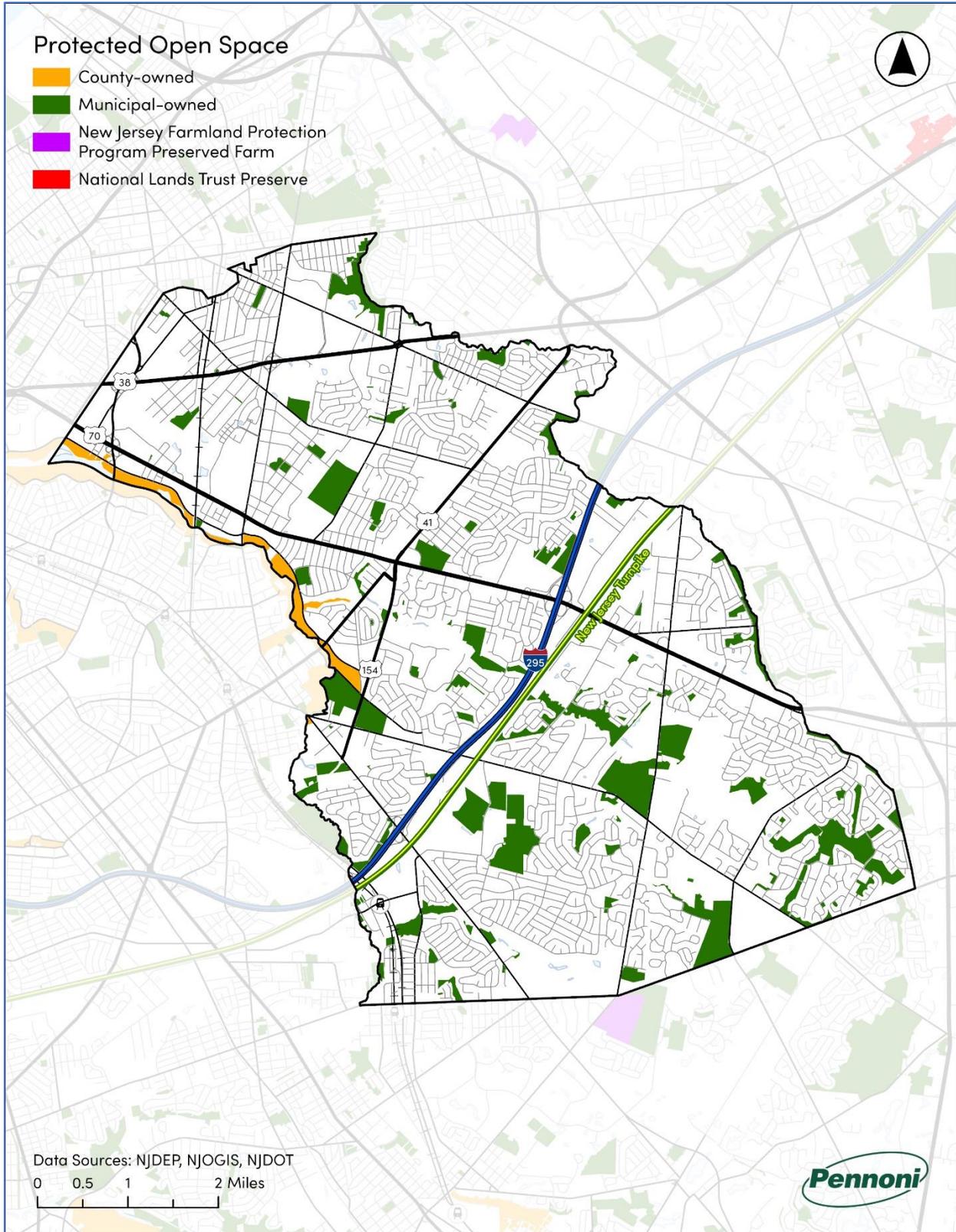


Figure 13 - Protected Open Space

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION GOALS

Public Input

The Green Acres Program identifies the need to involve the public in creating the goals, policies and action items included in the OSRP. To accomplish this, the Township of Cherry Hill held two public meetings noticed in the local newspaper, on the Township website and social media pages, with flyers posted on public bulletin boards and at other public meetings.

The first meeting was held on Wednesday, June 12, 2024, at the Cherry Hill Library. Approximately 20 people were in attendance including representatives from the Township and Cherry Hill residents. All those in attendance at the meeting clearly recognized the Township's obligation, responsibility and interest in preserving open space and providing recreation opportunities throughout the Township. This meeting introduced the plan update to attendees and solicited input into development of goals.

The second public meeting was held on Tuesday, July 9, 2024 at the Township Building and had approximately 50 people in attendance. The Mayor spoke at the beginning of the meeting on the intent and purpose of the OSRP and to answer questions from the community. A presentation was given that summarized the background of the project, demographics, the project scope, goals and objectives, and a summary of feedback from the first public meeting.

A public survey also went live on July 9th with paper copies and a QR code provided at the meeting which continued to be available on the Township website for 30 days. Over 170 residents responded to the survey. Results of the survey have been summarized in this section of the report. Feedback from the meetings resulted in the refinement of goals and objectives of the upcoming plan, developed within the following three primary areas: Preservation, Improvement, and Health & Education.

In addition to the public meetings, the completed draft plan was posted online upon completion, made available for public comment and presented at a Cherry Hill Planning Board meeting open to the public. Upon receipt of public comment at the Planning Board meeting, the OSRP will be adopted by the Board as part of the Cherry Hill Master Plan.

Public Meeting and Survey Feedback

Data from the two public meetings and the survey are included in the appendix, with any personal information redacted. The following is a summary, grouped into passive and active recreation and aligned with the goals of this plan: Preservation, Improvements, and Health and Education. Any relevant demographic information has also been included in this summary.

In the community survey, people were asked to rank what they considered to be the highest priority between the three goal categories. Respondents ranked "Preservation" the highest priority, followed by "Improvements" and then "Health and Education". Then each objective within each goal category was also ranked. Respondent satisfaction with how the Township is currently meeting each goal was asked. The results of this exercise are shown in charts below.

Preservation Goals Feedback

The objectives developed for Preservation are as follows: to preserve open space for conservation and recreation, to preserve environmentally sensitive areas, to preserve and enhance greenways, and to balance conservation with economic development. These were ranked as seen in the chart below, with

conservation and recreation as the top priority, followed by protect environmentally sensitive areas, enhancing greenways, and balancing environmental conservation with economic development.

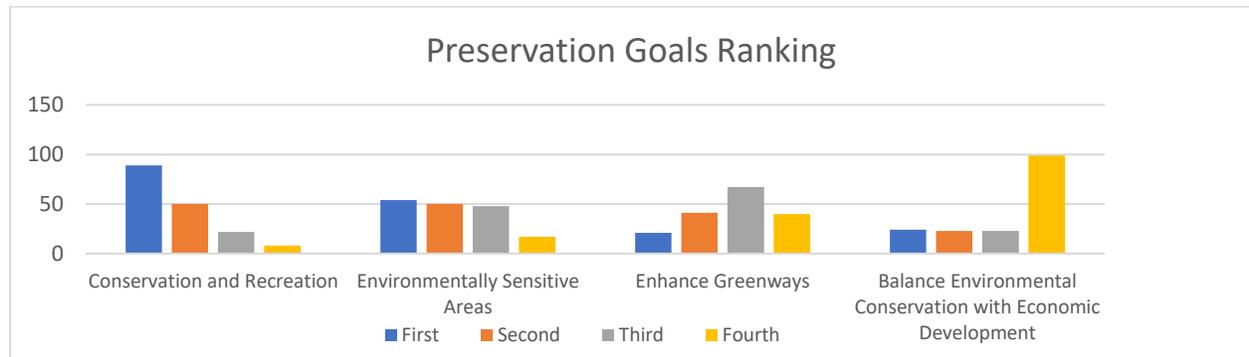


Figure 14 – Preservation Goals Ranking

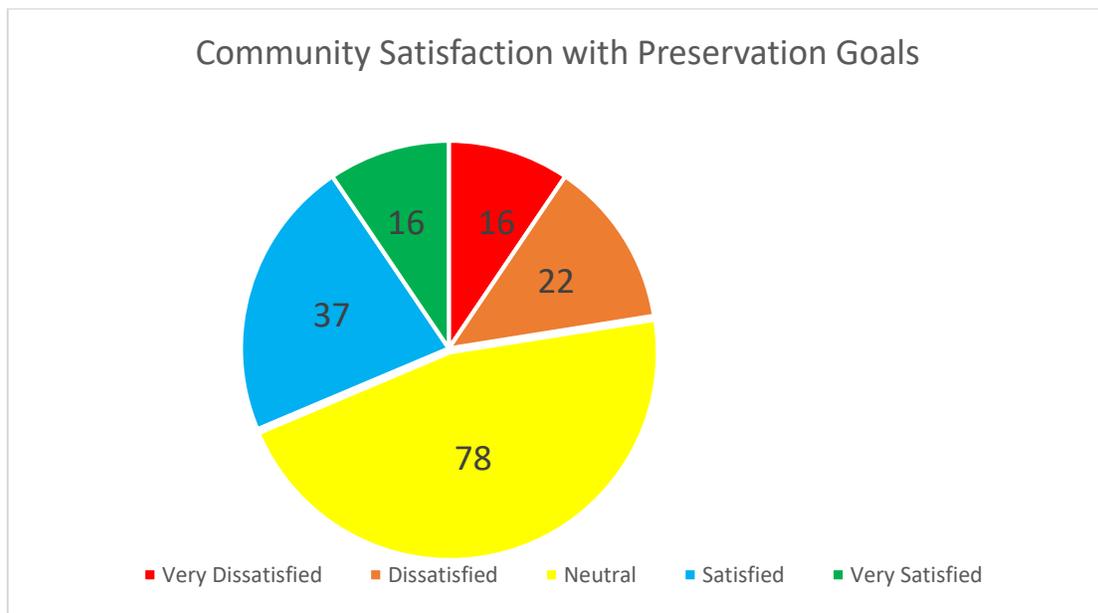


Figure 15 – Community Satisfaction with Preservation Goals

When asked about their satisfaction with how the Township is currently meeting its goals for preservation, 77% of respondents responded positively. Approximately 22% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with how the Township is currently meeting the preservation goals.

For the Preservation goal category, it was clear that protecting open space is a major priority to the public. Prioritizing the preservation of open space was one of the more common comments received during the public input process. Generally, this category applies to passive open space, and how to improve natural features at active recreation facilities, as applicable. The overall message received was to protect and enhance existing open space while pursuing opportunities for further preservation.

The following comments were received from the public during the survey process:

- Prioritize the protection of open space
- Establish gateways to the township through open space
- More requirements for open space within and adjacent to commercial areas
- Contiguous open space isn't always necessary
- Conversion of excess parking lots to open green space
- Improve tree diversity
- Brownfields revitalization (gas stations)
- Use and improve zoning to enforce buffer zones and protect delicate natural habitats
- Minimize unnecessary illumination
- Improve maintenance of existing parks and upgrade playgrounds before creating more parks
- Utilize underdeveloped and vacant parcels to develop parks and recreational spaces
- Increase planting of trees in parks and along streets in parks
- Honoring indigenous culture in parks
- Dark skies friendly lighting in parks

Improvement Goals Feedback

The objectives developed for Improvements are as follows: improve the existing open space system and provide adequate passive and active recreation opportunities for all ages, improve maintenance and maximize the use of existing recreation facilities, and improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout the township. These objectives were ranked as seen in the chart below, with existing open space and provide passive and active recreation for all ages as the top priority, followed by bicycle and pedestrian facilities as the second priority, and maintenance and maximizing the use of existing recreation facilities as the third priority.

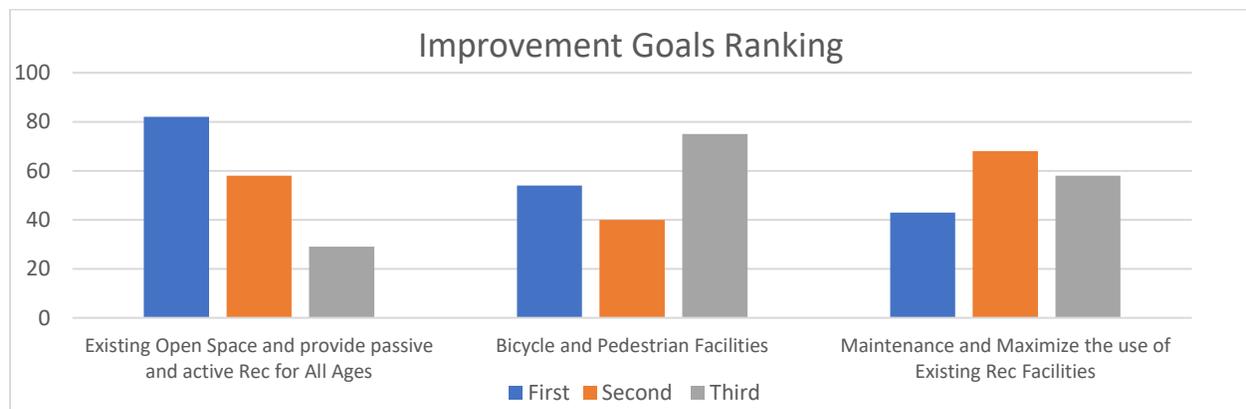


Figure 16 – Improvement Goals Ranking

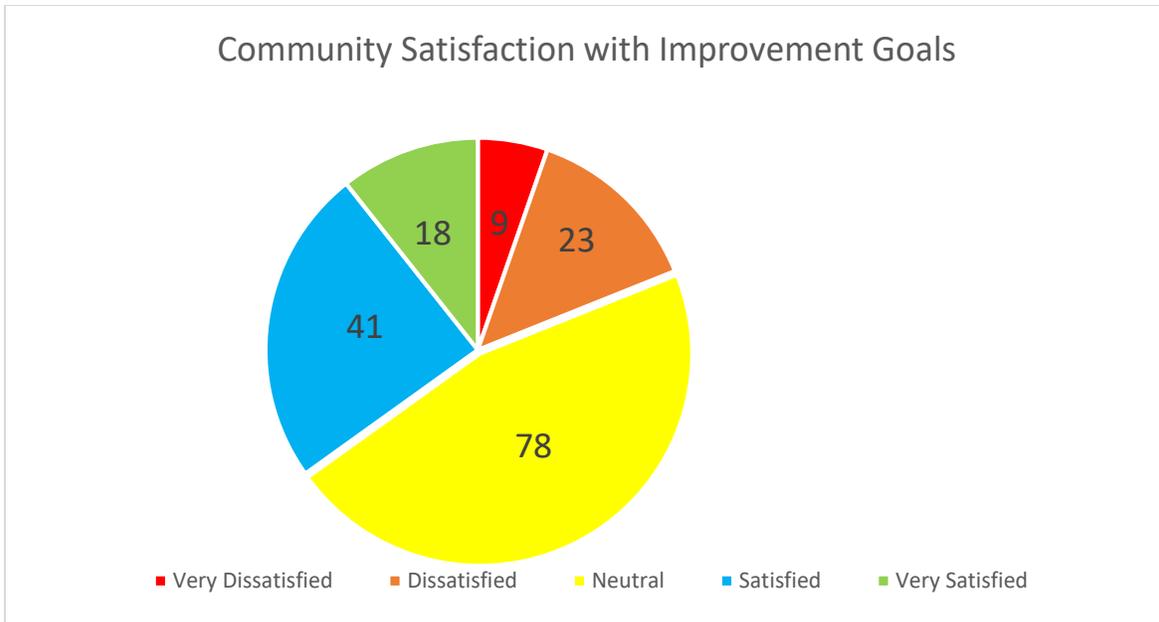


Figure 17 – Community Satisfaction with Improvement Goals

When asked about their satisfaction with how the Township is currently meeting its goals for improvement, 81% of respondents responded favorably, while 19% expressed dissatisfaction.

The Improvements goal category comments were broken into active and passive recreation facilities and improvements as well as some additional comments about access and safety. A wide variety of active recreational facilities were requested, as shown below. Residents would like to see more shaded, natural areas at their parks and for natural areas to be kept for the express enjoyment of passive recreation. Pedestrian and cyclist safety were also frequently mentioned, particularly in and around parks and at key crossings from neighborhoods to access parks. The addition of parks, especially pocket parks, throughout the township was also commonly requested.

The following comments were received from the public during the survey process:

- Active recreation facilities and improvements:
 - Dog parks
 - Pickleball courts with consideration of noise pollution and nets added at the Lion’s Den
 - Splash pads
 - Disc golf
 - Tennis courts
 - Skate/bike park
 - Outdoor obstacle course
 - Indoor skating rink
 - Indoor and outdoor township pools
 - Climbing walls
 - Batting cages
 - Handball courts
 - Walking labyrinth

- A full use recreation and community center with programming for all ages
- A senior center with activities
- An outdoor entertainment venue that can be used for events and concerts
- More recreation opportunities along Cooper River
- Better maintained ball fields
- Permanent restroom facilities, especially at DeCou Sports Complex
- Playground improvements including upgrading equipment, improving accessibility, more play elements to encourage physical activity such as climbing structures
- Improve the fence at Lion's Den
- Potential acquisition of the Cherry Hill Racetrack gatehouse
- Passive recreation facilities and improvements:
 - Greenways connecting natural areas and supporting wildlife and woodlands
 - Botanical garden
 - More shade at parks
 - Recreation improvements: more paved accessible walkways, wider more accessible trails, and better trail maintenance
 - Park amenities: public restrooms, trash cans, benches, water fill stations, safety call boxes, and shaded areas, cooling features such as sprinklers in hot weather
 - Removal of poison ivy
 - Add stones in low lying areas and other areas that experience flooding (including Croft Farm and Kresson Woods)
- Access and Safety improvements:
 - Expand park access on the west side of town
 - More parks on the east side of the township and in older parts of the township
 - Improved pedestrian conditions leading to parks including sidewalks and crosswalks
 - Traffic calming to reduce speeding around park areas, better and safer bike lanes
 - Increase the number of pocket parks throughout the township

Health & Education Goals Feedback

The objectives developed for Health and Education are to maintain passive open space parcels and to promote healthy lifestyles through access to open space. These objectives were ranked as seen in the chart below, with maintaining passive open space parcels as the top priority, followed by promoting health and education by providing access to open space as the second priority.

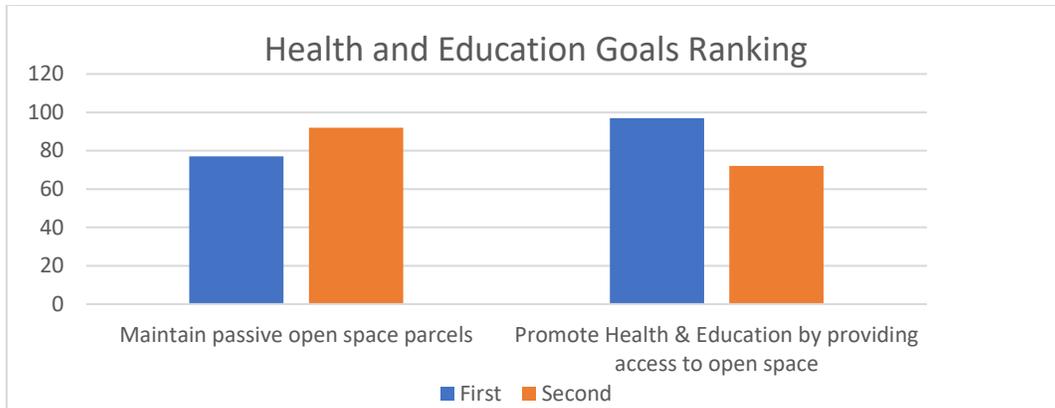


Figure 18 – Health and Education Goals Ranking

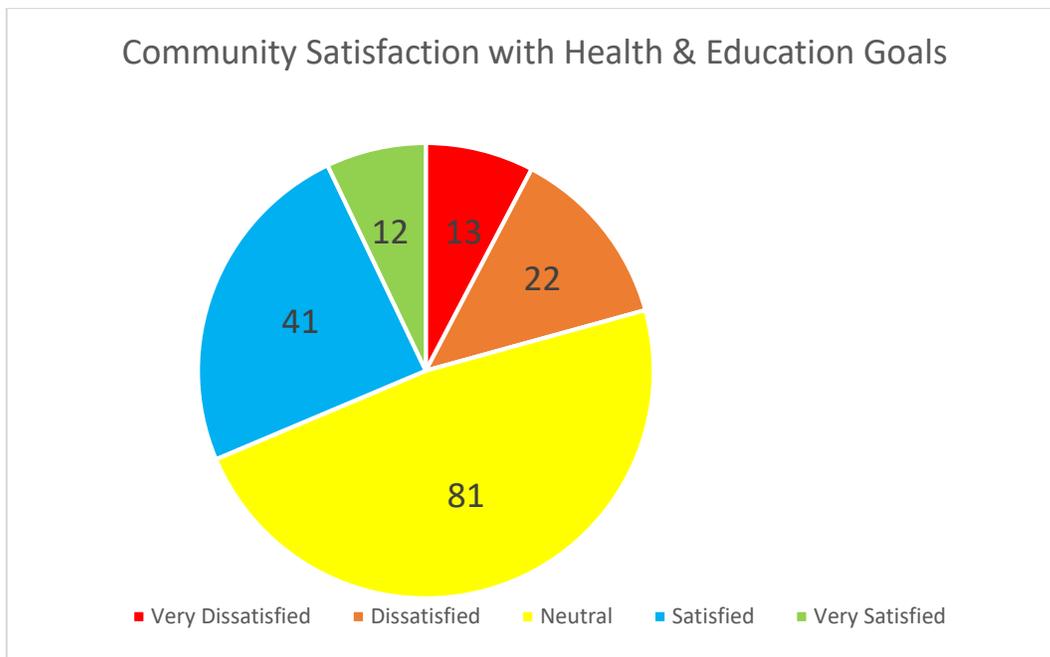


Figure 19 – Community Satisfaction with Health & Education Goals

When asked about their satisfaction with how the Township is currently meeting its goals for Health and Education, 79% of respondents expressed satisfaction, while 21% were dissatisfied.

The Health and Education category includes opportunities for partnerships, improved programming and different types of outreach that could aid in meeting the expressed needs of the community. In general, the key conclusion for this goal is that the focus should be on providing parks, recreation, and programming opportunities for all ages and abilities.

The following comments were received from the public during the survey process:

- Explore public/private partnerships for things like community gardens

- Programming improvements: offer arts and crafts shows, organized walking and hiking clubs, especially for seniors, free swimming lessons for young children, teen-oriented activities, outdoor movies
- Develop a guide to all the trails in the Township to encourage their use
- Increase facilities available for older children in their own neighborhoods (focus on populations without access to cars)
- Conduct a teen survey to ask what facilities that age group would like to see in the park system
- Focus on providing parks, recreation, and programming for all ages and abilities

Goals and Objectives

Goals

The two public meetings and a rigorous survey effort provided extensive community input as to the goals and action items to be included in the plan. Building upon the goals identified in the 2011 OSRP, three primary priority areas were developed: preservation, improvement and providing access to open space to promote health and education.

Objectives

Objectives are action items set forth to guide the Township toward successful fulfillment of the goals identified above. Utilizing the feedback from residents, a series of objectives for each goal was developed. The following is the comprehensive list of goals and objectives established for the 2024 OSRP:

Goal 1: To preserve open space for preservation, conservation and/or recreation.

Objective 1: Identify parcels for preservation that are contiguous to other open space parcels and/or are part of the larger greenway systems, such as the River to Bay Greenway or the Camden County Greenway.

Objective 2: Consider the use of conservation easements on private property that is environmentally vulnerable or may be part of a possible greenway.

Objective 3: Identify potential historic sites which present opportunities for open space, conservation or recreational use.

Goal 2: To preserve sensitive land areas through acquisition of environmentally sensitive areas, such as steep slopes, woodlands, aquifer recharge areas, and areas containing unique environmental features.

Objective 1: Maintain an updated list of the most environmentally vulnerable lands and those most susceptible to development. These parcels should be considered for acquisition by the Township before other less sensitive land areas.

Objective 2: Acquire fee simple ownership or create conservation easements along the major stream corridors of Cooper River tributaries and South Pennsauken Creek for preservation, recreational opportunities and /or to link existing open space areas.

Objective 3: Acquire sites in key locations in imminent danger of development.

Goal 3: To preserve and enhance greenways.

Objective 1: Continue to work closely with Camden County Open Space Committee, regional entities (DVRPC, Camden County Soil Conservation, etc.), and non-governmental organizations

(Trust for Public Lands, Sustainable Jersey, Cherry Hill Advisory Environmental Board (CHAEB), etc.) to improve and expand existing greenways and provide opportunities for active recreation, wildlife habitat, and historic preservation.

Objective 2: Acquire smaller properties to be added in coordination with other municipal, county, state, or non-profit open space initiatives.

Objective 3: Identify privately owned parcels that may provide an opportunity to expand existing greenways and consider the use of conservation easements to preserve these lands in perpetuity.

Goal 4: To improve the existing open space system throughout the Township and provide adequate passive and active recreation opportunities for all ages.

Objective 1: Work with the schools to improve recreation facilities and open space owned by the Cherry Hill Public School District.

Objective 2: Ensure that parks and recreation facilities are accessible to people of all ages and varying mobility throughout the Township. Review ease of travel to locations and opportunities for participation among all residents.

Goal 5: To improve maintenance and maximize the use of existing active recreation parcels.

Objective 1: Continue to engage in regular inspections of all park and recreation facilities to assure the operation and safety of all equipment.

Objective 2: Look for opportunities to increase the number of multi-use fields.

Goal 6: Promote the importance of and maintenance of passive open space parcels.

Objective 1: Work with local organizations to establish parcels that contain the most environmentally sensitive conditions and limit access to these open space parcels.

Objective 2: Create a comprehensive signage program to identify open space parcels preserved by the Township.

Objective 3: Consider promoting a memorial bench program to increase the number of benches at passive recreation sites across the Township.

Goal 7: To promote health and wellness through active recreation.

Objective 1: Work with local schools to promote use of public recreation parcels and their amenities that are located throughout the Township.

Objective 2: Evaluate accessibility to local parks to determine levels of walkability from local neighborhoods and make improvements where needed. Ease of access to recreation amenities may promote use of such facilities, particularly by groups that cannot drive.

Objective 3: Develop signage that encourages the use of trails and walkways, such as mileage markers.

Objective 4: Identify opportunities to activate trails.

Goal 8: To balance environmental conservation with economic development.

Objective 1: Review local ordinances to determine where improvements can be made to development regulations.

Objective 2: Consider offering density bonuses or parking requirement reductions to developers for an increase in open space set-asides.

OPEN SPACE & RECREATION ASSESSMENT

Federal

There are no federal-owned open space or recreation facilities in Cherry Hill Township. The closest federally owned land to Cherry Hill is the military reservation Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, to the northeast.

State of New Jersey

There are no state-owned open space or recreation facilities in Cherry Hill Township. Edith Wharton State Forest is the closest state-owned forest to Cherry Hill. With limited gaps, the River to Bay Greenway proposes a linkage from Cherry Hill to Wharton.

Camden County

The Camden County Parks Department owns a string of parcels along the Cooper River in Cherry Hill Township that collectively comprise Challenge Grove Park, Maria Barnaby Greenwald Memorial Park, and Cooper River Park. These parcels are part of the Camden Greenway initiative that seeks to link Camden County with Downtown Philadelphia through a series of multi-use trails.

The amenities available at the three County parks are as follows:

1. Challenge Grove Park – located on Borton’s Mills Road, this park contains the following recreation facilities:¹⁹
 - Boundless Field
 - John Kay Gazebo
 - One (1) Bike Path
 - One (1) Long Jump
 - Open Pavilion with indoor restrooms
 - One (1) Fitness Quad
 - One (1) Softball Field
 - One (1) ¼-mile track
 - Two (2) Playgrounds
 - Two (2) Picnic Areas
 - One (1) Basketball Court
 - Two (2) Bocce Courts
 - One (1) Landscaped Donor Recognition Garden
 - One (1) Bus Parking Lot
 - Pathways connecting all facilities
2. Maria Barnaby Greenwald Memorial Park – located along Park Boulevard, this park contains the following recreation facilities:²⁰
 - One (1) softball field
 - One (1) Cross Country Course
 - Parks Department Building
 - Environmental Center
 - Picnic Area

¹⁹ [John Adler Memorial Park at Challenge Grove | Camden County, NJ](#)

²⁰ [Maria Barnaby Greenwald Memorial Park | Camden County, NJ](#)

- 1.8-mile Watchable Wildlife Trail 1.8 miles
 - 1.2-mile Grove Street to Kings Highway Bike Path
3. Cooper River Park – located on North Park Drive starting at the Pennsauken Border this park contains the following recreation facilities:²¹
- William G. Rohrer Children’s Playground with pavilions
 - One (1) Softball Field
 - One (1) Cross Country Course
 - Camden County Boathouse
 - Camden County Golf Academy
 - The Cooper River Yacht Club
 - Two (2) Bike Paths: 3.8-mile Cuthbert to Rt. 130 Loop and 1.35-mile Cuthbert to Grove Street Path
 - One (1) Pooch Park
 - Fishing
 - Jack Curtis Stadium
 - ¼-mile Cinder Track
 - Two (2) Picnic Areas: Wallenberg Gazebo and Armitage Pavilion
 - Indoor Restrooms at Stadium
 - Memorial Groves
 - Biofilter Wetland
 - Sculpture Garden
 - Louis F. Cappelli, Sr. Bocce Court
 - Skate Park (pending 2025)

²¹ [Cooper River Park | Camden County, NJ](#)

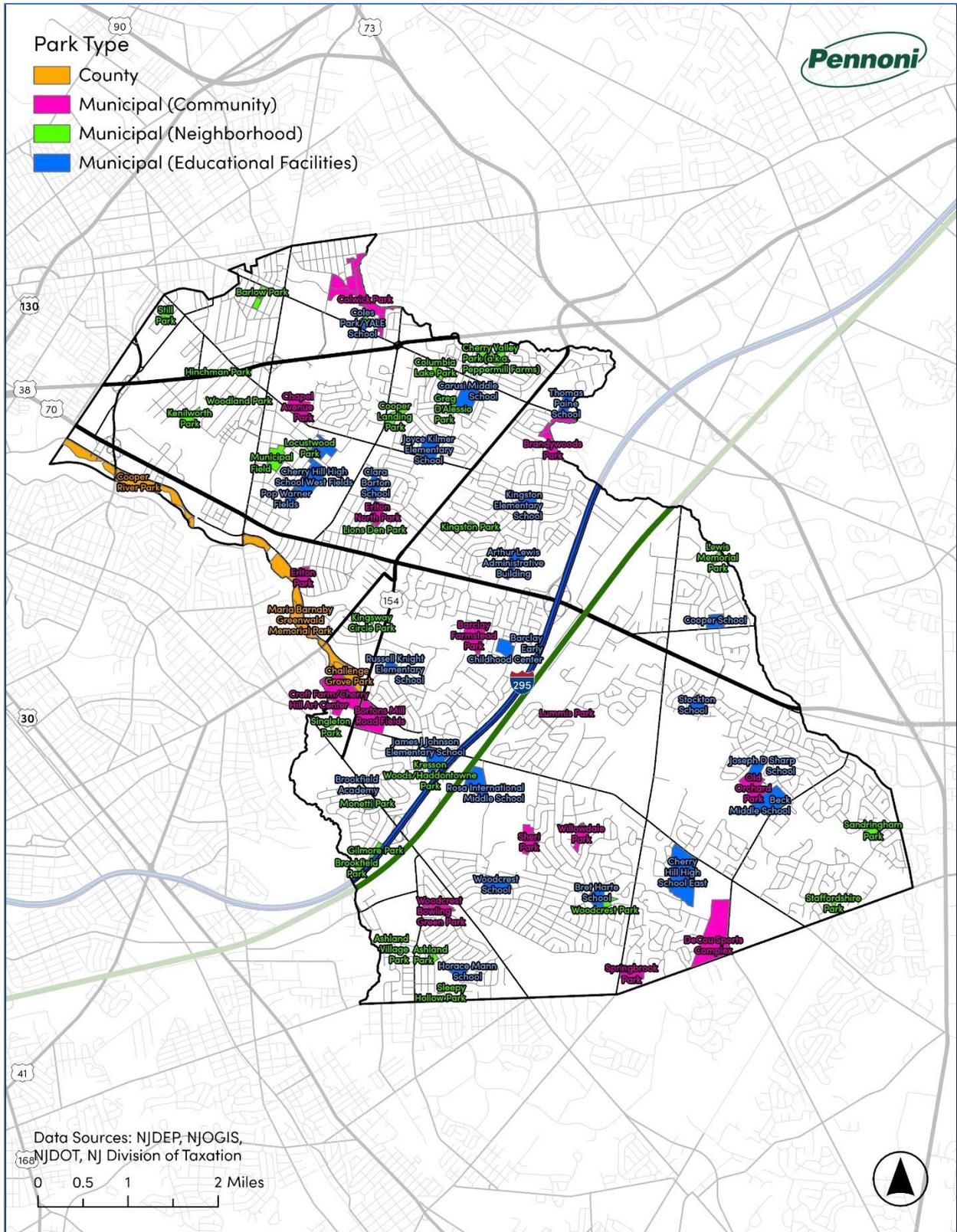


Figure 20 - Park Type



Figure 21 - Cooper River Park



Figure 22 - Cooper River Park Amenities

Municipal

Cherry Hill Township has 41 designated recreation facilities (96 parcels), almost all of which are part of a Recreation and Open Space Inventory (ROSI) that contains 226 parcels (not all parcels on the ROSI are part of the Township's park system). All of these parcels are listed on the Cherry Hill ROSI and are part of the New Jersey Green Acres Program.

Neighborhood Parks

Many of the recreation parcels throughout the Township are considered neighborhood or mini-parks and range anywhere from under 0.5 acres to 6 or 7 acres in size. Mini-parks are designed to service a specific group or neighborhood (e.g. Tot Lots) and provide a service area of approximately a quarter-mile mile. Neighborhood parks are larger than mini-parks, provide a number of activities in one location, and have a quarter-mile to half-mile service area. Neighborhood parks in the Township include:

MUNICIPAL NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS			
Park	Location	Block/Lot	Acreage
Ashland Park	3rd & Palmwood Avenues	543.02/1; 546.01/18	4.3
Ashland Village Park	Dobson Lane, Near Henszey Lane	581.01/4; 581.01/13; 581.01/14	0.5
Barlow Park	Church Road & Victor Ave	210.01/1; 216.01/1	2.9
Cherry Valley Park (a.k.a. Peppermill Farms)	Briar Lane off N Madison	335.06/30; 335.01/4; 335.01/5; 335.01/6	5.1
Coles Park (Yale School)	Church Road	278.01/1	0.3
Columbia Lake Park	Church Rd & Lake Drive	307.01/1	4.3
Cooper Landing Park	Cooper Landing Road	285.24/3	7.5
Greg D'Alessio Park	Ivy Lane & Roosevelt Dr	286.19/27	1.2
Gilmour Park	Haddonfield Berlin Road near I-295	431.16/8; 431.16/9	7.7
Hinchman Park	Hollywood Ave & Route 38	126.01/2	1.6
Jeremy Kane Park	539 Brian Drive/2003 Queen Anne Rd	582.33/25; 528.62/12	4.95
Kenilworth Park	Kenilworth & Olive Avenues	98.01/8; 98.01/9	6.8
Kingston Park	Deland & Edgemoor	339.36/2; 457.01/1	4.0
Kingsway Circle Park	Churchill Road off Kings Highway	397.03/1	0.5
Kresson Woods/ Haddontowne Park	Plymouth Drive & Salem Road	433.07/33	1.8
Lion's Den Park	New York Ave near Cooper Landing Road	357.01/8	1.6
Locustwood Park	Martin & Murray Avenues	167.01/8	0.8
Lummis Park	Marlkress Road near Lucerne	413.02/50	1.4
Monetti Park	Haddonfield-Berlin Road (Brookfield Academy)	431.03/26	3.8
Municipal Field	Town Hall	150.01/1	3.7
Lewis Memorial Park	Brookville Drive off Birchwood Park Drive North	469.03/8	4.1
Sandringham Park	off Sandringham Road	515.22/1	5.8
Singleton Park	Willard Avenue	424.01/25	0.4
Sleepy Hollow Park	White Birch Avenue	529.01/46	0.4
Staffordshire Park	off Brick Road	518.22/7	0.9
Still Park	Merchant Street, Main Street off of Chapel Ave.	111.01/12	1.9
Woodcrest Park	Queen Anne Road & Brian Drive	528.33/25; 528.62/12	5.0
Woodland Park	Between Third & Woodland Avenues	57.01/48	0.3

Community Parks

Community Parks range in size from 6 or 7 acres or greater. These parks provide space for a larger variety of recreation activities. There are several of these parks throughout the Township providing both passive and active recreation functions. The following are Township parks considered Community Parks:

MUNICIPAL COMMUNITY PARKS			
Park	Location	Block/Lot	Acreage
Barclay Farmstead Park	Barclay Lane off West Gate Drive	342.33/1	20.9
Bortons Mill Road Fields	Bortons Mill Rd/Brace Road	408.01/1	31.7
Brandywoods Park	S Dartmouth Road or Colgate Drive	338.01/1; 338.01/2; 338.24/48; 338.24/65; 338.32/1	17.6
Chapel Avenue Park	Chapel Avenue	285.25/4	16.2
Colwick Park	Colwick Rd & Overbrook Drive	260.01/13; 261.03/2; 263.01/1.02; 263.01/4; 282.01/33	13.2
Croft Farm/Cherry Hill Art Center	Bortons Mill & Brace Road	407.01/1	45.5
DeCou Sports Complex	Evesham & Cropwell Roads	521.18/1	66.7
Erlton North Park	New York & McGill Aves, off Cooper Landing Road	340.04/39	11.0
Erlton Park	Jefferson & Grant Avenues	383.01/1	10.6
Old Orchard Park	off Thorn Hill Drive	513.51/9	18.7
Sheri Park	Liberty Bell & Bunker Hill Drives	434.09/33; 434.09/34	14.5
Springbrook Park	Spring Road	521.01/1	12.5
Willowdale Park	Willowdale Drive	525.09/14; 525.38/13; 525.38/14	11.4
Woodcrest Bowling Green Park	South Bowling Green Drive	527.05/55; 527.05/56; 527.05/57; 537.05/60	12.0

In all, the Township retains ownership of 41 neighborhood and community parks (39 owned by the Township and two under long term leases). The Township engages in regular maintenance and repair of all existing facilities, regularly tracking the condition of each park in order to guide future updates and improvements to facilities.

The Township provides social programs for Township residents and non-residents as well. Activities for children, adults and seniors are available throughout the year and include a variety of activities. Youth programs include classes for visual and performing arts, summer camps, and athletic clubs. Adult recreation programs include classes in dance, computers, languages, hobbies and crafts, and health related issues. Senior classes include art, yoga, tai chi, mature driving class, tennis, line dancing, ceramics, and aerobics.

Educational Facilities

The Cherry Hill Public Schools are comprised of one early childhood school, 12 elementary schools, three middle schools and three high schools, for a total of 19 properties that provide open space and recreation opportunities for school children and neighborhood residents when the school is not in session.

MUNICIPAL EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES PARKS			
School	Location	Block/Lot	Acreage
Barclay Early Childhood Center	Weston Way	435.02/35	10.5
Beck Middle School	Cropwell Road	513.51/5	29.3
Bret Harte School	Queen Anne Road	528.57/1	9.8
Brookfield Academy	Haddonfield-Berlin Road	431.03/25	2.2
Carusi Middle School	Jackson Road & Roosevelt Dr.	286.35/1	21.0
Cherry Hill High School East	Kresson Road	524.18/1	55.5
Cherry Hill High School West	Chapel Ave	174.01/1; 167.01/7; 167.01/5; 343.01/4	14.1
Clara Barton School	Migill Avenue	340.24/1	11.6
Cooper School	Greentree Road & Birchwood Park Drive North	469.10/30	10.0
Horace Mann School	Walt Whitman Blvd	529.08/7	6.7
James J Johnson Elementary School	Kresson Road	433.22/1	17.6
Joseph D Sharp School	Old Orchard Drive	513.51/10	9.7
Joyce Kilmer Elementary School	Chapel Avenue	286.37/1	15.0
Kingston Elementary School	Kingston Road	339.05/17	9.0
Arthur Lewis Administrative Building (Former Estelle Malberg School)	Renaldo Terrace off Route 70	341.17/17; 341.17/18; 341.17/20; 341.17/21; 341.17/21; 341.17/22; 463.09/10	12.0
Pop Warner Fields	Warren & Graham Avenues	343.02/6; 343.02/7	49.0
Rosa International Middle School	Kresson Road & Browning Lane	433.01/7	21.8
Russell Knight Elementary School	Old Carriage Road	404.15/1	6.6
Stockton School	Wexford Drive	471.11/30	10.0
Thomas Paine School	Church Road	337.04/1	10.1
Woodcrest School	Aster Drive & Cranford Road	528.17/1	14.4
YALE School	Church Road (Private)	278.01/1	4.7

Newly Acquired Open Space

Since the adoption of the 2011 OSRP, the Township has acquired a total of 190.6 acres at the following properties:

Properties Acquired Since 2011 Open Space and Recreation Plan

Property	Location	Block/Lot	Acreage
Masonic Lodge Property	County Route 561	B431.16/L7	5.6
Hampton Road Easement areas	Hampton Road	111.02/7; 598.04/4; 598.04/5	2.9
Woodcrest County Club Conservation Easement/Development Rights	300 Evesham Road	528.01/11	155.6
Kingston Swim Club	116 Deland Avenue	456.01/3; 339.36/1	3.9
Gilmour Farm/Holly Ravine	350 Springdale Road	528.01/32	22.6

NEEDS ANALYSIS

The Needs Analysis provides a synopsis of the adequacy of the current open space and recreation system to satisfy present and projected public recreational needs for open space as established by the local government through the planning process. The needs analysis looks at those components of the open space system for which the municipality assumes primary responsibility.

Standards of Service

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) formerly advocated a comparison of acreage of open space and amenities relative to population size. The NRPA has now altered the determination of adequate service to recognize the unique characteristics of different municipalities and, in so doing, has supported a local approach to determining appropriate levels of service. The NRPA produces an annual report providing survey statistics from parks and recreation departments throughout the United States. These findings can help municipalities set priorities by providing benchmarks for comparison with similarly sized communities, thereby providing a baseline for identifying potential local need for additional facilities and open space.



Figure 23 - Open Space Inventory Graphic (Slide from Public Meeting #2)

Based on the 2024 NRPA Agency Performance Review benchmarks, municipalities with populations of 50,000 to 99,000 people typically have one park for every 2,386 residents. In Cherry Hill, there is one park for every 1,885 residents, which exceeds the median of this metric. (Note that this calculation does not include the Camden County Parks located in the Township.) Another notable metric is the number of acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. Per NRPA benchmarks, a similarly sized municipalities have 10.2 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. The Township has preserved approximately 1,265 acres of open space that provide varying degrees of recreation opportunity, which correlates to 16.36 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents (excluding school properties). Based on NRPA's benchmarks, Cherry Hill's open space and parkland

corresponds favorably to municipalities of similar size.

Condition of Existing Facilities

As noted earlier, the Recreation Department of Cherry Hill Township maintains and repairs all Township-owned recreation parcels. The condition of all parks is tracked and utilized as a guide to plan for future facility updates and improvements.

Future Need

The following chart details the most common recreation facilities and amenities in the Township:

Current Facilities				
Facility	Twp/Co	Schools	Total	Metric: Per 1,000 Residents
Community Park	159 Acres	---	159 Acres	2.05 acres
Neighborhood Park	305 Acres	214 Acres *	519 Acres	6.71 acres
Playground Equipment	36 Playgrounds	14 Playgrounds	50 Playgrounds	--
Baseball Fields	13 Fields	25 Fields	38 Fields	--
Little League Baseball Fields	9 Fields	---	9 Fields	--
Softball Fields	5 Fields	7 Fields	12 Fields	--
Tennis Courts	12 Courts	21 Courts	33 Courts	--
Basketball Courts	13 Courts	20 Courts	33 Courts	--
Volleyball	0	0	0	--
Pickleball Courts	16 Courts**	---	16 Courts	--
Turf Fields	3 Fields	2 Fields	5 Fields	--
Soccer Fields	7 Fields ***	16 Fields	23 Fields	--
Lacrosse/Field Hockey	2 Fields	7 Fields	9 Fields	--
Rugby Fields	1 Field	---	1 Field	--
Football Fields	2 Fields	4 Fields	6 Fields	--
Jogging/Fitness Trails	25.5 Miles	3 Miles	28.5 Miles	--
Ice Skating	---	---	---	---
Street Hockey	3 Rinks	4 Rinks	7 Rinks	--
Community/School Pools	0 Pools	0 Pools	12 Pools ****	--
Overall Open Space	1,265 acres	350 acres	1,615 acres	--

*66% of school site acreage is attributed to recreation

** 6 dedicated courts, 10 courts with pickleball lines on tennis courts

***4 fields are half size soccer fields

****12 Private Swim Clubs

Analysis

A review of recreation facilities show that the Township has an extensive variety of facilities, encompassing community and neighborhood parks, playground equipment, courts, fields and trails. These facilities are in addition to those owned by Camden County. While an assessment of parks and facilities show that there are areas of opportunity to improve and enhance open space and recreational facilities, surveys found that overall, 81% of residents are satisfied with existing passive and active open space and recreation facilities.

In comparison with like-sized communities, Cherry Hill ranks favorably in a review of parks and open space. Utilizing the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) benchmarks, Cherry Hill exceeds the metric of “Acres of Parkland per 1,000 Residents” for similarly sized communities, with 16.36 acres per 1,000 residents (excluding school acreage) and 20.89 acres per 1,000 residents (including school acreage). The median benchmark for this characteristic is 10.2 acres per 1,000 residents. For the “Residents per Park” metric, for similarly sized communities, Cherry Hill, with 1,885 residents per park, exceeds the median of 2,386 residents per park. Note that these metrics do not include the two Camden County Parks located in Cherry Hill: John Adler Memorial Park at Challenge Grove (17.7 acres) and Maria Barnaby Greenwald Memorial Park (47.21 acres), which further reduces the calculation of residents per park. In addition, the recently acquired Holly Ravine Farm, which will be preserved for passive recreation and agricultural uses, is also pending inclusion into this inventory.

“The vast majority of residential parcels within the Township (74%) are within 0.25 miles of a park while 99% of residential parcels are within 0.5 miles of a park.”

Regarding specific types of recreation activities, the town has a surplus of baseball fields and soccer fields. An additional need was found for tennis courts, basketball courts, softball fields, volleyball courts, football fields, lacrosse/field hockey fields, jogging and fitness trails, ice skating rinks, street hockey rinks and community pools. While amenities such as ice-skating rinks and community pools present challenges to provide as public facilities, the Township should evaluate the opportunity to increase multi-use fields where feasible and also partner with Camden County to develop amenities if possible. An example of this partnership is the Skate Park located in Cherry Hill currently under construction by Camden County.



Figure 24 - Turf Field on Chapel Avenue

Facility deficits do not necessarily mean there is a need to establish new facilities. Many local, non-competitive softball teams use baseball fields as an alternative to regulation softball fields. Volleyball courts and ice-skating rinks are not high-demand facilities and there are a number of private facilities that provide access to these types of recreation. Seven lacrosse and field hockey fields are provided at local schools where the need for facilities of this type is most appropriately placed and where these recreation activities most often occur. While there is no public swimming pool, many neighborhoods in the Township have private swimming clubs to serve the community, which is unique to Cherry Hill.

Figure 11 shows a quarter-mile and half-mile buffer around each park, as well as the location of all residentially-classified properties in the Township. Those residential areas that are outside of the buffers do not have access to these specific recreation types within a half-mile of their homes. It is important to note that much of the area outside of the half-mile buffer are industrial zones and where I-295 and the New Jersey Turnpike cut through Cherry Hill.

While the Township provides plentiful open space for a population of its size, residents have expressed interest in protecting specific lands that are environmentally sensitive and imminently threatened by development. The Cherry Hill Advisory Environmental Board (CHAEB) worked together with the Township to identify a number of these sites based on a ranking system. This list as of 2024 includes the following:

CHERRY HILL TOWNSHIP										
2024 OPEN SPACE RANKING RESULTS										
LOCATION	NAME	BLOCK(S)	LOT(S)	SIZE	BASE SCORE			EXTRA CREDIT		TOTAL
					WET- LAND	CONTIG	PUBLIC INTEREST	> 20 AC.	LINK- AGES	
1638 Springdale Road	Springdale Farm	438.01	2	5	5	5	5	3	3	26
200 Evans Lane	Apostolic Faith (Trustees of)	510.01	3	5	5	5	2	3	3	23
		510.03	4							
1000 Cropwell Rd	Little Servant Sisters of the BVM	523.12	7	5	5	5	3	2	3	23
Birch & Beechwood (Behind Executive Campus)	Woodland	68.01	1	5	4	4	3	3	0	19
		94.01	1							
		95.01	1							
1101- 1105 Warren Ave	Knights Field	343.02	6,7	4	5	5	5	0	0	19
Off Rockhill Rd/ Rt. 70	Intersection of Rockhill Rd & Garden Ave	502.01	21	5	4	4	2	1	0	16
		504.01	4,5							
Adj. to CH Racquet Club to 295	Old Cuthbert	463.01	2, 3	5	4	4	2	0	0	15
		467.01	3, 4, 9, 10	5	4	4	2	0	0	15
Near Woodcrest Speedline	Lakeside	592.01	5,12	2	4	4	2	0	2	14
		592.02	2							
Rear of Ignarri-Lummis Bldg	Chapel/295	465.01	14	4	4	4	2	0	0	14
Springdale Rd	Carnegie Plaza	468.02	1	5	4	0	3	0	0	12

Near Intersection of Kings Hwy/Ramble Rd	Kings Hwy	338.3	10	3	4	0	3	0	0	10
1215 Kresson Rd	Franciscan Sisters of the Infant Jesus	526.06	3	4	0	0	4	0	0	8

BASE SCORE		
SIZE	1 to 5	Must be minimum of 5 acres (estimate)
WETLAND	1 to 5	Area must be a wetland or have a water feature
CONTIGUOUS	1 to 5	Must touch existing open space or government property
PUBLIC INTEREST	1 to 5	Community interest of individual parcel

EXTRA CREDIT		
> 20 ACRES	1 to 3	Estimated size
LINKAGES	1 to 3	Links at least two previously non-adjacent public lands

It is important to note that the list does not preclude the Township from pursuing any parcel that becomes available. The list is intended to serve as a guideline for future planning.

While these parcels are not needed to meet a deficit in open space for the Township, per se, acquisition of these parcels would help fulfill a goal identified by community residents in the public outreach process: to focus on the most environmentally vulnerable lands, with those most susceptible to development preserved first. Direct acquisition of these parcels is one way to protect these parcels, but the Township may also consider the use of conservation easements as a low- or no-cost method for conservation of sensitive lands.

Considering future population growth is extremely important when establishing future need. According to 1990 Census Data, Cherry Hill Township had a population of 69,359; in the 2000 Census, Cherry Hill had a reported population of 69,965. When the previous Open Space and Recreation Plan was prepared in 2011, the U.S. Census Bureau estimated the Township's population to be 72,715 residents. With a current population of 77,315 people, the Township has grown by roughly 10% since 2000. If the Township were to continue growing at this rate, it would have a population of over 80,000 people in 2048. With no further acquisition of property, the Township would still provide 15.81 acres of open space per 1,000 residents.

A closer look at demographic trends provides additional insight into future needs. The chart below shows the percentage of age cohorts for three time periods: 2000, 2010 and 2022.²² These trends help the Township determine likely distribution of age cohorts into the future and future recreation needs based on those trends. The number of residents aged 10 to 14 and 15 to 19 was lower in the current population

²² U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 and 2022 American Community Survey 5-year Estimate, DP05 ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates and 2000 Decennial Census Summary File

than it was in 2010 and 2000. However, the number of residents under the age of 5 and between 5 and 9 is nearly identical to what it was in 2000. This suggests that while the current demand for facilities used by preteen and teenagers is slightly down, this will rebound within the next decade as the under 10 population ages.

Conversely, the 55 to 59, 60 to 64, and 65-74 cohorts are currently much higher than 2010 or 2000, reflecting the aging population of the Township. The predominance of these cohorts that comprise Township residents in or near retirement suggests that there is currently a high demand for the types of facilities used by older residents. While the Township should aspire to make all facilities appropriate and attractive to all age cohorts, the increasing senior community suggests the need for the Township to prioritize accessibility for residents with decreasing mobility. These improvements may include safer, paved walking paths, and expanded parking facilities at some recreation locations for those who would like to access a local park but may not be able to reach it by foot, improved sidewalks.

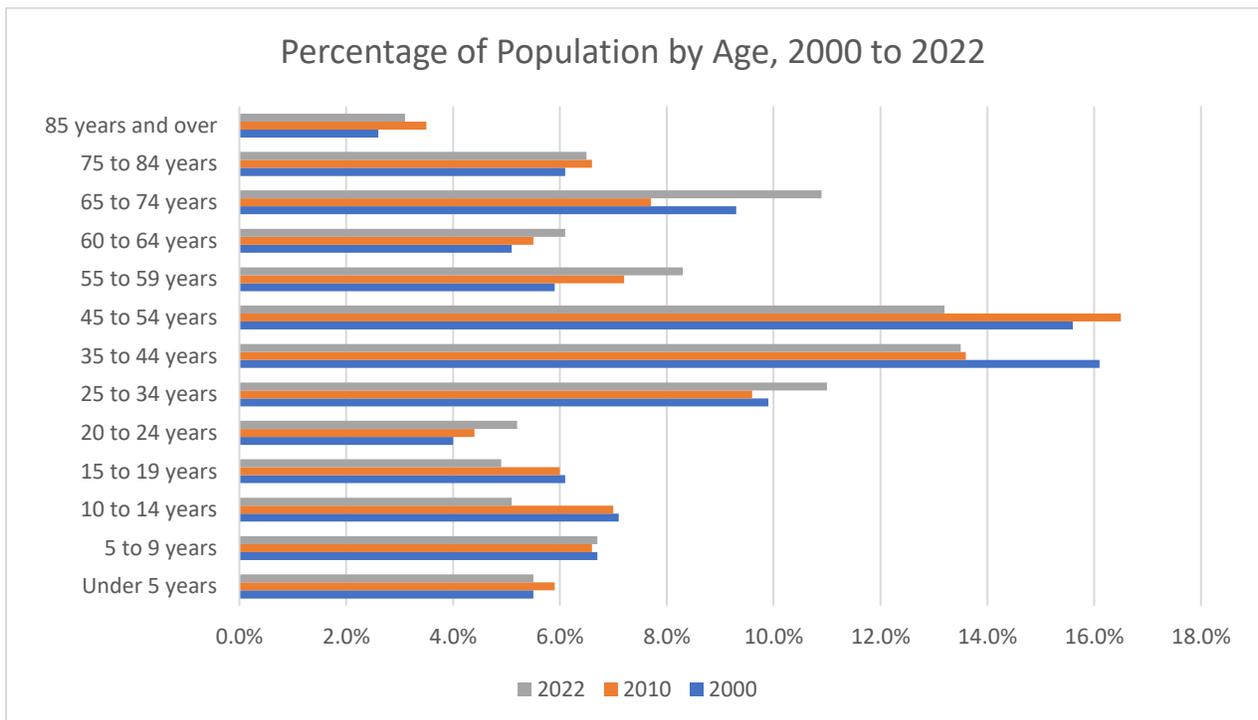


Figure 25 - Percentage of Population by Age, 2000 to 2022

Despite the nominal population growth anticipated over the next several years, changing demographics requires the Township to anticipate the possible need for increased park area in the future.

ACTION PLAN

Land Use Regulations

The Township of Cherry Hill’s Zoning Ordinance regulates land use and development throughout the Township. A number of ordinances are specifically oriented toward protecting open space and sensitive environmental conditions. All commercial development in the Township requires at least 25% of the property remain open space. The Stormwater Management Ordinance was adopted to maintain flood

control, groundwater recharge, and pollutant reduction through nonstructural or low-impact techniques before relying on structural Best Management Practices. The Township has also adopted a Stream Buffer Ordinance in recognition of the fact that natural features contribute to the welfare of residents. This buffer restricts development within 75 feet of any designated waterway in the Township.

The existing ordinance is currently under a revision process, and additional ordinances are being considered to protect the open spaces and natural resources of the Township. An updated Stormwater Management Ordinance has already been approved. During the re-examination of the Master Plan in 2028, best practices for future development will be further evaluated.

The Township plans to preserve land using the criteria outlined in the goals and objectives section of this plan, which were developed through analysis and the community engagement process.

Existing and Potential Open Space Sites: As required by the NJDEP Green Acres Program, the Township maintains a list and map of all existing preserved open space and recreation sites, along with a list and map of all undeveloped parcels greater than one (1) acre in the Township. Both are included in this OSRP.

Planning and Technical Assistance

Cherry Hill Township will continue to seek assistance in all open space and recreation planning from the NJDEP Green Acres Program. The Township will also continue to work closely with the Camden County Parks Department and the Cherry Hill Advisory Environmental Board in coordinating efforts for land preservation, providing recreation opportunities, and linking open space and trail networks within Cherry Hill with neighboring communities.

Management of Public Lands

Management of public open space will continue to be the responsibility of both the Township's Recreation Department and Public Works Department. The Township may also consider alternative methods of preservation as listed below, and engage in an education and outreach component that informs residents about management and proper practices in caring for public open space.

Preservation Tools and Funding

The Township has many options for acquiring and preserving open space. The following are some options available to the Township:

Fee Simple Acquisition: This method is generally the most expensive way of preserving property. The disadvantage of this approach is the need to have the full purchase price available at time of transfer.

Easements: Easements grant an entity the right to the use of another property for a specific purpose. Types of easements include:

Trail Easements: allows easement holder to traverse private property for a walking or bike trail.

Scenic Easements: used to maintain viewsheds or scenic roads.

Conservation Easements: requires the maintenance of a property in its natural condition for whatever length of time called for in the easement, typically in perpetuity.

Historic Easements: gives the easement holder the right to restrict changes to the exterior or interior of a building and its surrounding landscape.

Bonding: The municipality may borrow money through bonding to pay for acquisitions. Money from the Open Space Fund can be used as a down payment and can cover the debt service over time. Bonds require voter approval and can impair the tax credit of the municipality.

Installment Purchases: The Township can contract with a landowner to purchase a piece of property over time. The property owner receives the purchase price incrementally and typically interest due on the balance.

Donation: Donation of land to the municipality can provide a potential tax reduction to a private property owner. The Township may wish to consider working with a nonprofit land trust, such as the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust, to reach out to landowners in the Township that hold sensitive environmental lands or lands within designated greenways and discuss with them the general tax advantages of donations, bargain sales and conservation easements.

Long-Term Lease: The Township may wish to consider long-term lease arrangements with private landowners that may not wish to transfer ownership. The Township already uses this arrangement with the Cherry Hill Public School District for use of the recreation facilities at both public high schools in the Township.

Grant Funding: A number of grants are available to the Township to acquire open space and create recreation opportunities including, but not limited to:

NJDEP Green Acres Program provides low interest (2%) loans and grants to municipal and county governments to acquire open space and develop outdoor recreation facilities. For municipalities that have completed an Open Space and Recreation Plan, Green Acres provides grant funding and low-interest loans through the Planning Incentive Program. (<http://www.nj.gov/dep/greenacres>)

NJDEP Recreation Trails Program Grants are made available to develop and maintain trail facilities across the state. The program is funded through the Federal Highway Trust Fund. (http://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/natural/trail_grants.htm)

HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) is a source of grant funds available to the Township for acquisition and/or improvements to neighborhood parks and playgrounds in residential neighborhoods that meet certain resident income criteria. Accessibility improvements for adult access is also eligible.

NJDOT Transportation Enhancement Funds can be used for the creation of trails for bikes and pedestrians or installation and improvement of sidewalk facilities. (<http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/business/localaid/enhancements.shtm>)

NJ Historic Preservation Awards provide funding for historic preservation activities across the Township, preserving not only historical structures, but the important landscapes that surround them as well. (<http://www.nj.gov/dep/hpo/>)

Education and Outreach

Promoting public knowledge of recreation and open space values and needs in the community is an important endeavor for the Township. Education and outreach starts with this plan and the public involvement process that has gone into creating this plan. Multiple Township departments work diligently to promote the usage of our open space and recreation parcels by Township residents. Increased usage generally leads to a better understanding of the need for open space and the importance of its protection.

Partnering with local non-profit land preservation organizations to help increase outreach and education activities is another option available to the Township. These organizations focus on outreach regarding the need to preserve open space and provide recreational opportunities and are well-versed in the

benefits of open space for the community as a whole, particularly in regard to land values and public health benefits of utilizing open space.

The Township should continue working closely with the Cherry Hill School District to educate all elementary and high school students on the benefits of open space and recreation in the community.

Cherry Hill Township should utilize the many means of outreach available to promote the value and importance of open space and recreation land, including Township newspapers, social media websites, and Council meetings. The resulting awareness will serve and benefit all residents.

Cherry Hill Township

2024 Recreation and Open Space Inventory

Recreation and Open Space Inventory (ROSI) – May 2024					
Wholly Undeveloped Lands Held for Recreation & Conservation Purpose					
Key	Name	Block	Lot	Acreage	Funded/ Unfunded
1	Unnamed — Harvard Ave	15.01	1	0.3	
2	Park Boulevard	49.01	1	2.51	
3	Chapel Avenue	110.01	7	0.0716	U
4	Williams Street	110.01	11	0.0716	U
5	Evans Mill Road Haddonfield Twp	135	1	0.72	U
6	Evans Mill Road Haddonfield Twp	135	9	0.86	U
7	Memorial Park	151.01	1	0.77	U
8	Memorial Park	151.01	2	0.77	U
9	Memorial Park	151.01	4	0.87	U
10	Memorial Park	151.01	10	0.87	U
11	Media Road/Colwick Area	258.01	11	3.4	U
12	Colwick Conservation	261.03	2	18.7	
13	Brunetti Tract	263.01	1.02	11.36	
14	Brunetti Tract (Colwick Park)	263.01	4	13.78	
15	Brick/Savidge Property	282.01	33	5.22	F
16	Hassemer	283.01	19-21	0.5797	U
17	Colwick Conservation	283.01	1	1.75	
18	Embassy Drive Open Space	285.05	11	1.5	
19	Aaron Court/Aqueduct La	287.03	6	0.25	U
20	Liberty Lane	300.01	6	0.75	U
21	Carr Property	335.01	5, 6	4	100% NJEIT Funded
22	Sefcik Property	335.01	4	5.89	100% NJEIT Funded
23	Kingston Drainage Easement Area	338.24	64	0.25	
24	Route 70/Red Lobster/Jughandle	341.01	14	29.48	U
25	Kenwood/N. Branch	342.05	50	1	U
26	Kenwood/N. Branch	342.05	39,41,43	0.5	U
27	Barclay/Southview Driv	342.11	14	0.5	U
28	Cooperfield Park	343.01	3	66	F
29	Cooperfield Park	343.01	5	5.591	F
30	Ellisburg Park	389.01	17	5.77	U
31	Ellisburg Park	389.02	6	1.2	U

32	Pams Path Row	404.01	3	0.25	U
33	Willow Way Court	404.02	10, 15	8.1	U
34	South Barclay Park	404.11	20	4.98	U
35	Ridings of Fox Run Open Space	404.36	53	1.36	
36	Cotswold	404.47	10	0.02	U
37	Kingsway Circle Knolls	404.53	5	4.036	U
38	Tindale Run Park	429.01	2	10.347	U
39	Tindale Run Park	429.03	1	1.5	U
40	Tindale Run Park	429.03	4	2.12	U
41	Tindale Run Park	429.03	10	0.47	U
42	Tindale Run Park	429.03	11	7.2	U
43	Tindale Run Park	430.1	1	4.6	U
44	Rear of Mansfield	433.13	1	0.08	U
45	Valleybrook Area	431.14	82	4.8	U
46	Penny Plate, Inc. & Buff (Browning)	433.01	8, 9	41.961	45% NJEIT Funded
47	Rear of Mansfield	433.14	10	0.25	
48	Magic Forest Park	434.24	17	99.84	F
49	Siena Open Space	437.04	100	0.58	
50	Lucerne Open Space	437.04	99	1.34	
51	Siena/Lucerne Open Space	437.05	99	37.16	
52	Siena Open Space	437.05	97	0.76	
53	Siena/Lucerne Open Space	437.07	99	0.73	
54	Siena Open Space	437.11	36	1.12	
55	Versailles Open Space	437.12	104	1.23	
56	Springdale Road	438.01	4	6.229	U
57	Kingston Swim Club	456.01	3	3.53	
58	Northwoods Conservation	462.03	1	1.19	
59	Northwoods Conservation	463.06	5	14.35	
60	Katz Property/Frontage Rd	463.09	1	15.22	F
61	Chapel Avenue Extension	465.01	14	7	U
62	Deer Woods Park	467.04	13	1	U
63	Deer Woods (Park Road)	467.1	1	6.33	
64	Deerwoods	467.11	7	0.349	U
65	Greentree Road	470.08	7	0.14	
66	Garden Avenue	488.01	1	2.3	U
67	Springhouse Farm	510.02	1	45.95	F
68	Candlewyck Floodplain	513.44	59	1.57	
69	Candlewyck Floodplain	513.44	60	4.7	
70	Bridge Hollow Property	513.5	1, 2	39.067	50% NJEIT Funded
71	Marlowe Park	514.01	1	6.3	U
72	Candlewyck Floodplain	514.01	4	4.27	

73	Surrey Place East Park	515.01	2	4.6	
74	Unnamed—Brick Road	515.01	1	10.395	
75	Cropwell Estates	515.08	11	1.2	U
76	Unnamed—Charles Lane	515.09	10	1.9	
77	Surrey Place East	515.15	14	3.2	U
78	Surrey Place East Open Space	515.21	1	25.5	
79	Surrey Place East	515.23	1	10	U
80	Kresson Road	518.01	9	2.3	U
81	Huttons Hill Park/Signal Hill	518.02	30	0.8	U
82	Huttons Hill Park/Signal Hill	518.02	31	0.34	U
83	Huttons Hill Park/Signal Hill	518.02	32	0.34	U
84	Huttons Hill Park/Signal Hill	518.02	33	0.34	U
85	Cropwell Road	518.03	1	2	U
86	Fox Hollow Woods	518.1	33	0.8	U
87	Fox Hollow Woods	518.1	54	11.6	U
88	Fox Hollow Woods	518.11	13	3.4	U
89	Rams Gate Open Space	518.14	1	4.1	
90	Rams Gate Open Space	518.15	38	1.35	
91	Fox Hollow Woods	518.16	26	2.4	U
92	Fox Hollow Woods	518.16	27	7.6	U
93	Fox Hollow Woods	518.24	1	9	U
94	Fox Hollow Woods	518.24	2	6	
95	Cherry Run Open Space	519.01	35	7.1	
96	Brick Road	519.11	1	21.4	U
97	Wilderness Acres Floodplain	524.01	7	12.488	
98	Country Walk Open Space	524.1	30	6.46	
99	Timber Cove Park	525.27	19	4.8	U
100	Hillman Schoolhouse Site	526.07	1, 5	4.64	F
101	Woodcrest Remainder	527.05	60	6.95	
102	Woodcrest Remainder	527.05	61	1.57	
103	Holly Swamp Run	527.06	4	3.34	U
104	Holly Swamp Run	527.06	8	6.82	
105	Holly Swamp Run	528.01	1	1.4	U
106	Holly Swamp Run	528.01	2	2.4	
107	Rue du Bois	528.01	22	1	U
108	Zarrinia Property	528.01	3	1.217	F
109	Curry's Run Wetlands/Stream Area	529.01	1	6.1	U
110	Rear of Carolina Avenue	543.01	23	2	U
111	Ashland Village	578.01	19-21	3	U
112	Ashland Village	578.01	31-41	4	U
113	Orchard Lane	580.01	6	0.25	U

114	Merion Avenue	583.02	2, 3, 4	0.656	U
115	East Essex Avenue	588.01	1, 2	0.75	U
116	Lakeside Avenue	592.01	9, 11	0.75	U
117	Lakeside Avenue	593.01	1	1.33	U
118	Burnt Mill Park	594.02	1	18.62	U
Total acres of wholly undeveloped lands from all pages of this ROSI:					807.82

**Recreation Open Space Inventory
May 2024**

Developed & Partially Developed Lands Held for Recreation & Conservation Purposes					
Key	Name	Block	Lot	Acreage	Funded/ Unfunded
1	Kenilworth Park	98.01	8	0.6	U
2	Kenilworth Park	98.01	9	6.6	U
3	Samuel Still Park	111.01	12	1.88	F
4	Beechwood Tennis Courts	126.01	2	0.25	U
5	Memorial Park-Municipal Complex	150.01	1	14.8	U
6	Colwick Park	163.01	4	13.18	U
7	Cherry Hill High School West (Tennis Cts. Only)	167.01	8	0.77	U
8	Cherry Hill High School West (Baseball Fields)	167.01	P/O 7	0.5	U
9	Barlow Playground	210.01	1	2.9	F
10	Barlow Playground	216.01	1	2.9	F
11	Colwick Park	260.01	13	8.92	F
12	Cooper Landing Park-Nat'l Little League	285.24	3	7.35	U
13	Chapel Avenue Park	285.25	4	15.43	U
14	Brainerd Playground (Ivy/Roosevelt)	286.19	27	1.2	U
15	Poplar Court	292.04	11	0.25	U
16	Columbia Lake Park	307.01	1	4.44	F
17	Cherry Valley Playground	335.06	30	4.8	U
18	Cherry Valley Area	335.06	31	0.5	U
19	Old Salem Road	336.03	1	0.75	U
20	Fountain Court	337.03	14	3.7	U
21	Brandywoods Park	338.01	1	5.8	U
22	Brandywoods Park	338.01	2	6.7	U
23	Brandywoods Park	338.24	48	0.63	U
24	Brandywoods Park	338.32	1	6	U
25	Brandywoods Park	338.24	65	2.5	U
26	Kingston Playground	339.36	2	1.8	U
27	Erlton Park (Former Landfill)	340.04	39	10.4	U
28	Barclay Farmstead	342.33	1	22.8	U
29	Erlton Playground-Lions Den	357.01	8	1.42	U
30	Erlton Park (Former School)	383.01	1	10.92	U
31	Kingsway Circle Playground	397.03	1	0.59	U
32	Fox Run Open Space	404.36	1	10.62	U
33	Ridings of Fox Run Open Space	404.36	80	15.8	U
34	Hunt Tract Park — Pond	404.44	19	3.71	U
35	Barclay Farmstead	404.49	11	11	U
36	Cherry Hill Meadows/Croft Farm	407.01	1	41.24	U
37	Cherry Hill Meadows/Croft Farm	408.01	1	28.67	U
38	Lummis Park	413.02	50	1.4	U
39	Batesville Playground (Singleton)	424.01	25	0.41	U
40	Brookfield Park-American Little League	431.16	8	3.49	U
41	Brookfield Park-American Little League	431.16	9	5.2	U
42	Ashbrook Road	431.14	17	0.2	U
43	Kresson Woods Park	433.07	33	1.78	U
44	Sheri Park	434.09	33, 34	14.55	F
45	Scarborough Park-Covrd Brdg Pk	436.01	1	4.8	U
46	Kingston Playground	457.01	1	2.93	U
47	Point of Woods Park	469.01	2	15	U
48	Point of Woods Park	469.03	8	4.08	U
49	Point of Woods Park (Mrngside)	469.13	1	5.03	U
50	Lakeview Lake Park	470.06	10	19.2	U
51	Stockton/Wexford Leas Park	471.11	29	1.7	U
52	Wexford Leas	471.13	11	1.9	U
53	Old Orchard Park	513.51	8	4.34	U
54	Old Orchard Park	513.51	9	18.18	U
55	Surrey Place East Park	515.22	1	5.6	U
56	Rams Gate Open Space	518.21	20	0.75	U
57	Rams Gate Open Space	518.21	28	4	U
58	Staffordshire Farms Park	518.22	7	1.34	U
59	Springbrook Park	521.01	1	12.518	U
60	DeCou Park	521.18	1	66.3	F
61	Cherry Hill High School East (Tennis Cts Only)	524.18	1	0.86	F

**Recreation Open Space Inventory
May 2024**

Developed & Partially Developed Lands Held for Recreation & Conservation Purposes					
Key	Name	Block	Lot	Acreage	Funded/ Unfunded
62	Oriole Lake Park	525.09	14	3.9	U
63	West Point Drive	525.30	13	1	U
64	Oriole Lake Park	525.38	13	1	U
65	Oriole Lake Park	525.38	14	1.4	U
66	Springdale & Kresson	526.01	1	6.6	U
67	Potter's Field	526.06	31	2.2	U
68	Bowling Green Park	527.05	55	84.273	U
69	Bowling Green Park	527.05	56	1.3	U
70	Bowling Green Park	527.05	57	1.16	U
71	Matlack Burial	528.32	18	0.138	U
72	Woodcrest East Park	528.33	25	0.64	U
73	Woodcrest East Park	528.62	12	4.3	U
74	Sleepy Hollow Park	529.01	46	0.42	U
75	Brafferton Manor/Simi Court	529.11	16	0.93	U
76	Ashland (3 Ave.) Park	543.02	1	1.62	U
77	Ashland Playground	546.01	18	4.32	U
78	Ashland Village Park	581.01	4, 13, 14	0.47	U
79	Woodland Park (Vacated Linden Street)	ROW	ROW	0.57	U
Total acres of developed and partially developed lands from all pages of this ROSI:					584.119

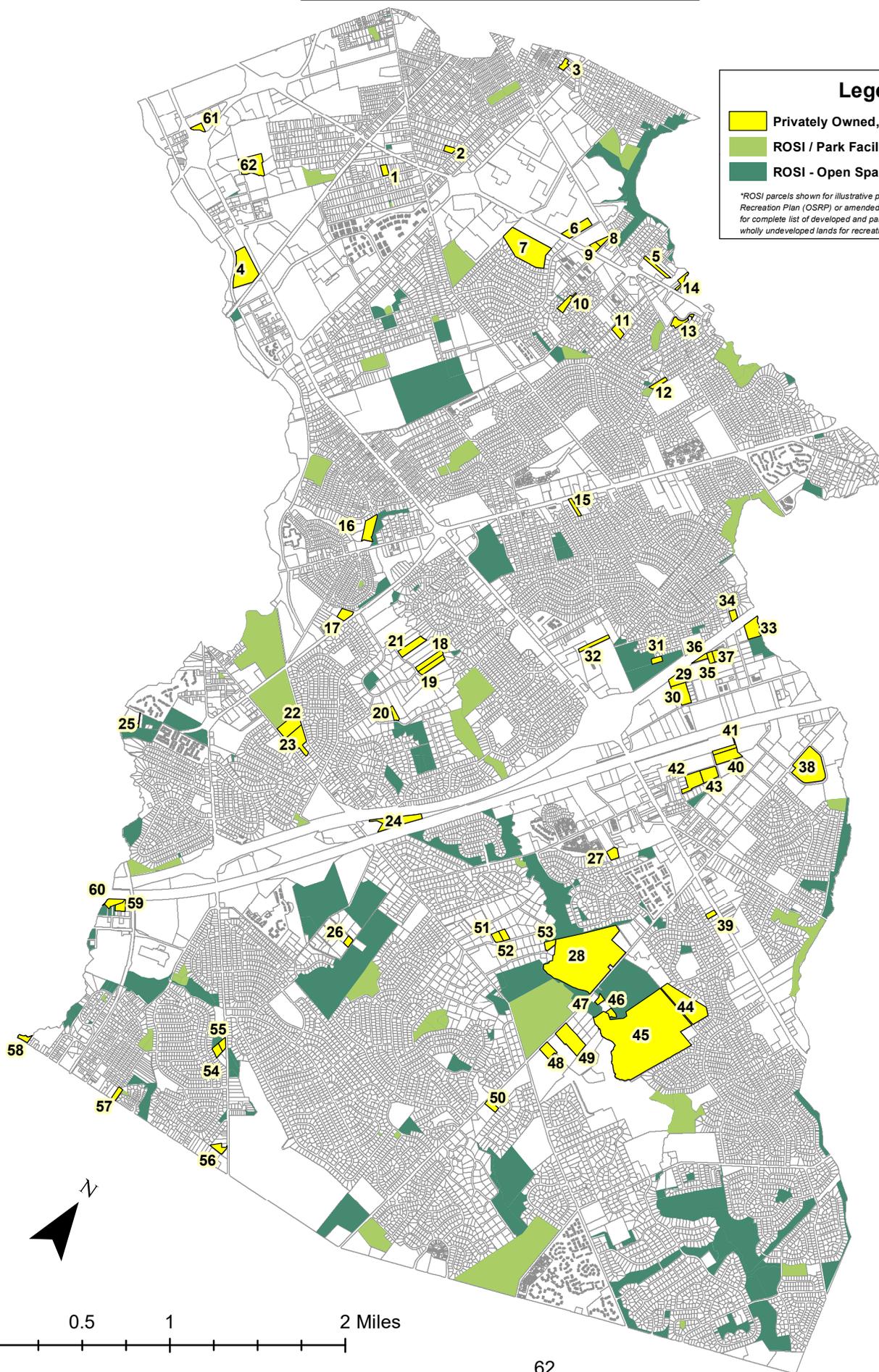
Open Space / Recreation Plan Parcels Greater than 1 Acre

JANUARY 2025

Legend

-  Privately Owned, Undeveloped, 1+ Acre
-  ROSI / Park Facilities
-  ROSI - Open Space*

*ROSI parcels shown for illustrative purposes only. See Open Space Recreation Plan (OSRP) or amended Green Acres Project Agreement for complete list of developed and partially developed land and wholly undeveloped lands for recreation and conservation purposes.



Undeveloped Parcels Greater than 1 Acre

MAPID	ACRES	LOCATION	BLOCK	LOT	QCODE
1	1.33	540 HIGHLAND AVE	128.01	43	
2	1.29	408 YALE AVE	185.01	21	
3	1.29	CARLISLE AVE	237.01	3	
4	13.61	2235 RT 70 W	27.01	7	
5	1.78	34 COLES AVE	284.01	16	
6	4.92	2128 RT 38	285.03	1	
7	21.30	RT 38-REAR	285.25	8	
8	1.17		287.04	1	
9	1.07		287.04	2	
10	2.24	23 MAPLE AVE	287.06	20	
11	1.71		289.02	17	
12	1.34	ROOSEVELT DR	314.01	1	
13	2.13	LAKE DR E	331.01	1	
14	1.30		333.02	2	
15	1.32	915 KINGS HWY N	339.01	10	
16	4.80	JEFFERSON AVE	375.01	3	
17	2.39	1200 BRACE RD	404.43	14	
18	3.22	232 MUNN LN	404.45	10	
19	3.00	304 MUNN LN	404.45	11	
20	1.27	1224 COTSWOLD LN	404.45	31	
21	4.14	218 MUNN LN	404.45	5.01	
22	6.31	351 KRESSON RD	408.01	2	QFARM
23	6.82	351 KRESSON RD	408.01	3	
24	7.72	N J TURNPIKE	411.01	7	
25	1.60	BERLIN RD	429.03	7	
26	1.14	REAR BROWNING LN	434.23	5	
27	2.13	13 ALLISON DR	437.01	26	
28	68.58	1638 SPRINGDALE RD	438.01	2	QFARM
29	4.68	600 PARK RD	463.01	2	
30	6.03	1890 OLD CUTHBERT RD	463.01	3	
31	1.20	CARLTON RD	463.06	21	
32	2.39	1432 RT 70 E - REAR	463.09	9	
33	4.97	605 CHAPEL AVE E	465.01	13	
34	1.35	CHAPEL AVE EXTENSION E	465.05	5	
35	1.25	REAR DEER RD	467.01	10	
36	1.08	PARK RD	467.01	4	
37	1.29	REAR DEER RD	467.01	9	
38	16.84	SPRINGDALE RD	468.02	1	
39	1.03	1929 RT 70 E	472.01	19	
40	5.26	ROCKHILL RD	473.01	5	

41	2.58	POINT VIEW AVE	473.01	6	
42	5.27	ROCKHILL & GARDEN	504.01	4	
43	4.03	POINT VIEW AVE	504.01	5	
44	15.65	200 EVANS LANE	510.01	4	
45	103.92	200 EVANS LANE	510.02	3	QFARM
46	1.17	1635 SPRINGDALE RD	510.02	4.01	
47	1.05	1627 SPRINGDALE RD	510.02	4.03	
48	2.91	SPRINGDALE RD	523.13	11	
49	9.18	SPRINGDALE RD	523.13	9	
50	1.54	SPRINGDALE RD	524.17	2	
51	1.63	1142 WINDING DR	526.02	10	
52	1.51	1138 WINDING DR	526.02	9	
53	1.59	36 IMPERIAL DR	526.06	12	
54	1.64		527.06	5	
55	1.18		527.06	6	
56	1.86	BERLIN RD	529.25	5.01	
57	1.39	158 EVESHAM RD	562.01	13	
58	1.17	48 EVESHAM ROAD WEST	578.01	59	
59	1.74	LAKESIDE AVE	592.01	12	
60	2.26	ATLANTIC AVE	592.02	2	
61	1.32	2372 RT 70 W	65.01	2	
62	8.69	2370 RT 70 W - REAR	68.01	2	